



## **OFFICER REPORT**

### **1. REASON FOR REPORTING APPLICATION TO COMMITTEE**

This application is being reported to the Planning Committee as more than 3 objections have been received to the application.

### **2. SITE DESCRIPTION**

The site comprises a detached building sited to the east of New Forest Ride and to the south of London Road, used as a workshop and MOT centre. Vehicular access to the site is taken from New Forest Ride. A Mercedes car dealership is located to the north of the site and to the west are residential dwellings. The area in front of the building is laid to hardstanding.

### **3. RELEVANT SITE HISTORY**

08/00288/FUL approved May 2008 for change of use from vehicle preparation unit to vehicle workshop and M.O.T. Centre.

13/00944/FUL withdrawn January 2014 for erection of new close boarded fence.

### **4. THE PROPOSAL**

Full permission is sought for the erection of 1.8m chain link fencing along the western boundary of the site facing onto New Forest Ride.

An existing chain link fence which denotes the western boundary of the site facing onto New Forest Ride would be removed. This fence is set between 4m and 14m from the back edge of the highway.

A new 1.8 high chain link fence would be erected closer to the highway on New Forest Ride. The proposed fence line would be set between 4.2m at the closest point and 8.5m at the widest point from the highway. It would run for a total length of 37m facing onto the highway and a section of fencing 5.4m in length would run adjacent to the vehicular entrance into the site.

The area of land which would be enclosed by the new fenceline which is currently laid to grass would remain as soft landscaping (confirmed by the agent). Any future alterations to this land may require a planning application i.e. works to lay hardstanding, if those works are considered to constitute development.

### **5. REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED**

Winkfield Parish Council was consulted on the application and objects to it on the grounds that it is visually intrusive and changes the character of the area, leading to a loss of visual amenity and it increases the commercial and industrial footprint of the site which is detrimental to and out of keeping with the local area.

3no. letters of objection received which can be summarised as follows:

- increase in commercial activity on site i.e. what will enclosed land be used for, can it be controlled\_
- non compliance with opening hours, way business operates i.e. offering a drop in service for vehicle repairs
- dumped vehicles
- impact on visual amenities of surrounding area
- intrusive nature of commercial site does not belong in residential area
- question legal ownership of land
- impact on highway safety
- issues with staff parking
- ground contamination
- display of advertisements

## **6. DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

The Development Plan for this Borough includes the following:

Site Allocations Local Plan 2013 (SALP)  
 Retained Policies of the South East Plan 2009 (SEP)  
 Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2008 (CSDPD)  
 Saved Policies of the Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan 2002 (BFBLP)  
 Bracknell Forest Borough Policies Map 2013

## **7. PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT**

SALP Policy CP1 refers to the presumption in favour of sustainable development as outlined within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). SALP Policy CP1 states that the Council will act proactively and positively with applicants to seek solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to improve the economic, social and environmental conditions within the area. Planning applications that accord with the policies in the development plan for Bracknell Forest should be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The site is located in a residential area that is within a defined settlement on the Bracknell Forest Borough Policies Map (2013).

CSDPD Policy CS1 sets out a number of sustainable development principles including making efficient use of land and buildings and locating development in locations that reduce the need to travel.

CSDPD Policy CS2 states that development will be permitted within defined settlements and on allocated sites. Development that is consistent with the character, accessibility and provision of infrastructure and services within that settlement will be permitted, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

These policies are considered to be consistent with the sustainable development principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and as a consequence are considered to carry significant weight.

As a result the proposed development is considered to be acceptable in principle, subject to no adverse impact on the street scene, amenity of neighbouring occupiers, highway safety, trees, etc. These matters are assessed below.

## **8. IMPACT ON CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF AREA**

Saved Policy EN20 of the BFBLP and Policy CS7 of the CSDPD relate to design considerations in new development and are relevant considerations. These policies seek to ensure that developments are sympathetic to the character of the area. This is consistent with the NPPF.

The application site is located in a prominent position to the south of London Road - a classified A road and to the east of New Forest Ride - a classified B road. An existing chain link fence denoting the west boundary of the site is currently set back between 4m and 14m from the back edge of the highway. Between the existing fence line and the highway is an area of grass and mature trees. The existing fence due to its design allows views through into the application site and is set back from the highway so as to not appear readily prominent in the street scene.

