

urbo JOURNALIST BRIEFING NOTES

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What is Urbo Regeneration?

Urbo Regeneration is a property development and investment company delivering best practice urban regeneration projects based in Chesterfield, Derbyshire. The company works in partnership with local councils, public agencies, land-owners and other developers and is targeting projects across the Midlands, North East, Yorkshire and the North West. It works with leading designers and other professionals at the cutting edge of regeneration. Its expertise lies in shaping carefully tailored solutions for delivering complex area renewal to create vibrant new places within towns and cities. The company is delivering excellent urban design and architecture, people oriented place-making, sustainable solutions in a fair, partnership framework.

Urbo Regeneration's Approach

Urbo's approach is to create buildings and spaces of the highest quality developed in partnership with people, providing a positive impact on local communities and the environment. It has a real desire to create places that make a difference to the quality of people's lives and leave a positive legacy for the future. Urbo is a development company that places partnership, design and the environment at the heart of its business. Urbo is willing to purchase land up front and pump-prime any pre-contract activity necessary to move the project forward.

Partnership Working

Urbo sees regeneration as a collaborative process and strives to ensure an inclusive approach to the way it works. Urbo does not see regeneration and development as an isolated process but rather one of partnership and collaboration where the key agencies, landowners and local community work together to help deliver results that exceed expectations. Its work with the public sector is based on a sound understanding of its objectives. Its approach is to form partnerships where commercial and regeneration objectives are aligned with the needs of its partners. This allows it to apply its experience and resources to deliver jointly agreed regeneration across urban areas. Its intention is to encourage appropriate public sector involvement in the delivery process whilst easing the resource

burden involved in this kind of work. Years of experience in public-private partnerships has allowed it to find innovative ways of securing these successful partnership structures.

Leading Design

Good design is at the heart of Urbo's business – creating buildings and spaces that set the benchmark for future development. It places design quality at the heart of its business whether it is developing low cost housing or a flagship office building. It employs award-winning design teams that understand its approach and commitment to delivering schemes of the highest quality. Urbo clearly distinguishes between the need for sound urban design and inspiring architecture. It believes in large area regeneration, the proper design of a place must come first having due regard to the need for a hierarchy of streets and public spaces. These spaces can then be animated by a mixture of uses creating vitality within a clear framework for buildings. The individual buildings can then take form using inspirational design to provide excitement and variety in our new urban neighbourhoods.

Community

Urbo considers its work successful when the communities in which it works believe their places and lives have improved. It strives to ensure that the buildings and places it creates allow the local community to benefit from the development process. It endeavours to build relationships in the areas when it works from the start of the development process. Urbo recognises that some communities are fragmented and neglected and it works hard, through great design and sound delivery, to mend and rebuild neighbourhoods. It wants to create places in which people will enjoy spending their time, whether at work or play.

Environment

Urbo is committed to a sustainable approach to the design and use of the buildings and spaces it creates, minimising the impact on the environment and helping to secure a better environment for future generations. Urbo recognises that the design, construction and use of buildings can have a major impact on the environment. It takes its environmental responsibility seriously and embraces current best practice in design and construction. This ensures all development meets and exceeds the most stringent standards on design and environmental quality. Urbo also has experience of generating renewable energy through wind farms and was responsible for the delivery of one of the first carbon-neutral housing development projects, www.ecostesseypark.co.uk in Norwich, Norfolk.

Urbo Regeneration's Structure and Finance

Urbo is a partnership between Bolsterstone Group, Arnold Laver Group and AGD Regeneration and brings together a number of experienced property development professionals committed to delivering urban regeneration. The Urbo board of directors are:

Andrew Dainty and Andrew Bradshaw of AGD Regeneration Ltd - property professionals, each with over 20 years of experience in major urban regeneration projects and public-private partnerships.

Peter Swallow and Mike Corker of Bolsterstone Group, a successful mainstream property development and investment company with £500m of projects managed in-house and sizable net assets built up over 20 years providing a sustainable capital base.

