

Workplace Consultancy



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Workplace Consultancy

Our perceptions of how we work, where we work and the role of the workplace has changed.

If you're thinking about optimising your workspace, perhaps the first question you should ask is not *"how much space do I need"*, but *"does the space reflect our personality, culture, values and brand, and perhaps most importantly, the expectations of our employees"*.

That is one of our starting points.

Today's workplace has to meet well-being, as well as productivity goals. It has to create an environment which facilitates hybrid working practices, is sensitive to the needs of those who prefer 'quiet working' as well as encourage engagement, collaboration and productivity.

It also has to help attract and retain talent.

We know that every organisation has its own unique combination of collaborative spaces, hot desks, quiet rooms and multimedia hubs.

At Fisher German, we have all the expertise you will need throughout the lifecycle of your workplace - from conception to disposal. In real estate terms, from leasehold advice at inception, through to space planning, Building Consultancy and Business Rates Consultancy, to providing counsel on dilapidations and of course acquisition of new premises and disposal of unwanted workplaces advice.

In short, we can help you re-plan, relocate, or refurbish your workplace.

Our Workplace Consultancy process starts with a simple conversation to understand your organisation, your challenges and your vision. After a thorough analysis of the leaders' strategic, financial and occupational requirements, we seek out employees' views and recommendations and translate all this intel into the reality of bricks and mortar.

We provide the leadership team with a detailed and costed report which includes:

- Conclusions of our audit
- Recommendations and costed options analysis

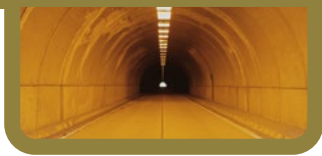
If you are starting to review your workplace strategy, or you are already at the point of considering the acquisition or disposal of your workplace, talk to us.

A short conversation could save you a lot of time and money

Joining the dots – between vision and reality



Vision, values, brief



Vision, values, brief

Working closely with the principal stakeholders, we start by dissecting the brief to understand the ambitions for the workplace and the organisation's requirements.

If the senior team agrees, we talk to departmental managers as well as employees to understand the reality of the issues they face and what they would like from their new/remodelled workplace – from health and safety issues, to security, sensitive/confidential environments, IT disruptions, etc.



Initial site suitability & assessment

Whether reimaging an existing workplace, or creating your ideal 'space' in a new location, there is a raft of critical housekeeping data which has to be determined at the outset.

Such as:

- Whether the refurbished or proposed new workspace is the right size
- Does it have the correct services to accommodate the new plans
- Does it have sufficient natural light
- Does the HVAC* infrastructure which is fit for purpose
- Will the electrical capacity meet the needs of the futureproofed new workplace

But above all, we will model the adaptations to the space to ensure the build costs for the fitout meet your objectives.

Timing is also key: how long will it take to fit-out the space, given the conclusions of the assessment audit.

These are the frequently asked questions, as well as the issues we will advise on and help you address.

*Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning



Space planning

Whether planning the layout of a new workplace, or reworking an existing space, we consider every aspect of how the space will be deployed.

Our initial space audit shapes the recommendations we make – from future proofing the space and ensuring it reflects current and potential work practices, to the utilisation of the layout, rethinking and maximising storage choices and design choices (including biophilic recommendations, finishes and coverings) to ensure your brand and corporate philosophy ambitions are met.

Recommendations are carefully developed to ensure they reflect our clients' occupational requirements, colour palates, values and ambitions.



Turning the brief into reality

Once we have drilled deep into the brief and understood the complex interactions of people, activity, corporate ambitions and how the workplace will be used, we start developing detailed ideas.

This is the bridge between the brief/vision and the physical constraints of reality.

When the strategy and plans have been ratified by the Client Team, we create high-quality CAD/CAM files to facilitate informed decision-making, as well as eliminating any ambiguity during the tendering stage - this ensures complete understanding of the task, from a contractor's perspective – and enables the accurate pricing of every aspect of the initiative.

