

PROPERTY FOCUS

YOUR PRO-ACTIVE FOUNDATION
FOR SUCCESS



2020

Autumn Bumper Issue



Team Penn. Left to right: Pippa Moss, Robin Cousins, Vanessa Penn, Mike Simpson FRICS, Tracy Valé, Paul Keen and Wendy Hicks

WE ARE OPEN FOR BUSINESS!

It was great to be able to welcome the team back to the office in July, after the long lockdown period. People are at the heart of the property business, and we were really pleased to resume live meetings again... socially-distanced, of course!

I am proud to say that, even during lockdown, we at Penn Commercial have still been busy and working hard. We have been acting on client-led instructions across East Anglia, Essex, the Midlands and London, and have had considerable success in transacting some quick deals and converting applicants with urgent requirements for storage space, offices and shops.

Whilst none of us can predict what the 'post-COVID' economy will look like, we have been encouraged by some 'green shoots' and a 'bounce' in interested applicants, with companies coming forward with their requirements. For example: a 40,000 sq.ft. pre-let for a relocation of an existing business in Suffolk; a Government transport department's requirement for 9,000 sq.ft. of offices; a six-week exchange on a town centre office building for residential conversion into 19 flats; and a national restaurant / café chain expanding into the provinces.

So, what might the future bring?

Post-Brexit, we believe that enquiries will increase for warehousing and last-mile logistics hubs in the

area, as well as for Customs clearance facilities close to the Port of Felixstowe, the UK's largest container port.

Whilst the Chancellor is talking of the worst recession ever, we believe that East Anglia may prove to be more robust and may benefit from an exodus out of London, for both residential and commercial buyers and tenants. Rents in the area remain very attractive compared to our nearest neighbours - Cambridge, Chelmsford and Stratford - and this can only bode well for future growth and expansion.

Town centres will inevitably change, with the conversion of redundant office space to residential, and further emigration to out-of-town office space, as companies seek to downsize and become more efficient, with the advent of working from home and flexible-working.

However, whilst retail is experiencing extremely challenging times, we have been surprised by some of the requirements coming forward. Prime retail space can be sourced at very preferential rates, which has led to some businesses that have been established for a while in secondary locations taking full advantage and relocating. For instance, Hank's Vegan Deli in Ipswich was originally in Lloyds Avenue, but has grown to take on larger premises in Carr Street, and the Cake Box franchise is moving into half of the former Superdrug unit in this Ipswich thoroughfare.

Moreover, we are excited to be launching a new out-of-town office scheme at Claydon, totalling approximately 14,000 sq.ft.; 36 new industrial starter units at Elton Park, Ipswich and Needham Market; a new B1 office development at The

Felixstowe Business Park; The Coalyard, a striking new 25,000 sq.ft. office in central Ipswich; strategic sites at the ABP ports of Ipswich, Lowestoft and King's Lynn; and a number of other new instructions in East Anglia and further afield, from both private and corporate clients.

With this 'new normal' in mind, I am pleased to be invited to be a guest speaker with Russell Williams, Chief Executive of Ipswich Borough Council, at Ellisons Solicitors Construction Conference in October, to discuss the latest insights and predictions across the sector...an update to follow in the next newsletter.

We wish you a successful rest of the year, whatever it may bring, and we would be delighted to hear from you with any commercial property opportunities on the contact details below.

Vanessa Penn
Managing Director, Penn Commercial

Included in this issue:

- The Coalyard development
- Getting back to the 'new normal'
- Property management with Paul Keen
- Behind the brand

GETTING BACK TO THE 'NEW NORMAL'



As life starts to return to normal after lockdown, we take a look at how the various commercial property sectors have been affected.

Offices

In our opinion, whilst home-working has been a success for many employees and businesses, we do believe that there are many positive aspects to office-working. Certainly, face-to-face communication and creativity, sharing ideas about existing and new projects, and the social element of having conversations with colleagues. Many firms may now operate a hybrid of the two, which will enable flexibility, whilst maintaining personalised service.

In terms of the larger HQs in London, these are likely to disappear and, instead, staff will be spread over a cluster of different offices.

We have not yet seen the relocations out of London, but where companies already have offices in Ipswich, some will be minded to relocate teams out of the City and into smaller hubs.

