**PEP 109 Edited\_Transcription**

[Speaker 3] (0:05 - 1:44)

Welcome to the official property entrepreneur podcast is the first of the month ladies and gents, which means it's time to lift the bonnet on some of the UK's most creative, lucrative and award winning deals on our deals, deals, deals podcast with my good friend, Mr. Mark Barrett. Mark is an award winning entrepreneur. He has a wealth of experience in property investing.

He's done 25 years as a landlord, 10 years as a broker, and he's been sourcing property deals for other people for over a decade. Mark joined us on the property entrepreneur board in 2016 and has been a board member ever since, which is our highest level program where I work directly with our property entrepreneur board members. He's done over 50 option deals as well as delayed completions, planning gains, commercial developments, and over 40 HMO conversions.

As well as property, Mark was also the founder of the HMO agency. He now runs the property brokerage, which broker property deals for landlords and investors. So he knows this stuff inside out and during these podcasts, what he's going to do is share everything he can with his experience, his expertise, his wisdom and insight to give you all the information and inspiration you need to apply this in your own business.

Each month on the first of the month, Mark's going to be interviewing some of the UK's market leading and award winning investors and developers to show various deals, structures, and strategies to enable you to apply this in practice. It's the first of the month, it's time for deals, deals, deals. So over to you, Mark.

[Mark Barrett] (1:47 - 1:54)

Hi, I'm really, really excited to welcome my new guest, Jen Barron. How are you doing, Jen?

[Jen Barron] (1:54 - 1:56)

I'm good. Thank you, Mark. How are you?

[Mark Barrett] (1:56 - 2:02)

Yeah, great. Very good. So I've known Jen quite a long time now.

It's probably five, six years.

[Speaker 4] (2:03 - 2:03)

Yeah.

[Mark Barrett] (2:04 - 2:18)

Yeah. And obviously, I've seen your development, the projects that you've been working on with Dan. So let me just get this right.

So your position is Head of Portfolio Builder within PPN Group?

[Jen Barron] (2:19 - 2:20)

Yes, that's right.

[Mark Barrett] (2:20 - 2:24)

Yeah. And how long have you been working with Dan?

[Jen Barron] (2:24 - 2:31)

So I have had the pleasure of working at PPN and for Dan now for six years.

[Mark Barrett] (2:31 - 2:38)

Okay, excellent. Yeah. And so you started out as a Site Coordinator working on the projects?

[Jen Barron] (2:39 - 3:09)

Yeah. So when I first started, my role was National Site Coordinator. And that really, that role was, you know, supporting Dan primarily as he was delivering the projects.

My role was to support him just to bring everything together and yeah, sort of just support him in order to deliver the sites. And fast forward a few years, my role now is me delivering the sites.

[Mark Barrett] (3:10 - 3:16)

So you actually kind of like run that business now, don't you, with obviously Dan supporting you?

[Jen Barron] (3:17 - 3:22)

I do. Yes, day to day. I have the reins of the business and have the pleasure of running it.

[Mark Barrett] (3:23 - 3:40)

Fantastic. Yeah. And obviously, the sites have changed from once you was kind of like first started.

I think you was doing kind of like HMOs and then you started doing like the conversions. I think you've just been doing bigger, like commercial conversions since then?

[Jen Barron] (3:41 - 4:49)

Yes, that's right. So when I started, HMOs were sort of, you know, still a big, big thing in the market. There was still a lot of money to be made in the HMO developments and that definitely got harder, particularly in our market in Nottingham, where we're governed by Article 4.

So Dan sort of spotted a crest of a wave in sort of micro studios build to rent to sell. And we did our first one of those, which was six flats. And that sort of model really grew from that.

And that's what we're sort of still doing today. And where are you today? Oh, today.

So I'm coming to you today from Mankore House in Hucknall, which hopefully people have seen on some Facebook updates. So this is our latest commercial site in Hucknall. It's 34,000 square foot.

And we are proposing to turn it into 88 apartments, subject to getting planning for all of that.

[Mark Barrett] (4:49 - 4:59)

OK, excellent. Yeah. Yeah.

So before you started to work with Dan, what was your experience then? What was you actually doing?

