

Fence and associated gates Installation and Secondary Entrance Alterations Design and Access Statement Flintstone Centre

21 September 2021

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Document history

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1. Description

The proposal is focused on the installation of fences and associated manual gates in isolated locations around the Flintstone Centre, East Street, Littlehampton, West Sussex. BN17 6AW. There is also the requirement to demolish a single storey extension to the south elevation of the building, to ensure that the access point is located within the new secure perimeter created by the fencing installation. The works are part of The Safeguarding Programme which has been rolled out to several schools sited across West Sussex County and aims to help meet standards as defined in the Department for Education Technical Annex 2B: External Space and Grounds. In producing this proposal, the West Sussex County Council title deeds have been reviewed to:

- Delineate the boundaries
- Establish service provider supplies and locations
- Identify tenancy agreements
- Establish encumbrances and boundary liabilities
- Determine rights of way
- Identify wayleaves
- Consider immediate neighbours
- Discover any other legal aspects which may challenge the proposal.

The design has been refined by consulting the staff & faculty to establish the appearance, function and operating detail of the enclosure to suit end user requirements. These details are described further in this statement. A Heritage statement has been prepared and submitted with the application and should be referred to in combination with this statement.

2. Site overview

The Flintstone centre is located to the north west of the centre of Littlehampton and is currently occupied by Aspire Sussex Ltd. which is a charitable social enterprise for adult learning across West Sussex. As one of several West Sussex Alternative Provision Colleges (WSAPC) it caters for students of ages ranging between 11-19. The facility is in one building occupying most of the site with a small area of hardstanding to the rear serving as a carpark and a fenced, hard-surfaced playground to the North-East.

The Adaptation Arun Local Plan 2011-2031 identifies the location as an economic growth area and the local roads can be expected to become busier as a result of the successful development of the town centre. In relation to Policy ING SP1, the proposal is a measure to support the needs of the occupants as an improvement to the existing amenities and to provide site safety.

Policy H SP2b informs that there are plans for a large residential development zone to provide at least 1,000 new dwelling on the West Bank (marked as SD4 on the plan). Whilst the development is not in the immediate proximity of the site the number of residents will be significant to the town and impact the density of people to the town centre. The Flintstone Centre is within ½ mile radius of Littlehampton train station which will have more demand from increased local traffic.

3. Surrounding buildings & spaces

The Flintstone centre is located to the east of the centre of Littlehampton. The setting is partly suburban with low density residential zones and medium density commercial outlets to the west. Littlehampton train station is located within a ½ mile radius. A new low-density development has materialised to the east of site which use to be the Old Dairy (Arun Planning application reference LU/13/15/PL) which is of modern construction with rendered façades.

The front of the site has a modern bow-top fence and gates at 1.2m high aluminium black powder coated fence extending along the South-West corner for the carpark entrance; which will be removed. The site has a flint and brick wall with black painted cast iron rails along the front the premises. A 3m high square mesh fence surrounds the north playground and extends between the building and the playground with a pedestrian gate. A flint and brick wall at circa 1.8m in height extends along the rear (West) boundary, North and South margins of the premises forming the boundaries with the residential neighbours.

The existing 3m high mesh fence surrounding the playground is likely to be in place to help meet the School Premises Regulations 2012 (2015 update). The other existing flint and brick boundary walls are likely to be characteristic to conservation and it is therefore not proposed to alter the existing to help maintain the requirements of Policy HER SP1.

To the West of site is East Street which has a steady volume of traffic throughout the day as shown in Image 1. This is likely to increase when considering the current and projected growth of population density to Littlehampton which will inevitably introduce higher volumes. Furthermore, the planned economic growth of the district that is mentioned in Policy EMP SP1 would increase the allure of the town from the surrounding areas and the volume of traffic from the East entrance of Town via East Street might consequentially increase. The proposed fencing will help meet the obligations as stated in Policy ING SP1 by securing the carpark and circulation areas away from this road.



Image 1: Google traffic volume maps (2020)

The surrounding buildings are mostly constructed of cobble and brick along the same side of East Street as the Flintstone centre. Other buildings in proximity have rendered or traditional brick elevations. On average the fences are constructed solid as rendered masonry, attractive flint and brick or wrought iron Barbican style with spear headed finials.

There have been reports of trespassers regularly accessing site via the South East boundary which was dividing the premises formally known as the Old Dairy and is expected to continue once the development of the new residences have completed. A set of stairs at the back leads to the basement of the premises from the carpark. Currently there is poor protection from falling around the perimeter of the stairs and easy access to the basement. At this same location there has been unauthorised entry in the past and the design seeks to restrict access for the future and provide protection from falling from heights as required by Technical Annex 2B: External Space and Grounds Chapter 8.4. The chain-link fence and associated gate between the playground and the building will be replaced with a Barbican style fence and gate to match and the existing carpark bow-top fence will be removed.