Whilst corporates might retain a headquarters in London, it is likely that many of them will adopt a 'hub and spoke' approach, i.e. setting up satellite offices in the regions, which are easier for employees to access and be able to meet up with colleagues.

Ipswich is in an ideal location, only 70 minutes from London Liverpool Street, and is likely to be considered, especially where companies already have teams based in the town, but may have employees commuting to London.

There are benefits for the staff who currently commute to London, with all the added time and expense that entails. In many instances, companies have committed to large, expensive space in London, only to find themselves now using only fifty per cent of the accommodation post-COVID.

We have seen evidence of one or two local firms wishing to downsize, as more of their employees work from home, and this will continue as a trend into 2021.

Retail

The High Street has been hit particularly hard and was already suffering from the effects of online shopping and high business rates.

We have seen a number of units become vacant locally, where retailers have either switched to online shopping completely, or reduced the number of outlets to priority locations. This leaves prime shops for other new concepts to fill and we have seen evidence of this, with lettings to a vegan store, cake shop franchise and others, who have historically occupied secondary

locations, but are now finding that prime locations are more affordable.

The non-food retail and leisure sector has also seen some casualties, particularly those based around play space, furnishings and some gyms. However, recent reports indicate that the likes of M&S and other food operators may now start to look at some of these larger out-of-town retail units, as they consider leaving their traditional high street locations.

Industrial

The industrial / warehouse market is proving resilient, with small and large units being taken up by warehousing, freight and logistics companies, many of whom service the online / fulfilment industry.

Small starter units are very popular, both leasehold and freehold, as budding entrepreneurs look to start new businesses. A recent report stated that more businesses started in July than at any other time this year. There is a lack of stock in the area generally and we are pleased that some speculative building is happening at Futura Park, with a new trade counter / industrial scheme, and at other locations in and around Ipswich and Stowmarket.

Similarly, the take-up of industrial land is strong, with distribution companies seeking to build their own bespoke units, particularly those who might be bringing products in via the Port of Felixstowe.

Penn's property management service delivers impressive client results during COVID crisis

Paul Keen, who heads up Penn Commercial's property management service, is justifiably proud of the way that the company has responded to the COVID crisis. "We have succeeded in ensuring that 90% of our landlords were paid from March to June, whereas the national average is only 18%."

Paul attributes this to being proactive in the early stages of the pandemic and identifying which sectors and clients would struggle the most. "It was very obvious that certain sectors would find it more difficult than others, so we drew up a list



of those clients who we thought would be hardest hit and went to see them personally."

Paul says that, in March, Penn started to receive calls from some of the tenants that there was no rent to pay. This was due, in large part, to the confusing advice being given by Government regarding its three-month rent payment holiday scheme; many tenants thought that this payment break had been granted to landlords via the Government, when in fact it was only available to landlords struggling to make their own mortgage

payments, as a result of tenants not able to pay rent due to the COVID crisis.

"What was said in the Chancellor's briefings was not the same as what appeared on the official Government website, and this caused a lot of unnecessary confusion, at the worst possible time. It did not mean that tenants should not pay rent, rather that they should work with their landlords to negotiate mutually-acceptable temporary revised terms, where they could." As the first holiday period ended on 30th June 2020, therefore all funds became due on 1st July 2020.

Paul - who joined Penn in 2012, after a thriving property management career - acted as the 'middle man' in these sensitive discussions and worked with all parties involved to come up with ideas to keep tenants in properties. "For instance, we were able to agree monthly payment, rather than quarterly, which was a great help."

"This is what we do at Penn, across all of our managed estate, and we trust our team to deliver in every aspect of our managed services provision."



PENN SUPPORTS SUFFOLK FOOD HALL'S SUCCESS

Suffolk Food Hall, just south of Ipswich, overlooking the spectacular River Orwell, is a proven venue for food and drink, along with lifestyle and well-being. Since the venture started in 2007, it has only ever used Penn Commercial to help create the proposition.

Whilst Suffolk Food Hall focuses on food as its core offering, there are thirteen other businesses operating across the site, and more are joining on various terms.

Following experiences with various regional commercial agents on other land-diversification projects, Suffolk Food Hall appointed Penn, quite simply because it 'gets the job done'.

"A pragmatic and determined approach, occasionally with lateral suggestions, has been Penn's reason for success", remarks Oliver Paul, Director.

