



Planning Potential overcame concerns about introducing a new bar into a Cumulative Impact Area in Bristol, securing consent for a new distillery, and bringing a Grade II listed building in a prominent location back into active use.

Our clients, Sapcote Group, wanted to change the use of the Grade II listed, three-floor restaurant (a former Jamie's Italian), to a mixed-use cafe, bar and restaurant, to include an on-site rum distillery and educational and training facilities. This would pave the way for a tenancy by Halewood Wines and Spirits, who wanted to open the site as 'The Bristol and Bath Distillery', a similar offer to their existing 'City of London Distillery'. Pre-application discussions with the Local Planning Authority (LPA), highlighted the site's location in a Cumulative Impact Area, as well as a previous refusal at Appeal for a change of use application further up the road, which indicated that this would not be a straightforward process.

Planning Potential recommended a combination of planning and communication services, which would ensure this unique and innovative use of the site could be carefully communicated to key stakeholders and decision makers, before the application was considered by Planning Officers.

An extensive programme of community engagement which included Ward Councillors, the Police, Environmental Health, the Business Improvement District team, local businesses and neighbours, led to support for the application from key decision makers and residents. This led to there being no objections lodged in respect of the planning application and letters of support. Liaison with the LPA throughout the planning process, providing documentation and assurances about the intended uses of the site, helped secure a recommendation to approve from the Planning Department. Officers were keen for the application to go to Planning Committee, due to the recent decision at Appeal to refuse permission for a bar Use at a nearby site, also in the Cumulative Impact Area.

Continued communications with supporters and the Planning Committee, accompanied by speeches by Planning Potential and the potential tenant, led to a unanimous vote in favour of the proposals.

Summary of achievements

- Preparation of planning and listed building consent applications
- Use Class survey to understand division of uses in the local area
- Preparation of brochure to describe intended use and benefits
- Liaison with stakeholders to explain unique and innovative offer
- Liaison with the Local Planning Authority through to delegated recommendation to approve
- Representation of client at Committee, speech preparation for potential tenant

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