

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no. 137586/FO/2023

Date registered valid: 25 August 2023

Proposal: Erection of 3 metres high security fencing and gates to the southern boundary of the school site

Address: St Johns RC Primary School, Chepstow Road, Manchester, M21 9SN

Ward(s): Chorlton Ward

Applicant: Mrs Bronwen O Donoghue, The Board of Governors

Agent (if any): Mr Andrew Simpson, Co-ordinate Ltd

Case officer: Holly Wright
Tel: 0161 219 6381
Email: holly.wright@manchester.gov.uk

Recommendation: Approve

Date of recommendation: 18 October 2023

Application details

Type of application: Full Application Consent

Development type: Minor Other

Date of site visit: 7 September 2023

Standard consultations: Printed: 31 August 2023 Expired: 21 September 2023

Neighbour notifications: Printed: 31 August 2023 Expired: 21 September 2023

Site notice: No site notice has been produced

Press advert: No press advert had been published

Departure from Development Plan: No

Environmental Statement: Not required

Description of site/building

Listed building: Not applicable

Conservation area: Not applicable

Tree Preservation Order: Not applicable

St John's Primary School is a voluntary aided Catholic Primary School within the Diocese of Salford serving the Catholic community of Chorlton-cum-Hardy. Accommodation is within separate key stage one and key stage two buildings, with a stand-alone gymnasium block which serves both year groups. The school is set within its own grounds in a residential area and has a single vehicular entrance from Chepstow Road, off Longford Road. The site is enclosed by 3m high security fencing on its western and northwestern boundary.



Figure 1. Submitted site plan.



Figure 2. Proposed area of development.



Figure 3. Proposed area of development.



Figure 4. Proposed area of development.



Figure 5. Proposed area of development.

Description of development

The applicant is seeking permission for the erection of 3 metres high security fencing and gates to the southern boundary of the school site.

Planning History

025022 - Erection of mobile classrooms – **APPROVED** (24.09.1985).

042306 - Single storey extension to form a classroom – **APPROVED** (30.10.1992).

056239/FO/SOUTH2/99 - Formation of an all-weather 5-A-Side Football Court with boundary fencing and lighting, temporary portable changing rooms and associated additional car parking – **WITHDRAWN** (14.07.1999).

057162/FO/SOUTH1/99 - Formation of 4.no.5-aside football courts, associated fencing, lighting and parking, including temporary portable changing/shower facilities – **WITHDRAWN** (20.01.2000).

062687/VO/SOUTH1/01 - CITY COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT Erection of new building to form multi-purpose hall, multi-purpose rooms for school and community sports, arts and social activities – **APPROVED** (15.11.2001).

069731/VO/2003/S1 -CITY COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT Erection of 8.7-metre-high building to form multi-purpose hall and changing facilities for school and community and relocation of 2 storage cages – **APPROVED** (16.12.2003).

088563/FO/2008/S1 - Erection of a single storey extension to form two additional classrooms and over cladding of existing classroom – **APPROVED** (04.03.2009).

091118/FO/2009/S1 – Proposed single storey extension to form 2 classrooms and breakout space – **APPROVED** (19.11.2009).

107424/FO/2014/S1 - Erection of single storey extension and associated elevational alterations – **APPROVED** (06.01.2015).

Consultations & Notification Responses

Six responses were received from six local residents. Their concerns are summarised as follows:

- Existing fencing on site already provides a secure boundary for the school in this location.
- Access points for trespassers onto the school premises are via Chepstow Road and Ryebank Fields, not the alleyway to the rear of the properties located along Longford Road.
- Fencing erected at the aforementioned areas would better secure the site.
- Removal of the existing palisade fence would severely damage the beech hedge which has established itself along it.
- Damage to the existing hedge would limit its ability to conceal the proposed fencing and would potentially destroy the natural habitats it provides.
- Loss of the existing hedge would cause visual harm to the appearance of the area and would compromise the privacy of neighbouring occupiers.
- Installation of mesh style fencing would inhibit the movement of mammals in and out of the school grounds as it would eliminate wildlife corridors.
- The proposed fencing would project higher than the existing and would limit the outlook of neighbouring residents.
- The proposed fencing should not encroach into the rear alleyway of Longford Road and should be sited entirely within the School's grounds.
- Concerns relating to the management and disposal of the Japanese knotweed present within the existing beech hedging.

