Park Farm Industrial Estate, Folkestone

CLIENT

Madford Developments Ltd

LOCAL AUTHORITY

Shepway District Council

SCHEME DESCRIPTION

B&Q retail warehouse

SERVICES

Direct Access of Counsel
Employment Land Studies
Planning Appeals and Inquiries
Retail Assessments

CASE STUDIES

Retail

Ensuring that a called in retail proposal stood the best prospect of success.

Following objections from the Council's planning policy and economic development officers, detailed justification of the retail and employment policy arguments was presented. This led to a recommendation for approval based on the need for, and benefits arising from, the retail development outweighing any harm to the loss of employment land.

The application was, however, called in by the Secretary of State. We led the Council's consultants in terms of documenting very detailed agreed statements on all relevant issues ensuring that the local planning authority presented a strong, consistent case at the inquiry.

The Inspector's recommendation to approve the application was accepted by the Secretary of State. Whilst the Inspector remarked that our sequential approach had been "unrealistically flexible", the Secretary of State considered that multi-storey development should have been considered even though our evidence had demonstrated it not to be viable in Folkestone. This illustrated why it is necessary to be sensitive to the potentially unpredictable nature of some Secretary of State decisions.

