

Urban & Civic to acquire L&Q Estates from London & Quadrant Housing Trust

London & Quadrant Housing Trust (“L&Q”) has today announced that the unconditional sale of L&Q Estates to Urban & Civic will complete shortly.

L&Q Estates, a wholly owned subsidiary of L&Q, is a strategic land business which promotes sites through the planning process, from pre-allocation stage to securing implementable planning consents before delivering serviced land to the marketplace.

Urban & Civic, a leading Master Developer in the UK, was identified by L&Q as a logical purchaser to deliver L&Q Estate’s focus on boosting housing output across South East England and into the Midlands. The acquisition will see Urban & Civic expand its portfolio into Milton Keynes, a key target geography, whilst also widening its commitment to strategic interventions in high growth locations. Catesby Estates, the land promoting subsidiary of Urban & Civic will also benefit substantially from expansion into new target areas and strengthen market competition by progressing those sites which are made directly available to housebuilders once consent is secured.

L&Q is one of the UK’s leading housing associations, owning and managing more than 105,000 homes. L&Q Estates, previously Gallagher Estates, was purchased by L&Q in 2017 to unlock land for housing development on a regional basis and since then thousands of new homes have been delivered across the Midlands and South East. However, L&Q’s corporate strategy is now focused on prioritising investment into existing homes and services and targeting growth in London and Greater Manchester.

Waqar Ahmed, Executive Group Director of Finance at L&Q said: “We are pleased to have reached this agreement with Urban & Civic. We’re immensely proud that since acquiring L&Q Estates in 2017, we’ve enabled the delivery of over 11,300 new homes, of which 1,800 have been built by L&Q. However, our long-term strategy is focused on ensuring that every L&Q resident has a safe and decent home, and access to high quality services they can rely on. This deal will help us meet this goal by simplifying our business and generating additional revenue which will be reinvested into our existing homes and services.

“L&Q remains committed to building the affordable homes the country so desperately needs, but this deal signals a longer-term ambition to concentrate future growth in our core areas of Greater London and Greater Manchester, rather than pursue strategic land opportunities across the wider South and Midlands. This will allow us to focus our resources on areas where housing need is the greatest, and where we are in the strongest position to provide responsive, local services that offer the best value for residents.”

Nigel Hugill, Urban & Civic’s Chief Executive, explained: “We were delighted to be afforded the opportunity to acquire L&Q Estates, a business that we have admired since the inception of Urban & Civic and with which we are fully familiar. The purchase presents a singular opportunity to integrate complementary projects and expertise, whilst also expanding our portfolio into key target geographies, most notably Milton Keynes.

“It is simply infeasible to meet adequate housing targets in South East England without a greater contribution from strategic sites. The acquisition promises a step change for Urban & Civic and Catesby Estates as the new Government looks at immediate means by which housing numbers can be lifted. Collectively, the enlarged group has gathered a lot of learnings to create best practice in amenity and landscape led master development. I expect this knowledge and experience to prove invaluable in the changed political environment. We can also help inject new competition into the housebuilding process by encouraging the participation of an otherwise apparently inexorably reducing number of SMEs across a broader range of projects. Seeing is believing but the acquisition will enable us to push harder again on new, amenity led, strategic housing development.”

Mike Nuttall, Head of Communications

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