

Hall Place, Havant
Statement of Marketing

Hall place is a Georgian Manor House that was bought by our client in 1980 when in a derelict state. It was extensively refurbished and has been in use ever since as offices for the Owen Agency.

The business is primary a marketing and advertising company and, as such, now requires modern premises locally that can provide open plan space with full optical cable systems and superfast broadband. With the building being 'listed,' this standard of wiring commensurate with the running of any modern business could not be achieved.

Graham Jacobs of Trafalgar were appointed by our client over a year ago to provide a thorough valuation and this involved a search of more suitable premises in the area. The report was depressing, with a glut of more up-to-date office premises empty for some considerable time.

For an unusual property like Hall Place, traditional marketing methods are not appropriate. This is not a purpose-built commercial property that is being considered for conversion to residential but rather a historic converted Manor House that was for hundreds of years a dwelling, and is now looking to be returned to its original use.

The marketing programme was started in 2013 on various fronts. Two other practices were asked to look into alternative uses such as a nursing/care home. Networking to their potential clients, they concluded that this was not a potential sales route.

In January 2013, our client arranged a meeting with Giles Maude of Hamptons International to start the marketing process by networking known clients. They, in turn, engaged Mark Mitchell of Flude to look specifically at office opportunities. This exercise concluded that the building was not an attractive proposition commercially, due to the limitations involved by the number of small rooms, differing floor levels, high maintenance costs, and the restrictions synonymous with its 'listed' status.

Part of our client's marketing strategy was to research as much information as possible on Hall Place and the Longcroft dynasty (previous owners for 200 years). This was to build a clear picture for the provenance of the property when marketing support material was produced. A specialist writer was commissioned who produced a time-line of Hall Place which spanned 500 years, and was included in the planning documentation set.

It is our contention that our client has marketed this property over the last eighteen months in a manner commensurate with the specialist nature of the building and that, in so doing, has acted within the spirit of the Core Strategy Policy.

However, it could be argued that if it were not for the fact that the building is listed, it would not need marketing at all but be granted residential consent as Permitted Development through Prior Approval. We consider, therefore, that the Policy in the Local Plan is slightly out of date regarding intent and has, to a degree, been superseded by Prior Approval.