

internationally, in place. Our stunning location - from centrepieces such as the Castle Rock through the breathtaking historical backdrop of the Old Town and the New Town to the new possibilities of the Waterfront - is being constantly added to as decayed sites are rebuilt and investors are attracted to improve the contemporary city. Recent concerns that there might be a conflict between heritage and developer interests have been assuaged by inspectors from UNESCO's World Heritage council.

While we are not immune to the effects of the current instability in the financial sector, Edinburgh is still the home of many great areas of promise, including Edinburgh Park, where nine of Scotland's 20 fastest-growing companies have created a growth rate ahead of Shanghai's phenomenal success. Edinburgh University's leading role in informatics, the growth in life sciences and the continuing success of creative industries, as

reflected in Edinburgh's status as the world's leading arts festival venue, are other aspects of the economic landscape ripe for development. Edinburgh Airport continues to grow and its immediate neighbourhood offers the potential for two or three more global headquarter sites.

The Shawfair development alongside the new Sheriffhall 'Park and Ride' adds to the dozen or so business and science parks in Mid and East Lothian. The relocation of Queen Margaret University is sure to create a new centre for innovation and progress to complement the cluster round the Bush estate. The icing on the cake will be the medical research centre at Little France, creating a centre of world class bio-science businesses which will double Scotland's current £1bn stake in the sector.

More importantly, the City's great architectural heritage is home to a marvellous range of talented people. With an increasing level of ethnic diversity we have great operators in the professions, the service sector, construction and manufacturing. Backed up by four excellent universities and three extensive Colleges of Further Education instructing the next generation of skilled workers, our city is bursting with enquiring minds. Our people have the highest level of educational qualifications of any major UK cities and support some hundred thousand students, full and part-time.

Part of the secret of Edinburgh's success is attracting and keeping the best workforce we can. The year round festivals, and in particular the International Festival and Festival