[Jen Barron] (5:01 - 5:34)

So previously to joining PPN, I was in my role for 12 years. I was a senior operations manager and I looked after a team of 44 people. And within that, I sort of specialised into a branch of it was in the hair and beauty industry.

And I sort of branched off into salon redevelopments. So working with a third party to refurbish hair and beauty salons.

[Mark Barrett] (5:36 - 5:43)

Great. So there's obviously a lot of transferable skills that you've got from what you're previously doing.

[Jen Barron] (5:43 - 5:57)

Yeah, absolutely. Like definitely in the people management side of things and also in project delivery. It's delivering on time and on budget, no matter who your client is.

[Mark Barrett] (5:57 - 6:15)

Yeah, fantastic. Yeah. I do actually remember when Dan was recruiting for your position.

And we kind of like do the Wealth Dynamics profile and the free one is the Genius U. What was your profile?

[Jen Barron] (6:16 - 6:19)

So the profile that I came out as was Blaze.

[Mark Barrett] (6:20 - 6:21)

Yeah.

[Jen Barron] (6:22 - 6:29)

And that wasn't the profile that Dan was hoping to sort of get for the role.

[Mark Barrett] (6:29 - 6:32)

Yeah. How did that play out then?

[Jen Barron] (6:34 - 7:23)

Well, after 12 years in the job that I previously was in, I was actually made redundant. So I was in a stopgap at that point in a job that I really did not like and did not enjoy. So when they came back to say that, unfortunately, you've not been successful to get to a telephone interview, I sort of went back and challenged it and shared some of the experience that I did have, like 12 years under my belt of doing various things.

Not perhaps worded quite so calmly as that. But yes, I went back and challenged it. And then, yeah, I laugh about it to this day with Dan.

By some miracle, after sending that, I got a telephone interview with Daniel Hill, the managing director of the company.

[Mark Barrett] (7:23 - 7:35)

Good for you. I think that's a couple of things. I think you're, have you retaken it and you're kind of like Blaze, Tempo, kind of deal maker?

[Jen Barron] (7:36 - 7:59)

Yeah, absolutely. So it's actually so interesting. It is something that I really love learning about.

And I can't believe I didn't know about this before I started working with Dan. It's so interesting. I did retake the test and, yeah, came out as the sort of Blaze, Tempo, like deal maker profile.

[Mark Barrett] (7:59 - 8:55)

Yeah, yeah. I think that's really interesting. Anybody that's kind of like looking to recruit, then Wealth Dynamics is a great tool to use.

And the free version is called Genius U. And it's something that I've used since starting on Property Entrepreneur. But it isn't a case, whilst it gives you a guide, everybody's got kind of like different skills.

And it doesn't necessarily mean that kind of like one size fits all and somebody is just that profile. It's an indication. And I think, Blaze, you've got really good people skills.

But I think for the particular role, it was kind of like looking for Tempo, which is what I am, which is basically in the flow of things, being able to get on and kind of like make things happen. And I think you've got kind of like a bit of both. So you've got both kind of like skills, which obviously pay well for your success in the role.

[Jen Barron] (8:56 - 9:20)

Yeah, that's very kind. Thank you. And I think it is, like you say, it is really, really important.

But yeah, I think just staying, having that sort of open mindedness, like Dan did have with me. And hopefully, you know, it's worked out really well for both of us. And yeah, the more you learn about this is bringing those traits to the role has, you know, has really helped develop the role that I do now as well.

[Mark Barrett] (9:21 - 9:31)

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

So you actually started helping out on the Property Entrepreneur programme, didn't you? Was that maybe five, six years ago?

[Jen Barron] (9:32 - 9:45)

Yes. So Dan asked me if I wanted to help at one of the Blueprint events back in 2017. And it was obviously the most amazing venue.

So I was like, absolutely. Hell yes. Sign me up.

[Mark Barrett] (9:46 - 9:48)

So that was the Belfry, yeah.

[Jen Barron] (9:48 - 10:04)

Yeah, the Belfry. And it was just the most like wonderful three days that I think I've ever had. I just, I just fell in love with it after sort of, yeah, three days of learning about it.

It was just incredible.

