

Application Number: 22/10857 Full Planning Permission

Site: 196 RINGWOOD ROAD, TOTTON SO40 8EB

Development: 1.825m high fence across the front boundary, to include a 3.75m access that will incorporate a gate (Retrospective)

Applicant: Mr. Parsons

Agent:

Target Date: 21/09/2022

Case Officer: John Fanning

Extension Date: 19/10/2022

1 SUMMARY OF THE MAIN ISSUES

The key issues are:

- 1) Visual impact of the development within the surrounding street scene
- 2) Highways safety

This application is to be considered by Committee because Totton and Eling Town Council recommended refusal on the basis of the visual impact of the development within the street scene and highways safety. Officers are recommending refusal of the application on the grounds of the visual impact of the development but do not believe that we can reasonably pursue the highways safety reason for refusal. Officers have liaised with the Town Council who confirmed their desire for the item to be referred to Committee if highways safety was not to be included as a reason for refusal.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

The site lies within Totton and forms part of the defined built-up area. The northern side of Ringwood Road typically features detached two-storey residential dwellings of which the application site is one. In the vicinity of the application site the southern side is occupied by a vegetated screen.

The application site is well set back from the highway, with a wide verge crossed by a wide area of hard surfacing and dropped kerb to provide access.

Abbotswood Junior School and Forest Park Primary School are situated in immediate proximity and occupy large plots to the north and east of the site.

3 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The site has historically had a low level fence running across the frontage, with a large tall hedge just behind. Following the bottom section of the hedge being trimmed a new taller fence was installed across the site frontage. The application seeks retrospective consent to retain the fencing in addition to a proposed gate.

4 PLANNING HISTORY

None relevant

5 PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

Local Plan 2016-2036 Part 1: Planning Strategy

ENV3: Design quality and local distinctiveness

ENV4: Landscape character and quality

CCC2: Safe and sustainable travel

Relevant Advice

Chap 12: Achieving well designed places

Constraints

Plan Area

Plan Policy Designations

Built-up Area

Landscape Feature

6 PARISH / TOWN COUNCIL COMMENTS

Totton & Eling Town Council

The majority of properties in the area have a wall or fence around 1 metre in height. The fence has an impact on the street scene in terms of appearance. The main area of concern is highway safety when entering/exiting the site due to reduced visibility. This causes concern for the safety of passing pedestrians and cyclists.

RECOMMENDATION PAR4: We recommend REFUSAL, for the reasons listed

7 COUNCILLOR COMMENTS

No comments received

8 CONSULTEE COMMENTS

Comments have been received from the following consultees:

HCC Highways

Upon review of this application, it was seen that the increase in fence height is a betterment than the existing situation of the hedge. The fence will maintain greater visibility splay than the hedge, as if the hedge is not maintained will overhang and increase in size, thus reducing the visibility splay. Therefore, as there was a slight improvement over the existing situation improving visibility splays the Highway Authority have no objections.

9 REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

The application received 1 letter of representation. The following is a summary of the representations received.

- Neighbouring footpath is commonly used by school children, parents and cyclists which places particular importance on having good quality sightlines to avoid accidents
- No in principle objection to fence however height should be lowered adjacent to neighbouring properties to improve sightlines

10 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Class A of Part 2 of Schedule 2 of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) outlines that a fence can be erected at a height of 1m where its adjacent to a highway used by vehicular traffic or 2m high elsewhere. It is the position of the Local Planning Authority that taking into account the circumstances of the application site a fence of more than 1m in height in this location would require planning permission.

As such it is felt that the proposal must be assessed against the following key criteria:

Character and appearance

The Ringwood Road frontage in this location typically features properties well set back from the site frontage, with low level boundary treatments creating a generally open and spacious appearance within the street scene. Generally speaking the frontage of the properties are occupied by a mix of vegetation/landscaping and hard surfacing for parking.

The application site has a very substantial tall hedge that runs along the site boundary with Ringwood Road, providing a solid visual barrier in the context of the surrounding street scene. The planting and maintenance of hedging typically falls outside of the remit of the planning system to control.

Notwithstanding the context of the hedge set behind, it is considered that the additional height of fencing would not be in character with the pattern in the context of the surrounding street scene. It is not considered that a full height fence along this frontage would be sympathetic to the character of the surrounding street scene and a reason for refusal is recommended in this regard.

The applicant has identified that they feel that the hedge and fence are necessary to provide adequate privacy and protection from anti-social behaviour however based on the available information it is not felt these matters are sufficient to overcome the harm identified.

Highways safety

Concerns have been raised by local residents and the Town Council with regard to highways safety, specifically in relation to the proposed fencing reducing sightlines with regard to cyclist and pedestrians using the footway. This is of particular relevance in the context of the nearby schools.

The Councils Highways consultants have reviewed the proposal as outlined above and raised no objection on the grounds that the fence will not represent a worsening of the existing situation when considered in the context of the retained hedge. They identify that the proposal would represent a marginal improvement by preventing future overhanging of the highway from the hedge.

With reference to the consultation response, it is not considered that the Local Planning Authority can substantiate additional harm to the highways safety of the existing lawful access as a result of the proposed development. On this basis it is not considered that an objection can be raised in this regard.

