

**PRESS RELEASE – OCTOBER 2006****Record Year Ahead as Conran Architects Take Centre Stage**

Conran & Partners architects has announced the biggest expansion in the award-winning firm's 25-year history with over 50 projects in the UK and worldwide, worth £350 million.

The diverse portfolio of projects ranges from a fabulous, one-off £3.5 million townhouse in Kensington, to chic restaurants in London and landmark residential towers changing the skyline of city centres across the UK. In London, the redevelopment of Greenwich Pier will create restaurants, a new cruise terminal and public space in time for the 2012 London Olympics. Conran & Partners has also been asked to redesign the Notting Hill Gate area of the capital in a fundamental redevelopment of a highly visible retail district.

Under the leadership of long-standing directors Richard Doone, Matthew Wood and Paul Zara, Conran & Partners' projects are getting bigger, in higher profile locations. Richard Doone, managing director of Conran & Partners said:

'In a quarter of a century we have completed more than 60 buildings in the UK and worldwide. Some of these have been ground-breaking, environmentally ahead of their time. In the last 10 years we have pioneered a new style of urban residential design in Britain's towns and cities. And we are not just building new city centre homes in big cities such as London and Manchester, but in provincial towns like Reading and Brighton.

'Overseas, our work in Japan has established us as the leading UK architecture practice in Tokyo where we have just won a prestigious competition to develop a new master plan for a suburb of the city, at Futako Tamagawa.

'The next decade will see Conran & Partners producing some of the UK's most significant new buildings in the residential sector, with parallel successes in Japan, establishing the company as one of the best-known names in the architecture world.'

Conran & Partners employ almost 100 talented young architects and designers from around the world at the studios in Shad Thames, bringing an international outlook to their architecture. Global commissions now form an important part of the Conran design portfolio, as the fame of the practice spreads worldwide. The most prestigious of these is Roppongi Hills, a major mixed-use development for the Mori Building Company in Japan and Ocean Terminal, Edinburgh, a mixed use development that includes the final mooring place of the Royal Yacht Britannia

Today, Conran & Partners' residential portfolio in the UK and overseas is growing, with a fascinating diversification into work for housing associations, plus research projects in modern methods of construction and family housing. Director Matthew Wood says:

'We put a lot of effort into researching new ways of designing better homes using innovative and highly sustainable materials, and are very interested in the design of family houses. Our recently completed Niki Club hotel project in Japan perhaps gives a glimpse of what a Conran & Partners

‘suburban’ project might feel like. We want to develop this side of the company and are actively pursuing work with developers and other bodies in putting these ideas into practice.’

One innovative and high profile building that puts into practice the research and development skills of Conran & Partners is the award-winning Longman Publishing Headquarters, the UK’s greenest office building, in Harlow. Another is an extremely environmentally friendly housing scheme on the South Downs.

Some of Conran & Partners’ best-known projects involve the conversion or adaptation of existing buildings – Michelin House on the Fulham Road, The Design Museum by Tower Bridge, and the recent restoration of Embassy Court, Wells Coates’ modernist icon on Brighton’s seafront. C&P director Paul Zara says:

‘When we tell people that Conran has had an architectural practice for twenty-five years they are often surprised. Some assume we only design interiors for the Conran shops and restaurants. We do, of course, design notable interiors, for many different clients, but as architects Conran & Partners has been quietly getting on with it and have completed over sixty buildings mostly for clients outside the group.

‘We believe a good building can sit quietly in its setting. Not all buildings need to scream and shout. Our buildings tend to be unfussy, well-proportioned, using materials that age gracefully. As architects we have many interests: breathing new life into old buildings, creating a sense of place in our master plans, making a difference in the fiercely competitive private housing sector, bringing good design to public housing...there’s always a new challenge!

‘Awards are the icing on the cake, and we have won many, including those from the RIBA, the Civic Trust and Housing Design Awards. We are now at a very interesting moment in the company’s history, with projects getting bigger, in higher profile locations.’

The practice is now undertaking large-scale architectural commissions working for a diverse range of clients from major blue-chip PLCs to privately-owned companies, including:

- New phases of development at Roppongi Hills
- The Futako-Tamagawa Master Plan in Tokyo won in international competition in 2005
- Major residential projects in Salford, Manchester, Liverpool, Sheffield and Cardiff
- High-class restaurants in London, including Plateau, Floridita and Royal Exchange
- A major redevelopment of the Eldridge Pope Brewery in Dorchester
- Radical, eco-friendly social housing projects in Brighton
- The redevelopment of Notting Hill Gate for Metro Shopping Fund (LandSec/Delancey)
- Redevelopment of historic Greenwich Pier in time for the 2012 Olympics
- Conran’s first new-build home in the UK, a £3.5 million townhouse in Kensington

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