

## Transformation of derelict former abattoir into Focus DIY store and three industrial units

Before



### Introduction

Following a competitive tender held by EEDA in February 2004 for this derelict former abattoir site on the edge of Beccles town centre, Millngate were firstly short listed as one of ten contenders and finally appointed as preferred developer in June 2004.

Although allocated as employment land in the Waveney District Council Local Plan it was clear to Millngate that the only viable way of removing the derelict buildings and remediating the site, was to achieve a predominantly retail led development with a small employment element.

Located on a principal route into the town, and situated between Morrisons Superstore and the recently completed Tesco, the site lent itself to DIY and bulky goods use. Pre-letting proposals were received from DIY companies in November 2004, resulting in conditional terms being agreed with Focus DIY Limited.

2005 saw considerable activity, to overcome site constraints, including, flood relief measures, remediation strategy, protection to the adjoining

railway line and preparing a full and justifiable case for planning permission to enable contracts to be exchanged with EEDA in August 2005. With outline planning permission being achieved the following month, an agreement for lease with Focus DIY Limited was signed on 28th September 2005.

### The Scheme

A 26,216 sq.ft. non food retail warehouse with an 8,500 sq.ft. garden centre, storage compound, service yard, and 96 customer parking spaces and 10,500 sq.ft. of B1, B2 or B8 accommodation on a triangular site of circa 2.7 acres bounded by George Westwood Way, Common Lane North and the Ipswich to Lowestoft railway line.

Integral to the sale agreement with EEDA, Beccles Town Council are to be given freehold ownership of the industrial units. In addition, Millngate will also gift a small area of land on the north side of Common Lane North for a 21 space public car park.

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## During



### Programme

Following receipt of reserved matters planning consent on 4th January 2006, a six week demolition and remediation contract commenced on 23rd January 2006. K & R Demolition were appointed as demolition contractor who in turn appointed AIG Remediation to carry out all the necessary remediation measures to a strategy agreed with the Environment Agency. Remediation was completed during March and signed off by the EA in June 2006.

Millngate appointed Cross Keys Construction Limited as design and build contractor in January 2006 and work commenced in March 2006 with completion of the industrial units set for August 2006 and the Focus unit for October, with trading to commence in November 2006.

### Funding

All upfront speculative expenditure was financed from internal resources and then upon concluding the agreement to lease with Focus, 100% development finance was put in place with Clydesdale Bank Plc. Shortly thereafter contracts were exchanged with Griffin Ejendomme, a Danish investment consortium, to acquire the Focus unit upon completion.

### The Developer's Team

**Chase & Partners** – Purchasing, Letting and Investment Agents and Town Planning Consultants

**Building Design and Management (UK) Limited (BD+M)** – Project Managers and Employers Representative.

**The Harris Partnership** – Architects

**Kirksaunders Associates Limited** – Structural, M&E and Environmental Engineers and Planning Supervisors

**Gardner Cann Partnership** – Quantity Surveyors

**Jubb Consulting Engineers** – Transport Consultants and Flood alleviation advice.

**Mills & Reeve** – Solicitors

In addition to the above EEDA have been advised throughout by Roche – Chartered Surveyors, Wilkinson Williams acted for Focus DIY Limited and GVA Grimley acted for Griffin.

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