The plans we submit include precise details such as:

- Meeting rooms, collaboration centres, quiet zones, desk area design and size options
- Social areas, kitchen and washroom facilities' designs
- Partitioning layouts – where they will be and what (materials) they will comprise
- Fire safety and exit points
- Roof and plant equipment plans
- Floorcovering options
- Wellbeing factors including air conditioning, air extraction systems, lighting design plans
- Infrastructure elements such as power arrangements, data infrastructure, audio-visual recommendations, emergency lighting
- Safety features such as emergency (escape) signage and exit routes to meet Building Control measures



Project management

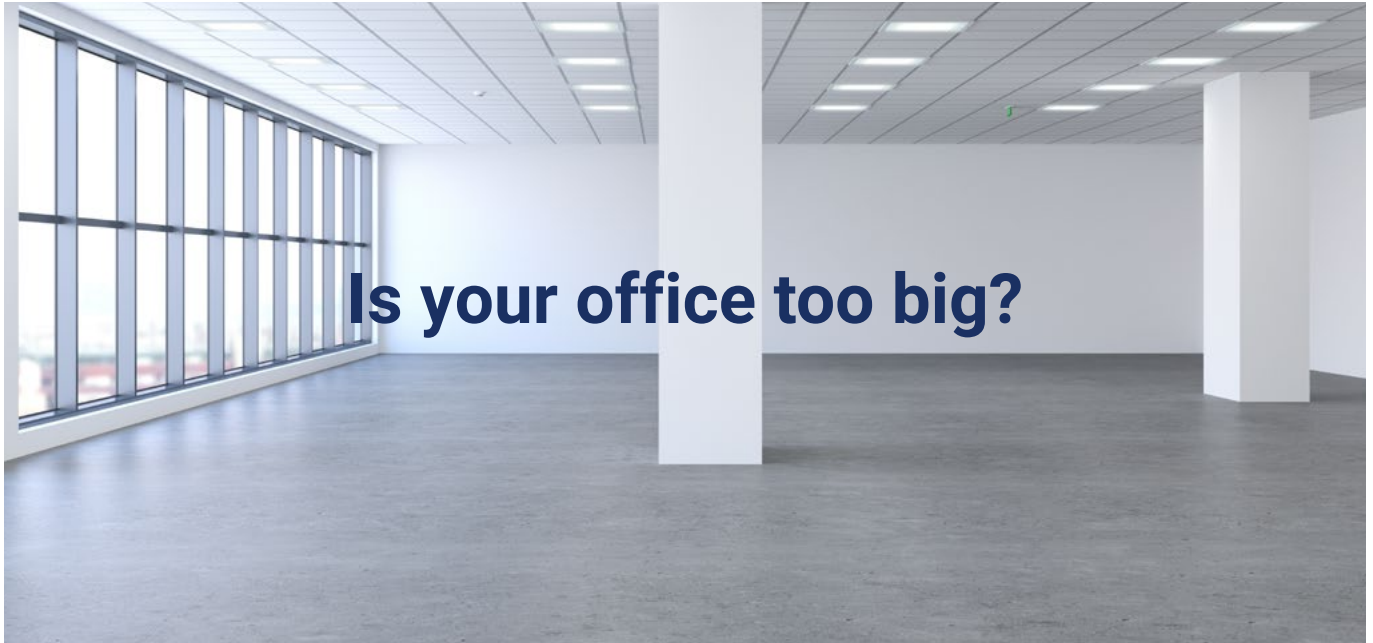
Once the plan is agreed upon and validated costs are signed off, work begins in earnest.

Whether we are re-shaping an existing premises, or creating a new workplace to meet your financial, occupational and brand requirements, our application is focused on delivery - on time, of budget and on spec.

We:

- Select the contractors with a proven and relevant track record to bid for the refurbishment/fit-out work
- Brief them thoroughly, to ensure the submissions from the invited bidders are detailed enough for us to make an informed decision as to who we would recommend our clients appoint
- Part of our due diligence comprises:
 - Reviewing contractors' credentials and qualifications
 - Check case studies
 - Seek customer testimonials and/or site visits
 - Showroom visits
 - Price negotiations
- We manage the whole process: from contractor identification and selection to Project Management and ensuring the successful completion of the assignment

**Our job is to worry about and resolve all the 'little' things,
so you can focus on the big thing – doing your day job.**



What are your options?



