Meadowview Estate, Market Drayton

Solice Care Solutions Ltd.

Planning Potential

● Planning ● Engagement



"Planning Potential have been really supportive throughout the process, providing clear guidance and working closely with us to help move the project forward. Their knowledge, proactive approach and understanding of our vision have been invaluable in navigating the planning process. We are looking forward to seeing Eldertree Lodge progress and become a home that provides high-quality care and support for children and young people who need it." Solice Care

The Challenge

In just 10 weeks, Planning and Communications Potential secured Change of Use consent for the reuse of a former secure care facility as a therapeutic residential children's care village, one of the first in the UK. The former Eldertree Lodge site had been closed since 2021 and carried a difficult legacy within the local community following its previous operation as a secure care facility. Solice Care sought to replace this historic use with six therapeutic children's homes accommodating up to 36 young people aged 11 to 17 within a family-style care environment.

The proposal attracted concern around community integration, traffic, anti-social behaviour, local services and the suitability of the rural location. Building understanding and trust with local stakeholders was critical to helping residents distinguish the proposed therapeutic care model from the site's historic operation.

Without clear planning advice and proactive community engagement, the proposal risked misunderstanding, stakeholder opposition and delay to the delivery of much-needed specialist children's care provision.

Our Approach

- Led combined planning and communications strategy supporting the proposed change from C2A to C2.
- Provided planning evidence demonstrating the site's established care-led operational characteristics.
- Ran a community engagement programme introducing the proposals before the application submission.
- Engaged ward councillors, parish councillors and community stakeholders directly.
- Managed resident enquiries preparing detailed responses addressing concerns about care operations and impacts.
- Provided a strong rebuttal to registered objections allowing the Case Officer to support the application

The Outcome

- Change of Use from C2a to C2 secured
- Consent achieved via Delegated Decision, removing potential delays through committee which would have meant missing the Ofsted registration deadline
- Clear distinction established between historic secure care use and proposed therapeutic model.
- Long-vacant and controversial site brought back into positive use while addressing a shortage of specialist children's placements.