

WINNER

SJ Berwin

JON VIVIAN

Prestbury/Brixton acquisitions

In an unusually fluctuating year for real estate, consistency was a watchword for the country's leading firms. SJ Berwin's advice to Prestbury on its joint venture acquisition of £400m worth of assets from Travelodge was one of two notable successes to arrive in quick succession. The other was the firm's advice to Brixton on its acquisition of Industrious Holdings Ltd, a deal worth around £600m. Both would have been individually considered worthy of an award, but the fact that Jon Vivian completed the deals side by side is what marks him and his firm as the leading performers of the year.

Longstanding client Prestbury was rewarded for its faith in Vivian and his team with an exceptional timeframe for the transaction of three weeks. This involved the acquisition of Travelodge's entire freehold estate of 135 properties, which were then leased back to the hotel chain for periods of between 25 and 35 years. Efficient mobilisation of a large team that comprised real estate, tax, corporate and banking specialists was essential.

Meanwhile, Brixton Plc was engaged in acquiring 163 properties covering 11.6 million sq ft of almost entirely industrial stock. Confirmation of the firm's faultless performance in both deals, and Vivian's seemingly inexhaustible stamina, came in the form of two more deals for Brixton at the turn of the year, disposing of property with an aggregate value of almost £400m.



(L-R): Richard Meddelton of The Royal Bank of Scotland, Raji Bartlett, Lewis Myers, Jon Vivian, Pat Dugdale

HIGHLY COMMENDED

CMS CAMERON McKENNA

Paweł Dębowski

Camerons are dominating the potential goldmine that is the real estate market of central and eastern Europe.

While other firms dither, the firm's advice to Eurohypo on the sale of the Metro AG retail portfolio, comprising

That the firm was retained for the sale in 2004, and subsequently instructed by the group's new owners, Quinlan, is a strong endorsement of the team.

WRAGGE & CO

David Askin

The sale and leaseback of MG Rover's Longbridge plant was as commercially sensitive as it was impressive, evidenced by the healthy amount of press attention it garnered. Clients St Modwen praised the commercial awareness of David Askin's team, which was brought to bear in negotiations that were concluded in just five days.

NORTON ROSE

Robin Mitchell

The redevelopment of White City is one of many ongoing regeneration projects, but factor in the biggest ever overseas investment in the UK at £1.3bn, and the backdrop of the changing ownership of the developers, and Norton Rose's performance in advising CGI looks even more impressive. As FPD Savills' John Rigg commented among numerous tributes to Robin Mitchell: 'I'm reluctant to say too many good things about him because I'm afraid I'll lose him to other clients!'

SJ Berwin's advice to Prestbury was one of two notable successes to arrive in quick succession.

24 shopping malls, was merely one of many deals handled by the region's pre-eminent real estate team.

DLA PIPER RUDNICK GRAY CARY

Philip Perry

DLA's relationship with Blackstone goes back to the US fund's original purchase of the Savoy Group in 1998.

Congratulations to SJ Berwin, the Real Estate Team of the Year.

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Make it happen