Move to smaller premises if your lease allows



Sublet part of your premises if your lease allows



Renegotiate your lease



Let us do all your heavy lifting

Move if your lease allows it

If your lease allows you to move office there are many things to consider.

Start by considering your ideal location, preferred costs, size of premises, and timing.

Fortunately at Fisher German, our experts have the experience and expertise to help organisations like yours make the right decision.

However, if moving is not the right choice for you, consider your other options - we will happily explore these and take away the stress of even thinking about moving office - let alone project manage an activity which will inevitably distract you from your day job.

This would be the optimum result - if your lease is almost at an end, or you are approaching a lease break.

It will allow you to exit the contract and the space.

If you decide to move, a landlord may serve you with a claim for dilapidations. This sets out any repairs and/or remedial works, which you are contractually obliged to undertake. It could prove costly.

Some leases have a clause for 'Full Repairing and Insuring' (FRI), which requires the tenant to undertake a full repair of the property and decorate it before they hand it back to the landlord. Even if the property was in poor repair when you moved in, you will still be responsible for restoring it to an A1 condition before moving out – if you signed the contract without challenging this clause.

Many tenants will have entered into a Schedule of Condition, which ensures that a property does not have to be handed back in a better condition than when it was when the contract was signed.

Be careful, a landlord can also claim for the rent during the repair period – after you have vacated the premises.

If you move out without fulfilling any repairs and/or remedial work (as specified by your lease), your landlord will appoint a surveyor to prepare a Schedule of Dilapidations. This highlights all the remedial work required – which you will have to pay for.

- Protect yourself from this:
- Check your lease terms before signing it
- Ensure you have photographs/evidence of the condition of the premises when you moved in
- Negotiate from a position of knowledge/expertise – or appoint a Dilapidations professional to do it for you. It is worth speaking to a Building Surveyor, as a good one could save you significant time and money

Breathe. We know the best way to take the stress out of subletting



If your lease allows it, subletting may be an option for you.

But do secure your landlord's permission first.

When subletting, there are three key things to bear in mind:

1. How much will you charge for the space

Portal trawling could help you decide on an indicative price, but do seek the advice of a property professional first. They will have access to comparable data and good local knowledge of 'grey space'

2. What are you including in the rental charge

From access rights and broadband usage, to how the utility bills will be paid; consider whether you will share the cost (how do you define 'sharing'), or whether it will be included in the rental fee

3. Is your subletting contractual agreement in place

Before you even think about giving your new tenant a key to the space, ensure you have a subletting contract in place. Seek the advice of a property professional before entering into any agreement

Issues to consider include:

How do you find the right tenant – it's not just about finding them, it's also about checking their financial credentials and taking up and assessing their references

Manage the whole process whilst continuing to do your day job

We have a team of professionals, with a wealth of experience, who can help you every step of the way. This will allow you to do what you do best – focus on financial and corporate goals.

If sub-letting is not the right choice for you, take a look at your other options.



Renegotiating your lease – let us take the pain out of it

Renegotiating your lease can be daunting.

In reality, you're just looking for a fair deal for the premises you rent.

Our team of expert negotiators have considerable experience of working through all the complexities of your lease and will negotiate the best possible terms for you.

Because we have access to local market intel and historic (tenancy) data, we know how to secure a good 'deal' with landlords and how to counter any complex strategies they might adopt.

If renegotiating your lease is not the right choice for you, take a look at your other options.

Our team has just one goal - your success.

Finding the right advisors to help you make the right decisions for your business is a skill we have.

That is why we make sure we go the extra mile to make you comfortable and confident about the advice we give you and our implementation skills. Every member of our team has deep expertise and experience across a broad range of property disciplines, which ensures that our clients always get the right result, on the best terms, at the right time.

Review your workplace strategy

Is it time to review your workplace strategy and/or your financial relationship with your landlord.

Employees expectations of work practices have changed, which is why employers are now reviewing their workplace strategies. To ensure you secure the best 'space' on the optimum terms, research the market and identify the evidence you need to negotiate with your existing or prospective landlord.

Unless you are good at it, appoint a seasoned lease negotiator to represent your interests.

