

Owners cancel £201m sale as Centurion and Westbrook chip their offer by £20m

Equiton back on market as sale fails

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The sale of the Equiton industrial portfolio to US fund Westbrook Partners and asset manager Centurion Properties has collapsed.

Westbrook and Centurion, which went under offer to buy the portfolio for £201m in June, are understood to have tried to chip their bid by around £20m. Owners Brixton, PRUPIM and the SE Ind Trust have now

cancelled the deal and are offering the portfolio – which comprises 42 assets totalling 2.9m sq ft in the South East – to underbidders.

AIM-listed property company Hansteen Holdings, fund manager Legal & General and a joint venture between M7 and Richardson Capital Partners have all been reoffered a chance to buy the properties.

Several of the underbidders are understood to have offered

close to Westbrook/Centurion's original bid.

However, Brixton must get consent from SEGRO, which is in the final stages of taking over the company, for any significant operational decisions. This would include the sale of any assets with a book value of more than £1m.

Subject to approval from both sets of shareholders, on 25 August SEGRO will complete the takeover of its former rival

for £109.4m in new shares. It hopes to fund the deal through a £250m share-placing.

Equiton, which was valued at £223m in December, was put up for sale in February following a strategic review by its investors. Debt on the portfolio, which is 20% vacant, matures in the autumn.

Franc Warwick is advising on the sale. Savills was acting for Westbrook/Centurion. All parties refused to comment.