

## Planning go-ahead for £5.5m new Innovation Centre on University of Kent's Canterbury Campus

Planning permission has been given for a new 3,638 sq m Innovation Centre on the University of Kent campus at Canterbury. The Centre forms the first phase of a technology park and the development represents a major economic boost for East Kent.

University Vice-Chancellor Professor Julia Goodfellow welcomed the news, saying: 'This is an outstanding opportunity for the University and the region. We look forward to working closely with SEEDA, Canterbury City Council and the Canterbury Enterprise Hub to make this development a success.'

Peter Cusdin, Development Director at SEEDA said: 'Canterbury Innovation Centre will provide a superb facility for the City, enabling entrepreneurial individuals and companies to develop and grow technology-based businesses. Construction is expected to start in Spring 2008 and the building will open in Summer 2009.'



SEEDA, working closely with the University and Canterbury City Council, has appointed RH Partnership architects to work alongside the South East Regional Design Panel on the design of the Canterbury Innovation Centre.

The Centre is scheduled to open in summer 2009 and will provide office, workshop and studio units of between 10 and 40 m<sup>2</sup> suitable for innovative small and hi-tech businesses. The units will be available on flexible licence terms, with on-site management and business support.

Denise Everitt, Director of Finance and Commercial Services at the University of Kent said: 'The campus is an attractive place for new start up companies, with facilities and staff to provide support and encouragement for owner-managers and their employees. We have been working with SEEDA and Canterbury City Council for some while to achieve an Innovation Centre on campus and consider it a major plank in our strategy to encourage innovation and enterprise activity within the University and to make it more attractive for our graduates to stay and work locally.'

The Canterbury Enterprise Hub, also based on the University campus, currently has 15 companies within its current facilities and a waiting list of others who wish to relocate to the Campus. Hub Business Champion, Ian Odgers stated: 'This is very exciting news. It will considerably accelerate the significant progress that has already been made by the Canterbury Enterprise Hub and Kent Enterprise at the University in supporting the commercial exploitation of innovative high growth opportunities. The availability of high quality, flexible premises is essential to the regeneration of East Kent, particularly in the light of recently announced job losses at Pfizer. It will be greatly welcomed by everyone concerned with the future success of Canterbury.'

The Canterbury Innovation Centre will be delivered and operated by Basepoint plc on behalf of SEEDA and will also house the Canterbury Enterprise Hub, part of SEEDA's Network of Enterprise Hubs in the South East of England.

For accommodation enquiries at Canterbury Innovation Centre please contact Phil Stansfield at Basepoint Developments Ltd on 01962 842244.