



**Claudiu G. Gheorghita**

**CAREER SUMMARY: RESPONSIBILITIES / ROLES DESCRIPTIONS**

*CHIEF INVESTMENT OFFICER*

**HILLTOP CREDIT PARTNERS**

Jan 23 - Sep 23

- Joined the team to expand the existing UK small ticket residential development loan business across commercial asset classes, larger transactions and other European jurisdictions.
- Hilltop had exclusive funding arrangements on a deal by deal basis with 2 PE funds. One for deploying a whole loan strategy in the £5-£25m space and another for deploying £25-£125m whole loans. Both strategies were limited to the UK residential development space when I joined.
- Worked within these constraints and managed to broaden the scope of the funding arrangements with the main PE fund backer to include transactions covering: logistics, student, offices and hotels across both UK and Mainland Europe.
- Re-shaped the origination and execution processes and spent the required time to train the existing team to work in a new format. The investment team comprised of 2 juniors plus a mid-level execution lead (all with small loan UK residential development experience only).
- Moved the business gradually into the larger loan space and managed to win the two largest loans to date for the fund (£40m and £90m), the first transaction in Northern Ireland, as well as closing a discounted loan purchase from a distressed lender that was unable to fund its commitments due to liquidity issues.

*EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR*

**NOMURA REAL ESTATE AND SECURITISED PRODUCTS**

Jan 19 - Jan 23

- Time split 50/50 execution vs. sourcing across debt and equity transactions in UK and mainland Europe. Broad mandate including senior, mezzanine and some forms of preferred equity across all asset classes.
- Lead the real estate product within investment banking and reporting directly into the Head of Europe. Part of team of 7 with 2 junior resources at analyst /associate levels.
- Primary responsibility to originate and execute investment opportunities for Nomura's balance sheet although selectively taking on buy side or sell side advisory pitches where the bank had a specific angle and real estate expertise / credentials were required to win the pitch.
- The day to day role involved origination via own network with access to funds, HNWI or debt advisors, deal screening, term sheet structuring and negotiation and once a mandate / termsheet was agreed leading the execution and negotiation, whilst managing external lawyers, valuers and technical due diligence consultants.
- Joined to build the single asset/small portfolios franchise within a business that did primarily NPL financing over the previous 10 years. Significant internal education process was required.

*VICE-PRESIDENT*

**MACQUARIE PRINCIPAL FINANCE**

Jul 2016 - Oct 2018

- Time split 75/25 execution vs. sourcing across debt and equity transactions in UK and Mainland Europe.
- Deal captain role responsible for driving the transactions forward from start to finish. General deal team structure included 2-4 people – MD and myself or MD, myself and 1-2 juniors.
- Responsible for evaluating new opportunities across all asset classes including initial deal screening, termsheet negotiation and execution, as well as presenting to the investment committee.
- Managing the overall due diligence process including the documentation produced by commercial and legal advisors, whilst working closely with our in-house legal council.
- Managing juniors, ensuring internally produced models and presentations were thorough and of high standard, whilst liaising on an ongoing basis with the borrowers/deal partners.

**MAWNEY Partners**



- Responsible for investment monitoring post transaction closing. Macquarie did not have a portfolio management team, all monitoring stayed with the person that performed the initial underwriting.

#### *ASSOCIATE*

##### **MACQUARIE PRINCIPAL FINANCE**

Jul 2013 - Jul 2016

- Worked largely independently on time sensitive transactions that required to step up and down the seniority level, whilst working closely with the transaction MDs.
- Responsible for modelling, building presentations and performing the general analytical heavy lifting.
- Actively involved in all stages of the transaction incl. termsheet negotiation and loan documentation.
- Worked closely with surveyors, technical due diligence consultants and financial due diligence providers.
- Responsible for investment monitoring post transaction closing across operating and real estate assets.

#### *ANALYST*

##### **MACQUARIE PRINCIPAL FINANCE**

Aug 2010 - Jul 2013

- Performed excel modelling, financial analysis and reviewing of commercial due diligence reports.
- Undertook various bespoke pieces of company analysis or market research across multiple asset classes.
- Drafted the commercial parts of the internal memos and supported the underwriting process.

#### **CAREER SUMMARY: SELECTED TRANSACTIONAL EXPERIENCE**

##### **HILLTOP CREDIT PARTNERS**

Jan 23 - Sep 23

- **London BTR Development Loan:** PE owned part refurbishment / part ground up development project in North London, built with the intention to operate as a rental block.
  - 75% LTC loan, parri passu funding with ECL backing. Land acquired several years back with the PE firm being in the process of finalising the construction contract.
- **London BTS Development Loan:** HNW owned land with planning for residential apartments for sale plus commercial units on the ground floor in a regeneration area within South London.
  - 83% LTC / 75% LTGDV loan, parri passu funding. Heavily structured transaction with cost over-runs buffer of 40% and guarantees provided jointly from the HNW owner and its income producing health care business. Returns included profit share in addition to the margin + fees structure.
- **Belfast BTS/BTR Development Loan:** Developer owned land with planning for residential apartments for sale in Belfast city centre.
  - 65% LTGDV loan, equity first funding. Complicated planning situation with a good but small developer. Negotiated exclusivity as well as getting a cost overrun guarantee from the mezzanine lender in the structure in order to reduce the cost over-runs risk with the smaller developer.
- **Scotland Discounted Refinancing Loan:** Good small developer in Scotland borrowed a development facility from a small alternative lender that run into liquidity issues and was unable to fund its commitments.
  - Refinancing completed at a significant discount and provided the required funding to the Scottish developer. Transaction included a pre-sale at closing of a care home facility built on the same site.