Andrew Laver and Mark Bower of Arnold Laver Group have carried out over £100m of property development over recent years. They bring the resources of Arnold Laver, a company with annual turnover of around £110m and net assets of over £80m.

Urbo enjoys solid relationships with a number of major financial institutions, providing significant funds in addition to group capital. This facilitates work based on best solutions and not driven by cash constraints.

Whilst Urbo works on major regeneration projects, Bolsterstone pursues its mainstream property business and provides full financial and delivery support to Urbo. This skill base and financial backing puts Urbo in a strong position to deal with the financial and professional challenges faced in delivering major urban regeneration projects.

Portfolio and Track Record

Major current projects include:

Chesterfield Waterside

Chesterfield Waterside is an innovative joint venture partnership between Urbo and Chesterfield Borough Council to deliver a new £300m urban village on a 16 hectare (40 acre) former industrial site adjacent to the A61 in the River Rother corridor. The project also involves restoration of the local canal network to create a fully navigable route.

The project is based on a masterplan now being led by EDAW was prepared by Taylor Young and AGD Regeneration, commended by the Planning Inspectorate for its approach. Development will be delivered by Urbo directly and in partnership with other sub-developers to ensure a mixed approach to design and delivery.

The project will create a stunning and sustainable waterside environment for apartments, houses, bars, restaurants and offices together with high quality waterside public realm features, contemporary landscape and public art.

The design team refining the masterplan is being led by EDAW together with Proctor and Matthews as lead architects and the canal basin is scheduled to start on site in summer 2008.

Canal Road, Bradford

Urbo has been working since 2005 alongside Bradford Council to masterplan and deliver a revitalised Canal Road corridor between Shipley and Bradford City Centre. Urbo has steered a team including urban designers Taylor Young, Urbed, AGD Regeneration and ARUP to create a bold new vision for the corridor. This will involve a complex land assembly process, releasing value from the area and thus assisting the local authority to finance new highways and canal construction.

Urbo and the Council are working in partnership to deliver the 40 hectare (100 acre) central section of the area masterplan. This part of the canal corridor forms a large triangle of land focused around two transport hubs and a new mixed-use canal-side development at Bolton Woods.

The development will comprise a mix of residential, commercial and leisure space in a new sustainable settlement with an end value in excess of £500m.

Ecostessy Park, Norwich

A £7m sustainable housing project, which received one of the first zero-carbon certificates, comprising 22 contemporary houses in a riverside location on the outskirts of the city. Commenced early 2007 and is assisting the regeneration of a sensitive site providing some of the most environmentally advanced residential space in the region. Non-standard house design elements include sedum roof, very high thermal insulation, self-cleaning glass and rainwater harvesting. Own-power generation in the form of wind turbines, energy savings by solar-powered street lighting activated by movement sensors is also a feature.

Further developments which demonstrate Urbo's track record:

- Anchorpoint, Sheffield: Developed in conjunction with third party developer Magallan, a four acre site close to the Sheffield United football ground. 188 residential units, 14,000 sq m (15,000 sq ft) of offices and retail completed in 2007. Value £30m.
- The Tram Shed, Guiseley: Conversion of a listed tram shed to provide a 2,323 sq m (25,000 sq ft) health and fitness centre for Cannons and 18 luxury apartments and has been retained as an investment. This scheme was awarded an RICS Conservation Award in 2005.
- Pearl Works, Sheffield: Led by Bolsterstone, a 3,000 sq m (32,000 sq ft) contemporary office development in Sheffield City Centre. Acquired in 2005 and awarded planning consent in 2007 for a high quality design by BDP architects. Likely to be retained as an investment post completion.
- Cathedral Quarter, Derby: In a resurgent part of the city centre with diverse uses from cafes, bars, shop and cultural and heritage buildings – a Business Improvement District – this scheme is a landmark new office building designed by Franklin Ellis Architects. 4,650 sq m (50,000 sq ft) with an end value of approximately £12m and the first Grade A office space in the city for many years and an important marker in the regeneration of Derby which will kick-start investment in the wider area.

Ends

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