Highways made the following comments in response to the application:

- "Highways have no objections regarding the proposed erection of a 3-metre-high Paladin FX system fence. It is understood that the proposals will not have an impact on the approved pedestrian/vehicular access, parking, circulation or the external highway network.
- The proposed fence will extend from the service access to the rear of 92a Longford Road, behind properties up to 52 Longford Road and thereafter enclosing the remainder of the School boundary on Chepstow Road. Fencing behind residential properties on Longford Road will be within the School site.
- The proposed fencing, Paladin FX system, ensures appropriate visibility, which is acceptable to Highways.
- The applicant should be advised that all gated accesses will need to provide inward opening gates to ensure they do not impact on the adopted footway or highway.
- It is noted that the existing waste and servicing arrangements will continue, this is acceptable to Highways.
- Detail should be sought from the applicant in relation to any proposed construction or fitout arrangements, where there is an impact on the highway. The applicant should be advised that any requirements for licensing, hoarding / scaffolding, skips and any associated temporary traffic management arrangements will need discussion and agreement with the council's Highway Applications and Network Resilience teams via Email --highwaylicences@manchester.gov.uk
highwaynetworkmanagement@manchester.gov.uk"

Greater Manchester Police made the following comments in response to the application:

- “Care should be taken to ensure that panels are fixed securely to the posts and that any level changes do not inadvertently facilitate climbing or leave large gaps underneath the panels/gates. There should be no centrally located horizontal bars to aid climbing and there should be no immediately adjacent climbing aids, such as low walls, projecting elements of the building, hard landscaping features, lighting columns, junction boxes etc, which may form a climbing aid.” No further comments to add.

Policies

The following policies are considered relevant in the consideration of this application.

The Manchester Core Strategy – Development Plan Document 2012-2027 (“the Core Strategy”) was adopted by the City Council on the 11th of July 2012:

- Policy DM1 – Development Management
- Policy SP1 – Spatial Principles

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2023)

- Chapter 12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places

The Places for Everyone Plan is a Joint Development Plan Document, providing a strategic plan and policies, for nine of the 10 boroughs which make up Greater Manchester. Once the Places for Everyone Plan is adopted it will form part of Manchester’s development plan.

To date, five consultations have taken place in relation to the Plan. The Examination of the Plan, following its submission in February 2022, began in November 2022. Following the completion of the Examination of the Plan, main modifications have now been proposed which will now become the subject of further public consultation.

The City Council’s Executive agreed the Main Modification on 4 October 2023 and endorsed an 8-week period of public consultation on the Main Modifications commencing no earlier than 9 October 2023.

Any representations will be forwarded to the Examination team managing the Plan. The Inspectors will consider all representations on the proposed Modifications before finalising the examination report.

Given the stage the Plan has reached, and level of public consultation and scrutiny it has received, the Plan and its policies are now a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications. The Plan and its policies must therefore be given significant weight in the planning balance.

For reasons to be outlined below, it is considered that the proposal accords with the principles of these policy documents.

