

SECTION '2' – Applications meriting special consideration

Application No : 11/01122/FULL1

Ward:
Copers Cope

Address : Bishop Challoner School 228 Bromley
Road Bromley BR2 0BS

OS Grid Ref: E: 538945 N: 169431

Applicant : Mr D Rolls

Objections : YES

Description of Development:

Erection of metal mesh fencing on boundary with Bromley Road to a maximum total height of 2.5m; erection of fencing to north of grassed area with single gate to east and double gate to west; replacement double gates on boundary with Scott's Avenue; erection of gate to west of site.

Key designations:

Biggin Hill Safeguarding Birds
Biggin Hill Safeguarding Area
London City Airport Safeguarding
London City Airport Safeguarding Birds

Proposal

This proposal is for the erection of metal mesh fencing on the boundary with Bromley Road; erection of fencing to north of internal grassed area with single gate to east and double gate to west; replacement double gates on boundary with Scott's Avenue; erection of gate to west of site.

The proposed metal mesh fencing on the boundary with Bromley Road (annotated at 1 on the plans) would have a maximum total height of 2.5m and would be constructed above an existing brick retaining wall. It would start at the entrance to the site along Bromley Road where it would extend for 6m at which point there would be a gap of 2.2m to accommodate the bay window feature of the lodge and then would extend for a further approximately 65m before turning into the site. This would in part replace an existing wooden fence which is approximately 2m high (at some points with an additional 0.8m high trellis above) and which extends for a total of 32m.

The proposed metal mesh gate to be located to the west of the site (annotated as 4 on the site plans) would be 3m in width and 2m in height. A 2.4m high metal mesh fence is also proposed to be constructed to replace an existing 0.6m fence on the grassed area adjacent to the front elevation of the listed building (annotated at 2 on

the site plan) with a double access gate to the west and a single access gate to the east. The fence would be approximately 48.5m in length at which point it projects an additional 6m to the south.

The proposed replacement double gates on the boundary with Scotts Avenue (annotated at 3 on the site plan) would be a maximum of 1.7m in height and would have a total width of 2m, including additional fencing. The existing wooden fence which has been painted blue is a maximum of 1.3m in height and 1.8m in width.

Three other applications – refs. 11/01124, 11/01104 and 11/01105/FULL1 are also on this agenda involving other works to the site.

Location

Bishop Challoner School, formerly Shortlands House School, is a late 18th century Grade II Statutory Listed Building located in Urban Open Space.

Comments from Local Residents

- the proposed 2.4m high welded mesh security fencing ‘Securimesh’ is typically used for “prisons, border fences, boundary fencing for military sites” and is wholly inappropriate in the context and setting for a Grade II listed building.
- concerns as local residents were not consulted by the School.
- the proposed metal mesh fencing is out of keeping with the streetscene.
- the proposal is wholly inappropriate in the context and setting of a Grade II Listed Building.
- concerns as to which documents are being submitted as part of the application.
- submitted drawings do not show the adjoining residential properties which are affected by the proposals and do not accurately represent trees within the site and include works unrelated to the current application.
- the reason for the fencing is given as “to provide better security along the boundary” notion that the proposed partial fencing will improve security is flawed by the fact that there are two wide ungated/open entrances from Bromley Road and at the corner of Scotts Avenue and Bromley Road.
- a green dense hedge as in evidence at the lower end of the site fronting Bromley Road or replacement timber fencing set on top of the existing dwarf wall would be more appropriate.
- charges in the deeds for Bishop Challoner site state that fences should not exceed 1.8m in height.
- the existing low level boundary fence (approximately 0.75m high) runs parallel to the driveway into the School is clearly visible from the Bromley Road entrance.
- the existing timber gates (1.5m high) set within mature hedgerow are used by pupils on a daily basis and are more in keeping with a discrete private school entrance.
- the design an access statement refers to the 2m high double gates being “similar in colour and style to boundary fencing to maintain continuity”.

However, the boundary enclosure all along Scotts Avenue is mature hedgerow and there is no similar boundary fencing existing or proposed adjacent to these gates.