[Mark Barrett] (10:05 - 10:12)

And then you've been on the programme, you've been on the Property Entrepreneur programme since then, haven't you? You go to the Advanced.

[Jen Barron] (10:13 - 10:27)

I do. I do. And it's, yeah, it's just the most incredible life changing journey that anybody can go on.

Like for me personally, it's changed my life and professionally, it's changed my life.

[Mark Barrett] (10:28 - 10:31)

And you've had a massive input as well on the get up, give back.

[Jen Barron] (10:32 - 10:40)

Yeah, absolutely. Yeah, get up, give back. I'm very proud of what everybody's achieved with that and who we've helped along the way.

[Mark Barrett] (10:41 - 10:58)

Yeah. Yeah. Fantastic.

So let's go through. So we're going to be discussing one of the projects that you actually did as a portfolio builder service for a client. So that's affectionately known as the fireworks factory.

Yeah, that's right.

[Speaker 4] (10:59 - 10:59)

Yes.

[Mark Barrett] (11:00 - 11:13)

In Nottingham. So how you work with Dan, I think Dan kind of like sources the sites, kind of like works out what the potential is. And then you then you work together to to deliver that.

Is that the case?

[Jen Barron] (11:13 - 11:48)

Yeah, that's absolutely right. So Dan has a real knack of finding a needle in a haystack, which this site was, and he found it. And then we have a very clear process that we go through from Dan sourcing it.

It's then over to me to do some sort of local market due diligence, speak to some agents, look at various comparables. And we do both of us go away and do our own thing on that. And then if the numbers stack and there's a deal to be done, we will proceed to securing it.

[Mark Barrett] (11:48 - 12:15)

Yeah. So this has worked out as a fantastic deal. So you sent over some kind of like some information on it.

So for people who are listening, the site is a great size. It's like 6000 square feet, approximately 557 square meters. And from that, you've been able to get 14 units.

[Jen Barron] (12:15 - 12:16)

Yes, 14.

[Mark Barrett] (12:17 - 12:29)

So it's kind of like six one beds and then the eight studios that I think you've got under permitted development for the minimum space standards came in.

[Jen Barron] (12:30 - 12:30)

Yes, that's right.

[Mark Barrett] (12:31 - 12:36)

Yeah. And then when did you actually hand the property over? How recent was that?

[Jen Barron] (12:38 - 12:53)

So we sourced it in 2020. We did all our bits on that to get it across the line and we commenced works on it in 2021 and finished within the last 12 months. They finished at the back end of 2021.

[Speaker 3] (12:56 - 13:30)

Just jumping in quickly with two things. So the first is if you're enjoying these podcasts and you haven't already ordered a copy of my brand new first ever released book Karma Credits, please go to Amazon now and order yourself a copy of Karma Credits by Daniel Hill. And it'll explain to you the universal law of wealth, health and happiness.

And the second, if you want a free report that you can read straight away, go to www.boomorbust.co.uk to understand the five things that I'm doing as we head into this next phase of recession. Back to the podcast.

[Mark Barrett] (13:33 - 14:23)

So just to go through the numbers, the purchase price was 280 on this, which is like remarkable thinking 20,000 pounds a unit. So I would love to find some of those deals. The refurb cost came out.

I think it was about 380. Total spend was about 660,000, which on 14 units is about 47,000, which is fantastic. Great numbers.

So just go through, listen as to what the process is of what you do on this kind of site. So I think you say it's kind of like everything's kind of like front loaded. Do you want to just go through once you've got the site, the process that you follow?

[Jen Barron] (14:24 - 15:17)

Yeah, absolutely. So we work with a big team of people that we've worked with for many, many years. And everything in Portfolio Builder is front loaded.

So we like work backwards. So when we hand the keys to the main contractor, everybody knows what they have to execute, when it has to be executed by and how much money they've got to do it. That's the kind of summary.

And then working back from that, we work with our team of surveyors, quantity surveyor, main contractor. And we spend months and months putting together what we call the final development pack. And within that is every single schedule, budget, document, design spec that everybody throughout the project will be working with.

[Mark Barrett] (15:18 - 15:32)

I think you showed me some of the documentation that you put together, which is great detail. And it's very impressive what you actually kind of like produce.

[Jen Barron] (15:32 - 16:03)

Yeah, we do. We mark everything down to where every socket's going, where every light switch is going. There is nothing at all that is left to chance.

Everybody is very clear on what is expected of them to deliver, from me to the main contractor to the quantity surveyor. Everything is geared up to deliver the project as smoothly as we can for the client.

[Mark Barrett] (16:03 - 16:08)

And then you then go on site, you do your regular inspections?

[Jen Barron] (16:10 - 16:46)

Yes, that's right. So I'm on site to start with, maybe like two times a week, then it drops to weekly. Within that mix, we have a quantity surveyor that does his inspections every month as well, puts together a full site and financial report, which obviously goes to our client and which we review.

And yeah, we're on site, like I say, I'm on site every week. And then towards the end, when it starts getting busy at the end of the project, I'm back on site maybe two or three times a week.

[Mark Barrett] (16:47 - 16:51)

So QS comes and that's to authorise the drawdowns for the funding?

[Speaker 4] (16:52 - 16:52)

Yes.

[Mark Barrett] (16:52 - 17:00)

The main contractor that you use, yeah. Okay. On this particular project then, was there any issues that you had to face within that?

[Jen Barron] (17:01 - 17:36)

It was a relatively straightforward site delivery. The challenges I think we had, which was sort of a sign of the times, was delays and challenges getting materials. Obviously, we were still within the COVID times.

So there was definitely delays on timber, there was delays on glass. But all of this was very carefully managed by all parties to ensure there was no sort of big issues.

[Mark Barrett] (17:37 - 17:47)

Yeah. And then I think you came in to hand that over. And then did you also get a lease for the property?

[Jen Barron] (17:48 - 18:13)

Yes, that's right. So again, sort of sign of the times, that demand was really high for the sort of social housing space. And there was a number of private housing associations that we had worked with previously.

And yeah, we secured a lease for our client on this site with one of those parties.

[Mark Barrett] (18:13 - 18:18)

Yeah, that was like a long term lease. I think it was about 75k, is that?

[Jen Barron] (18:19 - 18:20)

Yes, that's right.

[Mark Barrett] (18:20 - 18:25)

Yeah. And then I think the GDV is about a million pound.

[Speaker 4] (18:26 - 18:27)

Yes.

[Mark Barrett] (18:27 - 18:44)

It is like to have kind of like a lease of say, you know, seven and a half percent on the GDV. Obviously, the cost was a lot less than that. I think the total spend was about 660.

So absolutely fantastic, fantastic returns on the project.

[Jen Barron] (18:45 - 18:57)

Yeah, like really, really, it was a really fantastic project. The client was absolutely fantastic to work with. And yeah, the result was overall was very, very good.

[Mark Barrett] (18:59 - 19:11)

Excellent. So when you kind of like look on that for somebody that may be looking to do a similar project or from the experience that you've had, what would you say is like the three top tips that you would have?

[Jen Barron] (19:12 - 19:42)

Yeah, so my initial thoughts on this is one of my top tips is trust your gut feeling. Like that's really stayed with me for years and years, like within the job that I was in before. This is trust your gut feeling because it is very, rarely wrong.

Not always to say it's not wrong, but it's rarely wrong. So it's tuning into that and tuning into it early to stop a problem before it potentially becomes a catastrophe.

[Mark Barrett] (19:43 - 19:46)

What is any kind of examples on that?

[Jen Barron] (19:49 - 19:52)

There's probably too many to mention, to be honest.

[Mark Barrett] (19:53 - 19:56)

Is that where you think, oh, that could go wrong in the future?

[Jen Barron] (19:58 - 20:19)

Yeah, or it's a live example of thinking, oh, my God, this is going to go wrong now. If we don't sort of step in and sort this out now, this could go very wrong. And sometimes it means, you know, having very challenging conversations.

But it's not, you know, when you get that feeling, don't ignore it. Like just address it. And if it means having the challenging conversation, have it.

[Mark Barrett] (20:19 - 20:22)

Yeah. Yeah. Great.

Yeah. And then secondly.