Suffolk Food Hall continues to welcome further complementary businesses to the collaboration. Penn has been able to fulfil specific briefs, even during an exceptionally hard economic period.

Furthermore, Vanessa and her team have taken the time to gain a broader understanding of the site and its strategic goals, as a result of which they have been able to propose unsolicited and imaginative ideas to further the business' outreach.

Suffolk Food Hall has been innovative in hosting ancillary enterprises, to challenge and progress the independent food retail and restaurant sector, and Penn continues to be instrumental in making this happen.

What our clients say...

Penn Commercial was able to assist Cogent Technology Ltd with an urgent short-term property requirement in the Spring, just as the UK was entering COVID-19 lockdown:

"We needed a building initially in March on a short-term lease, in order to respond urgently to The Ventilator Challenge on request from The Cabinet Office. I knew the former Itron building in Felixstowe was empty and ideal as a manufacturing plant for electronics, as they were a client.

"I Googled and found that Penn were the agents, so I got in touch with Vanessa during peak lockdown. It was a pleasant surprise to find Vanessa so responsive to our requirements, even with the serious constraints of the lockdown period - whilst the Cogent team were designated as key workers, Penn were not, so it was even more reassuring that they were able to assist us, in spite of these obstacles. We had the keys within a week, thanks also to Ellisons Solicitors, which allowed us to press forward with our vital project.

"Post-ventilator challenge, with a growing demand from existing clients, we have been working directly with the landlord and Vanessa to secure a longer-term agreement, which will allow Cogent to relocate from Melton to Felixstowe in order to be able to respond to growing demand from our existing medical device clients, in a climate that is seeing a drive towards re-shoring production.

"Cogent is currently in the process of concluding agreements formally, with the aim of being fully operational in the Autumn."

Nigel Slator, Managing Director, Cogent Technology Ltd

"BT have a longstanding, successful relationship with Penn Commercial, who have become a trusted partner in dealing with property matters in Eastern England.

"We trust their team to deliver bespoke reports in a professional and timely manner, and their local expertise is second to none. They continue to deliver a quality product to BT, who value their services immensely."

Rob Maund, Senior Asset Manager, BT

Penn was able to work with the client, Peter Colby Commercials, listed in the top 100 companies in Norfolk and Suffolk, and Cogent Technology, to bring about a swift, mutually-beneficial letting arrangement:

"I have supported Vanessa since she set up the business on her own, over 13 years ago, and Penn is the only agent that I will use in Ipswich and Suffolk.

"I am very happy with Vanessa and the team, and they give me the service that I require, in every way. They are helpful, efficient and understand my needs.

"With regards to the Cogent arrangement, I was very happy to be supporting a British company, pioneering in medical research and development."

Peter Colby, Managing Director, Peter Colby Commercials

Penn Commercial has successfully let 4,823 sq.ft. of retail space in Ipswich town centre to Hank's Vegan Deli. The former Maplins unit on Carr Street has been taken on, in addition to the premises that they already occupy on Lloyds Avenue:

"Penn Commercial have now assisted us with 3 commercial property searches in Ipswich, 2 of which we completed with them. Their service has been outstanding and, during the pandemic crisis, when we needed to move quickly into bigger premises, they facilitated a fast-track lease, under very favourable terms for us, which allowed our business to take advantage of the situation and expand.

Robin and Vanessa have both been incredibly professional, knowledgeable and helpful throughout, and we would always return to them in the first instance, should we decide to expand the business further."

Geoffrey Bligh, owner, Hank's Vegan Deli

"Penn Commercial are an excellent smaller agent that punch well above their weight. Vanessa Penn is pro-active, communicative and full of creative suggestions as to how to maintain momentum in the marketplace. She is supported by a great team that are always willing to do more than they need. We would most certainly recommend them."

Mark Pertwee, Managing Director, Pertwee Estates



Ipswich's new Coalyard office complex gets planning permission

The Penn Commercial team is delighted to be representing Ipswich town centre's striking new office development, The Coalyard.

The new Coalyard is planned for Ipswich's Chancery Road, in the heart of an up-and-coming business corridor, and has been heralded as a 'striking new architectural presence'.

Pertwee Estates submitted plans for the Chancery Road office space in December 2019, and intend to create a stunning glass-fronted block of four

storeys, with 2,341 square metres of office accommodation and car parking.