- the design and access statement states the “gates are seldom used and are to remain locked and deter passersby”.
- the replacement fencing should be congruous with the historical and architectural nature of the site as a whole which the ‘dense mesh panel fencing’ does not.
- the replacement gates on the boundary with Scotts Avenue should be of wooden construction and of a similar height to the existing gates. The proposed replacement gates would be wholly out of keeping with the streetscene and with the importance of the site of which they form part.
- the existing access via Scotts Avenue has never been granted planning permission.
- the proposal is seeking to legitimise the use of an unplanned and unapproved entrance to the school and to permanently close off the safer and original entrance with consequent effects on road safety.
- the original entrance between No. 8 and 10 Scotts Avenue be brought back into use and additional measures such as parking restrictions be introduced.
- the erection of metal mesh fencing on the boundary with Bromley Road would unduly impair the open nature of the site contrary to Policy G8.
- the proposal would be contrary to Policy BE7 (i) and (ii) as the hedgerow along the boundary with Bromley Road is an important feature of the streetscape which ought not to be diminished in any way by the erection of the metal mesh fence.
- the 2.5m high fence would be inappropriate and would erode the open nature of the area and would adversely impact on local townscape character.
- the proposal is not a replacement fence as it extends further along the boundary with Bromley Road.
- the proposed fence should be built behind the hedgerow so that the hedgerow and planting can remain on the immediate boundary with Bromley Road.
- nearby enclosures are constructed of red brick, black wrought iron railings, white fences or other wooden fences which are pleasant and enhance the local townscape character.
- although the immediate boundaries are not within a conservation area, Shortlands Road, a designated Conservation Area intersects Bromley Road at very close proximity to the school. The Victorian houses, tree lined streets and leafy suburban ambience of Shortlands and Bromley Road will be adversely affected by the construction of a 2.5m high security military metal mesh fencing.

Comments from Consultees

From a trees perspective no objections are raised as no significant trees would be affected by the proposal.

From a heritage and urban design perspective the proposal is considered to be unacceptable as the proposed fence on the boundary with Bromley Road is considered to be an inappropriate material and excessively high. The current wooden fence of a natural material is considered to be more complementary and in keeping with its setting. The proposed 'internal' fencing encloses a grass area which is part of the setting of listed building and replaces a more discrete fence of a lower height.

The Councils Highways Division raises no objections to the proposal.

The Metropolitan Police Crime Prevention Design Advisor states that the proposal is considered to meet the requirements of the Secured by Design (SBD) Schools Guides as long as the gaps in the welded mesh are small enough to resist climbing. The application should therefore meet the requirements of Secured by Design.

Planning Considerations

BE1 Design of New Development
BE7 Railings, Boundary Walls and Other Means of Enclosure
BE8 Statutory Listed Buildings
C7 Educational and Pre-School Facilities
G8 Urban Open Space
PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment

Planning History

There is a substantial planning history pertaining to the site which has been outlined in planning application ref. 11/01105.

Conclusions

The main issues relating to this application is the effect the works would have on the Grade II Listed Building and its setting.

The existing wooden fence although sizeable is considered to be more in keeping with the context of the site and does not extend for such a length as the proposed metal mesh fencing. The proposed metal mesh fence would appear incongruous in the streetscene and does not respect or complement the setting of the site.

Policy HE10.1 of PPS5 states that "when considering applications for development that affect the setting of a heritage asset, local planning authorities should treat favourably applications that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset. When considering applications that do not do this, local planning authorities should weigh any such harm against the wider benefits of the application. The greater the negative impact on the significance of the heritage asset, the greater the benefits that will be needed to justify approval". In this instance, given the overall boundary arrangements and the possibilities of other options, the potential security benefits

of the application do not outweigh the potential detrimental impact to the setting of the site and listed building, contrary to Policy BE8.

The existing planting and hedgerow on the front boundary with Bromley Road which is considered to form an important feature of the streetscape would most likely be affected in order to accommodate the proposed metal mesh fencing, contrary to Policy BE7. The proposed 2.5m height of the proposal is considered to be excessively high and would form an imposing and overly dominant feature in the streetscene which is generally characterised by lower brick walls, railing and hedges and as such the proposal would adversely impact on the local townscape character, contrary to Policy BE7.

The proposed internal 2.5m high metal mesh fencing (to replace a low 0.6m fence) is considered to directly affect the setting of the listed building, due to its excessive height and design and is therefore contrary to Policy BE8. In addition the site is a designated Urban Open Space and the scale, siting and size of the proposal is considered to unduly impair the open nature of the site, also contrary to Policy G8. The proposed 2m high metal gate on the boundary with Scotts Avenue would appear industrial in appearance and would be out of character with the area.

In summation, the proposals as a whole are considered to harm the setting of the listed building and the openness of the site.

Background papers referred to during production of this report comprise all correspondence on file ref. 11/01122, excluding exempt information.

