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National Experts, Local Knowledge

Retail and Town Centres



We are DPP.

An independent, nationally recognised, director-led planning consultancy with offices in Cardiff, Leeds, London, Manchester and Newcastle upon Tyne.

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Rochdale Riverside

Client: GENR8 (Rochdale) Ltd
Local Authority: Rochdale Borough Council
Value: £70m
Image: TP Bennett Architects





A message from our Head of Retail and Town Centres

“DPP have a long-established reputation as a Planning Consultancy with retail and town centre expertise and many of our retail clients have used DPP for long-term advice, some going back over 30 years. We have adapted as the dynamic retail sector itself has changed, both in terms of new formats but also new clients who have entered the marketplace.”

Retailers have faced new and different challenges and whilst this partially reflects a wider economic lull, more fundamentally, the rise of on-line sales has had a profound impact on the sector and those with a strong on-line presence have found that they can drive sales from fewer physical locations. This has brought about changes in demand for space, within secondary centres and property owners within Town Centres have sought to broaden the types of uses that can be accommodated, often in the face of Planning Policies which have been slow to recognise the changes.

We also have a strong track record in securing consents for these broader town centre activities whether they be for restaurant, childcare or entertainment uses. Our understanding of Retail and Town Centres and the wider economic benefits for the high street to adapt and evolve, means that we're able to help developers adapt and evolve.

I hope this short overview of our expertise in these areas, of who we are and the work we do provides an insight into what we can achieve for you.

Bob Robinson
Director and Head of Retail
and Town Centre Sector

Milburngate, Durham

Client: MGH Card LLP
Local Authority: Durham County Council
Value: £145m
Image: Faulkner Browns Architects



National Portfolio

Client: Lidl UK
Local Authority: Nationwide
Value: £1m+



DPP work with Lidl across the UK assisting their extensive growth plans and provide strategic advice to developers and clients looking to include the brand within a wider retail or mixed-use scheme.

We deliver a range of services, including retail impact and sequential assessments, as well as managing the planning process to secure approvals with a very high success rate. We have a clear understanding of the Lidl brand and successfully communicate this to local communities as part of our pre-planning public consultation service.

"DPP's depth of retail planning knowledge, their Local Authority contacts and wealth of practical experience in organising and running public consultation events, continue to play an important role throughout our UK store expansion plans"

Graham Burr, Regional Head of Property, Lidl UK

Albert Street in Harrogate, the site of a 1950's department store, underwent a £11m demolition and redevelopment to provide a four-screen art-house cinema and nine town centre units.

As a prominent part of the Victorian spa town's shopping area, it was vital that we delivered a sympathetic proposal to the town, whilst ensuring a commercially viable scheme for the client.

We managed the entire planning submission and helped coordinate the public consultation exercise. We worked closely with the client, its architect, residents and businesses and the Council to develop a viable scheme that realised the client's investment and the value of their asset.

"In delivering detailed planning consent for our Harrogate leisure scheme the team at DPP were extremely thorough and knowledgeable and were also great to work with".

Paul Lancaster 4Urban Consulting Ltd

Albert Street, Harrogate

Client: 4Urban Consulting Ltd
Local Authority: Harrogate District Council
Value: £11m
Image: Seven Architecture



National Portfolio

Client: Tesco Stores Plc
 Local Authority: Nationwide
 Value: £1m+
 Image: Tesco Stores Plc

DPP has a long and successful relationship with Tesco spanning more than 40 years which has seen the business deliver a considerable number of new food stores and extensions to existing stores across the UK and Ireland.

We provide a full range of planning service to Tesco including assistance with asset management and operational issues as well as asset disposal and continue to work with the company as it diversifies its retail operations and plans for the future.

"Tesco have a long-standing relationship with DPP extending back over 30 years. During this time, they have remained one of our trusted advisors on planning matters, assisting us with our store development programme, across all formats, and on asset management of our extensive property portfolio. They continue to assist Tesco as we both rationalise our existing estate in response to changing shopping habits and manage new development in relation to the evolving property sector."

Marcus Vinnicombe, UK Property Acquisitions and Disposals Director, Tesco Stores Ltd.

