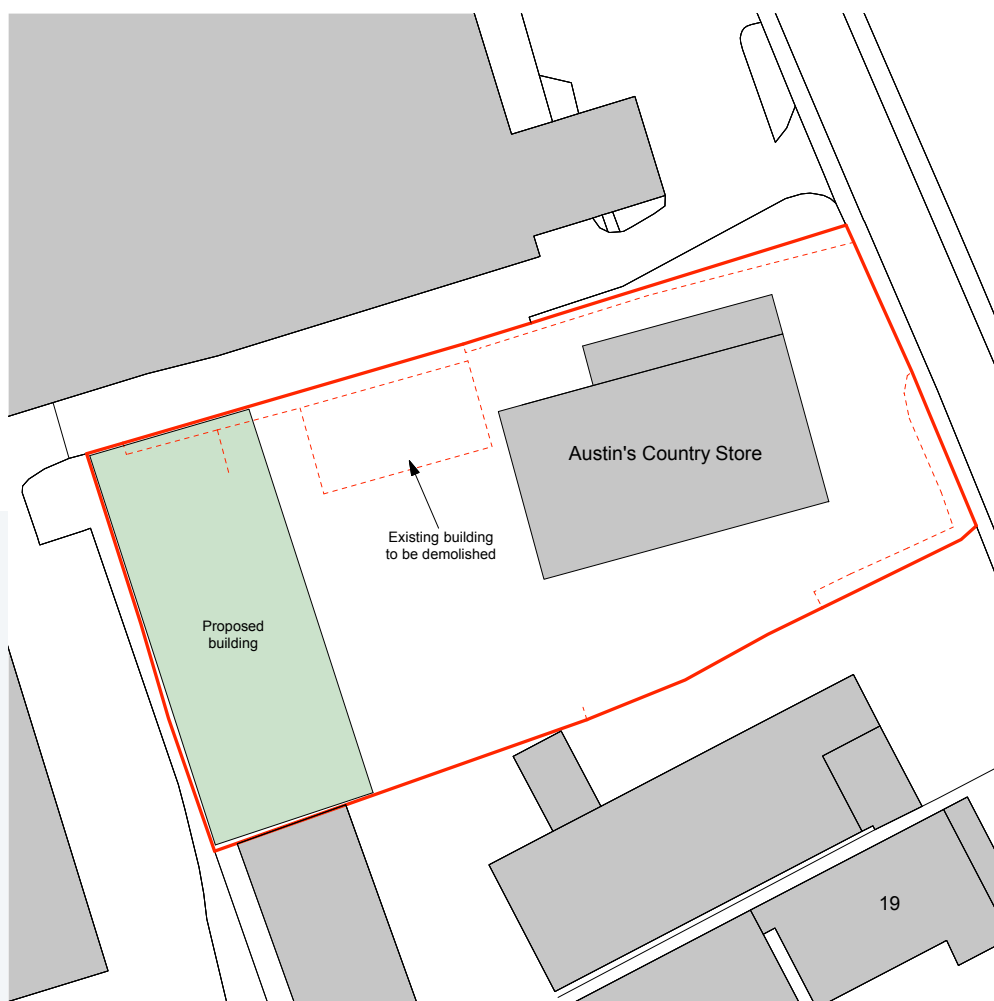


Site Context and Background

Having been introduced to the owners of the property by a local commercial agent, Plan-A were instructed to advise on the scope for a partial redevelopment in order to make better use of the site, together with the introduction of an ancillary café facility as part of improvements to the existing retail offer. On the basis of a positive initial appraisal, Plan-A were then instructed to coordinate and manage the subsequent application through the planning process.

The site lies within Cirencester's Love Lane Industrial Estate and is occupied by a long-established retail business. Whilst this had originally been focused on the sale and display of a limited range of bulky goods including coal and other solid fuel, the range and nature of goods had gradually adapted to ongoing changes in the retail market and other associated customer requirements.

This gradual evolution of the retail operation had led to an overall reduction in the amount of external storage required, leaving a significant area of the open yard largely redundant and resulting in the need to consider ways of making more effective use of the site as a means of ensuring the long-term viability and overall competitiveness of the business.



Our Approach

As an established employment centre, the prevailing planning policies for the Love Lane area provide specific support for new employment development. Therefore, our first step was to work with the architectural designer in establishing a potential site layout which maximised the opportunity to provide additional new-build business units without compromising the access and servicing arrangements associated with the client's existing retail operation. Furthermore, we worked alongside the commercial agent responsible for producing a sequential test report necessary in support of the ancillary café facility to ensure that it addressed all relevant planning policy requirements.

Following submission, it was necessary for us to negotiate away initial requests made by the planning authority for submission of a waste minimisation statement in support of the application. As a speculative proposal, we successfully argued that waste matters were best dealt with by way means of an appropriately worded planning condition.

However, in response to concerns raised by the Highway Authority, it proved necessary to work with a transport consultant in providing additional details to demonstrate that development of the site could be achieved whilst providing a safe and suitable access onto the highway.

The details set out within the transport statement were found acceptable by the Highways Authority and, since no other material concerns were raised in respect of the proposed development, planning permission was granted under the planning case officer's delegated powers.

