

For unrivalled knowledge of commercial property in the East of England

property focus

YOUR PROACTIVE FOUNDATION FOR SUCCESS

SPRING/SUMMER 2022 ISSUE



Welcome to our first newsletter of 2022!

The first quarter of this year seems to have flown by, with 2022 starting off with a flurry of activity, particularly across the industrial and logistics sectors.

All the experts are talking about industrial becoming the 'new retail' and property funds are continuing to focus on acquisitions, both of existing investments, logistic hubs and open storage. Penn Commercial has recently sold a strategic site in the region, comprising 63 acres, for mid- and big-box development.

We were delighted to have been awarded 'Most Active Agent in Suffolk' for 2021, with 465,000 square feet of transactions and our Associate Robin Cousins was placed second in East Anglia for the greatest number of deals transacted, particularly in the leasing sector. Notably, Penn Commercial celebrates its 15th year of trading in October.

There are several new commercial schemes in the pipeline, both offices and industrial, for delivery in late 2022/2023; these will provide much-needed stock for the local area.

The Sizewell C project is now backed by a Government stake and the key date for the decision is 25th May 2022. The project will fuel activity from contractors and ancillary services seeking warehousing, hardstanding and outside storage



over the term of the contract. You can read more on page 3.

The next quarter may be somewhat challenging, with the moratorium on rents ending on 25th March 2022. This prevented landlords from being able to evict tenants for rent arrears. The Commercial Rent (Coronavirus) Bill is now intended to resolve disputes between commercial landlords and tenants; as always, Penn will be working with landlords and tenants to secure the best outcomes for all parties involved.

We would like to thank all our clients for supporting us in 2021 and helping us to become Suffolk's leading independent commercial property agent. We are looking forward to continuing to work with you again this year and wish you every business success.

Vanessa Penn
Managing Director, Penn Commercial



2021 WINNER
MOST ACTIVE AGENT SUFFOLK

TOP IN EG'S 'ON-DEMAND RANKINGS' FOR SUFFOLK IN 2021

Penn Commercial is celebrating being confirmed as Suffolk's top commercial property agent in EG's 'On-Demand Rankings' for the whole of 2021, covering industrial, retail and office sales and lettings throughout the year.

Penn Commercial achieved a total of 68 deals between 1st January and 31st December 2021 inclusive, across all commercial sectors, equating to 464,515 square feet.

Associate Robin Penn was also named second highest-achieving commercial property agent in the East of England over the same period, with a total of 39 deals of 188,763 square feet.

In addition, EG confirmed that Penn Commercial came fifth in the whole of the East of England for the industrial sector in 2021, transacting a total of 367,195 square feet.

Penn Commercial partners with ABP to secure Enterprise Rent-A-Car in Lowestoft

Penn Commercial – as joint agent with Cushman & Wakefield – is pleased to have arranged the successful lease of Associated British Port's (ABP's) 0.52-acre site at Battery Green Road, Lowestoft to international car hire specialist, Enterprise Rent-A-Car Ltd, for a period of 20 years. Located within the boundary of the Port of Lowestoft, the site was formerly a hand car wash.

Kevin Fosbury, Senior Surveyor, Associated British

Ports, commented:

"We're delighted to welcome the international car hire specialist, Enterprise Rent-A-Car Ltd, to our Port of Lowestoft, in partnership with Penn Commercial.

ABP Lowestoft, together with our two other East Anglian ports, King's Lynn and Ipswich, contributes £360 million to the economy and supports 5,300 jobs."



INCLUDED IN THIS ISSUE:

'Opportunity in Adversity'

Helping to Manage Diversification

The steels are going up at Orwell Logistics Park

Transactions & New Instructions

STRONG DEMAND ACROSS ALL SECTORS – FREEHOLD & LEASEHOLD

We are finding that across all markets – retail, office and industrial – there is a surplus of high-quality tenants and purchasers and a lack of stock. So, if you have any new instructions, please let us know. Attractive yields available.



‘OPPORTUNITY IN ADVERSITY’

Penn Commercial acts for Suffolk Food Hall, on the outskirts of Ipswich, which is a prime example of successful diversification into food and recreation.

Oliver Paul, co-owner of Suffolk Food Hall, explains how the business has been thriving and growing, in spite of recent commercial challenges:

How would you describe Suffolk Food Hall?

“We are a comprehensive farm shop with a restaurant and a café, and a lettings business offering ancillary health and well-being services; set within the stunning Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty along the River Orwell.”



“Food is at the heart of what we do, and we pride ourselves on being able to tell our customers the whole story – from beast to feast, as it were.”

“We are a consumer-led business, and listening to our customers, staff and suppliers is key. We are always thinking about how we can add to the experience that we offer, increasing people’s interest and, by association, their spend potential.”

How have you found the past two years?

“The Covid-19 trading period has taught us all a great deal; as owners, colleagues and also customers. Customers have come to value independent retailers, and to understand the point of difference that we offer versus the multiples. It is easier for us, as a small independent business, to adapt quickly.”

“Many people have discovered us during this time; have liked what they have found and have kept coming back.”

How do you see the future of retail?

