



Planning Potential secured planning permission at Committee for a new store on a partially greenfield site in Kennington, delivering additional retail choice for residents living to the north east of Ashford.

Planning Potential was instructed by Aldi Stores Ltd. to assist in securing permission for their second store in Ashford, on a partially greenfield, green corridor site to the north east of the town centre. The proposals provided the opportunity to improve the retail offer of the area and promote more sustainable shopping patterns through reducing the need to travel, alleviate some of the pressure on the existing Aldi store in the town centre, and create new local jobs.

Planning Potential demonstrated through a detailed sequential assessment that there were no sequentially preferable sites and undertook a bespoke retail impact assessment to demonstrate the proposals would not have a significant impact on nearby centres. This position was accepted by officers, who were satisfied that retail matters had been robustly addressed.

The site, being partially greenfield, within a Green Corridor, and with complex ecology meant there was a high bar to overcome to justify development. Planning Potential set out a robust planning case in response to policy and highlighted the many benefits of the scheme, providing comfort to officers that these would outweigh any harm. The scheme is of a high-quality and sustainable design which is mindful of its designations and surroundings, comprising an extensive ecological-led planting scheme, establishment of an ecological corridor and use of a green roof design to deliver a significant biodiversity net gain.

Planning Potential managed the multi-disciplinary consultant team throughout the planning process, from preparing a detailed planning application to co-ordinating responses to issues raised throughout the consultation period, ensuring robust justification on all matters including; highways, design and amenity, flooding, biodiversity and sustainability. Working alongside Communications Potential, we managed an effective pre-submission public consultation, securing wide local support for the scheme. This included dialogue with Ward Councillors, Community Council and local residents throughout the process.

This, alongside the team's sustained efforts to build a strong relationship with officers despite personnel changes at the Council, resulted in the application being taken to committee with a recommendation for approval. In advance of

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committee, we worked closely with officers to ensure all late queries were resolved, as well as drafting the committee speech. The application was unanimously approved.

Summary of achievements

- Coordination of pre-application discussions with the LPA
- Coordination of planning application preparation and submission, including project management of the consultant team
- Preparation of a bespoke retail impact assessment
- Sustained efforts to build a strong relationship with the LPA throughout the process
- Extensive and co-ordinated planning and communications approach, securing significant support from local politicians and the community
- Securing unanimous support at Committee.