



Thursday, 12 March 2009

PRESS RELEASE

Genr8 selected for 1.2m sq ft Stoke-on-Trent Central Business District

Genr8 Developments has been selected as preferred bidder for Stoke-on-Trent's Central Business District, in Stoke-on-Trent city centre.

The North Staffordshire Regeneration Partnership (NSRP) and its partners Stoke-on-Trent City Council and Advantage West Midlands have chosen the company from a shortlist of three, following a competition launched last year.

Stoke-on-Trent City Council's Executive and Members Board met on Wednesday, 11 March, to support a recommendation to select Genr8, subject to further detailed discussions and the completion of a development agreement.

The announcement will be made to the property industry at the annual North Staffordshire reception at MIPIM on Thursday, 12 March. This reception is hosted by the NSRP, Stoke-on-Trent City Council, Advantage West Midlands and inward investment agency InStaffs.

The Genr8 proposals are for a phased development that will create approximately 1.2 million square feet of office, retail and hotel space, creating more than 4,200 jobs and boosting the North Staffordshire economy by nearly £19 million a year.

Mohammed Pervez, Stoke-on-Trent deputy elected mayor, said: "We are delighted with Genr8's ambitious and carefully considered proposals for the creation of a new Central Business District in Stoke-on-Trent.

"The proposed development is of the highest quality and will help to transform both Stoke-on-Trent city centre and the wider North Staffordshire region into a more prosperous and successful place.

“It will create more than 4,000 jobs for local people and provide career opportunities for students from our new University Quarter.”

Mick Laverty, chief executive of Advantage West Midlands, said: “One of our key roles as a regional development agency is to ensure that major physical developments are kept moving during the economic downturn.

“The Central Business District has been one of the highest priorities for Advantage West Midlands’ NSRP investment programme.

“We have committed considerable investment to reach this milestone and we are excited by the ambitious plans that have been proposed by Genr8.”

John Early, Genr8 chairman, said: “We look forward to working with the NSRP and its partners to create a Central Business District that will put Stoke-on-Trent firmly on the national map as a location to do business.

“To do this we will focus on quality, design excellence and integrating the Central Business District with the city’s other regeneration plans.

“This will ensure that Stoke-on-Trent is well placed to take advantage of the economic recovery as soon as it occurs.”

John de Kanter, chief executive of InStaffs said: “The proposals for a new Central Business District for Stoke-on-Trent are a vote of confidence for the city and the North Staffordshire area.

“It will create significant office space for new development and add more than 4,000 new jobs to the city centre, thereby boosting local businesses and contributing to the region’s economic vitality.”

Genr8 has brought leading international urban designers Gehl Architects and RHWL to help prepare their proposals, along with sustainability experts Atelier Ten.

The proposals include:

- 750,000 square feet of “grade A” office space
- 60,000 square feet of leisure and retail space
- 250 hotel beds
- 80 apartments
- 230,000 square feet of high quality public space

The development will be built in phases over the period 2010 to 2017. It will feature the highest architectural and urban design quality from leading designers, together with innovative techniques to keep energy use to a minimum.

The design will integrate with the rest of Stoke-on-Trent city centre and the wider North Staffordshire conurbation, helping to create a city centre that is strong and able to compete nationally.

The proposals are expected to increase the value of North Staffordshire's economy by nearly £19 million a year and will make a major contribution to the transformation of the area's image and attractiveness to investors.

Further negotiation will now take place between Genr8 and the NSRP, working towards a development agreement to be signed by early summer. Planning applications will follow and construction work on the first phase is expected to begin by the end of 2010.

Stoke-on-Trent City Council's strategic partner for support services is lined up to be the Central Business District's first anchor tenant. Other businesses will be attracted to the Central Business District through its key advantages of central location in England, relatively low occupation costs, sustainable building technologies and the availability of a trained workforce.

As well as offices, the Central Business District will provide complementary services such as bars, restaurants, showrooms, gyms and two hotels.

It will also include vibrant, high quality public open spaces that will attract people to the district, encourage pavement bars and cafes and offer opportunities for outdoor arts and events.

The public open space will be designed to provide strong connections to the rest of the city centre, including the main shopping area, the planned new East West centre, the Cultural Quarter and the University Quarter.

Genr8 Developments was set up in late 2007 as a 50/50 joint venture between Chelsfield Partners and AMEC Developments' founder and chairman John Early, together with other former AMEC directors.

Similar developments previously led by the company's partners include Broadgate in the City of London, Stockley Park in London, Newcastle Quayside and St Paul's, Liverpool.

Genr8's team for the Central Business District comprises:

Urban designer: Gehl Architects, Copenhagen

Masterplanner: RHWL, London

Phase 1 architect: RHWL

Sustainability consultants: atelier ten, London

Consulting engineers: Arup, Manchester

Agency: Jones Lang LaSalle / Christie & Co, Birmingham

Legals: Pannone, Manchester

Ends

For media enquiries please call Michael Howard on 01782 232621

www.stoke.gov.uk/news

Notes to editors:

1. The North Staffordshire Regeneration Partnership leads regeneration in Stoke-on-Trent, Newcastle-under-Lyme and Staffordshire Moorlands. Its 2008-11 business plan focuses on four areas of work:
 - Major redevelopment of Stoke-on-Trent city centre and surrounding areas, linked to new development in Newcastle town centre
 - Creating a better skilled workforce and more knowledge-based companies
 - Supporting communities through tackling worklessness, improving housing and revitalising town centres
 - Encouraging inward investment and improving the area's image.
2. Further information is available on the NSRP is available here:
<http://www.stoke.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/business/regeneration/>
3. Genr8 Developments LLP is a joint venture partnership between Chelsfield Partners and former Amec Developments Executive Chairman John Early together with other directors from Amec. Genr8 brings together the expertise in regeneration of the former Amec team and the major city centre development skills of Chelsfield whose partners include Elliot Bernerd and Sir Stuart Lipton. Genr8 Developments was formed to undertake large-scale, mixed use urban regeneration projects. The executive partners are directly involved in project creation and delivery, assisted by a dedicated project team. Chelsfield Partners provide administrative, accounting and legal services, as well as any additional development resource as required. The culture and approach is about creating sustainable, high quality and design-led mixed use development, and the partners have an unrivalled track record of working in partnership with the public sector. For further information on Genr8 please contact Justine McGuinn, Just PR and Marketing on 07903 661228 or justine@justprm.co.uk.
4. Genr8 Developments shareholders comprise John Early, Richard Ingham and Mike Smith together with Chelsfield Partners. Chelsfield is led by Elliot Bernerd and Sir Stuart Lipton, who have been responsible for developing some of the most significant developments in London including Broadgate, Ludgate Hill, Stockley Park and Stratford City.