Issues

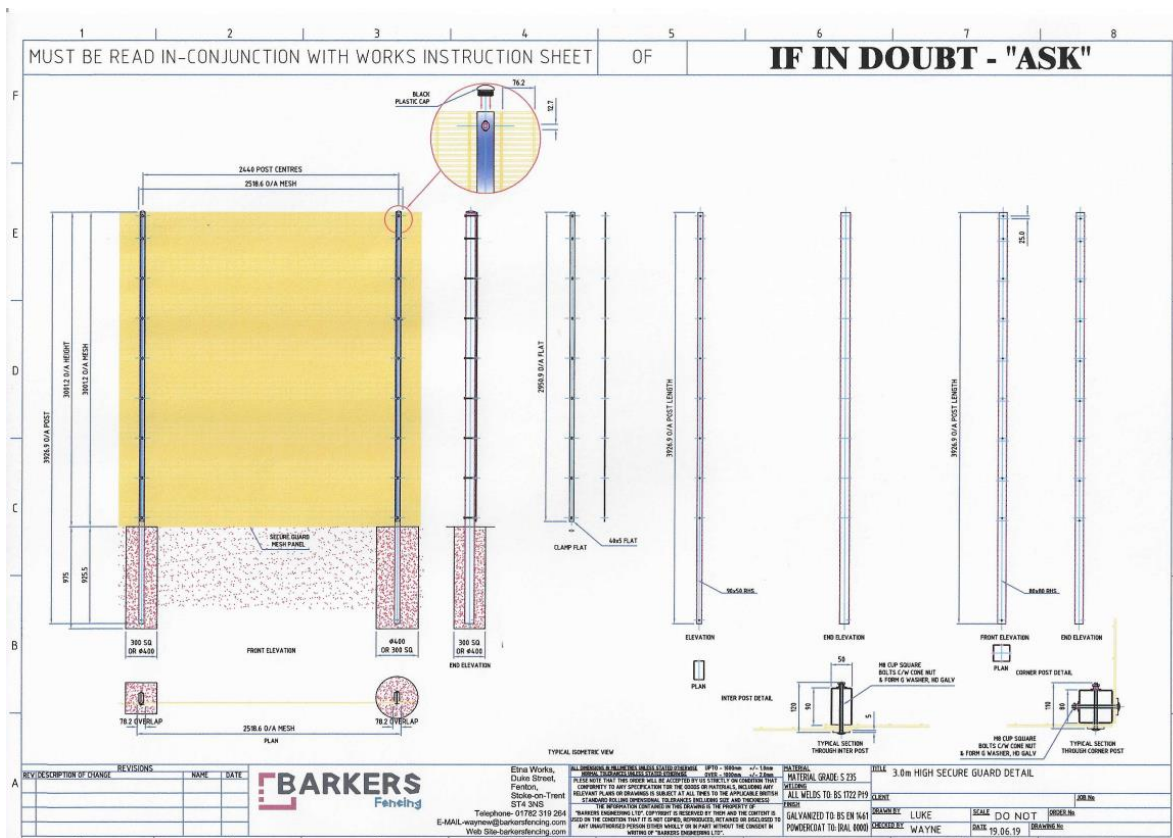
Principle – the principle of the proposal, to install 3m high fencing to the southern boundary of the plot, in order to improve the safety and security of the application site, is acceptable. However, consideration must be given to the proposal’s siting, scale, and massing, appearance, and impact upon visual and residential amenity, waste storage, parking and wildlife.

Siting, scale, and massing – the 3m high fencing would be sited adjacent to the southern boundary of the application site, running from the service access located to the rear of No.92a Longford Road, behind the properties leading up to No.52 Longford Road, and enclosing the remainder of the school boundary which borders Chepstow Road. The portion of the fencing sited behind the residential properties of Longford Road would be setback from the plot boundary, within the school grounds and, as such, would be concealed behind the established high beech hedging. The fencing would be uniform in terms of its height, measuring to 3m, and would consist of panels measuring to 3m by 2.515m, and post centres of 2.44m with a wire thickness of 4mm.

Overall, the siting, scale, and massing of the proposal is considered acceptable as it would not result in an 'excessively large or bulky' addition to the application site, would not introduce an overbearing presence into the locale, and would incur considerable public benefits as a result of its implementation, including improved on-site security and safety, pursuant to policies DM1 and SP1 of the Core Strategy.



Figure 6. Submitted proposed location plan.



Appearance and visual amenity – the proposal would be a simple construction, consisting of Barkers Paladin FX security mesh fencing and gates, galvanised and polyester powder coated in green (RAL6005) to match the existing security fencing present on site.

