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TSL wins BBC Manchester biz

British manufacturer and systems integrator TSL has been named as technical design consultant for Mediacity:UK, part of the continuing development of the Salford Quays site in Greater Manchester.

The site will eventually house five BBC departments scheduled to be transferred from London within four years.

Salford Quays is already home to the Lowry gallery and Imperial War Museum North. Mediacity:UK is planned as an international centre for the media, technological and creative markets, with the new BBC complex at its centre.

The decision to move BBC Children's, BBC Children's Learning, BBC Sport, parts of BBC Future Media and Technology and the sports and news radio station BBC Radio Five Live to Manchester was a controversial one and is still a contentious point within the BBC and the UK broadcasting business in general.

The BBC's director-general, Mark Thompson, said in 2005 the move was part of the Corporation's vision for the north of England, creating "a multimedia digital broadcasting facility from scratch". Thompson confirmed in May this year that the 200-acre Salford Quays area, which also houses bars, theatres, restaurants, shops and the studios of two commercial radio stations, would be the BBC's new base in the region.

The site is operated by Peel Holdings, the developer that also runs the Manchester Ship Canal and three UK airports, including John Lennon in Liverpool. Stuart Rimmer, construction manager of Peel Media, said: "Mediacity:UK is one of the biggest media and creative industry projects in Europe and will be a major commercial boost for the North of England. TSL was selected after a lengthy review process and the company demonstrated it has an impressive portfolio of successful design and systems integration projects, both in the UK and internationally."

David Phillips, chief executive of TSL, said, "Mediacity:UK will have state-of-the-art HD facilities and will put Salford on the map as one of the largest providers of broadcast services in the country." The project is due to be completed in 2011.