Ipswich Borough Council's Planning Committee approved the proposals by Pertwee Park Ltd unanimously in July 2020, to build the facility next door to The Maltings – a 200-year-old Grade II Listed Maltings building, which underwent a £3.5 million conversion to premium business premises and opened its doors in July 2019.

The Coalyard building will sit partly above the existing car park for The Maltings, with a lower floor to accommodate 41 car parking spaces. Plans outline an upper-ground floor reception, and office space on all four floors, with the addition of two roof terraces on the second and third floors.

According to the developers, who worked with Ipswich Borough Council when drawing up the plan, this office block represents the next step in the Council's ambitions for a neighbourhood of homes and offices, as part of the ongoing regeneration of the 'Ipswich Village' and the Princes Street corridor opportunity area.

Vanessa Penn says:

"At an early stage, off-plan, we have already been attracting strong interest in this landmark development from multiple occupiers."

A Day in the Life of... Robin Cousins

It is a glorious sunny day at the Penn Commercial offices in Orwell House, on picturesque Fox's Marina in Ipswich, where Robin Cousins is going through his schedule for the busy day ahead.

After we have established that Robin is not, in fact, the internationally-renowned ice-skating champion – "Spelt the same...but less talented!" – it soon becomes clear that this is a man with a real passion for property.

Robin, 30, joined the Penn team in 2017 and, over his three years' with the award-winning firm, has progressed from trainee to negotiator, brokering his own deals and taking a proactive lead on client negotiations.

Robin hails from a local farming family, based near Hintlesham, and still has close links to the business, "Although I could never see myself getting up at 6am to look after the pigs", he admits.

Having ruled out the traditional path of a university education, one of Robin's first roles was working on the Selfridge's account at Ipswich-based telephone answering service, Ansaback, where he was responsible for escalations and social media. Here, he found that the autonomy that the iconic London store granted to

its dedicated call response team enabled him to overcome issues and be creative with customers.

"I enjoyed the challenges of working with these 'high-end' and often demanding clients, and I was able to train my colleagues to take the initiative and give that bit extra when dealing with them. Some of their issues were quite unreasonable, but 'Where there's a will, there's a way', and our collective aim was always to try to get the best outcome for our clients."

Robin was informed that Penn was looking for a trainee to join its growing commercial property team, and he started as a trainee negotiator in 2017, having impressed Vanessa with his character, drive and determination. He was attracted to Penn, he says, "As it is a smaller company and we are the ones who have got to make it work together."

It is this sense of camaraderie and the team ethic that Robin attributes to being the strengths of the burgeoning Penn business. "Vanessa knows who does what in all the local companies, and has a huge knowledge of what people want and need, but she is heavily reliant upon her team, and is very people-focused. We all have a sense of ownership and know that, if the business is successful, then we will be, too."

Robin describes his role as negotiator as the 'go-between property and person', and he stresses the importance of communication throughout. "You need to cut through the semantics, and establish three things: 1) Where are we now? 2) Where do we want to be? 3) How do we get there? That is my daily mantra."

Robin's typical day – he laughs, as if there could ever be such a thing, especially in the new 'COVID-

era' – is to talk to his clients, interpreting their needs and matching them up with suitable properties.

"Our clients and applicants are our lifeblood, and getting to know them is key. I need to be sure that any property that I recommend is appropriate to their requirements and I have to do a lot of discovery to ensure that I am giving them the very best service that I can."

As is clear to see, Robin is looking forward to the next stage in his career with Penn Commercial. He concludes, "I am really enjoying the freedom, excitement and responsibility that I have with Vanessa and the team, and I want to continue growing and learning with the business."

"I will continue to do my very best to help our clients with their property needs in what will be a very different commercial climate", he asserts, "and I feel confident that we will be able to overcome the obstacles and find the right premises for them."

"I am very grateful to Robin Cousins at Penn Commercial, who has agreed multiple commercial lettings at the Eastgate Centre in Ipswich, despite challenging economic conditions."

"Robin is very connected to the occupier market in Ipswich and has consistently delivered new tenants on attractive terms. His dynamic approach is refreshing."

