

Designers appointed for Edinburgh St James



Last year The City of Edinburgh Council announced a three way plan to bring the St James Centre back to life. The owners TIAA Henderson Real Estate (TH Real Estate) are working alongside The Scottish Government and the council to demolish and rebuild everything at the St James Centre except the John Lewis store which will remain open throughout.

TH Real Estate has announced today that it has appointed architecture and interior design practice Jestico + Whiles to design the luxury hotel which will be the centrepiece of its £850m Edinburgh St James development.

Jestico + Whiles was instructed following a design competition which included presentations from five international architecture firms of their visions for Edinburgh St James. The retail-led development will transform retailing and leisure within the Scottish capital and is due to complete in 2020, with work starting later this year.

London-based Jestico + Whiles has designed the hotel as a bundle of 'coiled ribbons', creating a free-flowing and bold building which will complement the development's elegantly understated masterplan. The vision for the hotel includes a lofty bar, lounge and restaurant space boasting 360 degree panoramic views over the UNESCO world heritage city.

The news comes as JLL proactively markets the hotel opportunity. The team has received high levels of occupational and investor interest in the Edinburgh St James hotel, which will include up to 210 rooms. A 41,000 sq ft apart hotel also has the potential to provide between 52–70 suites. The design and layout of the hotel is flexible and will be shaped by the

eventual operator.

Edinburgh St James will deliver 750,000 sq ft of prime retail space including a multi-screen cinema and more than 30 dining destinations. This will help move Edinburgh further up the UK retail rankings, from 13th to seventh and will support the city's tourist industry which contributes an estimated £260m to Edinburgh's economy each year.

Jestico + Whiles joins the scheme's existing architectural team, which consists of:

Allan Murray Architects which is responsible for creating the Edinburgh St James masterplan

BDP, technical architects on the development

Purcell, which has redesigned listed buildings St Andrews Hall and 27-31 James Craig Walk

OPEN which is the landscape architect on the development

Martin Perry, Director of Development, TH Real Estate, said: "Jestico + Whiles has a well-deserved reputation for its excellent work on a number of prestigious hotel and leisure facilities throughout the world. The team demonstrated a thorough understanding and imagination for what we would like to achieve for Edinburgh St James which was reflected in their proposals.

"The final hotel design is likely to be influenced by the operator and given Edinburgh is continuing to prove a highly attractive destination with a growing tourist economy and strong finance market, we are encouraged by the response we have received from interested parties so far."

Heinz Richardson, Director, Jestico + Whiles, added: "We are thrilled to have been selected by TH Real Estate to be part of one of the biggest and most exciting regeneration projects currently under way in the UK.

“The contemporary design will be sympathetic to the surrounding World Heritage site and its history, providing a first class destination for Edinburgh at the heart of the city’s new retail quarter.”

Details on Edinburgh St James, including contact details for JLL can be found at <http://www.edinburghstjames.com/>