

DR A LEAK

**RETENTION OF 1.48 M HIGH TIMBER FENCE TO FRONT OF LITTON HOUSE,
TRULL ROAD, TAUNTON.**

22000/23550

RETENTION OF BUILDINGS/WORKS ETC.

PROPOSAL

The proposal is for the retention of a timber fence erected along the Trull Road boundary of the property. The fence measures 1.48 m in height, set back 0.3 m from the pavement edge, and approximately 27 m in length. The applicant has indicated that a new hedgerow will be planted along the rear of this fence, and the fence then removed when the hedge matures.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

PARISH COUNCIL although approving the application in principle, the parish council feel that the permission should be for a temporary period only, of say 5 years. Any renewal would need strong reasons for approval. The approval should require the new hedge to be planted during the present planting season and should be carefully monitored over time and there should be a condition to ensure the fence is properly maintained for the duration of the temporary approval.

3 LETTERS OF OBJECTION received raising issues of:- fence is entirely out of character with the area, and the owners should be required to replace their hedge; fence is of substantial height and length, creating an eyesore along Trull Road as it comes into view; no getting away from the overall visual impact of the starkness and harshness of the fence which replaced a well established hedge; local wildlife is rapidly running out of trees, shrubs or hedges to enable their survival; a concerted effort should be made to retain the character of all that remains untouched so far; look of Trull Road spoiled which apart from a few small sections of timber consists of green hedges, trees, shrubs and stone walls for the whole length from Compass Hill to past Queens College. ONE LETTER OF SUPPORT stating that they have no objection to the visual aspect of the fence with regards to construction and height; feel it provides better safety to pedestrians by keeping the pavement clear of overhanging hedges; along Trull Road some properties have similar fencing atop a brick/stone wall, and the combined total height is similar to the new fence at Litton House.

POLICY CONTEXT

Taunton Local Plan (Adopted 1986) policy EC/4 states that "The Borough Council will safeguard and enhance the landscape setting of approach routes into Taunton through the strict control of development and through positive measures of enhancement". Paragraph 8.11 of the plan highlights Trull Road as being one of the most attractive

roads leading into the town, with it being particularly pleasant owing to its mature trees. Taunton Deane Local Plan Revised Deposit policies EN5 (Protection of Trees, Woodlands, Orchards and hedgerows), S1 (General Requirements) and S2 (Design) were also considered when determining the application. Policy EN5 states that: "development which would harm ... hedgerows of value to the areas landscape, character or wildlife will not be permitted unless adequate provision is made for tree cover to compensate for this loss".

ASSESSMENT

The applicant has indicated that the previous boxed privet/sycamore hedge was in an extremely poor state, and was removed with the intention of growing a new hedge. The fence was erected so a new hedge of Laurel could be planted behind the fence, and there would be some privacy whilst this hedge matured. It is intended to remove the fence in 3 - 4 years as soon as the hedge matures enough not to be vandalised and to offer privacy again. The fence has been painted rustic oak to soften its appearance. Trull Road at this point has an enclosed, semi-rural appearance, with several large mature trees arching over the road. The road boundaries to the properties are typically stone walls with thick laurel and privet hedging atop, giving an attractive appearance to the street scene. The road is well used, being a main traffic route into the town centre from the south. The fence erected is considered incongruous and of an unsympathetic appearance to the visual attractiveness of the street scene. Whilst reasons for it are understood, given the appearance of the fence in the street scene, and the fact that there would be little opportunity for planting in front of the fence to soften its visual impact in the street scene, the application is considered contrary to the policies in both the adopted and emerging local plan and therefore the granting of even a temporary permission would not be appropriate.

RECOMMENDATION

Permission be REFUSED for the reason of the detrimental impact on the visual amenities of the street scene and the character of the area.

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

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