Ed Mileham, Director of Asset Management, London and Cambridge Properties Ltd



Six months of prestigious deals

In spite of the COVID-19 global pandemic and UK-wide lockdown, Penn Commercial is pleased to have continued offering the very best, responsive service to its clients. Two major deals in recent months have been:

LET

DR2 Claydon Business Park - Industrial



SOLD

Century House, Ipswich - Residential conversion



Five minutes with... Tracy Vale

Many of you will be familiar with the friendly tones of Penn Commercial's Tracy Vale, Property Assistant, described by Vanessa Penn as "an invaluable cog in the wheel of our business. Tracy has terrific industry knowledge, as well as being very efficient and great with all our clients."

"At Penn, we feel that it is important that we continue to offer that personal 'human touch' and we have made the conscious decision to retain someone of the calibre of Tracy to be responsive to when the telephone rings, or an enquiry comes in, throughout the office day."

HERE, TRACY GIVES US A BRIEF INSIGHT INTO HER ROLE:

How long have you been with the Company?

Since 1995, under various corporate 'umbrellas', and then with Penn, when Vanessa started up on her own in 2007.

What is your background?

Office / administrative work. I started out performing mainly reception duties, which have gradually expanded and developed over time to the current PA role. I have adapted along with the role, as the business has changed and grown.

Describe your typical day

Dealing with enquiries via the 'phone and email'. Registering applicants on our database. Sending out details. Arranging viewings. Making appointments for new inspections. Updating the websites. All general property administration.



Typing – new instructions, marketing reports, heads of terms etc. – and recording fees.

Why do you enjoy what you do?

I enjoy organising, as well as the IT work and websites. The day-to-day contact with everyone is also enjoyable; we are a friendly team and work well together.

What would you say are the key services that you provide at Penn?

Continuity and direct personal contact with clients and applicants, rather than an automated system. Providing a pro-active response to enquiries. IT proficiency. Good knowledge of the business and the properties, and a strong understanding of client / applicant requirements.

Importantly, there is always a surveyor available at Penn to be able to pick up an enquiry or transaction, not just a voicemail, and I take pride in being able to facilitate this important personal connection.

Penn partners with ABP on port commercial lettings



Penn Commercial is delighted to be working with ABP, the UK's leading port operator, on an instruction with Cushman & Wakefield on commercial lettings at the strategic ports of Ipswich, Lowestoft and King's Lynn.

With a network of 21 ports, ABP handles around a quarter of the UK's seaborne trade. ABP's port locations are geographically diverse and well-positioned on key global and European trade routes. The ports are located in close proximity to important domestic industrial clusters, logistics hubs and major conurbations.

ABP owns a total of 3,743 ha of freehold land, which includes 960 ha of strategic development land in prime locations across the country.

Behind the brand

Do you know the origins of the distinctive 'purple pyramid' Penn Commercial patented trademark?

Vanessa Penn explains:

"We devised the trademark ourselves when we started out in 2007, to represent a solid, positive, upward-reaching business.

"We wanted an easily-recognisable logo on our

boards, which would stand out and grab people's attention, and purple actually became the colour that everyone was using in the property market."

"The eye-catching 'e' in 'Penn' is from a now-retired font, which I had been working with when I was at Adobe Systems", says Penn's Wendy Hicks. "We felt that it added an unusual, individualistic character to the logo - reflecting the unique, bespoke way that we approach our business."



The Government has introduced wide-ranging reforms to the planning system, which will soon allow premises to change freely between various 'Town Centre' uses.

The introduction of a new use class on 1st September 2020 combines the following uses, meaning that there will be no need for planning permission, if you want to change from one to the other:

- A1 (shops);
- A2 (financial / professional services);
- A3 (restaurants / cafés);
- B1 (a) (offices);
- B1 (b) (research / development);
- B1 (c) (light industrial);
- D1 (health services / clinics / crèches / day centres); and
- D2* (gyms/indoor recreation).

*some activities currently included in the D2 use class will become Sui Generis.

Thus, a conversion from a shop to a dental surgery, or gym to a restaurant, can take place without seeking planning permission for the change of use. Of course, any other planning consents regarding building, advertising or licensing, for example, remain in place.

The changes will, in effect, introduce a laissez-faire planning regime in Town Centres. This will address a key concern held by landlords and operators in

A change to 'Change of Use'

recent years by enabling the ready conversion of redundant shop space to other uses – uses that will increase footfall in the Town Centre.

