



Establishing a positive relationship with Officers at Swale Borough Council alongside a coordinated consultation exercise generating almost unanimous local support, was essential to Planning Potential's success in securing delegated consent for a replacement ALDI store in Sittingbourne.

Delegated consent for a new and enlarged ALDI foodstore on the site of the existing store in Sittingbourne was granted in December 2018. This secured permission for a site extension and knock down and re-build of the existing store to deliver a new 1,703 sqm foodstore and 113 space car park.

The ALDI store had been trading in Sittingbourne for over 20 years, however had become outdated and no longer met the company's latest store format requirements. Pre-application discussions were initiated with Officers to discuss potential options, explaining the significant constraints of the existing store and demonstrating the benefits of redevelopment, particularly the retention of a popular and successful anchor foodstore within the town centre. This was recognised by officers, who supported the principle of redevelopment to provide an enhanced store on the existing site.

The project team worked with Officers, amending the design to create a more active frontage and improved relationship with the town centre, successfully negotiating a solution that Officers found acceptable, which also met ALDI's operational requirements. In addition, Planning Potential's methodological policy appraisal and detailed analysis was effective in demonstrating that loss of an allocated housing site to facilitate the site extension was acceptable, on the basis that this was unlikely to come forward by nature of its size and location in flood zone 3.

Planning Potential were successful in setting out to Officers that the benefits of the redevelopment would outweigh concerns associated with design and other areas of policy. This position was supported by a coordinated public consultation exercise which secured almost unanimous local support – with 96 per cent of consultees expressing support for the application. Our efforts to foster a positive relationship with officers was crucial in securing a swift delegated approval, which allowed ALDI to meet their programme and progress a scheme based on their latest store format.

Summary of achievements

- Coordination of pre-application discussions with the local planning authority
- Preparation and submission of a comprehensive planning application
- A coordinated public consultation exercise, securing 96% support for the proposals
- Project management of the consultant team
- Securing a delegated decision

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