



The new flagship Barker and Stonehouse store on Teesside Retail Park is literally being brought to life, thanks to the creation of the first 'living' wall and roof on Teesside.

Thousands of colourful plants will soon transform a south-facing wall and the roof into a bright display and wildlife habitat in time for the store's opening on March 28.

Award-winning local landscape designer Will Quarmby will shortly transfer 14,000 plants to the pioneering design created by Dennis McLuckie, construction project manager.

A purpose-built irrigation system has been fitted to maintain the plants, with a 6,000 litre tank beneath the store to hold harvested rainwater.

The roof will be planted with a colourful variety of Sedum, which customers of the in-store café will be able to enjoy from an outside roof terrace that also offers views across to Teesside Park golf course.

James Barker, Managing Director of Barker and Stonehouse, said: "We've invested heavily in the new Teesside store as part of our commitment to our customers in the region.

"Working with local suppliers and companies is always a priority for us, and we feel privileged to be able to use Will and Dennis' skills in creating our unique living wall."

Dennis, from McLuckie Projects, said: “The wall will bring the planted roof seamlessly down the south elevation, which will create a visually arresting design for the store’s façade - and the technical design of the wall is completely bespoke to the store.”

The time of year means the plants have spent the last few months in glasshouses at Earley Ornamentals in Thirsk, sheltering from the worst of the weather.

Will, owner of Quarmby Landscaping, said: “The dimensions of the wall led me down a route of designing swathes of plants that would draw the eye along the length of the building, allowing the whole space to become one.

“I chose various species of plants to create contrasting colours and textures from plants such as Heuchera, Sedum and a mix of hardy ferns and grasses, which will all bring something different.”

The designer has won several prestigious awards for his garden designs, including a gold medal and ‘Best Small Garden’ award at Hampton Court Palace, and a bronze medal in the ‘Artisan Garden’ category at the Chelsea Flower Show.

Other green features of the store include low-energy heating, an innovative heat recovery system and unique lighting system specially designed by the company.

Solar UV panels have been fitted to the roof to provide almost half the store’s electricity usage, which will reduce the carbon footprint by 46%.

Barker and Stonehouse is no stranger to sustainability – the unique lighting system has already been introduced into the retailer’s other stores and resulted in savings of up to 60% on the company’s annual fuel bills.

The store also boasts maximum insulation and features a host of striking design features, many of which are made from recycled and environmentally resourced materials.