



Planning Potential Retail.

Introduction

Retail is one of the most dynamic and constantly evolving sectors in the UK. And we love it. Our team knows that working in such a fast-paced environment requires equally dynamic solutions to unlock difficult locations.



“You can expect us to approach your projects with creativity, energy, drive and enthusiasm.”



“We’re realistic too and if something’s not right, we say. Our clients know they’re receiving commercially-focused, honest advice to give them full confidence in the decisions they make.”

We’re proud to be market leaders and pioneers in a sector that supports diverse lifestyles, creates vital employment opportunities and stimulates the economy. Our combined experience has delivered over a million square feet of new floor space investment and sustainable regeneration throughout the UK, creating 1,000s of jobs along the way.

In a world of constantly changing regulations and economic trends, we recognise it’s crucial to maximise site and asset value to meet the needs of today – and be prepared for the demands of tomorrow. We deliver planning solutions by developing a thorough understanding of what our clients need and applying a forensic approach to every project.

Our experts work closely with key stakeholders – from initial appraisal through to planning application – to get to the heart of the issue and provide bespoke solutions, even in the most challenging circumstances. We strive to deliver flexible consents, to maximise marketing potential and accommodate evolving business needs.



Development Management

The planning process can often be a challenging, complex and daunting prospect, but we've got the right tools to support you. We always take a forensic approach, ensuring we have all the facts, to give you the best advice and meet the needs of the project.

Our services include:

- Site appraisals
- Catchment and economic analyses
- Shopper and leisure surveys
- Footfall analyses
- Shopper questionnaires
- Retail impact assessments
- Sequential assessments
- Planning appraisals
- S106 and condition negotiation
- Town centre health checks and frontage audits
- Heritage projects
- Signage and shopfronts
- Stakeholder engagement

Appeals

In the event of an appeal, Judicial Review, or S288 challenge, we can act on your behalf as expert witness. We advise on the most appropriate appeal procedure, as well as preparing and coordinating appeal submissions. We work closely with the UK's leading planning barristers and instruct counsel on our clients' behalf.

Town Centre

We understand the constraints of the high street and pressure to find the right location. We've been privileged to deliver a range of schemes on some of the UK's most prestigious retail pitches, and have developed the skills and experience to secure:

- Town centre regeneration and mixed-use schemes
- Flagship retail development
- High-street conversions and change of use
- Listed building and heritage projects

Out-of-Centre / Out-of-Town

We know that out-of-centre sites often present the greatest planning challenges. We can provide in-depth local analysis of market trends and key issues to justify why the sites we are promoting are the right locations to meet identified needs. Working on behalf of national operators and developers, we've had many successes throughout the UK securing consents for:

- Retail parks and warehouses
- Mixed-use schemes
- Stand-alone units
- Drive-thru premises


Asset Management

Successful management and protection of your asset is an ongoing process and we can provide you with the right planning advice to maximise your estate – and step in if things go wrong!

We work on behalf of pension funds, landlords and national operators to help them:

- Review estates and advise on planning use options and restrictions
- Variation of conditions (S73) to relax onerous restrictions such as:
 - Retail sales
 - Servicing /delivery restrictions
 - Trading hour restrictions
 - Parking
- Estate enhancement – managing the planning process for extensions and upgrades (including signage)
- Enforcement
- Acquisitions – undertake planning due diligence to advise on risks and opportunities
- Disposals – securing planning consent on surplus estate to maximise value
- Competitor monitoring
- Legal challenges

**Whether it's big
or small, on
the high street or
out-of-town, we've
got it covered.**



“Planning Potential offer a wealth of experience and provide tailored advice that ensures ALDI win community support and secure valuable planning consents, even in the most difficult of circumstances.”

Roland Stanley, Property Director, ALDI

We have been working with ALDI since Planning Potential's inception and are exceptionally proud to have established a relationship with one of the World's leading retailers.

We are now retained planning consultants for ALDI across four regions of operation and have secured over 100 consents for new stores.

ALDI have around 7,000 stores worldwide and first entered the UK market in 1990s. The company's philosophy is simple – providing high quality products at discounted prices, within a pleasant shopping environment.

We've not only supported the growth of the ALDI business in the UK, by securing numerous town centre and out-of-town consents, we've also assisted with a broader range of portfolio management projects that are often complex and challenging.

Planning Potential also assists ALDI with community engagement as part of the planning process and we regularly meet with MPs, local councillors, community interest groups and local residents.