It is acknowledged that concerns were raised in relation to the proposal's potential to cause visual harm to the area. However, given that the proposal is relatively standard in terms of its scale and design for developments of this type, combined with the fact that it would be sited within the grounds of the application site, with the majority of the fencing located away from the public highway and obscured from view by the existing high beech hedging, it is understood that the proposal would cause less than substantial harm to the visual amenity of the area.

Moreover, it should be noted that any perceived visual harm caused as a result of the proposal would be outweighed by the significant public benefits that the scheme would produce, including improved on-site safety and security for the facility's users.

The proposal therefore accords with policies DM1 and SP1 of the Core Strategy, as well as chapter 12 of the NPPF.

Residential amenity – the proposal is not believed to significantly harm the residential amenity of neighbouring occupants as the proposed fencing would be a permeable construction and would be sited a considerable distance away from nearby residential properties. As such, the fencing should not cause issues associated with overshadowing, and loss of light, nor should it introduce an overbearing presence into the area.

Concerns were raised in relation to the proposal's potential to compromise the privacy of neighbouring residents through the removal of the existing mature beech hedging. However, the submitted information and agent email correspondence (dated to the 20th September 2023) indicates that the site's beech hedging is to be retained and unaffected by the proposal, as such, levels of privacy experienced should remain as existing.

It is acknowledged that concerns were also raised in relation to the proposal's potential to affect the views and outlook of nearby residents as it would extend higher than the existing boundary treatment present to the south of the site. However, in these circumstances, this harm is considered to be less than substantial and would arguably be outweighed by the benefits that would be reaped as a result of the scheme, including improved on-site safety and security, pursuant to policies SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy.

Waste storage – the current waste management strategy would be unaffected by the proposal.

Parking – the current parking arrangements would be unaffected by the proposal.

Highways – made no objection to the proposal.

Other matters – concerns were raised in relation to the proposal's potential to harm local wildlife through the damaging and removal of the existing beech hedging present on site. It should be noted that the submitted information and agent email correspondence (dated to the 20th September 2023) indicates that the site's high beech hedging is to be retained and unaffected by the proposal. The proposal is therefore acceptable in this regard.

Any further impacts upon wildlife, including the restricting of wildlife corridors, would be outweighed by the public benefits incurred as a result of the proposal, including improved on-site safety and security, pursuant to policies SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy.

Concerns relating to the management and disposal of Japanese knotweed present within the existing beech hedging do not warrant the refusal of this application as the submitted information indicates that this hedging (and the associated Japanese knotweed) are to be unaffected by the proposal.

Conclusion – given the above issues, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in terms of its principle, siting, scale, and massing, appearance, and impact upon visual and residential amenity, waste storage, parking, and wildlife as it complies with policies DM1 and SP1 of the Core Strategy, and chapter 12 of the NPPF.

Other Legislative Requirements

Equality Act 2010

Section 149 (Public Sector Equality Duty) of the Equality Act 2010 requires due regard to the need to: Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act and; Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The Equality Duty does not impose a legal requirement to conduct an Equality Impact Assessment. Compliance with the Equality Duty involves consciously thinking about the aims of the Equality Duty as part of the process of decision-making.

Human Rights Act 1998 considerations

This application needs to be considered against the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998. Under Article 6, the applicants (and those third parties, including local residents, who have made representations) have a right to a fair hearing and to this end the local planning authority must give full consideration to their comments.

Protocol 1 Article 1, and Article 8 where appropriate, confer(s) a right of respect for a person's home, other land and business assets. In taking account of all material considerations, including Council policy as set out in the Core Strategy and saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan, the Director of Planning, Building Control & Licensing has concluded that some rights conferred by these articles on the applicant(s)/objector(s)/resident(s) and other occupiers and owners of nearby land that might be affected may be interfered with but that that interference is in accordance with the law and justified by being in the public interest and on the basis of the planning merits of the development proposal. She believes that any restriction on these rights posed by the recommendation given is proportionate to the wider benefits of and that such a decision falls within the margin of discretion afforded to the Council under the Town and Country Planning Acts.