[Jen Barron] (20:22 - 21:04)

Yeah. So secondly is you get what you pay for. And it sounds like a very obvious one.

But we, you know, we're no different to anybody else. We've had projects where we've had to dismiss main contractors because they've just not delivered to what they should be doing. And some of those mistakes we're still paying for today from poor workmanship.

We don't work with those trades anymore. The team that we work with are fantastic. But like anything, any of the partners that we work with, any of the suppliers, you know, you get what you pay for.

[Mark Barrett] (21:05 - 21:50)

Yeah. Yeah. No, fully agree.

And I've had the same kind of experience with that. I was at a property event recently where they were talking about the refurbs, the triangle. And on that triangle, the three points and they were kind of time, price and the quality.

And they were saying is you can get two, but you can't get all of those. And I think having kind of like thoughts about that, you certainly and that comes into what you get, what you pay for. So it's hard to get done in a really good time.

It's a really good quality without paying the price for that.

[Jen Barron] (21:51 - 21:56)

Absolutely. Absolutely. You can't have it all at the end of the day.

[Mark Barrett] (21:57 - 22:00)

Yeah. And then thirdly.

[Jen Barron] (22:01 - 23:07)

Yeah. So my third one is like a mantra that we've had within Portfolio Builder for a couple of years now, and it's whatever it takes. And we like we don't say that lightly.

Like we if we say to somebody, we will do whatever it takes to finish this project. You know, we do. And whatever that might entail.

And actually, in the case of the fireworks factory, it was securing that site where this sort of mantra came into play. Basically, the agents were very non-responsive on communications. And I think it probably drove quite a few people just sort of get exasperated and give up.

But we sort of we went on LinkedIn, we went on any kind of platform that we could to get the agents details. And, you know, we were successful in securing it. So, yeah, it's it is about like, don't say that if you're not going to do it, like we say it and we do it.

[Mark Barrett] (23:08 - 23:27)

Yeah. Excellent. OK, thank you for the those three.

And I think. Yeah, I think anybody listening. I think they.

Yeah. Great. Great tips and advice.

So for anybody wanting to contact you, what would be the best way to get in touch?

[Jen Barron] (23:29 - 23:45)

So feel free to email me. And my email address is jennifer.barron at portfolio-builder.co.uk. So it's a very long email address. I'm going to put it in the notes.

[Mark Barrett] (23:45 - 24:05)

Yeah. Yeah. We'll add it to the show notes.

And you're still looking. I think you were saying that portfolio builder, you are oversubscribed. So potentially you don't have anything, any spaces at the moment.

But if people wanted to work with you in the future, then they might want to reach out for you.

[Jen Barron] (24:06 - 24:21)

Yeah, absolutely. So we are oversubscribed at the moment, but we do have an investor waiting list. So if you are interested in working with us, then we can certainly have a conversation and add you to that.

[Mark Barrett] (24:22 - 24:28)

Yeah. So as far as sites, is there any particular types of sites that you are interested in?

[Jen Barron] (24:29 - 24:44)

Yeah. So we like, you know, big commercial sites that we can, you know, convert into residential. And we ideally like these to be located in Nottingham.

[Mark Barrett] (24:44 - 24:55)

Yeah. Yeah. OK.

So then we've got any large commercial sites that are for commercial conversion, Nottingham area. That's for you. Yeah.

[Jen Barron] (24:55 - 24:59)

Yeah, absolutely. Getting in touch. I look forward to hearing from you.

[Mark Barrett] (24:59 - 25:14)

Great. Jen, thank you very much indeed for your time. It was great to go through Fireworks Factory.

I kind of heard about it through Dan. I've seen it on your socials and, you know, pictures and results is absolutely amazing. So congratulations.

[Jen Barron] (25:14 - 25:18)

Thank you very much. It was great to have the opportunity to talk about it. Thank you.

[Speaker 3] (25:22 - 26:22)

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And we'll get you added to one of the private VIP WhatsApp groups where you can request your own podcast. It will be dedicated to you and your business. And every Tuesday I'm in there answering questions, giving you one to one direct support.

And we don't know how long we're going to keep these open for. Success and failure are both very predictable. I will see you on the next episode.