

The railway workers' estate in Elstal is growing – Deutsche Wohnen holds topping out ceremony

Berlin, 27 August 2018. Today Deutsche Wohnen celebrated the topping out of a total of four new builds with 24 residential units in the historic railway workers' estate in Elstal (municipality of Wustermark) near Berlin. The ceremony was attended by Kathrin Schneider, Brandenburg's minister for infrastructure and regional planning, Holger Schreiber, the mayor of the municipality of Wustermark and Maren Kern, the head of the BBU, an association of residential property companies in Berlin and Brandenburg.

Kathrin Schneider, the minister for infrastructure and regional planning in the federal state of Brandenburg, said, "Here on the outskirts of Berlin there is always demand for a good mix of flats in all price categories, so every new flat contributes to easing the pressure on what is a difficult housing market. With its commitment to the railway workers' estate in Elstal, Deutsche Wohnen has set new standards for the refurbishment of listed apartment buildings. Moreover, the company continues to set standards with the timber construction it is using for these new builds. I welcome the use of wood in construction and of sustainable building materials in general."

The railway workers' estate dates back to the 1920s and is a listed ensemble which was comprehensively refurbished between 2013 and 2017. Indeed, in 2015 Deutsche Wohnen won the German Building Developers' Award for its responsible refurbishment of these architecturally significant buildings.

Since March 2018, Deutsche Wohnen has been building four new three-storey apartment buildings using solid wood in a modular design. This type of building is being tried out for the first time. It is intended to bring ecological advantages as well as keeping maintenance costs low over the long term. The pre-fabricated wall elements are fixed together firmly using screws made of beech wood with no adhesive involved. Whilst the warm natural wood look is retained on the interior side of the wall elements, the structure and colour of the exterior is being adapted to complement the plaster facades of the surrounding residential buildings. As Stefan Degen, CEO of Deutsche Wohnen Construction and Facilities GmbH, explained, "We are building a completely new apartment prototype here and our focus is on wood, a natural construction material. Moreover, this method of building is not just sustainable - it is very fast as well. All the building elements have been pre-fabricated before they get to the building site, so our carpenters need just 20 working days to complete the building shell."

Back in 2016 Deutsche Wohnen completed a new-build project in Brandenburg. At that time, an existing railway workers' estate was redensified with a total of 91 new flats for rental and 12 terraced houses. So, the current construction work in Elstal is a further new-build project

by Deutsche Wohnen in Brandenburg.

Holger Schreiber, the mayor of the Wustermark municipality observed, "Following the successful refurbishment of the existing buildings in this estate, I am delighted that we are now seeing an equally successful addition to this ensemble. The very special and sustainable timber design of the new buildings complements the existing estate and creates an exciting element of contrast as well. This symbiosis of old and new works extremely well."

And Maren Kern, the head of the BBU, pointed out, "With this project Deutsche Wohnen is showing once again its total commitment to meeting housing needs in the dynamic conurbation that is Berlin-Brandenburg, to innovative building and not least to well-balanced urban development. The company is providing clear evidence of both its entrepreneurial vision and its sense of responsibility."

It is planned that the first three buildings with 17 flats will be completed this year. Work on the fourth building with a further seven flats should be finished by the beginning of 2019. Overall, more than 2,000 square metres of living space is being created. The investment costs amount to approximately EUR 6.5 million in total.

Deutsche Wohnen SE

Deutsche Wohnen is one of the leading publicly listed property companies in Germany and Europe with a business focus on managing and developing its portfolio, which consists mainly of residential properties. As at 30 June 2018, the portfolio comprised 163,942 units in total, of which 161,468 were residential and 2,474 commercial. The company is listed in the Deutsche Börse's MDAX and is also included in the leading indices EPRA/NAREIT, STOXX® Europe 600 and GPR 250.