

Our ref: **AM/57TheBroadway1**

Your ref:

Mr W Moore
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*Also at Brighton & Hove
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Date: 31 March 2026

Dear Mr Moore,

Re: 57 The Broadway, Haywards Heath

Following our recent correspondence, I understand that you require some commentary from us in relation to your proposed planning application in relation to the above premises.

As you will be aware, the existing ground floor commercial unit provides a retail area of 77.9 sq m (840 sq ft) and under its current configuration provides a front customer retail area accessed from The Broadway with a kitchen to the rear. I understand that as part of your planning application and proposed alteration of the premises you are looking to reduce the ground floor offering to circa 63.1 sq m (680 sq ft) in order to facilitate the necessary communal areas in relation to the proposed residential scheme to the rear. However, I further understand that as part of the works you will be including the lower ground floor area of 32.1 sq m (345 sq ft) which previously was only utilised by the residential section of the building. Therefore, the total net internal area of the commercial element will be 95.2 sq m (1,025 sq ft). This reflects a reduction in the ground floor space of around 19% but increases the total commercial element by 22%.

As you may be aware, we have let a reasonable number of similar retail units within the town centre along The Broadway, South Road, and Sussex Road specifically and have a few still on the market. In our experience it has been these smaller, lower cost retail units that we have managed to dispose of with greater ease than the larger premises. One specific example is a parade of six retail units in the centre of Haywards Heath, three of which were single-fronted, small retail unit, whilst the other three were large double-fronted units. All three small units let within a reasonable timeframe, whilst the last of the double-fronted units was only let recently on flexible terms after a marketing period of c. 12 months. Whilst significantly larger than the subject premises, we are finding there is very little interest for the Côte premises a few doors along and are generally finding a push towards smaller retail units from parties looking to occupy premises within the town.

We believe that this is largely down to the increase in costs from utilities, insurance, staff wages, and business rates. As I am sure you are aware, the new 2026 rating is about to come into effect and when looking at the vast majority of retail premises we have been involved with or asked to investigate, it would appear the business rates are going to increase somewhat and, in certain circumstance, the rateable value of units has increased from being below the £12,000 small business rates threshold to above £15,000 where the full 49.9p proportion is paid.

Whilst it is hard to comment on the layout that every occupier would be wanting, I feel your proposed changes to the commercial accommodation at 57 The Broadway are likely to assist in securing a tenant, given from a retail point of view occupiers are seemingly wanting smaller retail offerings but with the ability to store excess stock on site in a separate area that attracts a lower level of rent on a per sq ft basis.

Whilst we are finding that there is generally a strong level of demand from nail bar and barber type operators at present we are seeing an increased level of demand from professional occupiers looking to utilise retail premises instead of offices, given that it provides a lighter area environment and allows them to advertise their business to the public with greater ease by utilising the shop fascia and front window. There is also a reasonably positive response from generic retailers when we are placing properties on the market, again generally for the smaller, more affordable properties.

I trust the above clarifies our views on your proposed planning application but if you would like to discuss the matter further, please do let me know.

Yours sincerely,