Importantly, pubs (A4), hot food takeaways, (A5), live music venues, cinemas, bingo halls (D2), betting shops and casinos have all become Sui Generis. This means that the activity does not fall within any use class and any change to another use, including another Sui Generis activity, will require full planning permission.

Current Permitted Development Rights, which relate to changes between existing use classes – where the two use classes in question are not both to be subsumed under Class E – will remain active until 1st July 2021, whilst changes to reflect the recent amendments are investigated.

So, does all this mean that you will not need to submit planning applications for your change within the E use class? Not necessarily.

The above regime changes will allow the use of the property to change without permission, but this does not provide the go-ahead for any physical development. For example, an A1 to A3 change of use will almost always require the installation of a kitchen ventilation system, and this must be the subject of a planning application and noise assessment.

Regardless of whether any physical works are being undertaken, we strongly recommend that any 'changes of use' within the new E use class are confirmed to be lawful by a Certificate of Lawfulness. This certificate will provide formal confirmation that the new use of your property is lawful, does not require planning permission and cannot be enforced against.

A Certificate of Lawfulness is invaluable, as it is your best protection against any future changes to

the local or national planning context, which might result in you being forced to return the site to its previous use.

For example, local councils have the ability to introduce Article 4 directions, which remove Permitted Development Rights from certain buildings or areas. Article 4 directions are a well-used planning tool, which councils have exploited in the recent past to prevent permitted changes between, for example, offices and dwellings. If an Article 4 direction is introduced in your area, you will want to be in possession of formal confirmation (via a Certificate of Lawfulness) that your change of use occurred before it took effect. Without this, you are likely to find yourself at risk of costly enforcement action and might, ultimately, be required to reinstate your property to its former use.

A nightmare scenario could see the owner of a site change its use from an office to a health centre, investing a lot of money in this change, but without taking the step of confirming formally its lawfulness via a straightforward and inexpensive Certificate of Lawfulness application. If the council then introduced an Article 4 direction, which prevented such a change, they could take enforcement action against the site owner. Unless the site owner could prove definitively that the change of use had occurred before the Article 4 direction took effect, they would almost certainly be required to return the site to its former use as an office.

Of course, this could all have been avoided if the site owner had simply applied for a Certificate of Lawfulness at the time of making their change. A Certificate of Lawfulness is the best protection against potential future enforcement action and will also prevent any uncertainties over the property's lawful use at the point of its lease or sale.

Andrew Cann, Director, Planning Direct



Headlam Group's new centre in Harris Way, Ipswich [Picture: Headlam Group]

Penn Commercial has played a vital role in the development of a new £26 million floor coverings distribution centre in Ipswich.

Headlam Group has unveiled its new premises in Harris Way, off Hadleigh Road, in Ipswich - on the site well-known as the former home of the Harris Bacon factory, which was once a major employer in the town.

Penn acquired the 19-acre site from the then-East of England Development Agency, for industrial, warehousing, commercial and manufacturing use.

Having carried out some remediation work, Penn was approached by Headlam PLC for a relocation from its existing premises in Hadleigh. Penn's architects drew up a scheme for the new distribution hub, and planning was submitted and gained.

Penn sold the site freehold to Headlam, who instructed Readie to do the build.

Vanessa Penn said: "This is one of the largest vacant industrial sites in the town and it is exciting news for Ipswich that a large local company is creating 80 new job opportunities here."

The new owner, the Headlam Group, is Europe's largest distributor of floor coverings, providing the link between suppliers and customers across the UK and continental Europe. It wants to create growth capacity and provide a better service to customers through the new distribution centre.

Headlam Group's new 190,000 sq.ft. development houses the long-established Faithfulls and Garrods businesses from nearby Hadleigh, with their 100-strong workforce, and 80 new jobs have also been created. Headlam has said that it hopes to be taking on more staff, as the business grows and operations ramp up.

The project - which cost £26 million - means that long-established firms Faithfull and Garrods now have a state-of-the-art facility, which is around twice the size of their previous premises.

The centre has an eaves height of almost 56ft, 10.6 million cubic feet of capacity and substantial new warehousing, 30,000 rolls warehousing capacity, 9,000 pallet locations, two cutting tables, capable of a combined 100 cuts per hour, a sorting unit - with capacity to hold 2,500 cut-length pieces at any one time - and a large trade counter. Built on a brownfield site, the warehouse uses solar panels and other energy-efficient technologies.

