

Marketing of vacant units 6, 8 and 9

Why the applicant has selected unit 9

Proposed change of use from warehouse to gymnasium

Unit 9, Durban Road Business Centre, Durban Road, Bognor Regis, PO22 9FE

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1.0 Marketing of Vacant Units 6, 8 and 9, Durban Road Business Centre

- 1.1 Unit 9 was last used as a warehouse by Above All who vacated the unit approximately 8 months ago.
- 1.2 Units 6 and 8 are also currently vacant. Unit 6 has been on the market since August 2014 and unit 8 has been on the market for 3 months.
- 1.3 This information has been supplied by the letting agents – Michael Jones Commercial, 1st Floor, Chapelworth House, Chatsworth House, Worthing, BN11 1BE - who have been actively marketing the units.
- 1.4 The units have been advertised in the following ways:
 - On the Michael Jones website
 - On Movehut
 - On Commercial Rightmove
 - In Property Today (a newspaper which is circulated locally - Worthing, Bognor, Littlehampton etc).
- 1.5 The agents have extensive knowledge of local market conditions and rental values, and have been marketing the three units at between £6 and £7 per square foot. Unit 9 has been advertised with a rent of £15000 per annum.
- 1.4 Units 6 to 9 are not visible from the public highway (Durban Road). Unit 7 is occupied by a long established tenant. The letting agents have found it hard to let any of the other three units over the last few years. Whenever a tenant has been found for units 6, 8 and 9 they have not occupied the units for long.
- 1.5 Over the past few months the letting agents have received few enquiries for any of the three vacant units for their existing B1, B2 and B8 use and these enquiries have not resulted in any firm applications to rent them.
- 1.6 The above information shows that unit 9 has been extensively marketed for its existing use (B1, B2 and B8) over a sustained period of time, and there is no reasonable prospect of re-use of the unit for industrial, business or warehouse purposes.

2.0 Search for a suitable site

- 2.1 The applicant has made extensive enquiries before choosing to apply for planning permission to use the application site.
 - He has enquired about 3 units in the Southern Cross Industrial Estate, Bognor Regis. He found one was too big for consideration at over 5000 square metres, one was

too small and needed far too much work doing to it to make it fit for purpose, and one was available but the owner was not willing to consider a change of use.

- Enquiries have been made about premises next to Heath Place in Bognor Regis. This was deemed unacceptable due to the premises being in a very poor state of repair.
- The conversion of an office premises at Heath Place was considered but ruled out due to the excessive cost of conversion.
- A property in Durban Road, at Christie Place, near to the application site, was considered but when it was found to be already under offer.
- Two units in Arun Business Park were looked at but were deemed to be either too small.
- A request was made to take over the lease of unit 3 in the Bognor Regis Retail Park. This was refused by the owners who chose to offer it to a retailer.
- Enquiries were made about the former Kwik Fit and Comet premises in the Shripney Road Retail Park and it was found that both had already been let to new businesses.
- The district council and West Sussex County Council have been asked if they have any suitable units but neither have.

2.2 When the applicant found that unit 9 was available upon inspection it was found to be very suitable for the proposed gymnasium, not only in terms of its size and cost but also because of its location close to the former Fitness First gymnasium. Unit 9 can be converted at very little cost which will enable the applicant to offer an exceptional rate to potential members. It is situated in a fairly busy and very accessible location for potential members. Members will be able to come and go without causing any disturbance to the nearby businesses or the surrounding area.

