

Look to the Future

Von der Heyden Group (VdHG) was one of the first large developers to start operations in Poznań. In 1998, the group started the construction of the tallest office tower in the downtown area, the Poznań Financial Center. Earlier, the international developer had built two office buildings in Warsaw—Prima Court on Nowogrodzka Street and BFG Office Building on Skorupki Street. Other spectacular projects included the Liberty Corner building at 5 Mysia St.

VdHG has also carried out construction projects in Germany, the United States and Spain. The Poznań Financial Center proved a commercial success, as its 27,000 square meters was soon rented by such large companies as Bank Zachodni WBK, Polkomtel, Usinor, PwC and Dresdner Bank. In December 2004, the developer sold the building to an investment fund.

VdHG continues to operate in Poznań with Andersia Tower on Andersa Square, near the Poznań Financial Center. The two will form one business and commerce complex. Andersia performs two functions, housing offices on the upper floors and a four-star hotel with 171 rooms below. The room for rent totals to 10,000 sq m of future offices. The very top will house three high-standard suites with the added value of a view of all of Poznań. The hotel's operator will be the Spanish IBB hotel chain.



Adam Trybusz, managing director of VdHG in charge of projects conducted in Poznań talks to Ewa Kielak Ciemniowska.

■ You are introducing 10,000 sq m of office space to the Poznań market—aren't you worried about renting it all out?

We will complete Andersia Tower in 2007. The construction has met with a lot of interest from companies willing to rent office space. We know the market well and can see a significant increase in the activity of companies with foreign capital in Poland. These are immense, esteemed companies present in Poland for some time, seeking opportunities to extend their operations to the Poznań market. Other potential tenants include companies which are only entering Poland and have chosen Poznań as their headquarters. Both groups are interested in prestigious locations and high-standard offices sized from 2,000 to 5,000 sq m. We have been negotiating with a few companies, including financial institutions, and I believe in the latter half of the year we will have memorandums of agreement concerning 70 percent of the office space. However, those companies want more than just offices. When a company opens an office the size of a few thousand square meters,

it usually brings its staff to the city and needs to guarantee apartments for the employees. A foreign manager, or even a Pole from a different city, can live in a hotel for a week or two, but then they will want to have a place of their own to settle. Consequently, alongside office space, Poznań must offer apartments.

A lot of apartments are under construction in Poznań, but foreigners and senior managers have certain expectations.

They are interested in high-standard apartments in the city center in a safe and nice neighborhood.

Was it with those expectations in mind that VdHG started work on the Maraton Gardens residential quarter?

Such are the typical development trends: the demand for apartments reflects the growing number of business and industrial facilities. The most characteristic feature of latest project will be its manifold functions. The plans include an office and service center coupled with exclusive apartments. The latter will occupy two-thirds of the 2-hectare allotment. We have planned six buildings with a total of 250 high-standard apartments sized from 40 to 120 sq m. The buildings will have five to six floors and the spatial plan provides a private atmosphere of the place in park-like surroundings. Hence the name Maraton Gardens.

What will the business and service center be like?

The center will be situated on one of Poznań's main streets, Królowej Marysieńki Street. We want it to house B-class offices and a small, three-star hotel as well as commercial space for stores and service outlets. In our opinion, this is an excellent location for medical services, as one of Poland's best academies of physical kind, the Academy of Physical

Education, is situated nearby. We are hoping to open a clinic or a physiotherapy center here in cooperation with the excellent staff of the academy. This could come with a spa, a polyclinic or a specialist clinic. The adopted development plan also features an indoor skating rink.

Naturally, all our expectations result from an evaluation of the location and current needs. We have planned the entire housing-office-service complex with young people who lead active professional lives in mind. They are people who have decided to stay in Poznań and want to live in good conditions, in a safe and friendly environment, pursuing their ambitions and needs for development, entertainment and recreation close to where they live. At the same time, they want to stay close to the center of the local business and social life. Maraton Gardens are five-minute walking distance from the Poznań Financial Center and Andersia Tower, the Stry Browar shopping mall is right next to it and a walk to the Old Town Square will take 15 minutes.



The Andersia Tower and PFC - a visualization