**PRESS RELEASE  
15 July 2015**

**WORK GETS UNDERWAY AT EL GATO NEGRO MANCHESTER**

Work has commenced at 52 King Street, the new site of acclaimed tapas restaurant, El Gato Negro Manchester.

Since securing the iconic address in February, El Gato Negro founder and Chef Patron Simon Shaw has been busy working with a team to develop designs for the 150 cover restaurant, with works now underway.

Part of the King Street conservation area, El Gato Negro Manchester will pay homage to the building’s past lives, preserving many existing architectural features while embracing sustainable design techniques. The plans celebrate aspects and features of the former retail space, set to be transformed as Simon brings his award-winning Spanish cuisine to the city centre.

Leading the design elements of the project is Mark Mason Design, a Manchester consultancy best known for its work in Manchester with Revolution and Revoluci**ó**n de Cuba Bars, The Deaf Institute and Trof on Thomas Street.

Commenting on the scheme, designer Mark Mason said: “We’ve worked closely with Manchester City Council to develop plans and concepts to reflect the heritage of the building, as well asSimon’s contemporary take on traditional tapas.

“El Gato Negro Manchester will be a very different space for the city. A lot of the materials used will be reclaimed to refresh and repurpose features that have existed in the space throughout the years. Our vision has always been to preserve the organic, easy style of eating, drinking and sharing which makes tapas well loved, while reflecting the attention to detail of Simon’s cooking across every aspect of the restaurant’s design.”

Furniture and fittings for El Gato Negro Manchester are being sourced from local antique dealers and reclamation yards, with most of the development’s contractors and suppliers based in Manchester and the North West. Furnishings will also be sourced direct from Spain, while the interior decor and colours also take inspiration from various Iberian regions.

Fresh from a discovery trip to San Sebastián, the city that kindled his love of Spanish cuisine over ten years ago, El Gato Negro founder and Chef Patron Simon Shaw said: “It’s great to have the support of Manchester City Council to realise our vision.We’ve been careful to make the most of our new home in Manchester, pleased with its larger capacity, whilst carefully maintaining the intimacy and character which has always been a key appeal.

“We’ve taken care to make this a venue that will appeal to those looking to drop by forhalf an hour over a selection of tapas and a glass of wine or sherry, as much as it will for those taking time to enjoy a bigger occasion.”

The search is underway to recruit the restaurant’s core management team well ahead of the development’s completion, with applications now sought [online](http://www.elgatonegrotapas.com/jobs/).

El Gato Negro is renowned for seasonally-inspired dishes reflecting a mix of modern and traditional Spanish flavours and techniques with influences from closer to home. A select range of Spanish wines completes the offer.

El Gato Negro Manchester is a partnership between Simon Shaw and Mills Hill Developments Ltd. The restaurant is due for completion in autumn 2015 with details of its opening to be announced.

**Ends**

For further information on the launch please contact Miranda or Julie at Rule 5 on: [firstname@rule-5.co.uk](mailto:firstname@rule-5.co.uk) or 0161 686 5727 / 686 5726.

[www.elgatonegrotapas.com](http://www.elgatonegrotapas.com)

**Notes to Editors**

**Simon Shaw - Chef Patron / Creative Director**

Simon is a highly experienced restaurateur with over 35 years of experience, most notably as Executive Head Chef at Harvey Nichols, before opening his own highly successful restaurant El Gato Negro Tapas in 2005, after ten successful years in London.

Originally from Yorkshire, Simon trained in patisserie and rapidly worked his way through the ranks at some the county’s finest restaurants – from 6 Royal Parade in Harrogate, Pool Court in Wharfedale, Leodis in Leeds, to the Golden Cock in Farnley Tyas – before being headhunted to lead the restaurant in Harvey Nichols’ new store in Leeds as Head Chef.

After a stellar stint in Leeds he was then seconded to their restaurants in London; first heading up the kitchens at Prism, the company's prestigious City of London restaurant, before moving to the flagship Knightsbridge store as Executive Head Chef. While working in London, Simon visited the Basque country and Catalonia, and immediately fell in love with the diversity and excitement of modern Spanish cuisine.

Determined to bring this then under-appreciated cuisine to a wider audience, in 2005 Simon returned north to open El Gato Negro in the Pennine village of Ripponden. His restaurant’s reputation grew by the year, picking up awards and accolades galore: winning best local Spanish restaurant in the country on Gordon Ramsay’s F Word; annual listings in the Good Food Guide; being called the ‘best tapas in the north’ by Hardens; feted by critics such as the Observer’s Jay Rayner; ranked the number one tapas bar in the country by The Times; and finally awarded the prestigious Michelin Guide Bib Gourmand in both 2014 and 2015.

During his time in Ripponden Simon also promoted his style of modern Spanish cooking to a wider audience; as consultant chef to blue chip companies, cooking for celebrities at private functions,

making media appearances and leading sell-out cookery masterclasses. He is truly driven by a passion for his craft.