



# Architects check in for seminar for hotel design

ONE of Northern Ireland's leading architectural practices will examine the contribution of hotel design to the Northern Ireland tourism industry at an event later this month.

The seminar, hosted by Belfast based Douglas Wallace Architects has been organised in conjunction with the Northern Ireland Hotels Federation.

The seminar will feature contributions from Sue Wheldon, Director, Douglas Wallace, Janice Gault, CEO of the Northern Ireland Hotels Federation and Michael Williamson, Director of ASM Horwath.

Topics under discussion will include the potential for growth that exists in the Northern Ireland hospitality market as well as future trends in the industry including an analysis of visitor numbers and consumer expectations.

According to the Northern Ireland Hotels Federation, bedroom numbers in the Northern Ireland hotel industry have doubled in the last ten years. This seminar will address the need for the industry to provide quality as well as quantity both in terms of accommodation and attractions.

Janice Gault, CEO of the Northern Ireland Hotels Federation, said: "Consumer expectations are much higher than ever before and it is vital that as people travel more frequently and to increasingly far flung locations that the indige-

nous market meets the design challenge."

Sue Wheldon, Director, Douglas Wallace said: "We have a unique opportunity to make Northern Ireland a world class tourist destination with resorts, accommodation and attractions that can rival anywhere else in the world. Design has a crucial role to play in this endeavour by delivering better quality hotel environments and consumer experiences throughout Northern Ireland."

Michael Williamson, Director of ASM Horwath, said the hospi-

tality sector in Northern Ireland had experienced dramatic change over the past 10 to 15 years brought about by a more stable political and economic environment, confidence about the future and competition in the marketplace.

"In general, there has been a significant improvement in the choice and the quality of hotel stock available but it is important that we don't rest on our laurels; we must continuously improve on the current offering to tourists and business travellers alike."

**The seminar will take place at the Hilton Hotel, Belfast from 10-12.30pm on February 26.**



**TOP CLASS:** The Merchant Hotel, Belfast