

CANTERBURY INNOVATION CENTRE MILESTONE

10 July 2009

The Canterbury Innovation Centre today held a 'topping out' ceremony to mark its structural completion. The £7.3m centre funded by the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA), due to open in November 2009, will provide much needed high-tech office space for budding entrepreneurs.

The Centre is being built to connect business with nearby university expertise and drive innovation and entrepreneurship in the region.

Interest in securing space is high, with companies keen to be a part of this new development. The Centre's sustainable design is generating strong interest from businesses in the environmental technology sector.

Located at the entrance to the University of Kent's campus, the centre will provide almost 2,300 sq m (25,000 sq ft) of offices, studios and workshops. It will be the first building on the proposed 6.5 hectare (16-acre) Kent Technology Park.

Lee Amor, Executive Director of Development SEEDA said: "Canterbury Innovation Centre will provide an ideal environment for businesses to establish themselves and grow, making the most of the knowledge and skills that the local universities are generating. Transferring knowledge into successful innovative businesses is key to driving the South East's economy out of recession. I am delighted that SEEDA is supporting its partners to deliver this important project."

Professor Julia Goodfellow, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Kent, said: "The Centre will enable more local and international businesses to access and benefit from research at the University of Kent. It will facilitate innovation and enterprise through the exchange of ideas, knowledge and skills with our staff and students, while helping to rejuvenate the local economy and create new jobs. The University is delighted to be part of this development."

The Innovation Centre is being built by the East Kent Spatial Development Company (EKSDC). Debbie Spalding, EKSDC, said: "The Innovation Centre will have such a positive effect on the economic development in Kent. The prospect of attracting enterprises to the area, working alongside our local businesses, proves how ambitious Kent is in driving innovation in the region."

[Trade only: The building's sustainability credentials include the use of a biomass boiler, photovoltaic cells, rain water harvesting and SUDs, which will reduce the potential for flooding.]

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Notes to Editors

The ceremony will take place on July 10 between 11-12 pm, photographs and interviews can be arranged.

- **SEEDA, the South East England Development Agency**, is the Government-funded agency responsible for the sustainable economic development of the South East of England – the driving force of the UK's economy. Through supporting businesses, encouraging innovation, developing skills and engaging with public and private partners, we aim to create a successful, sustainable future for the region.
- **SEEDA's support helped deliver the following** over the period 2005-2008:
 - o 17,500 jobs created or safeguarded
 - o 32,500 people helped to get work
 - o 10,000 businesses created or attracted to region
 - o 137,500 businesses assisted
 - o £638m investment, 45% levered from private sector
 - o 200ha Brownfield land remediated
 - o 148,500 people assisted in skills development
- **For media enquiries**, please contact:
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Canterbury Innovation Centre

Basepoint will operate the centre on behalf of East Kent Spatial Development Company. The development is being project managed by Basepoint with RH Partnership as the architects. Morgan Ashurst is the contractor. Accommodation related queries should be directed to Basepoint on 0800 197 3494 or email enquiries@canterburyinnovationcentre.co.uk. Further information can be found at www.canterburyinnovationcentre.co.uk.

Basepoint specialises in the development and operation of flexible business, innovation and enterprise centres. These centres provide comprehensive accommodation and support infrastructure packages to new and early-stage companies within a supportive and secure environment. The company operates both wholly- and part-owned centres as well as managing facilities on behalf of public sector bodies. Group operations currently extend across Southern England and the Midlands, with additional opportunities under assessment across the UK.

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