

# Building on success

With a sprawling global portfolio spanning real estate to luxury hotels and hospitality, The Von der Heyden group has gone from strength to strength in recent years, despite the confines of the pandemic. The Von der Heyden Group came to Malta in 2014, and has since continued to grow to become a pan-European real estate investor-operator offering integrated and innovative solutions across its subsidiaries. What's the secret to rock solid business and what lies ahead for the highly successful Group? The *Malta Business Weekly* finds out in a rare interview with **SVEN VON DER HEYDEN**, Chairman and Founder of the Group.

**DAYNA CAMILLERI CLARKE**

"The pandemic hit us, especially our hospitality arm, however, looking back I feel we were resilient to the changes that came about when the world ground to a sudden halt" begins von der Heyden. "It was somewhat of a blessing that we sold one of our biggest developments to date, the Blue Tower at Bavaria Towers in Munich, literally just three weeks before Covid hit. Whether by pure chance or from effective planning, timing has been integral to the Group's thirty-three-year success. Of course, for business leaders everywhere, there are great lessons to be learnt from the Covid years. Since our successful survival back in 2008-2009, we have remained agile as ever and kept a close eye on changes in the market".

Did the Group change their strategy during the pandemic? "Our focus has always been in delivering exceptional quality, in the case of office developments, we are aware others can turn around buildings and office spaces at a cheaper cost, but this isn't what Von der Heyden Group is about. It's our intention to

create high-end and desirable developments from the intelligence to a buildings' sustainability, places where the world's best workforces want to be".

The Von der Heyden Group has a reputation in Europe for developing high-end assets with quality finishes and achieving record multiples for several award-winning projects. The Group's proven track record in delivering landmark developments in prominent cities is testament to its legacy in real estate investment.

"Our work speaks for itself. The recent Andersia Silver project in Poznań has attracted global multi-national companies to apply for commercial space, even before the work has commenced overground. "We do not depend upon or push for presale leases to be signed. "Simply, we want the best clients at the right time" explains von der Heyden.

The state-of-the-art building is currently in the final development phase at Anders Square, in Poznań, with an estimated total investment exceeding a quarter of a billion euros. The completion of Andersia Silver is expected in 2024/2025.

"Our proven track record for

creating incredible destinations, such as the creation of Poznań's financial district, is testament to this. 26 years ago when we were entrusted with the first project, it was the first time a private entity such as ourselves and the local government there had joined forces, and living proof the private and public sectors can work together symbiotically, honestly and harmoniously."

Von der Heyden Group's Andersia Silver project has recently headlined Poland's real estate news in commencing its above-ground works and in holding its cornerstone building. The high-rise building will be the highest skyscraper at 116m and marks the fourth and final phase of Von der Heyden Group's development and co-investor partnership project with the City of Poznań after the development of three other award-winning commercial buildings: Poznań Financial Centre, the Andersia Tower and the Andersia Business Centre, which were completed in 2001, 2007 and 2012 respectively.

Designed by world-class architects Ewa and Stanisław Sipinski, Andersia Silver will stand 26 storeys high with three underground floors, catering for over



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244 parking spaces. The multi-functional commercial building will have almost 40,000 square metres of usable area and host prevalent office space.

Not one to rest on their laurels, the Group's trusted reputation in new and emerging communities has enabled the Group to enter three new markets, including Algarve, Portugal, Reževići (Budva), Montenegro, and establish an investment in the renovation of one luxury villa in Tuscany and a future 5\*Hotel in Italy with another luxury villa planned in Menorca, Spain.

"The old saying 'Location, location, location' – really is absolutely everything for us", explains von der Heyden "Unlike many developers, we really don't like to rush into things. In fact, rather the opposite, we are prepared to wait for the perfect opportunity in the perfect place". Locally, the Von der Heyden Group is renowned for the revival of Malta's 16th Century fortress

Macina on the water's edge, a landmark that gave Senglea its winning name during the Great Siege, 'Citta Invicta', an unconquered city. This building is today, the Cugó Gran Macina Grand Harbour Hotel in the heart of the three cities. Whilst standing as the Group's flagship luxury boutique hotel in its hospitality arm, the establishment also hosts Hammett's Macina, a three-time Michelin-recommended restaurant headed by award-winning restaurateur Chris Hammett in its catering arm, as well as the popular Sheer Bastion wedding and events venue.

What's next for the Group? "We are always looking towards the next iconic project, wherever and whenever that may be. We are passionate about rehabilitating and renovating historical buildings and giving them a new lease of life. As for Malta? Well, all I can say is there is certainly some exciting news on the horizon... watch this space!"



Poznań: Andersia Silver



Munich: Bavaria Towers



Malta: Cugó Gran Macina Grand Harbour