4. Objectives

The proposed fence and associated works are planned to help overcome the below listed challenges:

- Unauthorised access to site via the back (East boundary) of the premises
- Unauthorised access to the basement and unsuitable protection from falling
- Separation of the rear hardstanding from the front of the building
- Avoid negatively impacting the character and appearance of the building

5. Design & Appearance

The new design is of a height and construction to deter trespassers, secure vulnerable areas and prevent falling from heights. It has not been installed to replace the flint and brick walls but to increase their height at specific points only.

Following receiving previous comment from the planning authorities, the fencing design will be a combination of welded mesh fencing to rear of the site and an ornamental fencing to any areas visible from the front elevation of the building. The posts are located at approximately 2.4m apart and at 3m and 2m heights to the back and between the playground and the building on the premises and will terminate to a uniform finish line. This maintains one of the design principles to retain the identity of the premises and help meet Policy P SD1 whilst avoiding the construction of a distinctive feature which detracts from the character of the building. The design maintains revisability by grounding the posts instead of embedding posts or rails to the fabric of the building or into the surrounding flint and brick boundary walls.

It is understood that the front of the building has an aesthetic prominence to the local area. The new section of gated fence leading from the front of the building to the back hardstanding is set back to avoid imposing on the aesthetic appeal of the premises whilst separating the car park area with the front of school and creating a safeguard which will help to achieve Policy ING SP1. The fence would be shrouded on the West and East approaches by the existing trees located adjacent the front flint and brick wall.

The extension on the south elevation is due to be demolished, with the existing ramped access and associated fixings to be removed and the ground is to be made good to match the surrounding area. This extension to the south elevation was not constructed in a style that is in keeping with the original building, and the building material is not considered to hold any historical significance. The original wall surfaces will be made good where the extension is removed, with specialist contractors being instructed to complete the repairs using methods to imitate the style of the original building. This additional access alteration is required, as a compromise, to ensure the fence can be offset from the most historically significant front elevation of the building, while still encapsulating this secondary entrance within the secure perimeter created by the fencing installation. The existing step down from the external door and level platform will remain unchanged along with the existing stepped access. This is compliant with the requirements of Approved Document Part M as the principal entrance of the building to the front elevation is an accessible entrance. There is also a further accessible entrance to the rear of the site.

The site is mostly level throughout. The locations where the fences will be erected are seemingly flat, and we do not expect an uneven finish line along their lengths at any point. The justification behind the selection of this fence was for its ability to achieve:

1. A design which lends itself to application where through-visibility is necessary for surveillance purposes
2. Avoids extended installation times and occupant exposure to the dangers of construction
3. Anti-trap design to avoid self-harm

4. Incorporates the Secure By Design principles to meet SR1 standards with LPS 1175 Issue 7 guidance
5. Long life cycle with relatively low maintenance requirements
6. Meet the requirements of Technical Annex 2B: External Space and Grounds; Chapter 8.1.

The final design and location of the fence and gates was discussed with the faculty and staff to establish suitability, locations and gate control methods which are illustrated in the submitted drawings:

- The Flintstones Centre - Location Plan (Works Area and Site Boundary)
- The Flintstones Centre – Fencing Layout As Proposed

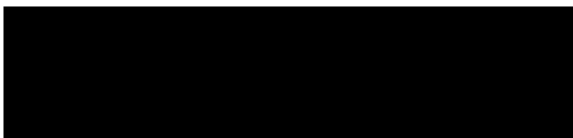
6. Assessment

The layout has been designed to prevent trespass between the neighbouring spaces and residential properties and improve the control of access to the front of the premises. The design of the gates and fences tries to avoid any finger traps or the like where users may self-harm; meeting RoSPA requirements. The proposed design involves minimal foundation works and applicable only to ground the posts, it is unlikely that there will be significant ground disruption. The fencing design does not lend itself to be permanently attached to the building elevations or the boundary walls. The demolition works that are proposed to take place to the south elevation of the building ensure that the secondary entrance is encapsulated within the secure boundary created by the fencing installation, helping to reduce the risk of pupils accessing the school car park without permission, while ensuring the works have a minimal impact on the principal elevation of the building. The ramped access to the principal entrance of the building, as well as to an entrance to the rear, offset any negative impact of the removal of the ramped access to the south elevation of the building.

The design considers the Arun's Local Plan, national and regional regulations and incorporates a long-lasting low impact design to satisfy the occupant requirements whilst avoiding diminishing the visual appeal and distinctive character of the building.

Access is not restricted by the proposal and no alterations are taking place to the public footpaths etc.

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