Previous application 13/00944/FUL proposed a 2m high close boarded fence to replace the existing chain link fence. This was considered to be inappropriate, appearing incongruous within the street scene due to its design and siting, set 2m from the back edge of the highway.

This revised application proposes a 1.8m high chain link fence which would be acceptable in design, the same design as the existing boundary treatment facing onto New Forest Ride. A chain link fence would not be solid like close boarded fencing so would allow views through into the site. The design of the fencing would therefore be appropriate.

The new fenceline would be relocated out towards the highway from its current position but be set back from the highway between 4.2m at the closest point and 8.5m at the widest point so that a large area of soft landscaping comprising open grass and trees is retained between the highway and new fenceline. The section of New Forest Ride turning off from London Road to Tesco is characterised by grass verges, mature trees and shrubs which act as a visual buffer between the highway and surrounding development, creating an attractive green, leafy character to the area. The revised position of the fenceline, although closer to the highway, would still retain this soft landscaped buffer which is characteristic of the area and would therefore not detract from the visual amenity of the surrounding area.

As such, the proposal would not adversely affect the character and appearance of the surrounding area and would be in accordance with Saved Policy EN20 of the BFBLP, Policy CS7 of CSDPD and the NPPF.

## **9. RESIDENTIAL AMENITY**

Saved Policy EN20 of the BFBLP states that developments should not adversely affect the amenity of surrounding properties. This is consistent with the NPPF.

The proposed 1.8m high chain link fence would be located between 27m and 42m from the nearest residential properties to the west of the site at Wareham Road and Lyndhurst Close. In view of separation distances to the nearest residential properties, the proposed fence is not be considered to impact upon the residential amenities of neighbouring properties by virtue of visual intrusion.

As such, the proposal would not be considered to affect the residential amenities of neighbouring properties and would be in accordance with Saved Policy EN20 of the BFBLP and the NPPF.

## 10. TRANSPORT IMPLICATIONS

Policy CS23 of the CSDPD refers to improving the safety of travel. This is consistent with the NPPF.

There is an area of land that runs adjacent to the highway on New Forest Ride which is adopted highway land, owned by the Council. This strip of land is 4m wide. The revised position of the proposed fence would be sited behind highway land and its siting would therefore be acceptable. Further, the position of the fence would not interfere with vehicular visibility at the exit of the site onto New Forest Ride.

As such, the proposal would not result in highway safety implications and would be in accordance with Policy CS23 of the CSDPD and the NPPF.

## 11. TREE IMPLICATIONS

Saved Policy EN1 of the BFBLP ensures that the Borough's trees are protected. The NPPF refers to conserving the natural environment, therefore this policy is consistent with the NPPF.

The proposed chain link fence would be relocated outwards towards the road but behind the group of trees close to the entrance to the site. This would mitigate any impact to the root protection of these trees. The proposed chain link fencing would be supported by posts at 3m intervals with the holes for the posts hand dug where they would be under the canopy of existing trees to minimise impact to the rooting areas of the trees.

The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with Saved Policy EN1 of the BFBLP and the NPPF and would not result in an adverse impact on existing trees.

## 12. CONCLUSIONS

The proposed chain link fence would not result in adverse impacts to the residential amenities of adjoining properties and would not adversely affect the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Further, the proposed fence would be sited behind the adopted highway and would not adversely affect the root protection area of existing trees. As such, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policy CP1 of the SALP, Policies CS7 and CS23 of the CSDPD, Saved Policies EN1 and EN20 of the BFBLP and the NPPF.

The application is therefore recommended for conditional approval.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the following conditions:-

01. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three

years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

02. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out only in accordance with the following approved plans received by the Local Planning Authority on 16 July 2014:  
drawing no. 218/1b  
drawing no. 218/2a  
REASON: To ensure that the development is carried out only as approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Informative(s):

01. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework
02. No details are required to be submitted in relation to the following conditions; however they are required to be complied with:
  1. Time limit
  2. Approved plans

Doc. Ref: Uniform 7/DC/Agenda

The application file to which this report relates can be viewed at the Council's Time Square office during office hours or online at [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk)