

EICC

The development partnership of City of Edinburgh Council, Scottish Enterprise and Edinburgh International Conference Centre (EICC) Limited yesterday broke ground on the site of an £85 million Expansion Space for EICC and separate Grade A Offices, signalling the start of one of Scotland's biggest construction projects, that will sustain 250 jobs at peak employment.

The development forms the last piece of Edinburgh's Exchange Masterplan and will be ready for occupation by 2013, adding a 2,000 square metre Multi Purpose Hall to EICC and delivering 186,000 square feet of Grade A office space in the city centre.

Main contractor, Sir Robert McAlpine, will direct up to eighty sub-contractors on-site working to a build schedule of 126 weeks.

Leading the development partnership in a ground breaking ceremony on-site City of Edinburgh Council leader, Jenny Dawe, said:-"Experience tells us that when we invest in EICC we are investing in the future prosperity of the City and, with a £2.3 billion return forecast over the next thirty years, our long term investment is safe and sustainable through and beyond the current economic downturn."

Echoing the economic development potential Scottish Enterprise Director, Pamela Woodburn said:-"We are active investors in this development and the return in jobs and prosperity from a resilient EICC is measurable across Scotland and represents excellent value for money."

Announcing the start of a global marketing campaign for the expanded events venue, EICC Chief Executive, Hans H Rissmann OBE said:-"International Association customers around the world are excited about bringing their delegates to an

expanded EICC that can fully justify its offer as the world's most technologically advanced events space."

Commenting on the construction project Sir Robert McAlpine Director, Andrew McAlpine said:-"We are delighted to return to this site that we know well as main contractor for the Scottish Widows Edinburgh One building next door and the nearby Standard Life offices and we look forward to delivering another landmark building to this important area of the city."

During the excavation stage of the development 120,000 tonnes of material will be removed from the site and work on the superstructure will require 3,300 tonnes of structural steelwork to be erected.

The main construction challenges will be the installation of a 15-metre cantilever at the rear of the building where the office development will overhang Conference Square and ensuring that the EICC can continue with business as usual throughout out the build period.

The new Multi Purpose Hall for EICC includes a bespoke moving floor system to cater for various configurations and uses, ranging from flat-floored exhibition, through tiered banqueting to raked auditorium and arena setup.