Case Study

Kier Property

Plots 2 & 3 Kier Park, Maylands Avenue, Hemel Hempstead

Planning Potential were successful in securing an officer recommendation to approve 268 residential units and over 10,000 sq ft of office space.

In 2016, Planning Potential were appointed by Kier Property to prepare a planning application for a vacant site that had been in Kier's possession for over 10 years. Located on the outskirts of Hemel Hempstead and on the periphery of the Maylands Industrial Area, the site was designated as employment land suitable for B1/B2/B8 use.

Having been able to demonstrate through extensive marketing evidence that there was no appetite for a wholly employment scheme, Planning Potential were instrumental in leading discussions with the Council to agree that a residential-led scheme would be appropriate. The Council considered that should the site come forward for a mixed-use scheme, it would need to act as a gateway development marking the entrance to the Maylands Industrial Area.

Having agreed the principle that a residential led development could deliver the landmark building the Council sought, the appointed architects drew up a scheme to meet the brief.

The quantum of office development to be included within the scheme required extensive negotiations with officers. The Council sought a considerable quantum of office space in this location, to ensure its employment status was merited. However, Kier's marketing experience and local research enabled the team to justify a sustained lack of demand for office development in this location. Following a thorough period of discussion with officers, it was agreed that small scale office space, focused on the needs of start-up businesses and small firms, would meet local needs whilst ensuring there wasn't an excessive amount of vacant office space in this prominent location.

The scheme was able to deliver a policy compliant level of affordable housing and the delivery of a significant number of homes in a brownfield location, relieving pressure on future Green Belt releases. Having successfully overcome initial objections from the Council's Environmental Health and Tree officers, Planning Potential were delighted to be able to secure a positive officer recommendation.

Summary of achievements

- Provision of advice and guidance regarding the site's suitability for development
- Provision of pre-application advice to the client and design team
- Appointment and management of consultancy team
- Preparation of a robust Planning Statement justifying a diversion from policy
- Co-ordination of a comprehensive planning submission
- Swift and robust responses to comments received during the consultation period
- Obtaining an officer recommendation to grant permission

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