

The I.O.W. Espresso Co.  
85a St James Street  
Newport  
Isle of Wight, PO30 1LG

[www.iow-espresso.co.uk](http://www.iow-espresso.co.uk)  
Tel: 01983 857670  
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**REQUEST FOR SPECIAL PURCHASE**  
**Title Numbers 24988 & 31031**

9<sup>th</sup> June 2022

Dear Sirs,

We are writing to request being allocated Special Purchaser status for the property known as Redbrick Warehouse, Blackhouse Quay, Little London, PO30 5YH and adjacent land.

### Background

The IOW Espresso Co. is a long-standing, well respected and award-winning local Island family business that, despite the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, has continued a programme of growth and investment, helping to regenerate the areas it operates in, including the previously abandoned former Beavis's building in St James Street, and creating local jobs. We have a diverse and robust business with a well-structured and achievable plan for continued growth over the next 10 years, building on our existing and award-winning track record. Part of this plan is the investment in our existing sites which is only possible with the assurances of long-term tenure. Given our initial discussions with the Council Officers, we believe there is mutual benefit to the IW Council, the general Newport Harbour area and The IOW Espresso Co if we are able to purchase the freehold of the current sites at Blackhouse Quay, namely the Redbrick Warehouse and the adjacent land for which we are the incumbent leaseholders with a remaining lease in-excess of 90 years and on a peppercorn rent. We feel it is worth mentioning that we would also be interested in the piece of land north of our site should it become available to preserve as usable outside space for both our customers and the general public. Currently un-curated, it is an area that is neglected without a purpose which then attracts the wrong kind of attention. We would ultimately like to link this area with a footpath along the front of the site which would give it a purpose and make it a meaningful part of the area. We would intend to manage this along the lines of English Nature, encouraging wildlife birds and insects to thrive, whilst offering up the views to the river and a soft transition from riverbank walk to Urban arrival at Newport.

As the incumbent lease holders and sole occupiers for both properties, we have always worked proactively with the IW Council as well as being actively engaged with the consultation process for the Newport Harbour Regeneration plans, with our own investment and growth plans very much in-line with the Council's plans for regenerating the area.

### Investment Plans

We have a multifaceted long-term growth and investment plan in sustainable phases. With the existing long-term tenure of the adjacent land, we have already invested in regenerating the brownfield site with the building of a new warehouse unit which will enable a more efficient and modern process to keep pace with the increase in output on our wholesale business. In turn, this will then allow us to clear and invest in the existing Redbrick Warehouse which requires significant works just to bring it up to a fully usable condition. This includes, but is not limited to, removal of a suspected asbestos roof which has not been fully watertight since before our lease ownership, stabilisation & rebuilding of part of the walls, external industrial door replacement and connection to a drainage solution. However, given the state of the property and the amount of investment needed to regenerate the building to only a basic shell standard, we would wish to fully regenerate the building to include the above along with looking to improve its flood resilience and to allow it to be used as a multi-use space centred around a coffee & tea environment, encouraging a range of

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cliental to form a hub for both local Island residents and visitors alike as well as incorporating some co-working space.

Alongside this regeneration project, we would also like to then lease an area of the waterfront to provide a variety of floating amenities such as eco-focussed holiday accommodation, guest pontoons and landside facilities to also encourage increased visitors and use of the River Medina to further support the overall regeneration of the Newport Harbour area, including the possibility of cycle hire and water sports such as paddle boarding/kayaking.

### Track Record

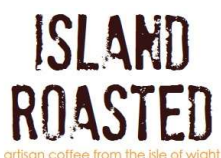
As we have grown our business, we have established a proven track record of generating business growth and job creation, particularly for younger workers under 25, and investing in our home community. We have won awards across the breadth of our business and brands, from our overarching IOW Espresso Co. business to our Island Roasted & Wight Label product brands as well as for our flagship café & retail space – Caffè Isola – which has not only been recognised for its achievements as a destination, but also for the regeneration and refurbishment of the former Beavis’s building which had been left empty and in desperate need of repairs, yet retaining the wonderful architectural and historic elements of the former church lecture hall. In doing so, we have spearheaded a sustained re-independence of the upper St James Street area, significantly increasing footfall, the attraction of other shops to the street and increase in economic activity in this part of Newport. This required significant private investment by us to achieve and has produced a site unlike any other on the Island, but its popularity shows that we understand the coffee-related sector and operate at the forefront, providing space for business workers, local residents and visitors alike. We are certain we will achieve a similar growth in economic activity following our focussed and targeted investment in the Redbrick Warehouse site and, although the overall usage and draw of the site will be different to that of our Town Centre Caffè Isola location, we understand what combination of use-cases for the site will draw people into our coffee-centred offering.

Our track record however is not limited to our public-only facing business activities and we remain a key local producer with our Wight Marque Island Roasted artisan hand roasted coffee brand at the heart of our business-to-business and wholesale arm. With our sustained growth in overall production we will continue to create jobs within our production, sales, equipment, servicing and training roles providing multi-faceted opportunities for local people with a mixture of skills.

