

Comments for Planning Application APP/16/00921

Application Summary

Application Number: APP/16/00921

Address: Dolphin Quay, Queen Street, Emsworth

Proposal: Demolition of the single storey shop, two-storey office building and associated outbuildings. Erection of 4No. houses (3x 3No. bedrooms and 1x 2No. bedrooms) fronting onto Queen Street and associated parking and erection of 2No. detached dwellings (4No. bedrooms) fronting onto the Mill Pond with associated parking and access from Queen Street.

Case Officer: Rachael McMurray

Customer Details

Name: Mr John Pritchard

Address: c/o Helyer Davies 1 The Old Flour Mill, Queen Street Emsworth

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Complainant

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I am writing in connection with the para 12 of the Marketing Report of Holloway Iliffe & Michell (12 February 2016) where it is stated: 'we were approached by a third party that had not actually viewed the premises on behalf of a London based charity.... However, after enquiring as to who the actual charity was and if they could substantiate the offer through proof of funds and therefore this did not progress any further'.

I suggest that gives a misleading impression in that it implies no serious offer was received. On the contrary, a serious cash offer (for more than the apparent value of the property) was put forward as long ago as April 2015 but not properly responded to:

1) My wife and I live in Emsworth. We are trustees and funders of a charity, Link.org (charity number 1162911) whose registered office - for Charity Commission purposes - is in London. The charity is designed to benefit young people (with preference being given to applicants 'within 12 miles of Emsworth, Hampshire'). So it is a local, Emsworth, focused charity, for young people.

2) My wife and I have long-been familiar with Dolphin Quay (we often walk past it). When I heard in March 2015 that the site was being marketed I instructed Helyer Davies Architects. My brief was that I was considering buying the site with a view to protecting it as a mixed-use commercial, employment/business, site for the general Emsworth community, and that this might be done by using it for charitable 'youth' purposes via Link.org.

3) The architects advised me in general terms and they obtained valuation advice from a local

valuer. As a result, an offer was made to the Agents by Helyer Davies on 13 April 2015 at 5% more than the top-figure calculated by the valuer (a copy of the valuation was attached, and the Agents were informed that the offer was made on behalf of a charity).

4) The offer was ignored by the Agents. No reply was received so on 25 August 2015 they were written to again (details of the charity were provided; that a primary object was the provision of youth facilities within the Emsworth and Havant area; and that funding was secured etc).

5) That offer was also ignored (despite the architects having phoned and got confirmation that both offer letters had been received). Accordingly, on 7 July 2016 the architects wrote again: 'We refer to our letter to you of 13 April 2015 & our letter 25th August 2015 (copies attached). We also telephoned your offices and spoke with Tom, seeking to discuss the purchase of the site but have had no success in entering negotiations. For the record, we wish to reiterate the offer made in that letter'.

6) That prompted a same-day response which claimed 'we did discuss your initial letter over the phone and at the time I requested confirmation of who your client was and to see proof of funds'; however, that does not accord with the notes or recollection of the architects. Likewise the Agents claimed to have never receive the emailed and posted letter of 25 August 2015. They then set out various requirements (eg 'Proof of funds and not your say so'; 'Proof of their due diligence'; 'Who their solicitors are' etc).

7) The architects replied on the same day repeating the offer and querying the implication that neither of the previous offers (13 April 2015 and 25 August 2015) had not been reported to the Agent's clients. Additional information was also provided (eg 'There is cash available. The Trustees have a (confidential) commitment to funding from a third party'; 'no solicitors have been instructed yet. If your clients will negotiate, and there is reason to believe the matter may progress, then The Trustees will instruct solicitors'; etc).

8) That email was acknowledged by the Agents on 11 July 2016. They were chased again on 2 August 2016 before finally replying on 19 August. They stated that 'in order to take this seriously' a list of nine queries had to be answered. In response we said 'the charity has already out of courtesy offered additional details. The nature of the purchaser is irrelevant; they have substantial funds for this development and have made an offer over market valuation'.

In summary, we made an offer in April 2015 on a mixed-use/commercial basis and have been struggling to get the Agents to engage with us since then (despite having offered more we are told the property is worth and having cash funding in place).