David Ellesmere, Leader of Ipswich Borough Council, welcomed the development, hailing it as good news for Ipswich. "It has been a vacant site for many years and it is great to see it being developed and get jobs created on site."



Underlay in racking at Headlam Group's new centre in Harris Way, Ipswich [Picture: Headlam Group]

An introduction to... Mike Simpson, FRICS

Mike Simpson, FRICS, formerly a partner of Clarke and Simpson, has gained over 35 years' experience in estate agency and general practice surveying. Mike provides consultancy and EPC assessments at Penn Commercial.

Here, we find out more about what Mike brings to the comprehensive Penn team:

Why have you chosen to work with Penn?

Penn Commercial are clearly a go-ahead firm and very active in East Anglia; I was pleased to have the opportunity of being involved in a small way in what they are looking to achieve in a region I know well.

What is the scope of the services that you offer at Penn?

Besides the (relatively) recently-acquired expertise in Energy Efficiency matters, as they relate to property, I can draw on years of general practice experience in terms of contacts gained and skills developed in the property world; these embrace both commercial and residential environments and a broad spectrum of past case studies.

You are a Fellow of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. How did you attain this prestigious accreditation? And how does it enhance your professional offering to clients?

Being elected as a Fellow of the RICS was a qualification I was very pleased to accept, after many years of service in the property sector; it is a benchmark that hopefully provides an element of confidence to people who I am dealing with and, of course, they will know that I have to work within a strict code of conduct.

What brings you most satisfaction in your role at Penn?

Working amongst a team of dedicated professionals, under the leadership of Vanessa Penn, gives me the most satisfaction in my role with the firm. But there are many other benefits as well.



Transactions

Penn Commercial has been instructed as agent for a number of prestigious developments:

NEW INSTRUCTION:



Claydon 52 Office Campus

Old Ipswich Road, Claydon

New B1 office units to let / for sale in the high-specification location of Claydon, Ipswich. Units are available with a ground floor area of 111 sq.m. / 1,194 sq.ft., including lobby / kitchen / WC, and a potential first floor within the attic truss of 67 sq.m. / 721 sq.ft. Units can be combined.

The 2.21-acre site features generous parking for staff and visitors, within landscaped grounds.

NEW INSTRUCTION:



Beamish Hub Business Space

Ransomes Europark, Ipswich

Fitted business units on Ransomes Europark in Ipswich, in close proximity to the A14 and A12. Highly energy-efficient, with rents including building insurance and service charges. Bringing a straightforward concept to a commercial working environment.

Beamish Hub on Ransomes Europark comprises 16 high quality business units ranging from approximately 550 sq.ft. to 1,000 sq.ft.

LET:



The Old Airfield

Town Lane, Wetheringsett cum Brockford, Stowmarket

Acting for the landlord, Mendlesham Homes, Penn Commercial has let this concrete hard-standing plot to container transportation company, James Kemball Limited. The site is suitable for a variety of uses, including lorry parking and storage, and the buildings on-site will be retained by the client for their own use.

NEW INSTRUCTION:

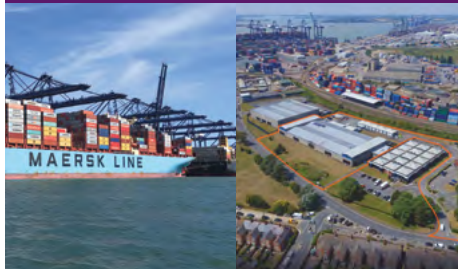


Zizzi

13 St Nicholas Street, Ipswich

Prominent town centre restaurant, at the heart of the 'Saints District', which has recently become available to let or for sale. Fully-fitted and available for immediate occupation. Rent and price on application.

SOLD:



Headquarters Building

Felixstowe

Sold on behalf of Itron - approx. 79,000 sq.ft., site of 6.3 acres.

SOLD:



9 & 11 Museum Street

Ipswich

SOLD, freehold town centre 4,837 sq. ft. office building for residential conversion.

PENN AFFILIATES

We recommend using our business affiliate partners, who offer a variety of services to our clients...

Gotelee Solicitors
Trebuchet Creative

Pound Gates
Ellisons Solicitors

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