##### **NOMURA – REAL ESTATE AND SECURITISED PRODUCTS**

Jan 2019 - Jan 2023

- **Milan Office Repositioning:** Acquisition financing provided to a PE fund post COVID to acquire a vacant office building that required refurbishment of existing floorplates, façade and building an additional floor.
  - Senior facility, cash pay interest, pari-passu drawdowns, fund recourse for the undrawn portion of the equity commitment, additional fund recourse for 10% of the principal, as well as advantageous cost over-runs guarantees negotiated.



- **UK Student Housing:** Refinancing of a 300beds asset completed in Aug 2020 and development finance to finish the construction of another 600beds on adjacent site. UK regional city with two universities.
  - Stretch senior facility, cash pay interest, pari-passu drawdowns, fund recourse for the undrawn portion of the equity commitment and cost over-runs guarantees. Refinanced bank over-exposed to student housing that could no longer fund the completion of the remaining development.
- **Central London Resi Development:** Acquisition financing provided to a private equity firm that acquired an existing office in central London with the view to retain the listed façade and rebuild residential + retail.
  - Stretch senior facility, cash pay interest, pari-passu drawdowns, fund recourse for the undrawn portion of the equity commitment and cost over-runs. Full fund recourse negotiated until certain risks were mitigated through entering into a new agreement with the owner of the adjacent hotel.
- **Lisbon Office Re-gear:** Acquisition financing provided to a private equity firm who acquired a short sale and lease back portfolio of 3 assets with the view to refurbish and relet once the single tenant vacated.
  - Loan structured as cash pay senior with asset recourse only and cash pay mezzanine having the benefit of full recourse to 1.5bn NAV fund for principal and interest over the entire loan term – these protections were negotiated post the initial COVID wave.
- **Rome Office Lease Up:** Financing provided to a local investment platform backed by institutional capital to acquire a 50% vacant but newly refurbished office building located in a submarket in Rome.
  - Stretch senior loan, cash pay interest, lease up covenants and lease controls, structured with a single point of enforcement outside Italy (via Lux). The collateral comprised of several adjacent offices that could be leased and sold independently if needed, with loan basis below replacement cost.

#### MACQUARIE PRINCIPAL FINANCE

Aug 2010 - Oct 2018

- **French Office:** Financing provided to 3 over-rented office buildings in Paris and Bordeaux with 100% of the rent coming from the borrower's property company.
  - Worked under a tight timeframe with a borrower that did not have a well organised information. The loan was sized based on a mix between VPV and a lender instructed valuation with the special assumption that the building was rented at market rent once we determined the Sponsor tenant put in place an over-rented lease.
- **Office Refurbishment:** Whole loan financing secured against an office with short lease. Loan required to complete a heavy refurbishment, including the construction of 2 additional floors.
  - Closed the transaction in 4 weeks start to finish and worked without junior support.
  - Performed the commercial work and was involved closely in the structuring of the transaction, as well as negotiations including covenant levels, definitions and development monitoring regime.
- **Long Term Bridge to Planning:** Stretch senior loan secured against an East London mixed use estate. Fall back option was recovery from the break-up sale of the portfolio.
  - Transaction closed Christmas Eve, 3 weeks start to finish and worked without junior support.
  - Successfully performed the required diligence including the break-up analysis that proved the thesis.
- **Resi Rescue Financing:** Loan provided to a high net worth owner operator in order to prevent enforcement from exiting bridge lender (c. 100 properties including a £10m house for rental property).
  - Performed the due diligence and directly liaised with the inexperienced borrower (portfolio was inherited), including reconciling financials via reconstruction of cash collections from each tenant.
- **Newcastle Student Housing:** Whole loan cross-collateralised against 2 student housing properties provided to the borrower at the practical completion of the developments including an equity release.
  - Sourced the transaction and performed independently the majority of the execution work as I had no junior staffing allocated to execute the transaction.



- **Bristol Student Housing:** Whole loan secured against one property in the first year of operation.
  - Completed in 2012 the first student housing financing for the team, being heavily involved in all parts of the transaction and managed to obtain all the internal approvals.
- **UK Data Centre:** 10 years financing to a 30 years remaining leasehold interest in a London data centre. Most of the value was in the cashflows and in the data centre fit out.
  - Completed the first data centre transaction for the team, performed all commercial due diligence including switching costs analysis and detailed benchmarking of the data centre operating cashflows.
- **College of Law:** Uni-tranche acquisition financing to private equity firm, which relied partly on underwriting the education business and partly on the property collateral.

## **EDUCATION**

### **Cass Business School**

*1st Class - BSc Investment and Financial Risk Management.*

Sep 2007 - Jul 2010

### **David Game College**

- Mathematics (A\*), Economics (A\*), Quantitative Methods (A\*).

Sep 2006 - Sep 2007

## **INTERESTS**

Travel, reading, hiking, football, cycling