PERMIT

A REPORT ON THE POTENTIAL FOR EMPLOYMENT TYPE USES

AT

6A WEST STREET, EMSWORTH, PO10 7DY

BY

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1.0 THE AUTHOR

1.1 I am a Chartered Surveyor with over 18 years post qualification experience. Formally I was a Partner at regional commercial property specialist Vail Williams I have also spent 2 years as a Director at Dean and Dyball Developments. Currently I am a Director of Henry Adams Commercial Ltd based in Chichester where i have resided for over 30 years. I cover the East Hampshire and West Sussex commercial property markets. Therefore I am well qualified and experienced in the local commercial property market and I am well qualified to make this report.

2.0 INSTRUCTIONS

2.1 We have been instructed to provide our advice on the suitability of the first and second floor accommodation at 6A West Street, Emsworth for employment type uses. The property is currently vacant and the owners are looking to bring it back into beneficial occupation. They have considered alternative uses and believe that a conversion to residential use is most appropriate. We set out our observations and recommendations below.

3.0 SITUATION

3.1 6A West Street, Emsworth comprises the first and second floor of a mid terrace property situated above a shop currently trading as Solent Dry Cleaners. The adjoining property at 4 West Street is a public house and number 8 West Street is a charity shop. Directly opposite is a pharmacy and delicatessen.

3.2 West Street is a cul-de-sac street in central Emsworth. It is narrow with limited on street parking and footfall and therefore would be considered to be a secondary or more probably tertiary retailing location.

4.0 THE PROPERTY

4.1 The property is self contained with an access door at street level leading to a narrow hallway and stairs up to the first floor. The first floor accommodation comprises one large front room with bay window overlooking West Street. Behind that is a smaller room without windows and a further room to the rear with fire escape door and window. There is a kitchen and 2 wc's on the first floor.

4.2 Narrow stairs lead to a reasonable sized room on the second floor with steps up to a larger front room.

4.3 There is a net internal floor area of approximately 940sqft.

4.4 The previous use was as offices and generally the decor is in a tired and dated condition.

5.0 ALTERNATIVE USES

Offices

5.1 Offices falling within Class B1 (Business) and A2 (Financial and Professional Services) would appear to be on first inspection the most appropriate use. However on closer inspection numerous issues arise which any business occupier would encounter and would consider being less than suitable.

These include:

- The narrow entrance hall limits the appeal to A2 type users that are requiring access for the general public.
- The steps up from pavement level and narrow steep stairs restrict the suitability for the general public and complying with Disability Discrimination Act requirements in terms of disabled access. The width of the stairs is not sufficient for a stair lift. Wheel chair access to the upper floors would not be possible.
- The 5 rooms over two floors do not suit modern open plan working practices favoured by most businesses.
- There is a lack of car parking for the employer, staff and visitors.

- There is very limited opportunity for signage at ground floor level to attract passing customers.
- The neighbours are generally unattractive for high quality businesses.

Class D1 (non residential institutions)

5.2 This planning category covers medical and health services, consulting rooms for the likes of physiotherapists, dentists, doctors etc.

5.3 Again due to the narrow staircase and steps up from street level means that the property is unsuitable for wheelchair bound and other disabled patients/customers. Therefore in our opinion the property would not be considered suitable for this type of use.

Alternatives

5.4 Other than Class C1 (Dwelling Houses) we see no other suitable use to consider for the purposes of this report. Any sui generis type uses such as a taxi office generally will find the accommodation too large and consequently too expensive.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 We conclude that with more suitable purpose built type office accommodation in the vicinity it is unlikely that an office type occupier will be found for the property in the short to medium term. In order to achieve a letting a comprehensive refurbishment would be required that would not be carried out speculatively. Even so this would be commercially unviable with the market demand for short flexible leases of 1 to 3 years meaning that the owner would not recoup costs for some considerable time.

6.2 Furthermore for the reasons listed the physical layout, situation and amenities lead us to believe that this is very unsuitable for office use even at a very low and discounted rent. Hence there is little prospect of letting this property as offices in the current economic climate in the medium to long term.