



Blandford + Commercial Situation – A short report

On 4 & 5 October contact was made with the Dorset Chamber of Commerce & Industry via the Dorset Local Enterprise partnership and the Dorset Gateway Agency together with the commercial departments of local estate agents including Chaffers, Humberts, Horder (who have no commercial dept), Symonds and Sampson, Goadsby, Connells and Jackson-Stops. Not all replied to the request for information.

Those contacted were asked the following question: -

“In your experience what is the current demand for business units?”

Retail.

The town centre retail market is very poor and likely to get worse. Despite the market condition rents remain unchanged and there is little prospect of business rates review. All town centre units, of whatever category are struggling. Only charity shops without the business rate burden are stable. The out of town retail units are static although there is room for more limited growth in this category.

Office Units

The market is poor for town centre office space but the same is not true for rental or shared out of town space which is in a better situation. Serviced offices or ‘hot desk’ units are doing well and the requirement likely to grow over the next few years. As work from home becomes even more popular the need for serviced office facilities will grow.

Industrial

There is no current requirement for the larger industrial units and the situation will probably remain unchanged over the next few years. The same is not true for smaller units at 2000sq ft and below which is very buoyant, and units go as soon as they appear on the market. This requirement is expected to grow over the next few years.

General

The poor NS communication links and no ready access to rail services was mentioned on a number of occasions. This is perceived as a major limiting factor to commercial expansion and prosperity over the longer term. The ‘Brexit factor’ is not seen as significant in this respect.

Blandford St Mary

5 October 2018