Eastbourne

When policy officers insisted a proposed new store on a designated employment site be recommended for refusal, we had already done the groundwork to secure planning consent and the recommendation to refuse was unanimously overturned at committee.

Middleton Park, Leeds

Despite opposition from officers at Leeds City Council, we were able to demonstrate to elected members that the many benefits of developing a new ALDI foodstore would outweigh the loss of a disused pub. Consent for the new store was secured at committee, creating 40 new jobs.

Taunton

This challenging site raised a number of complex retail, highways and policy allocation issues, and planning officers took a negative stance to the proposals from the outset. We provided compelling evidence to narrow down potential issues and demonstrate to members that any reason for refusal was finely balanced. Our positive community engagement also meant we could show significant local support, which helped persuade members to support the scheme.

Our positive community engagement also means we can usually show significant local support.

Metro Bank



We are retained planning consultants for Metro Bank and are assisting them with their ambitious store expansion programme.

Metro Bank are the UK's first new high street bank in over 100 years, providing both retail and commercial banking services, with a core focus of providing exceptional and unparalleled customer service.

Whilst seeking to extend their reach across the UK, Metro Bank are committed to delivering significant investment in new stores and becoming an important part of the local communities in which they operate.

We have successfully secured consent for stores in a variety of locations – including conservation areas and sites with complex highway and access issues. We also have the necessary heritage expertise to secure listed building consents.

Metro Bank often work to strict opening programmes, so it's essential for us to secure planning and signage consents swiftly and without any onerous planning conditions – in order to meet contractual dates and comply with the commercial requirements of the business.



Recent successes include a new Hayes/Southall store, which contains a “drive thru” bank facility. We ensured that internal resource issues at the council were overcome to expedite a decision. Consents for three new stores in Ilford, Basingstoke and Colchester were all secured in the same month. Permissions were obtained under delegated consent – without the need for planning committee consideration – and with no pre-start conditions.

“Planning Potential are an integral part of our development team and have played a key role in our new store expansion. They are exceptionally tenacious and always prepared to get ‘stuck-in’. We love how they buy in to our **AMAZEing values!”**

Calum Ewing, Head of Property, Metro Bank

Our collaborative approach, working closely with Metro Bank's property team, ensures careful management of the entire planning process.

LXB Retail Properties Neatscourt

“As part of the planning process, we managed a large project team, coordinated the preparation of an environmental impact assessment and organised a public consultation.”

Over a period of five years, we were able to obtain multiple planning permissions to enable the phased development of a major mixed-use scheme on the Isle of Sheppey in Kent – satisfying the needs of our client and the various retail, leisure, pub and restaurant operators who now occupy the space.

Acting on behalf of the real estate investment company, LXB Retail Properties, we coordinated the preparation of proposals and secured unanimous support for the development of a 20-acre, out-of-centre site at Neatscourt, Queenborough.

The land was formerly allocated for employment use and the local council was initially reluctant to consider retail proposals. Despite this opposition, we successfully promoted the benefits of a retail-led mixed-use scheme, which would create a large number of jobs and generate significant investment.

We were not only responsible for securing approval for the various phases of development, we also submitted non-material amendments and Section 73 variations to suit the retail, leisure, pub and restaurant operators who invested in the scheme.

Overall, we submitted more than 12 separate applications for the client on this site and secured permission for all.



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Canary Wharf Group

“We work closely with clients to maximise asset value and reduce void time.”

Planning Potential works with Canary Wharf Group to secure planning permission for changes of use on the Canary Wharf Estate, in order to maximise asset value and ensure flexibility.

We were initially asked to assist with a change of use from D1 (Private Dental Practice) to A1 (Retail) at Churchill Place, Canary Wharf. The proposals included a loss of community facilities, which would be contrary to policy; however, we were able to demonstrate that replacement facilities would be provided elsewhere on the estate. We established a positive relationship with the council officer and secured permission within six weeks of submitting the application.

We were subsequently asked to assess the prospects of achieving a change of use from A1 to a flexible A1/ sui generis (car showroom) use, on behalf of global electric vehicle brand, Tesla. In order to overcome the loss of an A1 unit, we devised a strategy which would allow a flexible use of the unit between A1 retail and car showroom. We worked with the local authority, alleviating any concerns during the process and again achieved permission within the 8-week deadline.

