

Tiger transformations in the east and west

"I HOPE to have a spade in the ground by the middle of next year."

The ground will be one of Edinburgh's most neglected city centre sites – the former Morrison Street goods yard near Haymarket Station – and the man who will be figuratively wielding the spade is Edward Pearce, development director of Tiger Developments.

Tiger Developments is the Cork-based subsidiary of the O'Flynn group, which operates in all areas of construction, acquisition and asset management. It focuses on the acquisition of properties where value can be enhanced and it has concluded more than £1 billion of transactions in the UK.

Its Morrison Street development is massive – the Irish group will spend more than £200 million on building a five-star, 180-bedroom InterContinental hotel, a three-star, 246-bedroom Travelodge, more than 335,000sq ft of offices, shops and a major pedestrian thoroughfare.

The planning application was lodged in August and the development is scheduled for completion in 2012 with a chance that, all

JIM DOW

going well planning-wise, some offices could be ready in late 2010.

The Tiger team has had its first meeting with planners from the local authority – there will be many more in what is a lengthy consultative process, not just with the local authority but with those involved in other proposed developments in that part of the city.

That means staying in touch with the Springside £200m development, a joint venture between Grosvenor, AMA and Royal Bank of Scotland on the site of the former Scottish & Newcastle brewery in Fountainbridge. This will deliver 650 homes and 140,000sq ft of commercial space.

Work on Haymarket station, meanwhile, should finish by 2012.

Completing the consultative trio is the feasibility study commissioned by the City Council into how the Haymarket area can be improved over the next 30 years. This is known as the Hay-

market Interchange Feasibility Study and Masterplan and the contract was awarded to the Halcrow Group.

The study was funded by Transport Scotland plus a variety of other interested agencies such as Network Rail, First Scotrail and bus operators.

It's all about trains, trams, buses, shops, offices, roads and hotels in a part of the city that has long been neglected.

John Nesbitt, managing director of Tiger Developments, says Tiger has devoted much time and energy to listening to the local community and other key groups and has designed a scheme that will benefit the local area and the city as a whole.

At the other side of the country, Tiger has bought what one agent described as a "cracker" of a site in Glasgow.

It acquired from a private investor a derelict ten-acre brownfield site in Scotland Street and it proposes there a £100m scheme incorporating 358,000sq ft of offices, a 130-bed hotel and ancillary retail units.

This will be another Tiger transformation of part of a Scottish city.

An outline planning application will be submitted before the year's end.

Pearce, 36, who has been with Tiger for three years, is beginning to know the London-Edinburgh-

Glasgow route pretty well. He says Tiger is looking at other opportunities in Scotland.

"There is a genuine appetite for other opportunities but it is too early to elaborate," he says.

He adds that he is already getting approaches from potential tenants for the Morrison Street development, but they are unlikely to bite until the full planning hurdle has been cleared.