### Impact

As the area already lies within the boundary that the Council desires private investment to fund regeneration and, given that our plans are very much aligned to the Council’s desired regeneration outcomes as well as the current state of the Redbrick Warehouse building being in very poor repair, the impact of this proposal is entirely positive and with no risk to the Council. The key impact points are:

- Regenerates a currently dilapidated Council owned building
- Regenerates a Brownfield site within the boundary of the Newport Harbour Master Plan
- Generates immediate revenue for the Council to fund other regeneration projects
- Provides a destination for the harbourside area, tying in with the cycle path, industrial estates and walking routes between Newport town, IW College and Hospital
- Generates local jobs
- Provides a multi-use, multi-faceted and robust economic regeneration of the area



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- Will set the standards for quality, local business private investment in the Harbour Regeneration Plan (where private investment is crucial to the regeneration plan's success)
- Supports a long-standing local family business in its sustainable long-term growth

## Considerations

The two sites, although open to each other, are on separate Titles and leases, with the adjacent land still on a current lease with over 90 years left to run and only a peppercorn rent of £25.00 per annum meaning this Title currently is of negligible value to the Council in both the short and long-term. The Redbrick Warehouse (annual rental £150.00), whilst currently tied over, is subject to Landlord and Tenants which limits options and interests of other potential interested parties. It also requires significant investment simply to keep safe which, without us as the incumbents, will fall on the IW Council to fund and also makes its value to any other interested party limited in both type of interested parties and monetary value of the site. The site will then require even more investment in order to regenerate and, as such, not only is there a risk of the site producing no revenue in the short-terms and only limited revenue in the mid to long-term for the Council, there is also the risk that without, The IOW Espresso Co moving forward with the proposal to purchase, the site may indeed end up being a short to mid-term cost to the Council.

With the amount of investment required, no party would realistically regenerate the site without securing the site for the long-term in order to see a return on that investment.

For the existing site, we have already completed our due diligence in accordance to Planning requirements for the regeneration of the adjacent land and as we have operated from the existing Redbrick Warehouse site for a number of years we have ongoing excellent relations with the neighbouring businesses and house boats which will be enhanced further as more economic activity comes into the area through our regeneration plans. We also have the support of Councillors Julie Jones-Evans and Matt Price as the members for adjacent wards.

## Conclusion

As the incumbents and with our investment and growth plans well aligned with the Councils Newport Harbour Regeneration Master Plan, we are best suited and best placed to achieve regeneration of the site whilst creating more local jobs and providing an immediate revenue for the Council to further achieve other regeneration projects within the area. We have the proven track record, robustness, skills and long-term commitment to achieve this and, as such, we ask that we are considered as a Special Purchaser for the sites in order to move the regeneration of the area forward.

Yours Sincerely,

Colin Burgess  
Founding Partner  
The IOW Espresso Co.

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### Site Overview



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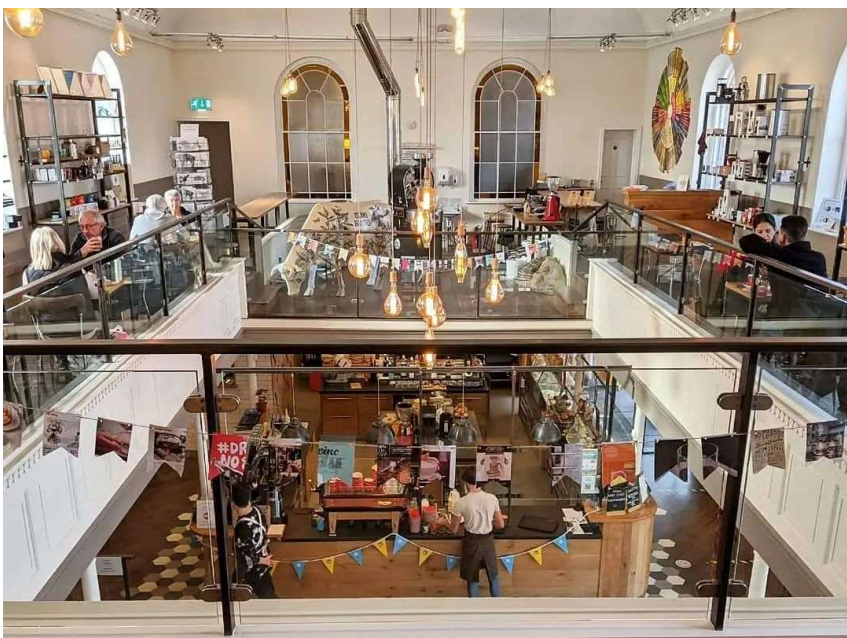
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### Caffè Isola – Award-Winning Refurbishment, St James Street, Newport



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