



Planning Potential secured planning permission at Committee for Aldi's second store in Eastbourne, delivering additional retail options for residents living in the northeast of the town.

Planning Potential was instructed by Aldi Stores Ltd. to advise and assist in securing permission for a new store at Sovereign Harbour. The proposals deliver Aldi's second store in Eastbourne, helping to improve the retail offer of the area and promote more sustainable shopping patterns through reducing the need to travel.

The proposals had come forward as part of a wider development, also comprising a care home and retirement living facility. Combined, the applications would finally guarantee comprehensive delivery of a prominent site, which remained vacant, despite being allocated for development for over 30 years and benefiting from outline planning permission.

Planning Potential project managed the multi-disciplinary consultant team throughout the planning process. This entailed having pre-application discussions with Eastbourne Borough Council, stakeholder engagement, preparing a detailed planning application, co-ordinating detailed responses to issues raised throughout the consultation process and working closely with officers and consultees to ensure any outstanding issues were resolved.

As part of the application, Planning Potential prepared a detailed sequential assessment and impact analysis, confirming that there were no alternative suitable or available sites to locate the proposed development, and that any impacts on surrounding centres would be within acceptable levels. We also set out robust justification for retail use of the site, successfully demonstrating that traditional employment uses sought by outdated policy were unlikely to come forward and that in line with the direction of travel identified within the Council's evidence base, the proposals provided a realistic and deliverable opportunity to bring the site into active economic use to complete the Sovereign Harbour neighbourhood.

The robust justification set out was accepted by officers, who, despite competitor objections, were satisfied that matters of principle had been

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addressed. In light of competitor objections and potential for judicial review we co-ordinated instruction of Counsel and subsequent liaison with officers to help mitigate potential risks.

The application was taken to Planning Committee and was subsequently approved by members.

Following this, we were involved in extensive S106 negotiations to agree the mechanism to ensure all three applications were linked, providing comfort to Officers and Members that a comprehensive development would come forward. A suitable trigger was agreed that worked for all parties to enable permission to be granted.

Summary of achievements

- Coordination of pre-application discussions with the Local Planning Authority.
- Coordination of planning application preparation and submission, including project management of the consultant team.
- Preparation of a detailed sequential assessment and impact analysis.
- Sustained efforts to build a strong relationship with the LPA throughout the process.
- Securing a positive recommendation from officers and support at planning committee despite competitor objections.
- Negotiating conditions and S106 Agreement with the LPA.