

Press release

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Construction begins on Edinburgh's Quartermile Development

Construction has begun on Edinburgh's 8-hectare Quartermile development. One of Scotland's largest regeneration schemes, the development will transform the former Royal Infirmary site into a new mixed-use neighbourhood for the city. Foster and Partners' masterplan includes the conversion of existing historic buildings alongside the sensitive insertion of contemporary buildings. Quartermile will contain housing, high-quality office space, hotels, restaurants, cafes and shops. Located between the Victorian fringes of the old city and the urban parkland of the Meadows, the new district will be extensively landscaped, drawing the park directly into the heart of the site.

The scheme fuses the historic former medical buildings with a bold vision to create a self-contained destination in its own right, while reinforcing connections to the existing wider urban context. A new network of pedestrian routes will strengthen links to the nearby neighbouring communities, financial institutions, universities and courts.

Located within a conservation area, the Quartermile Development includes nine listed buildings, of which David Bryces Surgical Hospital is listed Category A, and sits within a World Heritage Site. The design team has worked closely with the City of Edinburgh Planning Department, Historic Scotland, the Royal Fine Art Commission for Scotland, the Edinburgh World Heritage Trust, and the Cockburn Association from the earliest stages. The best historic buildings will be retained and enhanced alongside contemporary

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architectural interventions. Residential buildings will be placed at the quieter edges of the site and commercial and retail activities concentrated in the centre. New office buildings will frame a public square that accommodates a performance space for concerts and public events. The quality of the urban experience will be enhanced by the 2.8 hectares of soft landscaping - the masterplan will increase the area of open and green space from 8 to 34 per cent.

The first phase of development includes three new residential buildings and an underground car park. This will be followed in future phases by the construction of Foster and Partners Number One Quatermile Square, a 7-storey, flexible office building, which will provide dramatic views of Edinburgh Castle to the north and of Quatermile to the south. Set back from the road to create a public space, the building will be a striking gateway to the development.

Senior Partner at Foster and Partners, Grant Brooker, said: Our goal is to reintegrate this wonderful, but disconnected part of the city. We recognise the beauty of the fine historical buildings, and we will bring them back to life, then knit them together with calm, contemporary buildings. It is vital that we do this so that the contrast between old and new highlights the intrinsic qualities of each.