Retrospective application

It is not considered there is any evidence to suggest the applicant intended to intentionally subvert the planning system. As such it is not considered that the Local Planning Authority could reasonably attach any special weight to the retrospective nature of the application.

11 CONCLUSION

For the reasons outlined above it is considered that while the proposal is not ideal in terms of providing wide visibility splays associated with the existing access, it is not felt that the Local Planning Authority could reasonably sustain an objection to the proposal on those grounds. It is felt that the proposal represents a visually intrusive form of development that fails to respect the design and character of boundary treatments along the Ringwood Road frontage in the immediate context of the application site.

As such it is recommended that the application be refused on the grounds of the impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding street scene.

12 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

None.

13 RECOMMENDATION

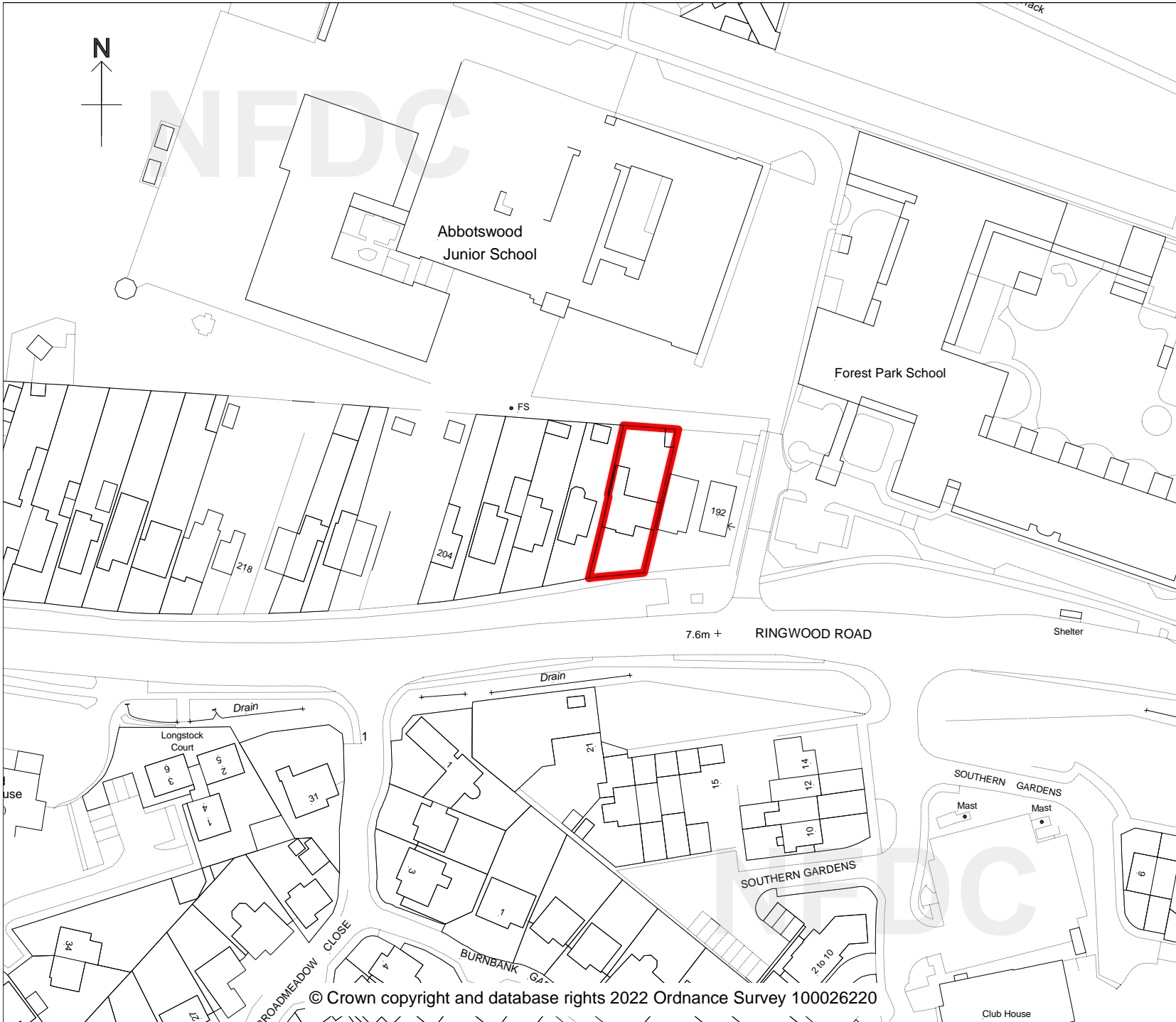
Refuse

Reason(s) for Refusal:

1. By reason of its excessive height and prominent position adjacent to the highway, the proposed fence would create an intrusive element with a harmful visual impact which would be out of keeping with the low level open boundary treatments in the surrounding streetscene. As such, the proposed development would be contrary to Policy ENV3 of the Local Plan Part 1: Planning Strategy for the New Forest outside of the New Forest National Park.

Further Information:

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New Forest

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PLANNING COMMITTEE

October 2022

196 Ringwood Road
 Totton

22/10857

Scale 1:1250

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 scale.