“Retail is evolving to be a service. With the ‘Amazonisation’ of consumer habit, there is a golden opportunity for physical venues to stand out by doing something not available online. Some call it ‘experiential retail’.”

“At Suffolk Food Hall, we are clear on what we do; we are not going for the bulk of grocery spend, rather we act as an extension of people’s recreational activity.”

“Local independent businesses are well-placed to provide something that is led by quality and service, rather than cost and convenience.”

How long has Suffolk Food Hall worked with Penn Commercial?

“Since we started in 2007, we have only ever used Penn Commercial to find other businesses that subscribe to our proposition. They take the time to gain a broader understanding of our site and strategic goals, and put forward unsolicited and imaginative ideas to further the business’ outreach.”

You can read the full interview with Oliver Paul on the Penn Commercial website under the ‘News’ section.

To find out more about Suffolk Food Hall, visit <https://suffolkfoodhall.co.uk/>

HELPING TO MANAGE DIVERSIFICATION



Penn Commercial has assisted local farmers with a number of successful diversification schemes, as the EU subsidies that were previously on offer are phased out.

With the shortage of storage space close to the Port of Felixstowe, Suffolk has seen a surge in demand for land and industrial/warehouse units. Farmers with large, under-utilised barns or other agricultural buildings are often in an ideal position to diversify into commercial property, and the increase in achievable rents is making this an attractive and financially-viable option.

Many of the land holdings benefit from good access to the A14/A12 and comprise redundant agricultural buildings, able to be converted to industrial/warehouse accommodation, with planning consent. This is often cost-effective and can provide yields of up to 10-15%.

Where farmers have surplus land holdings, then they can apply for planning for larger ‘sheds’, which can be leased out, rather than sold; thereby remaining in family ownership and able to be managed accordingly.

Penn Commercial is pleased to be involved in several of these management scenarios, including Sycamore Farm, Bramford, Ipswich, where it sourced seven tenants to occupy circa 14,000 sq ft.

Sycamore Farm owner Graeme Keep has entrusted Penn Commercial to manage and oversee his property portfolio for eight years. “I have absolute confidence in the quality of the service that I receive from Penn Commercial in looking after my property interests,” he said. “They save me a lot of work, time and money, with their efficient and proactive management of my properties.”

Other schemes include Old Park Farm, Letheringham, where buildings comprising former chicken and hay sheds have been converted, as well as some new builds on surplus land. Ambitious schemes such as Park Farm Barns, at Wherstead, Ipswich saw planning consent achieved for 48,000 sq ft of B1/B8 new build space, which will replace the existing out-of-date farm buildings.

Penn Commercial provides a complete service, from lettings to full property management. Please contact Vanessa Penn on **01473 211933** or email vanessa@penncommercial.co.uk for advice or a no-obligation quotation.

BY SPECIAL INVITATION!

Vanessa Penn visited the Mercers Hall, the home of the oldest livery company – of some 700 years – in the UK in Ironmongers Lane, London.

As part of a special invitation, Vanessa was given a tour of the Court Rooms, Dining Hall, Offices and the Ambulatory, which was housing a collection of paintings from the National Gallery, including a portrait featuring one of which features Cardinal Thomas Wolsey, one of Ipswich’s most famous residents.



The steels are going up at Orwell Logistics Park

Construction is well under way at Orwell Logistics Park (OLP), strategically located on the doorstep of the Port of Felixstowe – the UK's busiest container port – and the steels are now going up for Units 1 and 2.

Penn Commercial – partnering with developer Equation Properties and fund BentallGreenOak as the local letting agent – is receiving an increasing number of enquiries regarding the scheme.

Once complete, OLP will deliver one million square feet of new speculative-build industrial / distribution space.

Phase One will provide five speculative-build units, available from Quarter 3 2022:

Unit 1 – 300,000 sq ft / Unit 2 – 255,300 sq ft /

Unit 3 – 44,455 sq ft / Unit 4 – 53,790 sq ft / Unit 5 – 25,335 sq ft

Phase Two will be available to pre-let from Quarter 2 2023, comprising Unit 6, with a total area of 500,000 square feet.



To register your interest or to request further information, please contact Vanessa Penn on **01473 211933** / vanessa@penncommercial.co.uk

To view the 'Live Cam' on-site footage, or to find out more, go to <https://orwelllogisticspark.co.uk>

Felixstowe Focus

In recent months, the Penn team have been spending a lot of time in the popular coastal resort of Felixstowe, on a wide range of different properties...

SOLD:



4 PARKER AVENUE

Sale of the 99-year long leasehold interest in this prominent Felixstowe site, comprising 59,317 sq ft (5,511 sq m), approx. gross internal area, 3.57 acres (1.44ha), offices 3,549 sq ft (330 sq m), store / plant room 3,219 sq ft (299 sq m), with 55 HGV and car parking spaces.

LET:



87 HAMILTON ROAD

A new way to enjoy business space is being launched in Felixstowe by business support organisation, MENTA, at 87 Hamilton Road – the 2,126 sq ft (198 sq m) former 'Yours' ladies fashion store. The new @Inc. Felixstowe enterprise – set to open its doors at the end of April / early May 2022 – will complement MENTA's highly-successful business space @Inc. Bury St Edmunds, in the town's Kings Road.

