

38/2008/032

GOVERNORS TAUNTON SCHOOL

**ERECTION OF 2.45M HIGH SECURITY FENCING WITH ACCESS GATES AT TAUNTON SCHOOL, TAUNTON AS AMENDED BY LETTERS DATED 27 MARCH 2008 AND 3RD APRIL 2008 AND ATTACHED PLANS**

321790/125880

FULL

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**PROPOSAL**

The application seeks permission for the erection of a 2.45m high security fence to enclose both school site to the south and north of Greenway Road. The fence propose is a large mesh type fence with a 200 x 50mm grid pattern having a vertical emphasis with 5mm wires and "V" shaped depressions along the length to provide rigidity. The fence is finished in green. Additional information has been submitted by the applicant to clarify the position of the fencing.

Fencing to the south and part of the east boundary of the main site will be visible from Staplegrove Road where it is to be positioned behind existing trees along this boundary. Part of this southern boundary also adjoins the railway line.

The eastern western boundary of the main site is shared by gardens of properties fronting Cyril Street West, Addison Grove and Beverley Grove.

There is a short section of fencing to be provided along Greenway Road and here it will be located behind the existing well established iron railings that currently marked the boundary. The fence line then runs along the rear gardens of residential properties fronting Greenway Road and along the flank of College Road properties before continuing around the Petrol Filling Station Site.

The remainder of the northern boundary it will form the school boundary on the south side of the private road which provide rear access to Greenway Road properties. There is an eastern section that runs along the path to the rear of properties in Staplegrove Road where the fence then returns to the junior school site entrance.

On the northern side of Greenway Road the security fence is to be located behind the existing hedge and fence that marks the boundary of the tennis courts and also behind the hedge and trees that form the boundary of the playing fields. The western boundary of that site adjoins the public footpath and the fence continues along that boundary and then for the first section of the northern boundary runs to the rear of residential properties in Lewis Road and Wyncham Road. For the remainder of the northern boundary it will adjoin open land.

Part of the eastern boundary adjoins the roadway access to Taunton Vale Sports Club. The remainder of that boundary runs behind the residential properties at 10 Gypsy Lane. It then continued along the rear of Greenway Road properties before linking back up to the frontage site fence.

The submission includes a Design and Access Statement and a letter setting out details of a meeting with the Avon & Somerset Constabulary regarding advice on security. The applicant have indicated that the fence line will respect existing boundary trees and any works necessary will be kept to the absolute minimum.

Approval was granted last year for the erection of the same type and height of fencing to parts of the Staplegrove Road frontage and to the rear of Greenway Road properties (38/2007/216). This fence has been erected for some time and has not resulted in any adverse comments concerning its appearance.

## **POLICY CONTEXT**

### Adopted Taunton Deane Local Plan Saved Policies

S1 – General Requirements.

S2 - Design.

EN6 – Protection of Trees, woodlands and hedgerows

EN12 - Landscape Character Areas

PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development (PPS1)

PPG17 - Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation

## **CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS**

LANDSCAPE OFFICER - My main concern is:

- potential impact on tree roots and branches
- how deep are the holes for the post
- will branches need to be removed from trees
- official impact
- Is the fence replaced existing fencing

More details clarifying above would be helpful before making a full assessment

Views on additional information awaited.

CONSERVATION OFFICER- I am clear as to the extent of the proposed fencing. Is it really all around the boundaries of both sites? Proposal appears a bit over the top. What is the justification

Views on additional information awaited.

Some 26 letters were received on the original submission with a further 20 submitted since the revised information has been available. The principle matters raised are as following:

- Need to further increase security on the site is questioned
- Justification for fence in general and in particular surrounding the playing fields needed and not adequately given.

- Fence appears of light construction and cannot be considered as a security fence
- Details submitted don't indicate the position of fence in relation to hedges and trees.
- Queries about how trees and hedges will be maintained in the future
- Fence needs to be set away from any hedges by a minimum of 1 m to allow for maintenance
- It will create enclosed areas that cannot be maintained
- The particular height , form and style of fence will make residents feel that they are living a prison
- It will be an eyesore and impact on residents amenity
- Not in keeping with existing in rural outlook over fields
- Schools should concentrate on fencing the campus rather than playing fields
- Not in keeping with the character of the Listed Buildings and will adversely affect their setting.
- Appears to block public footpath in places
- Proposal must contain a gateway to number 10 Gypsy Lane to preserve right of way

## **ASSESSMENT**

It is not a requirement of the Local Plan policy that the applicants need to demonstrate a need for any particular development before planning permission should be granted. However careful consideration needs to be given on any impact on the setting of Listed Buildings. In this instance the applicants consider that their fencing proposal will form part of the Schools security strategy as discussed with the Constabulary to improve the site security for the benefit of the pupils.

The issue to be considered here is what impact will the development have on the general appearance of the site and on amenities of those residents which surround the site.

As has already been pointed out permission for the same style and height of fence as that now applied for has really been given with that fence now erected on parts of the site. This does not seem to have resulted in major objections since its erection.

It is considered that the proposed fence is of a light weight nature and as such will not have a major visual impact where it is located along Staplegrove Road and Greenway Road where in both instances it is set behind existing hedges and fencing.

In the majority of cases where it adjoins residential properties it is an addition to existing boundary fencing. With the height proposed only the top portion of the fence will be visible above this existing fencing and in most cases this will be at a distance that your officers consider will not have an adverse visual impact on the amenities of those residential properties.

The concerns about the precise position of the fence and future maintenance have some validity and consequently a condition is recommended requiring the precise

location of the fence line to be agreed and details of any tree works submitted and agreed in writing prior to being undertaken. In this way the precise circumstances particular to the various portions of the fence can be resolved

On balance it is not considered that the nature of the fence proposed will have an adverse effect on amenities of neighbouring residents or on the appearance of the site from points of public advantage. With this in mind a recommendation is one of approval

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Permission be GRANTED subject to conditions the precise position of the fence and any necessary tree works being submitted prior to commencement of that section and following reason:

Reason: "The proposed fence appears of a style and height appropriate to its location and will not impact on the visual or residential amenities of the area."

**In preparing this report the Planning Officer has considered fully the implications and requirements of the Human Rights Act 1998.**

**CONTACT OFFICER: 356454 MR M ROBERTS (PART-TIME)**

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