



Planning Potential has secured planning permission for a change of use on behalf of énergie Property (UK) Ltd, helping to expand the gym operator's portfolio in the East Midlands. The application was treated on its merits and our clear and effective approach resulted in a swift approval from the Council.

Bulking up the local economy

By reviewing the site's surroundings, we were able to 'sell' the economic benefits that a gym at this location would unlock, including job creation, increased footfall and linked trips with the nearby local centre. We were able to demonstrate how a gym at this empty unit would play an active and positive role within the local community, reflecting the objectives of local planning policy. With university buildings located close by, we assessed the existing gym provision and proposed that an énergie gym would reach out to the nearby student population.

This offset potential concerns around the loss of a large A1 unit and instead shifted the discourse to focus on the vitality and viability of the area, including how a vacant building currently detracts from the Conservation Area. Despite the unit lying out-of-centre, and therefore technically triggering the requirement for a Sequential Assessment, we were able to argue that as the unit was already in a town centre use and that previous applications for different uses had not undertaken a sequential assessment one was not required in this instance, saving the client time and money.

By comprehensively arguing that an énergie gym would enhance the well-being of local residents, we were able to exceed the client's brief, delivering unrestricted opening hours. No objections were received, highlighting the importance of the time spent in understanding énergie Group's values and ambitions, helping to position énergie as a gym operator that was committed to the communities in which it served.

Development within a unique setting

Proposals in Conservation Areas can often be complex and demanding. On behalf of énergie Group, we were able to put forward an engaging and compelling case to demonstrate that a change of use at this location would preserve and enhance the area's special character and interest.

A swift decision

Our team was fully engaged, working closely with the Council's planning team. The willingness to work with the Council was recognised by the local authority, demonstrating the benefits of fostering positive relationships during the planning process. The application was approved under delegated powers within the eight-week deadline, testament to our preparation and the relationship we garnered.

Summary of achievements

- Preparation of a persuasive planning case and the avoidance of a sequential assessment
- Lead informed discussions with the Local Planning Authority, working closely with them at all stages of the application
- Obtaining approval before the eight week-deadline, testament to our strategic and economic approach

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