LET:



102A HAMILTON ROAD

American pizza chain Papa John's has been given the go-ahead by East Suffolk Council to change the use of 102a Hamilton Road to a takeaway restaurant, creating 20 new jobs in the town.

FOR SALE:



55 HAMILTON ROAD

A prominent ground floor retail space (formerly Marks & Spencer) in the town centre, next to Caffè Nero and close to Peacocks, Santander, Iceland, Coes and WH Smith.

- Would suit other uses (e.g. A3 restaurant), subject to planning permission
- Planning approved for conversion of upper floors to residential accommodation comprising 14 apartments (no affordable or 106)

TEAM PENN TALKS TO THE ANIMALS!

The Penn team took time out of the office on 23rd February and visited local attraction, Jimmy's Farm & Wildlife Park, to spend time with the animals and show support for a growing business, just on our doorstep.

A delicious breakfast was enjoyed by all at the Barn Restaurant, with a range of local and exotic wildlife on display at the Farm, from goats and chickens to meerkats and camels!



Pictured at Jimmy's Farm on 23rd February: Left to right, Penn's Rachael Jackson, Tracy Vale, Robin Cousins, Vanessa Penn and Paul Keen.

Sudbury restaurant The Case gets a new lease of life



Penn Commercial is delighted to have arranged the freehold sale of historic restaurant The Case in Assington, Sudbury, where there has been a hostelry on site since the 19th Century.

We wish the new owner Vanessa Taffs and family a great start with their new restaurant venture and letting rooms.

'LOGISTICS AND WAREHOUSING ON A NUCLEAR SCALE' EVENT TO SHAPE THE FUTURE OF SIZEWELL C

Penn Commercial was pleased to attend Suffolk Chamber of Commerce's 'Logistics and Warehousing on a nuclear scale' discussion on the plans for Sizewell C, held at Trinity Park Events, Ipswich on 21st March.

EDF's proposals for Sizewell C – to be built next to the existing Sizewell B, which began operating in 1995 – would see the creation of a 3.2-gigawatt power station to provide reliable low-carbon electricity. Once built, Sizewell C would generate 7% of the UK's electricity and provide low-carbon electricity for at least 60 years and employ 900 people, in addition to the thousands of support roles required.

Speaking after the event, Ashley Shorey-Mills, Head of Supply Chain Engagement at the Suffolk Chamber of Commerce, told us:

"Working closely with companies like Penn Commercial gives us the chance to evidence first-hand the benefit local business can bring to the project. That local and regional commitment to the businesses we represent is essential and we will ensure that those commitments are achieved and, where possible, exceeded."

On 25th February 2022, the Planning Inspectorate submitted its report and recommendation to the Secretary of State on whether to grant Sizewell C a 'Development Consent Order' ('DCO'). This followed a six-month examination process that ran from April to October 2021.

The Secretary of State will now have until 25th May 2022 to make a decision on whether to approve the DCO application, which would provide consent to build Sizewell C.



Well-deserved recognition for Tracy Vale!

These gorgeous flowers brought a smile to the face of Property Assistant Tracy Vale on 31st March – an unseasonably snowy Spring day – in recognition of a 'job well done' and for her efforts in going above and beyond in the office. Well done, Tracy!



PENN AFFILIATES



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

Ellisons Solicitors
Eric Dines Carpets & Flooring

Fusion Sign Systems
Guymer King

Heronbuild
Lucid Systems
Office IS Solutions

Planning Direct
Trebuchet
Woodward Markwell

Transactions & New Instructions

Penn Commercial has been proactive in a number of transactions and new instructions:

FOR SALE / TO LET:



Suffolk Central Stowmarket West, Suffolk Central Business Park, Stowmarket

The Suffolk Central Stowmarket West scheme presents an exciting and exclusive opportunity to purchase or let high-quality office premises in a desirable location in Suffolk, adjacent to the main A14 corridor, and equidistant to Ipswich and Bury St Edmunds. They would also suit other uses, subject to planning permission.

Each office benefits from: Ample car parking spaces • Glazed boardroom / meeting room • Fully-fitted kitchen • Disabled WC, with shower and changing room • High-speed fibre internet connection • Raised floors • Suspended ceilings • Reverse cycle air conditioning • Three-phase electricity supply

SOLD:



66 Thoroughfare, Woodbridge

Freehold sale of this Grade II Listed bookshop and three-bedroom flat in the heart of Woodbridge.

TO LET:



33 Westgate Street, Ipswich

3-storey premises, former fashion store, total floor area approx. 426.5 sq m (4,591 sq ft). To let on a new lease at £35,000 per annum exclusive, plus VAT. Would suit other commercial uses.

- Occupying a prominent corner location in the town centre
- Attractive Grade II Listed building, high pedestrian footfall
- Close to Marks & Spencer, Primark, Clarks, W H Smith, Caffè Nero and Starbucks

LET:



2nd Floor, Fraser House, Museum Street, Ipswich

3,043 sq ft of high-quality office space let to Attwells Solicitors LLP on a five-year lease.