

19th October 2021

Braintree District Council
Development Management
Causeway House
Bocking End
Braintree
CM7 9HB

Dear Sir / Madam,

RE: New Place Bardfield Road Finchingfield: Retrospective application for the retention of recently replaced boundary fencing

- 10 Please find enclosed documents for the retrospective householder planning application for the above site submitted via the planning portal, ref: PP- 10343572

Drawing R-01 – Location & Block Plan

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Drawing R-02 – Site plan showing boundary treatments

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Drawing R-03 – Front boundary fence detail

- 2.0 The proposals in this application follow the replacement of the existing boundary fencing which is currently being investigated under case: 2100192/UBV8. The applicant has carried out the replacement of fencing and boundary treatments around the site to provide security and privacy to their home where most of the fencing has been replaced in a like for like manner as demonstrated on the submitted documents, summarised as follows:

North Boundary

- 3.0 The northern boundary comprises of a large brick and flint wall which extends from the eastern boundary and stops a few meters short of the western boundary which fronts the road. At this point it changes to 2m high timber fencing which extends up to the western boundary. Prior to the fence replacement, the timber fencing comprised of 2m high close boarded fence panels where these were replaced with 2m high traditional featheredge fencing. The traditional featheredge fencing is a more traditional and appropriate fencing technique in the conservation area so it is considered an enhancement in this respect. The eastern end of this boundary has not changed.

South Boundary

- 4.0 This boundary is formed with a timber fence along most of its length where past the main dwelling it changes to a low level brick and flint wall. The original timber fence comprised of 2m high traditional featheredge fencing where this has been replaced like for like. Beyond the timber fence, the brick and flint wall remains where trellis has been installed inside the site to allow planting to grow up and offer privacy to their garden from the adjacent public footpath, similar to others in the area as shown in the images below.



Western Boundary

- 5.0 The original boundary comprised of a low level timber picket fence which has been replaced like for like with a new timber fence along the boundary line. Set back from this by over 1m, is a 2m high featheredge fence where between the two is a laurel hedge. The 2m high featheredge fencing has been installed to provide a temporary boundary and offer the applicants property security while the laurel hedge establishes itself. Laurel hedges are fast growing where in a relatively short period of time, it will be at its mature height where it will then continue to fill out. Once the laurel hedge is fully established at its mature height and is fully mature in terms of its density the fence behind can be removed where the hedge will provide the privacy and security the applicants need.

Eastern Boundary

- 6.0 No changes are proposed to this boundary.

Impact Assessment

- 7.0 The boundary changes which have been carried out provide the applicant privacy and security which is an integral part of their living and enjoyment in their home. The manner in which the boundaries appear will have an impact on the character of the conservation area so should be sympathetic to their setting and their acceptability based on this.
- 8.0 The north and south boundaries are like for like replacements of the previous fencing where the side boundaries to properties in the area comprise of hedges / brick walls and timber fences so the use of timber here is appropriate. The use of featheredge timber fencing is more appropriate and traditional than fence posts with panels installed between so the use of this to both boundaries will not cause harm to the character of the conservation area.
- 9.0 To the south, the brick wall on the eastern end of the boundary is a wall to a former important building in the village so has a strong heritage importance in its own right. The installation of the trellis fencing above it is one which is not uncommon within the context of the area as shown in the images above. Over time, as the plants establish themselves on the trellis, the screening will begin to become natural and offer a natural transition to the brick wall.
- 10.0 The general character of site frontages in the area is that of open frontages with low level fences and brick walls. Some sites are more well screened where behind the low level fencing mature hedgerows provide

screening to the sites beyond. At New Place, there are several large mature trees which are dominant in the area and street scene so form an important feature of the conservation area.

- 11.0 The fence here has been replaced in a like for like manner and the hedge replaced with laurel hedging which will be allowed to grow to 2m high, similar to others in the area. The fencing behind currently has a negative impact on the street scene so is harmful to the character of the conservation area however once the laurel hedge is at the maintained height of 2m, the greenery and setting of the area will be restored. To ensure this is the case, the fence behind can also be removed where the hedge will provide the applicant the security they need.

Summary

- 12.0 In summary, the replacement fences are generally considered acceptable and will not cause harm to the character of the conservation area however initially there the 2m high fencing to the west fence to the south if kept permanently would cause harm to the character of the area. Notwithstanding this, the fence has been erected as a temporary solution where its long term, permanent appearance is considered to be appropriate to the area so this initial harm will no longer exist.

- 13.0 It is likely that this initial harm to the conservation area would be sufficient to warrant a refusal of the application so under the planning practice guidance, paragraph Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 21a-001-20140306, which states,

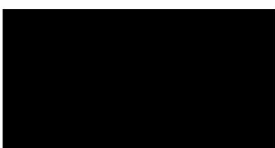
'When used properly, conditions can enhance the quality of development and enable development to proceed where it would otherwise have been necessary to refuse planning permission, by mitigating the adverse effects.'

It is suggested that conditions be imposed on any approval to safeguard the character of the conservation area in the long term and allow the boundaries to remain the short term.

- 14.0 This condition could be worded so that the 2m high fencing to the western boundary, be removed once the laurel hedge is established at 2m high where a suitable time limit on this could be applied.

- 15.0 We trust the drawings and information is acceptable however if you require any further information then please do not hesitate to contact us. Furthermore if, once the information has been considered in detail by the planning officer, you feel there is anything that may prejudice the granting of planning permission then please contact us at your earliest convenience to discuss the matter before writing up your detailed report or determining the planning application.

Yours Sincerely,



David Farrow (MCIAT)
Director