

# News

3.10.11

## **Smithfield scheme is voted the best in the UK**

Ician, a wholly owned subsidiary of Muse Developments, is celebrating after its Smithfield Market site in Manchester 's Northern Quarter won the award for 'Best Mixed Used Project' at the *Regeneration and Renewal Awards 2011*.

A total of 13 winners were selected from 55 finalists, and Smithfield beat off tough competition for the accolade from St Modwen for their Longbridge scheme in Birmingham and St George Central London for Imperial Wharf amongst others.

BBC Newsnight economics editor, Paul Mason, hosted the awards ceremony which celebrates regeneration projects that can provide objective evidence that they have improved places or communities economically, socially or environmentally.

After visiting Smithfield Market judge Peter Hamilton, associate partner at consultancy Cass Associates, said: "A unique aspect of the scheme, in my view, is the number of independent retailers and operators that have located within the area. There are only a few multiples. This helps to provide a unique character and identity."

In order to win any award category, projects' backers must be able to provide objective evidence of the impact their project has had on an area and its vicinity. The judges commented that the most simple and compelling proof Muse provided was an aerial photograph of the site from 1999 prior to the start of the project showing an area dominated by surface car parking. Judges were also impressed by the way in which a mix of uses has been introduced to the area, while at the same time respecting and enhancing its heritage assets.

"The regeneration proposals have brought about new developments," says Hamilton. "There has also been the renewal and enhancement of much of the heritage that has been retained. The retention of the fish market walls provides a real sense of historic and cultural value in the area. This helps to give the area a sense of place and identity."

Commenting on the achievement Mike Payton, design and construction director at Muse, said: "It's fantastic that Smithfield has been awarded this accolade. We've worked hard to retain the scheme's character while transforming this once no-go area of Manchester. The Smithfield Market project is a great example of real regeneration and we're very proud of what has been achieved to date, with more exciting work to follow."

Overall, the judges felt that the Smithfield Market project has made a significant contribution to the regeneration of the Northern Quarter and is a worthy winner of the award for mixed-use project of the year.

Ends.