

**Austin Mackie Associates Ltd**

# TOWN

PLANNING CONSULTANCY

*'solutions from your perspective'*



# I n t r o d u c t i o n

Austin Mackie Associates is a new and progressive town planning consultancy, built upon a foundation of 25 years experience across a range of commercial property, design and planning environments.

## Client Focus

The Company was formed in response to client requests for a planning consultancy service that respects and prioritises their own objectives.

Our business principles are very clear. The primary focus is upon understanding, servicing, supporting and guiding our clients. It is their needs that define our approach.



## Skills

Our approach to the delivery of planning consultancy services draws together both technical and vocational skills, backed by 25 years of experience.

Knowledge and understanding of policy and processes are supported by relevant project-specific research and intelligence in order that we can anticipate and review key issues and predict potential responses; all supported by strong communication and advocacy skills.

## Scope

Our experience covers the core planning consultancy services, including; asset management, development management, change of use, policy formulation, testing of evidence, community and stakeholder engagement, appeals and public examinations. However, our skills and services are tailored to suit specific client requirements.

*"A man who does not think and plan long ahead will find trouble right at his door."*

Confucius

*"By far the greatest and most admirable form of wisdom is that needed to plan and beautify cities and human communities."*

Socrates

*"Those who plan do better than those who do not plan even though they rarely stick to their plan."*

Winston Churchill

*"It is not the strongest of the species that survive, not the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change."*

Charles Darwin

*"Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?" asked Alice. "That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said the Cat. "I really don't care where," replied Alice. "Then it doesn't much matter which way you go," said the Cat.*

Lewis Carroll

The planning system is a central element of, not only the use and development of land, but also the processes of environmental, social and economic governance. ....

## Response

....as a consequence, the planning process is exposed to a vast range of legislative, policy and external considerations; which themselves are scrutinised by a wide number of stakeholders. It is therefore critical that any planning strategy is fully informed and robustly managed.



## Knowledge

Our expertise has been developed within a diverse range of commercial property consultancy, design and planning environments.

We possess a detailed understanding of the economic, environmental and social issues influencing the planning and development processes.

Policy can be interpreted in many ways and legislation frequently changes. Simultaneously a wide range of stakeholders can have a significant influence on the decision-making process and of course, every site has unique characteristics. We possess considerable experience of managing such a complex set of variables.

## Capability

Extensive experience of complex issues and major schemes equips us to advise a range of clients such as, property investors, landowners, occupiers, developers, house builders and housing associations in relation to a range of policy formulation / interpretation and development issues, including; residential, business and commercial space, mixed-use, infrastructure, town centre, leisure, and community uses.

Strictly speaking, we have no set service lines, but our clients have needs and issues that they face and objectives they wish to achieve - these serve to define our products.

## Unique Project Briefs

Each instruction is approached in a specific manner that is relevant to both the client and project. By gaining a clear understanding of our clients, the issues that they face and their ultimate objectives; we define a custom brief for each and every instruction.

To this we apply our knowledge and expertise as relevant to the circumstances of the case. Where additional skills are required, we advise on the most appropriate appointments and undertake extensive early research and intelligence gathering.



## Core Service Areas

### Planning Applications and Process Management

- ✓ Submission strategy, professional team and process management, stakeholder engagement

### Asset & Portfolio Management

- ✓ Acquisition, disposal, brand roll out, changes of use, development plan monitoring

### Risk Assessment

- ✓ Client strategy and decision making support

### Policy Formulation & Review

- ✓ Monitoring and input to development plans, site promotion, evidence assessment

### Appeals / Expert Witness

- ✓ Submission of appeals and evidence, instruction of counsel, EIP and expert witness

