

In brief

Sheffield residential bid

Knight Frank has become the first national agent to set up a residential team in Sheffield in a bid to exploit the upturn in the city's housing market, where 30 new schemes are either planned or in development. Partner Charles Calvert will oversee the day-to-day running of the office together with Tearle Phelan, who will lead the sales operation and development launches, including the £30m Kelham Riverside scheme by the Raven Group. Knight Frank is also involved in the Heart of the City development and said that negotiations for the sale of the scheme's residential element are well advanced.

Belfast opening for GVA Grimley

GVA Grimley has opened an office in Belfast. Three appointments to the firm from Colin Buchanan & Partners will provide the team's nucleus. It will be overseen by Manchester-based partner Gerry Hughes, who prepared the recently published regeneration strategy for the city centre on behalf of the Department for Social Development. The new office is at Enterprise House in Adelaide Street.

Telereal gives former exchanges a resi connection

TWO FORMER BT TELEPHONE EXCHANGES are to be redeveloped into residential use following their sale by Telereal, the joint venture between Land Securities Trillium and the Pears Group.

Howard de Walden Estates has bought the 20,000 sq ft (18,580 sq m) Marylebone Telephone Exchange near Harley Street, London W1, where there is detailed planning consent to build 21 flats. In Croydon, Telereal has sold the 62,000 sq ft (5,760 sq m) exchange on Scarbrook Road to a local residential developer.

The sales raised a total of £8m for Telereal and BT, which is rationalising many of the old exchanges in the wake of its £2.38bn acquisition and services agreement in 2001 for the telecoms company's 6,700 properties. Telereal's Mike Parker said that demand for former BT properties 'remains very high'.

The group is also known to be in advanced negotiations to sell the 96,500 sq ft (8,965 sq m) Telecom House in Bedford. A planning application for residential and hotel use is being prepared for the building, which could be sold for around £2.5m.

Bellway wins £25m Glasgow scheme

Housebuilder is preferred developer on Penilee regeneration site

By Doug Morrison

BELLWAY HAS BEEN NAMED AS preferred developer on a £25m mixed-use regeneration scheme in the Penilee district of Glasgow. The scheme is expected to consolidate the group's position in Scotland.

The Penilee project is seen as part of an expansion drive north of the border by the housebuilder, and follows a series of land acquisitions across Scotland's central belt where the total estimated development value is £109m.

Penilee is in the south-west of Glasgow and a spokesman for Bellway described the 10.4 acre (4.2 ha) development site as one of the most significant to become available in the area.

The site comprises 1950s tenement blocks, a former school, football pitches and other community facilities. It is owned by Glasgow City Council and

Glasgow Housing Association (GHA).

Bellway's plans involve 220 private homes and 30 homes for rent, which will be taken by the GHA, as well as six new shops and an upgrade of the existing leisure facilities. Bellway is due to start construction this summer.

The Penilee scheme follows a large-scale land acquisition by Bellway of the former McLellan Rubberworks on the west side of Glasgow.

Located on the edge of the recently reopened Forth and Clyde Canal, this scheme includes 176 flats and townhouses.

Last year Bellway sold 495 homes in Scotland, up from 456 in 2002. The group is set to increase sales as a result of opening a division in the east of Scotland, based in Livingston, to complement its operation in Hamilton.

Apart from the Glasgow deals, recent acquisitions include sites in Edinburgh, Falkirk, Cambuslang, Carnbroe and Denny.

■ Bellway is maintaining its commitment to the south-east of England after winning planning permission for residential development on two widely contrasting sites.

Earlier this week it secured consent from the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead for 63 homes on an 11 acre (4 ha) woodland site at Ascot after buying the land from the Crown Estate for an undisclosed sum. The consent includes a section 106 agreement involving the protection of wildlife.

It follows Bellway's planning success for a £25m residential development of part of Leyton Orient Football Club's stadium in east London, where the scheme's cash injection for Orient will help protect the club's future. Detailed planning consent includes residential blocks at each corner of the stadium, providing a total of 144 flats.

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Sunrise ignites care home bid

SUNRISE SENIOR LIVING (SSL), the US's largest provider of care homes for the elderly, is on the hunt for UK sites having won planning approval for three schemes with a combined development cost of £52m.

The projects are on prime residential development land in Fleet, Guildford and Edgbaston.

SSL has signalled its intentions to expand in the UK and has a target of 25 developments to be up and running by 2008.

SSL operates three homes in the south-east after entering the UK market in a joint venture with PRICOA two years ago. Two more projects are under construction and SSL has recently secured consent for a £20m development in Bournemouth.

Across the US and Canada, SSL has 370 care homes and the company is

consolidating its growth there while expanding into the UK and German markets.

A spokeswoman for SSL said the group is in talks with several developers about participating in mixed-use schemes.

Despite the acknowledged ageing population, care homes are closing across the country and SSL claims that government policy on boosting housing supply is ignoring this sector.

The group cites as an example its project at Edgbaston where there is an undersupply of 5,439 care home beds.

The spokeswoman said: 'Meeting the nation's housing needs is not just about providing affordable and keyworker homes, it is about meeting the needs of all sections of society. The elderly are one such group.'



Hunt: Sunrise is expanding in the UK

