



Planning Potential successfully secured planning permission at appeal for Aldi's first store in Tandridge, justifying compliance with planning policy and defending the merits of the scheme at Public Inquiry.

Planning Potential was instructed by Aldi Stores Ltd. to assist in helping secure permission for their first store in Tandridge, on the site of a former car showroom to the north of Caterham. The proposals provided an opportunity to bring a vacant longstanding commercial site back into beneficial economic use, improve the retail offer of the area, job creation, and promoting more sustainable shopping patterns through reducing the need to travel.

Planning Potential successfully demonstrated that there were no sequentially preferable sites, and the proposal would not have a significant adverse impact on nearby centres. This position was accepted by officers and their external consultants, who, despite competitor objections, were satisfied a robust retail impact assessment had been undertaken.

Planning Potential managed the multi-disciplinary project team throughout the planning process, co-ordinating responses to issues arising and ensuring robust justification on all other matters including; highways and parking, design and amenity, flooding, and sustainability. Despite this, and County Council sign off, the Council adopted an overly cautious position on highways following input from an external consultant, and the application was narrowly refused at Planning Committee in July 2022. This was on a single ground relating to concerns arising from a perceived lack of parking.

Planning Potential again co-ordinated and managed the project team during the appeal, including instructing and liaising with Counsel throughout. We successfully demonstrated why the proposals merited consideration by Inquiry to ensure that evidence was fully tested. We appeared as an expert witness at public inquiry to justify compliance with planning policy, including relevant retail and in principle tests, as well as defending the merits of the scheme. We also demonstrated that the many benefits of the scheme outweighed any potential impacts.

The Inspector accepted and agreed with the case presented and allowed the appeal.

Planning Potential Ltd

London

Magdalen House
148 Tooley Street
London SE1 2TU
T: 020 7397 5212

Summary of achievements

- Coordination of planning application preparation and submission, including project management of the consultant team and liaison with the LPA through to the determination of the application.
- Management of the appeal submission and the appeal proceedings, including; instructing Counsel, preparation of detailed evidence, providing robust justification to justify overturning the Council's decision.
- Appearance as an expert witness in relation to planning matters.
- Successful demonstration of the merits of the proposals, including compliance with planning policy, and that the benefits of the scheme outweighed any impacts, resulting in the Inspector allowing the appeal
- Delivery of the first Aldi store for Tandridge.