We were also asked to prepare an application for the change of use of a single retail unit (A1) to a smaller retail unit (A1) and a mixed retail and fitness studio unit (A1/D2). The intended gym occupant was a new and innovative company, with a focus on high intensity class-based fitness. The sale of gym clothing and a juice bar provided a retail arm to the fitness studio. We were able to convince the council that the proposals would benefit the centre, as a significant proportion of the retail frontage would be retained, whilst also providing important gym space to serve workers, residents and visitors to Canary Wharf.

Our work with the Canary Wharf Group has also included the review and analysis of the DCLG's consultation on improving the use of planning conditions. We liaised with our client, to understand how they felt about the Government's proposals, and submitted representations on their behalf. We then monitored the representations and provided our analysis when the consultation feedback was issued.



We worked with the local authority, alleviating any concerns during the process and achieved permission within the deadline.

Bosideng, South Molton Street, Westminster

“We were able to present a compelling case to elected members, successfully highlighting the economic benefits of encouraging inward investment.”

When Bosideng identified a striking new building on South Molton Street as the perfect location for their new European headquarters and flagship store, they appointed Planning Potential to secure the permission they would need to enable them to adapt the premises.

Permission was granted in 2009 for the redevelopment of the former “Hog in the Pound” pub to create an architecturally striking, six-storey, mixed-use scheme. Occupying a prominent site, at the junction of South Molton Street and Davies Street, in the heart of the West End, this landmark scheme caught the attention of Bosideng – China’s leading down wear retailer.

The mixed-use scheme was designed speculatively, before occupiers had been identified, to comprise a retail unit occupying basement, ground and first floors, with a further four floors of office and residential accommodation divided equally above.

Bosideng sought to reconfigure the interior of the building to suit their needs – extending the retail space to second floor level to create a flagship store, with two floors of office space above that.

The additional retail floor space was welcomed by officers at Westminster Council, but they expressed concern about the loss of residential accommodation. Although Bosideng’s proposals represented an increase in both residential and commercial space, compared with the former use of the site, council policy encouraged the space to be divided equally between residential and commercial uses. Restricted by the small footprint of the development, Bosideng didn’t consider it practical to provide two floors of residential accommodation within their flagship building, although they were happy to retain a self-contained flat at fifth floor level.

We were able to present a compelling case, successfully convincing the council that the economic benefits of encouraging inward investment should outweigh the policy of retaining residential accommodation.

It was particularly important for Bosideng to open their new flagship store in time to take advantage of the focus on London during the 2012 Olympics. Permission was granted and Bosideng were able to occupy the premises in the summer of 2012.



Bosideng sought to reconfigure the building to suit their needs. Planning Potential secured the permission they needed to adapt the premises.

On the High Street

“We work with a number of well-known High Street operators, obtaining permission for new stores, securing consent for shopfronts and signage, enabling the use of outdoor space, and adapting buildings to meet operational needs.”



50-bedroom boutique hotel for Borough High Street

This 50-bedroom boutique hotel scheme was designed to assist in meeting demand for tourist accommodation in the popular Borough Market area, whilst also creating 50 new jobs and delivering a significant boost to the local economy. In addition, the bar and restaurant proposed at ground and basement levels would give a new lease of life to this section of the High Street.

The application was subject to some opposition from local residents, who were concerned the proposals were of a scale, mass and design that were out of keeping with Borough High Street Conservation Area. Our consultation and engagement activities ensured that comments were addressed, concerns were allayed and consent was secured.



Gail's

Planning Potential has worked with Gail's – the artisan bakery – since 2013, assisting with their ambitious expansion plans by successfully securing consent for a number of new bakeries in various locations around London.

As well as securing consent for new bakeries, typical projects undertaken for Gail's include justifying shopfront proposals and the use of kitchen extraction equipment, to accommodate corporate branding and operational requirements. We also advise on extensions, the use of outdoor seating areas, and garden works to properties within Gail's existing portfolio.

Gail's often seek to occupy buildings that are listed, or located within conservation areas – adding complexity to the process. We work proactively with local communities and planning authorities to achieve the approvals Gail's require.



Paddy Power

Despite its global profile, Paddy Power is a relatively recent addition to UK high streets and Planning Potential has been an integral part of the company's expansion since 2010.

We have been able to use our extensive experience and knowledge of local planning authorities' policy requirements, to secure consent for shops in a variety of locations across England. We are able to engage with political and community representatives during the application process – and through to the appeal stage if necessary – to address concerns and overcome resistance to new shop proposals.

Contact the teams

With offices in London, Bristol and Harrogate, we are well placed to deal with projects throughout the UK.



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