### Specialist Services

- ✓ Compulsory purchase, EIA - screening, scoping and baseline inputs

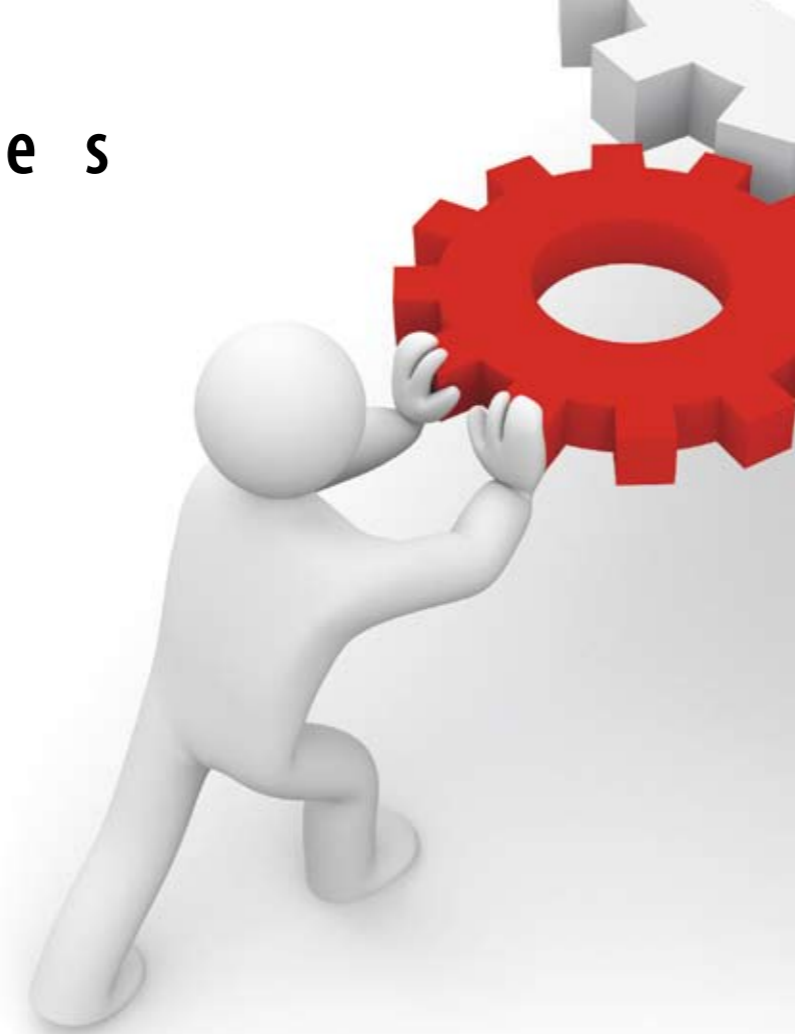


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## Asset & Portfolio Management

Protecting your property interests, whether held as an investment, occupied, or awaiting development, is critical. We are able to advise in relation to:

- ✓ Acquisition – assessing planning status and risk assessing potential issues for individual or multiple sites
- ✓ Preparation for disposal – maximising flexibility, opportunity and value
- ✓ Brand roll-out – preparing and implementing planning strategies to secure or adapt property in good time
- ✓ Changes of use, alterations and development
- ✓ Third party development – ensuring your interests are protected
- ✓ Policy monitoring – ensuring that changes to development plans and designations do not detract from current operational efficiency or long-term value

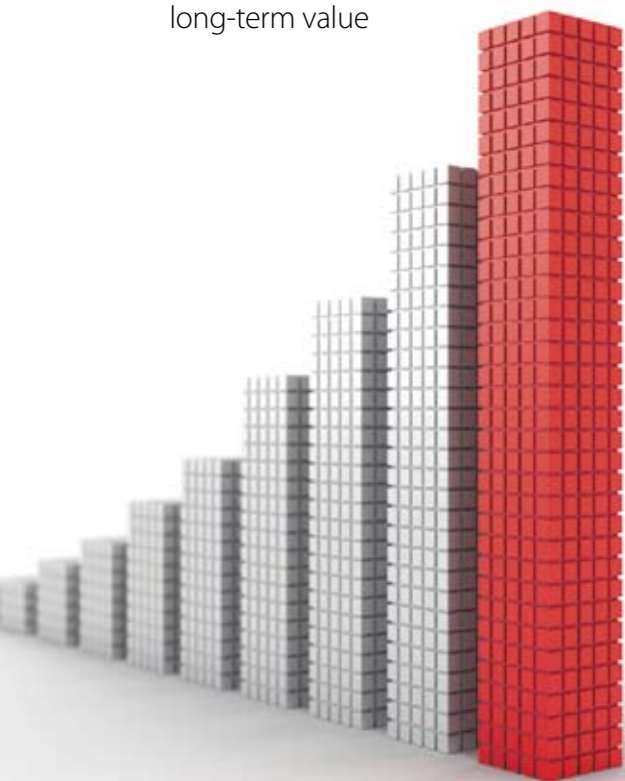


## Process Management

Planning is very much a process, be it development or policy-led, stakeholder engagement or negotiation. The successful management of processes, timescales, stakeholders, large professional teams and occasionally client expectations, is a key skill.

We are able to provide process management in respect of, for example:

- ✓ Early advice on strategy options
- ✓ Programme and timing
- ✓ Scoping of professional team and appointments
- ✓ Planning manager / lead consultant
- ✓ Coordination of the professional team and/or support to the client
- ✓ Stakeholder analysis / engagement



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## Risk Assessment

Prior to acquisition, redevelopment, disposal or simply when reviewing an existing project that isn't progressing as you had expected, an independent risk assessment of potential options can be an invaluable part of the processes of due diligence in property and project management.

We seek to operate as an integral element of the client team, supporting client decision-making and team structures.

We ensure that we understand what you are looking to achieve and your parameters. We apply an open and honest assessment of key issues; advising of risks and opportunities and potential strategy options.

Future relationships are as important as any current instructions and we will not encourage instructions that we do not believe are deliverable or not in the client's interests.

The need for confidentiality and speed of response in early investigations is fully respected.

