

15 January 2021

Jo Male  
Planning Department  
Bracknell Forest Council  
Time Square  
Market Street  
Bracknell  
RG12 1JD

**RECEIVED**

15/01/2021

21/00035/FUL



Installation of automated timber vehicle gates with pedestrian gates on either side.  
Wyevale Garden Centre, Forest Road, Binfield, Bracknell, RG42 4HA

Dear Jo,

I have the pleasure of submitting a full planning application for the installation of vehicle gates at Wyevale Garden Centre, Forest Road, Binfield, Bracknell, RG42 4HA.

Planning application 20/00155/FUL for the “Erection of 20 no. dwellings with associated landscaping, open space and car parking following the demolition of existing buildings” was granted permission on 21<sup>st</sup> August 2020. Condition 26 reads as follows:

No gates shall be provided at the vehicular access to the site.  
REASON: In the interests of highway safety.  
[Relevant Policies: Core Strategy DPD CS23]

This condition was recommended by the Council’s Highways Section, dated 28<sup>th</sup> April 2020 and amended 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2020, but no justification for the condition was included by the Highways Engineer in the Consultee Response. It would be reasonable to expect that if the engineer had concerns about the possibility of gates resulting in a highway safety issue, that the consultee response would have included justification for the recommended condition.

In considering the application for the proposed dwelling, it is stated in paragraph 9.51 of the Planning Committee Report that: *“Binfield Manor is located approximately 180m to the south of the development, behind large walls and gates which provide screening from the site.”* It was therefore reported to the Members that the precedent of a gated development is present within close proximity of the application site. In fact, Binfield Manor has gated access from Forest Road and Binfield Road as well as all the residential properties on Binfield Road.. There are also examples of gated entrances on Church Lane, in close proximity of the application site. Therefore, in terms of the principle of a gated development, there are numerous examples in the immediate surrounding area and therefore the LPA should not have an objection to the proposal from a design perspective, subject to the appropriate appearance of the gates.

The Committee Report also states in paragraph 5.5 that: *“An area of public open space is provided centrally within the site. Around its perimeter, beyond the unlisted wall, a ‘leisure walk’ would be created, accessed by both existing and new openings within the wall. This would have a gated access at the front of the site and would be for private use by future residents only.”* It has therefore been accepted by Members

that the open space would only be accessible to the residents of the development, because although the public could gain access to the 'leisure walk' around the historic wall, the pedestrian gates would restrict access to the open space. The principle of creating a private, walled garden / open space is a popular historic design feature, but it would however be nullified if the public is allowed to gain access by means of the vehicle access. It is therefore considered that the Members have by default also accepted the principle of a private, gated development.

In terms of the reason for the relevant condition, the Highways Section has stated that gates will not be acceptable "in the interests of highway safety." The only possible highway safety related reason that the engineer might be concerned about, is the obstruction of the highway by vehicles waiting to enter the residential development site. The distance between the back edge of the footway and the gate is 20m, which means that a refuse vehicle and a car would be able to pull clear of the highway, whilst the gates open. All of the examples of gated developments in the immediate surrounding area have shorter separation distances between the back edge of the footway and the gates and have either been allowed or no action has been taken to prevent the obstruction of the highway. The condition makes reference to Policy CS23, which states:

**Policy CS23: Transport**

The Council will use its planning and transport powers to:

- i. reduce the need to travel;
- ii. increase the safety of travel;
- iii. maintain and where possible improve the local road network;
- iv. provide improved access to key services and facilities;
- v. promote alternative modes of travel;
- vi. secure the reliable movement of goods through the Borough;
- vii. enhance sub-regional connectivity to and from the Borough;
- viii. promote travel planning;
- ix. make representations and bids for funding major transport infrastructure to help deliver the Core Strategy and Local Transport Plan schemes.

Only point (ii) mentions highway safety, but point (iii) could also be relevant to the provision of gates, in terms of ensuring the free flow of traffic on the local highway network. However, the proposed gates will not obstruct the highway, because the set back from the highway is more than sufficient to prevent vehicles overhanging onto the highway or obstructing pedestrians in the footway. It is therefore considered that the reason attached to condition 26 is not justified and therefore it would be acceptable to allow the installation of the gates as proposed by this application.

I trust that this proposal will be received favourably by officers, but if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me direct.

Kind regards,



Wesley McCarthy MRTPI  
Planning Manager  
Nicholas King Homes

