

Real estate team of the year

WINNER

SJ Berwin

Jon Vivian

The Crown Estates' Regent Street regeneration



(L-R) SJ Berwin's Bryan Pickup, Sally Thomson, Helen Willett and Jon Vivian, with John Jeffcock of NetworkMP

In one of the biggest redevelopments and rebrandings the West End has seen, SJ Berwin advised The Crown Estate on the deal of the year. The development of Regent Street not only saw the major regeneration of four million sq ft of iconic commercial space, valued at £2bn, but also involved the sale of the legendary Metropole building, as well as the largest-ever West End property swap. The exchange of 580,000 sq ft of prime central London property, valued at over £350m, was made between Great Capital Partnership and The Crown Estate, and was the quintessential complex transaction carried out in a tight timeframe.

The Quadrant Scheme is the jewel in the crown of the development. It incorporates the mixed-use regeneration scheme of the Regent Palace Hotel, Café Royal and Quadrant blocks near Piccadilly Circus to create one million sq ft of property in the heart of the West End.

A longstanding relationship with this enviable client means that lead partner Jon Vivian, advising along with Bryan Pickup, Helen Willett and Duncan Fields, benefits from one of the few active property players operating in the market.

As sole adviser on all the real estate aspects of this development, SJ Berwin won the admiration of its client, which noted that the firm's 'exceptional advice was integral to the whole process. Often they will step back from the specific legal position at hand and question what it is we really want to achieve and shape advice to try to get us there.'

HIGHLY COMMENDED

ALLEN & OVERY

Adam Cleal

In a transaction that attracted vast media attention, Adam Cleal's team advised on one of the highest-profile transactions of the year when it acted for HSBC on its agreement with Metrovacesa to buy back its Canary Wharf headquarters. This impressive deal superseded the existing sale and leaseback that hit the headlines in 2007.

ASHURST

Marc Hanson; Hugh Lumby

Ashurst has enjoyed a stream of superb mandates in recent years, including advising on the Stratford City redevelopment and the Westfield shopping centre in White City, which neatly followed the firm's advice to Sun Capital Partners and Pearl Group on the £2bn acquisition of freeholds from Banco Santander at the end of 2007.

BERWIN LEIGHTON PAISNER

Robert MacGregor

In acting for Canary Wharf in the sale of J.P. Morgan's new European headquarters, BLP advised on one of the property industry's headline-grabbing deals of 2008. Originally destined for the Barbican, J.P. Morgan made the decision to move its headquarters to 1.9 million sq ft premises at Canary Wharf, in the largest-ever forward sale to a single occupier seen in Europe.

HERBERT SMITH

Julian Pollock

The Herbert Smith team secured the lead role advising on all real estate aspects of the £12.1bn refinancing of Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted airports. This enviable work kept the team busy acting on all title and security issues relating to the three airports, the refinancing of which was the largest ever of its type.

MAPLES TEESDALE

Mark Bryan; Neil Sagoo

In a real coup for the firm, following a competitive tender, the US government instructed Mark Bryan and Neil Sagoo's impressive team on the acquisition of a five-acre site for a new embassy building in Wandsworth. The firm also handled the sale of the US government's current Grosvenor Square premises, which was one of the highest-value single property transactions of the past year.

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Managing Partners Network

NetworkMP is delighted to have sponsored the Real Estate Team of the Year.

Congratulations to the winners, SJ Berwin, and to all the runners up.

NetworkMP

NetworkMP is the leading network of Managing Partners. It has a wealth of insightful and innovative solutions and benefits from the economies of a shared intellect and free advice. To learn more, please contact:

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Panel Pack

We would like to thank Investec, Thomson Reuters, Barclays, Alliance & Leicester and BAE Systems for their input into the Panel Pack – ‘a start to finish guide to creating a legal panel’. To learn more, please contact:

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