## Policy Formulation & Review

The planning system places considerable weight upon the preparation and interpretation of planning policy documents. What was meant to be a simplified system has become more difficult and burdensome for both planning authorities and those utilising the system.

There is an expectation that landowners, occupiers and developers will participate in plan formulation in order to, for example, identify site development opportunities, and assist in identifying development capacity and infrastructure issues.

Failure to participate at the appropriate stages can have a negative impact on future opportunity and value.

Where required, we are able to monitor the progress of draft policy and plans, identify appropriate programmes for engaging policy makers, submitting representations and negotiating appropriate outcomes.





## Appeals and Expert Witness

We have considerable experience of planning and associated inquiries and hearings. The modern appeal process offers limited flexibility in relation to scheme modifications or programme. As such, implications need to be considered carefully in terms of.

- ✓ Pre-decision, pre-application, even pre-acquisition assessment of appeal risks, and issues
- ✓ Appeal process options
- ✓ Advise on appeal prospects - reducing risk and abortive costs
- ✓ Preparation, lodging and management of appeals
- ✓ Instructions to Counsel where necessary
- ✓ Appeal statements / proof of evidence
- ✓ Presentation of expert witness evidence

## Specialist Services

The planning system is closely linked to sustainable Governance and as such, to the implementation of economic, housing, environmental and social policy. Our experience reflects the interaction of planning with other areas of legislation and policy, for example:

**Compulsory Purchase** Land assembly is an increasingly significant aspect of regeneration. Whether you are promoting or defending a potential CPO, we are able to provide planning input to key elements of the CPO process.

**Environmental Impact Assessment** We are able to provide screening opinions, scoping reports and contributions to environmental statements, baseline studies and assessment.

## However....

..... we are first and foremost a specialist planning consultancy. We do not offer a one-stop shop of convenient, but potentially average services. We prefer to focus on what we do best and where necessary, work with those who are the best in each and every field. We can assist clients in scoping appropriate design, technical and professional appointments throughout the process.

So how does it all come together? An example of a major regeneration project managed from the pre-acquisition stage, through conception and design development, to the grant of planning permission.

## Alperton Regeneration

Alperton is one of several large mixed-use schemes that we are managing. The site, key to the Borough's local regeneration programme, now benefits from planning permission for 441 residential units with B1 and leisure uses fronting new canal side public realm.

Acting as consents manager, we have supported the client and their funding partner throughout the project, including the key stages of...

### Pre-acquisition - Site and Risk Assessment

Early planning assessment for client and funding partner in order to identify opportunity, sensitivities and reduce risk – an informed acquisition process. Focussed appraisal of key policy and development issues, including site capacity assessment, supported by early engagement of the LPA and key stakeholders.

Assessment of the LPA's draft planning brief and a review of adjoining development sites.

### Professional Appointments

Scoping of application requirements, selection and appointment of a large professional team, including coordination of an architectural competition.

### Process management / Stakeholders

Detailed pre-application engagement with the LPA, guided by a planning performance agreement.

### Management of Planning Submission.

Coordination of project team and stakeholder discussions, including key discussions with LPA, GLA and statutory authorities.

### Consent

Pre-committee officer and third party agreements through to conditions and s106 negotiations.



Images courtesy of Squire & Partners





We work with a diverse range of clients and their partners, together with consultants and designers who are leaders in their field.

## Our Approach

Our clients cannot be defined by any particular business type or property sector, but have a common desire to successfully manage the evermore complex planning process.

We place considerable importance upon developing and maintaining necessary long-term relationships with both the client group and the key stakeholders with whom they also need to develop a relationship.

We see our role as one of adding value, be it operational or financial. We certainly do not work for clients who simply want a 'yes sir' service.

Firstly we listen to a client, to ensure that their needs are clearly understood and only then establish clear and realistic objectives and a project brief that is based upon robust understanding. We identify and assess potential risks and opportunities; identify key stakeholders, wider potential influences and timeframes.

From these we prepare an informed delivery strategy and support the client team with high quality, realistic advice, process management and stakeholder engagement.

## Our clients tend to be drawn from:

- ✓ Businesses and occupiers
- ✓ Property owners and investors
- ✓ Landlords and asset managers
- ✓ Developers
- ✓ House builders
- ✓ Housing associations
- ✓ Other professions



## We're not alone.....

No. 70 Cowcross Street, in the heart of Clerkenwell 'village', is home to a community of over 50 businesses and organisations engaged in the built and open environments, including: town planning, regeneration and economic consultancy, architecture, urban design, masterplanning, landscape design, sustainability, built heritage, transportation, civil and structural engineering, interior design and more .....



The Gallery at 70 Cowcross Street hosts regular workshops, seminar and lectures.



No. 70 Cowcross Street, Clerkenwell is within a minute's walk of Farringdon Station [for Thameslink, Circle, Metropolitan, Hammersmith & City – and ultimately Crossrail]

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