



Planning Potential secured planning permission for the refurbishment and extension of a specialist educational facility serving children and young adults with complex learning needs.

Demonstrating our ability to manage sensitive community infrastructure projects, combining detailed pre-application engagement, technical evidence, and close authority working to secure permission without technical objection.

The Challenge

Oaktree School is a maintained Special Educational Needs school serving pupils aged 7 to 19, with capacity for up to 137 students. Proposals sought to refurbish and extend the existing school to improve facilities, accessibility and capacity on a constrained site.

The scheme involved loss of part of the playing field, triggering statutory engagement with Sport England, alongside detailed design scrutiny from the Local Planning Authority's Urban Design team.

Without careful planning advice and front-loaded engagement, the project risked objection from Sport England, design concerns, and delay to the delivery of improved educational facilities.

Our Approach

- Led detailed pre-application engagement with the Local Planning Authority and Sport England
- Front-loaded technical discussions to resolve key issues prior to application submission
- Coordinated consultant inputs and managed the planning process on behalf of the client
- Prepared and submitted a supporting Open Space Needs Assessment
- Responded to Urban Design comments to improve design quality and townscape relationship
- Maintained close liaison with officers throughout determination

The Outcome

- Planning permission secured via delegated decision with no technical objections
- Sport England confirmed no objection despite the loss of playing field land
- Refurbishment and extensions approved to enhance SEN educational facilities
- Delivery certainty achieved for a vital community education asset