Many business owners/managers think that the only bargaining chip they have is rent. Wrong; there are other factors which need to be considered to ensure you do not commit to any expensive long term liabilities or, are locked into unfavourable (and expensive) terms.

Common lease negotiating variables include:

- Negotiate a lower rent
- Adjust the frequency of rent payment
- Soften repair obligations
- Add or remove break clauses
- Reduce the size of a premises
- Secure upgraded premises with the same landlord

NOTE: a landlord may have their own reasons for wanting to change the terms of a lease – for example, they may want to redevelop the property. It is important that you are aware of issues like this when entering into a renegotiation.



Thinking of moving, consider ...



Size and Purpose

how will you use the space & how big a space do you need



Location

what's the best option for your organisation



Costs

consider all costs, not just rent



Timing

what are your lease end/break commitments & what are your timescales



We explore all options... to ensure you make the right decision

If your office is too small, then consider all your options before you decide.

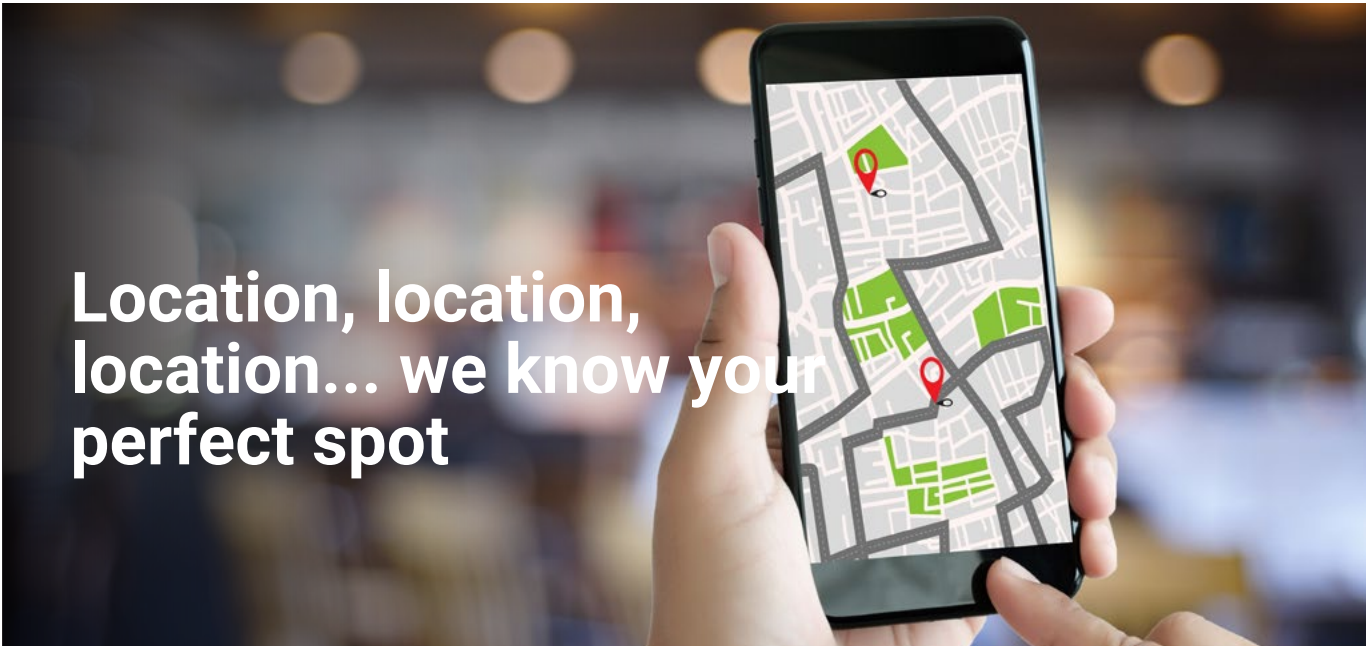
For example:

- Are you planning for sustained growth, temporary growth spurts, M&A, etc
- Will you adopt hybrid work practices (a combination of WFA* and working in the office)
- Will most of your team WFA* or will they all work in the office
- Will you adopt a hot desk and meeting/collaborative zones workplace strategy, or will your team return to dedicated desks

We are experts in helping organisations define their immediate and longer-term workplace requirements, which are aligned to their business plans. Our skill lies in helping them make informed decisions and minimise their short term (property) costs and long-term liabilities.