RECOMMENDATION: MEMBERS' VIEWS ARE REQUESTED

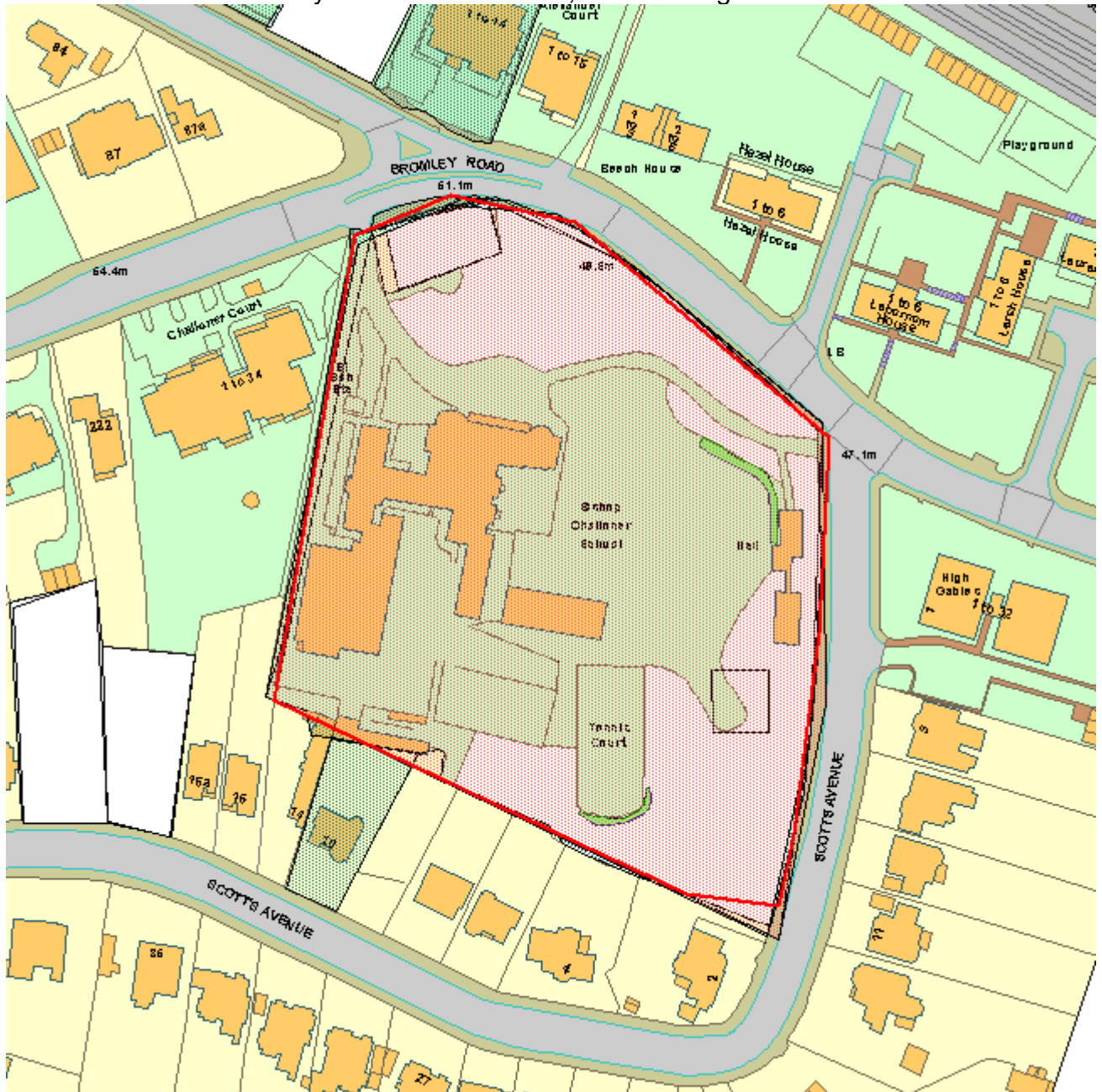
D00003 If Members are minded to refuse permission the following grounds are suggested:

- 1 The proposed internal metal mesh fencing would due to its design, extent, height and external appearance be harmful to the character and setting of the listed building and would unduly impair the open nature of the designated Urban Open Space site, contrary to Policy G8 of the Unitary Development Plan.
- 2 The proposed front boundary fence due to its design, extent, height and external appearance would be harmful to the streetscene and setting of the historic listed building, contrary to Policy BE8 of the Unitary Development Plan.

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