Since 2010, DPP has provided British Land with planning consultancy advice at Broughton Shopping Park near Chester, project managing several major planning applications aimed at enhancing the development's overall retail and commercial leisure role and attraction to both customers and operators.

Following the initial success, when DPP secured planning permission for an 11-screen multiplex cinema, 5 sit-down restaurants and associated infrastructure improvements, consent has also been obtained for a Marks & Spencer store at the Shopping Park.

DPP is continuing to advise and progress further planning applications aimed at improving the shopping park's overall environmental quality and shopping experience.

"DPP has consistently provided an exemplary planning service, which has been instrumental in our achievements at Broughton. DPP will, I am sure, continue to take a lead role and assist us in securing further positive outcomes at the Shopping Park, to the benefit of both British Land and the local community."

Matthew Reed, Director British Land

Broughton Shopping Park, Chester

Client: The British Land Company plc
Local Authority: Flintshire County Council
Value: £1m-£3m
Image: The British Land Company plc



National Portfolio

Client: Kentucky Fried Chicken (Great Britain) Limited & Herbert Group
Local Authority: Nationwide
Value: £1m+
Image: Herbert Group

For over 10 years we have advised KFC and their franchisees on the development of town centre and drive-thru restaurants throughout the UK.

We provide a range of services from feasibility studies assessing planning prospects to securing consents for new restaurants. In town centres, consents have overcome restrictive policies on frontage thresholds and have addressed policies relating to proximity to schools. Our role also extends to wider asset management, securing variations to restrictive conditions, securing signage consents and managing beaches of conditions.

"We have worked with DPP for a number of years and I hugely value their planning expertise and commercial knowledge. DPP has secured a number of tricky consents for us and we find their combination of local policy knowledge, pragmatism and diligence a key factor in this success. I would highly recommend DPP to any other food retailer and we continue to work with him on more new stores as we deliver our ambitious expansion plans."

Jason Shepherd-Abdullah,
Head of Acquisitions Herbert Group

DPP has provided advice to Dunelm (Soft Furnishings) for a number of years. DPP have advised the retailer on a range of matters including new store development, refurbishment and mezzanine expansion, CIL obligations and applications for variation/deletion of operational conditions which could potentially constrain existing or future retail premises.

On occasions we have also provided advice in respect of competitor proposals and framing of representations to planning applications.

We have advised Dunelm on upwards of 20 sites throughout the UK which has assisted them in expanding from their original Midlands base to become a major national homewares retailer with a continuing store development and refurbishment programme

"DPP are a trusted planning adviser; strong retail insight allied to a detailed and commercial focus in their planning advice has been a recipe for success over many years"

Director of Property, Dunelm
(Soft Furnishings) Ltd

Dunelm, National Portfolio

Client: Dunelm Group Plc
Local Authority: Nationwide
Value: £1m+
Image: Dunelm Group Plc



Planning People

Every member of our team bring professional skills & technical expertise which we utilise on projects to deliver successful outcomes.

Director input throughout every project ensures clients benefit from our vast experience. We draw together our project teams based not just on geographical location, but on the expertise required to deliver the outcome.



Bob Robinson

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Having joined DPP in 1987 as a planning assistant, and becoming a Director in 1998, Bob has a wealth of experience and is a highly skilled technical planning consultant.

Acting for a wide variety of private sector clients on projects ranging from major retail/leisure schemes to urban mixed-use redevelopments and changes of use, he is often called upon to project manage development teams. As well as leading DPP's London office, Bob also has extensive expert witness experience in respect of planning appeals, examinations, CPO and High Court.

What People Say About Him:

"I have known Bob Robinson for many years – in fact I called him as a witness the first time he gave evidence to a planning inquiry. He identifies the key points in a case in persuasive terms and is steadfast under cross-examination. I rank Bob as one of the best planning witnesses in the country. As a planner he is that rare combination of someone with common sense, an ability to see the wood from the trees, realism and pragmatism; I wholeheartedly recommend him."

Christopher Katkowski QC

Our people deliver projects with passion, openness and accountability. They focus on action, not words, on outcome not process. The single goal for everybody is delivering results for our clients.



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