If moving workplace is not your preferred option, take a look at the other options available to you.

*Working From Anywhere



Location, location, location... we know your perfect spot

When you're looking for a new workplace remember, it's not just about price.

Consider:

- Your team's commute
- Accessibility to transport hubs and good parking
- What your premises says about your brand and your culture

We have almost 200 years' experience of helping clients find the best locations, on the best terms and advise them on the best fit-out for their budget and occupational requirements.

We know how to help clients make informed decisions, which meet their strategic, occupational and their financial requirements.

However, if moving office is not your preferred option, take a look at the other options available to you.



Negotiating costs is tough - we'll negotiate the best deal

Considering relocating your workplace - it is not all about rental costs ... that is just the tip of the iceberg.


You also have to consider other costs such as:

- Dilapidations on your existing premises
- Other contractual obligations
- Pre-acquisition surveys
- Fit-out and broadband connectivity
- Moving costs ... and so much more

The final bill could be far more than you anticipated, which is why we help you by identifying all potential property-related costs, negotiate those we can and ensure your immediate and longer-term liabilities are minimised.

We do everything we can to ensure that no unforeseen factors scupper your financial planning.

If you would like to find out how to best navigate potential (property-related) financial pitfalls, click the link below or contact one of our team and we will be happy to work through all your options and secure the best terms for your organisation.



**When time is of
the essence - you
can rely on us**

Moving office can be a huge drain on your most precious resource: time.

The process is often rushed, which leads to porous decision making, escalating costs and sleepless nights for senior executives.

Our team of experts can help reduce the pain, the costs and the time lost from protracted decision making – usually caused by lack of intel and/or experience of moving offices.

We let you focus on your day job by doing the heavy lifting when it comes to:

- Negotiating favourable terms (with both your existing and prospective landlord)
- Dealing with your legal team
- Advising on the design and fitout of the new office, as well as on health and safety issues
- The selection and installation of broadband and communication systems

Our property acquisition team understands what an organisation needs when it is moving and how to secure the best results.



Outgoings... consider the following



Cost management

Managing a commercial property portfolio includes monitoring and reviewing all costs and charges relating to the maintenance and general upkeep of premises.

Identify them, ascertain what they are and what they are for, and price-match them. But don't just look at the £££, consider service, reputation and track record.



Service charge

What are the costs of maintaining and repairing the property.

What is covered by a commercial property service charge will differ from unit to unit, but tenants can typically expect a service charge to include items such as:

- General interior or structural repairs
- Cleaning all areas
- Refuse and recycling collection
- Central heating
- CCTV security
- Air-conditioning systems
- Insurance costs
- Property management fees



Rent

Rent reviews are an integral part of commercial leases.

Typically, rent reviews happen every three to five years, but exactly when they occur will depend on the review clauses in the lease agreement.

In the UK, there are three common methods used to calculate the commercial rent:

1. Open market - how much is the property's current market value
2. Periodic - the rent will be reviewed at intervals detailed in the lease, in line with the Retail Price Index (RPI)
3. Turnover - how much rent should be paid based on a business's financial turnover. Turnover-based rental values are used in the retail sector



Utilities

Every organisation should review all its utilities' costs regularly/annually.

Unlike domestic energy users, they are offered bespoke energy quotes to reflect the needs and consumption patterns of the organisation, which means that business prices will vary and shopping around pays dividends.

When checking your utility charges, pay particular attention to the unit cost and the standing charge, as they make the biggest difference to the amount you pay for gas and electricity.

Unit cost - how much you will be charged for each kWh of energy used

Standing charge - a daily amount that covers the cost of transporting energy to your premises and maintaining the National Grid

For the latest information on the average business energy rates, visit the [UK Power website](#).



Business rates

Business rates are a tax on property applied to non-domestic premises.

Although your local council calculates and collects your business rates, they cannot change your rateable value or the multiplier - these are set nationally.

Whilst it can be difficult to change the amount you have to pay, you are within your right to challenge it. It might be worth speaking to a Business Rates Specialist.



If you'd like to speak to us
about your options,
then contact us today



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