Recommendation: Approve

Article 35 Declaration

Officers have worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner based on seeking solutions to problems arising in relation to dealing with the planning application. No significant problems have arisen during the consideration of this application and the application has been determined in a timely manner, in accordance with the policies with the Development Plan.

Condition(s) to be attached to decision for approval OR Reasons for recommendation to refuse

1) The development must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of permission.

Reason - Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 91 of the Town and Country Act Planning Act 1990.

2) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following documents:

- 'Application for Planning Permission', stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on the 25th August 2023.

- Proposed drawing titled: '3.0m HIGH SECURE GUARD DETAIL', stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on the 1st August 2023.

- 'DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT For PROPOSED SECURITY FENCING at ST JOHN'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL', stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on the 17th July 2023.
- Fencing brochure titled: 'BARKERS Fencing: SecureGuard 358', stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on the 1st August 2023.
- 'SITE LOCATION PLAN', stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on the 17th July 2023.
- 'METHOD STATEMENT', stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on the 25th September 2023.
- Agent email correspondence, dated to the 20th September 2023, stamped as received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on the 20th September 2023.

Reason - To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and documents pursuant to Policies SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy.

3) The materials to be used on the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those specified on the submitted application form and approved documents.

Reason - To ensure the appearance of the site to be developed is not adversely affected by the materials to be used in the construction of the development, pursuant to saved policies DC1.1, DC1.2 and DC1.4 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester and policy DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy.

Informatives

1) The applicant should be advised that any requirements for licensing, hoarding / scaffolding, skips and any associated temporary traffic management arrangements will need discussion and agreement with the council's Highway Applications and Network Resilience teams via Email highwaylicences@manchester.gov.uk highwaynetworkmanagement@manchester.gov.uk

2) Care should be taken to ensure that panels are fixed securely to the posts and that any level changes do not inadvertently facilitate climbing or leave large gaps underneath the panels/gates. There should be no centrally located horizontal bars to aid climbing and there should be no immediately adjacent climbing aids, such as low walls, projecting elements of the building, hard landscaping features, lighting columns, junction boxes etc, which may form a climbing aid.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Highway Services

Greater Manchester Police

13 Lynton Road, Manchester, M21 9NQ
11 Lynton Road, Manchester, M21 9NQ
96 Longford Road, Manchester, M21 9NP
84 Longford Road, Manchester, M21 9NP
80 Longford Road, Manchester, M21 9NP
86 Longford Road, Manchester, M21 9NP
78 Longford Road, Manchester, M21 9NP
74 Longford Road, Manchester, M21 9NP
70 Longford Road, Manchester, M21 9NP
66 Longford Road, Manchester, M21 9NP
64 Longford Road, Manchester, M21 9NP
62 Longford Road, Manchester, M21 9NP
60 Longford Road, Manchester, M21 9NP
56 Longford Road, Manchester, M21 9NP
6 Chepstow Road, Manchester, M21 9SQ
92 Longford Road, Manchester, M21 9NP
72 Longford Road, Manchester, M21 9NP
52 Longford Road, Manchester, M21 9NP
8 Chepstow Road, Manchester, M21 9SQ
4 Chepstow Road, Manchester, M21 9SQ
94 Longford Road, Manchester, M21 9NP
90 Longford Road, Manchester, M21 9NP
82 Longford Road, Manchester, M21 9NP
76 Longford Road, Manchester, M21 9NP
68 Longford Road, Manchester, M21 9NP
92A Longford Road, Manchester, M21 9NP
58 Longford Road, Manchester, M21 9NP
50 Longford Road, Manchester, M21 9SR
10 Chepstow Road, Manchester, M21 9SQ
2 Chepstow Road, Manchester, M21 9SQ
88 Longford Road, Manchester, M21 9NP
54 Longford Road, Manchester, M21 9NP

Appendix 2 – Planning constraints

Article 4 Direction - Removal Of PD Rights Change Of Use From Class C3 To Class C4

Aircraft Safeguarding Zone - Aircraft Safeguarding Zone - All Exceeding 90M

Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -

Area Team Boundary - Name: SOUTH AREA