

# Still plenty of room for growth in city living

SHEFFIELD'S city living sector has evolved rapidly in recent years, with a critical mass of development and the regeneration process in the city centre now effectively self sustaining.

Whilst the supply of apartments in the city centre is now noticeably greater than 18 months ago, the lack of suitable city centre development opportunities, means future high quality residential supply is likely to remain constrained. Furthermore, the introduction of 25% affordable housing in new schemes will throw doubt over the viability of some schemes without planning, restricting supply further.

Developers who until now have been solely concerned with other regional centres such as Leeds and Manchester, are looking more closely at Sheffield due to its comparative low prices and its future potential growth. Furthermore, there are only a small number of completed city centre residential units in Sheffield, approximately 2,700 when compared to the likes of Leeds and Manchester, 9,000 and 14,000 respectively. There is no doubt when compared to other major cities, Sheffield City Living market is still in its infancy and therefore offers excellent prospects and opportunities not only for the continued regeneration of the City Centre, but also in terms of growth and return for investors and owner occupiers. It was only six years ago that various property professionals advised great caution when investing in the city centre due to over supply and potential rental voids. This was a fair statement at the time, the city centre of Sheffield at that time was hardly appealing. There were no signs of the major regeneration that



By **TEARLE PHELAN**  
Knight Frank

was to commence making the centre an attractive place to live. This is not the case today.

In my mind there is no doubt that Sheffield city centre is capable of accommodating a greater number of city centre apartments. The centre is a completely different place to live than it was six years ago when the city living phenomenon began. There is a greater range of shops, bars and restaurants but this is merely the tip of iceberg. As most of you are aware, Sheffield One has been carefully

promoting seven schemes which will change the face of the city centre. Major schemes include the redevelopment of the Leopold Chambers, The Heart of the City, the refurbishment of the City Hall, the new retail quarter and the redevelopment of Sheffield Train Station and Castlegate. These high profile schemes constitute hundreds of millions of pounds worth of investment in the city centre and will not only improve the centre to work and shop but also as a place to live. A number of these schemes are situated in high profile and gateway locations and will undoubtedly have a ripple effect across Sheffield city centre.

The long term viability of city living in Sheffield is closely linked, not just with the quality of each individual development, but the success of the city as a whole. Two schemes which are fundamental to Sheffield's changing fortunes are the New Retail Quarter by developers Hammerson and The Moor by REEF. These schemes comprise over 24 acres of Sheffield city centre and will have a huge effect not only in attracting new retailers to the city, but fundamentally improving the city centre environment due to the high quality design incorporated into these schemes.

Sheffield is teetering on the brink of a new era with the major developers concentrating their efforts on a city which had been left behind by other regional centres such as Manchester and Leeds. Within the next decade Sheffield city centre will have landmark buildings of high quality and design and public realms of European standard all of which making it a highly desirable place to live.

## Year of growth for Quadrant

SHEFFIELD'S premier business centre, The Quadrant, celebrates its first year this month - and that first year has proved a great success.

Offering the highest quality serviced office and conference space, in a prime location, in a beautifully designed building and with the added benefits of environmentally and ethically sound policies has proved to be a winning formula for the centre, which is owned and managed by Manor & Castle Development Trust.

Jenny Pupius, Business Manager of The Quadrant, says, "We're delighted that our first year has been such a success. Over 70% of our office suites are now occupied with a great mix of small businesses, larger organisations, private sector and not-for-profit sector tenants.

"We have welcomed the National Open College Network, which has chosen The Quadrant as its headquarters offices over other possible locations in Birmingham and London, and the Environment Agency is now taking up residence in Quadrant 2.

"At the same time, we know that the unique environment afforded by The Quadrant is enabling locally based entrepreneurial businesses to expand and succeed. Already over 30 new jobs have been created by our tenants since they took up residency with us.

"Our stunning conference and meeting space is becoming an extremely popular venue for all manner of training and other events. It is the location for many of Sheffield Chamber of Commerce's flagship workshops, amongst others, and we believe that our particular combination of stunning architecture, great customer service and unique networking ambience all add value to our clients' events."

## TO LET JUNCTION 1 OFFICE PARK BAWTRY ROAD, ROTHERHAM



- High spec Office Suites available from 1,957 sq ft upwards to 16,106 sq ft.
- Ample on site parking.
- Excellent location, close to Junction 1 of the M18 Motorway.
- Availability from the 1st January, 2007.
- Annual Rental – £13.50 per square foot per annum exclusive.
- For further information, please contact George Thompson at the Sole Agents, Fernie Greaves Limited

**FERNIE  
GREAVES**  
COMMERCIAL SURVEYORS

0114 2449121

## Rise of the restaurant sector

By **MIKE HULL**  
MD, SMC Chartered Surveyors

ECCLESALL ROAD has recently seen several new lettings which have confirmed its reputation as the prime restaurant location in Sheffield, although several other locations are coming up strongly to challenge this perception.

Amongst the recent lettings that have set record levels of rent are the two achieved by SMC Chartered Surveyors to La Vina (part of the La Tasca chain) and to Felicini's within the redevelopment of the former Non-Pots Club. Both units were hotly contested and, as a result of the stiff competition, very strong rents were achieved. This was mainly due to the scarcity of larger sized units within the main 'Golden Mile' stretch of Ecclesall Road. It is significant that both units went to multiples rather than to local businesses. Another recent letting achieved by Campbell & Co has been that to Caffè Nero near to Champs Diner and there are several other major multiples still desperate to find a property.

The knock-on effect of the new lettings has meant that existing occupiers face rent increases at rent review or lease renewal. SMC has recently completed a rent review on behalf of the landlord of a restaurant on Ecclesall Road where an increase of nearly 70% was achieved compared to the rent set 5 years ago.

By comparison, London Road has neither the prestige or rental levels of Ecclesall



Road, but as a restaurant location it has continued to grow strongly. It probably has the most diverse range of food styles available in Sheffield (Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Turkish to name but a few). The growth is due to a number of factors, but the Chinese community in the area has certainly contributed, as has the recent development of about 1,000 student apartments at 'The Forge'. Several other residential and student schemes are either planned or under way. This location is thus destined for far greater things and is definitely one to watch.

By contrast, the choice of restaurants within the city centre has been relatively weak when compared to other cities like

Leeds and Manchester, but this is rapidly changing.

The West One scheme brought many more restaurants into the central area, but it is the schemes at Leopold Square and St Paul's Place, which are going to have the most effect for the heart of the city in the short term. Café Rouge are already trading at St Paul's, with Piccolinos and Caffè Nero due to open soon.

Leopold Square is due to be completed for Easter 2007 and the developers, Ask, have so far let five of the eight restaurant and bar units to a mixture of national, regional and local operators. At this stage, the identity of the tenants is confidential, but an announcement is expected soon.