



**PLANNING, DESIGN AND ACCESS
STATEMENT**

New Perimeter Fencing at Western Elms Surgery

Western Elms Avenue

Reading

RG30 2AP

For

Western Elms Surgery



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This application is made by the Partners at Western Elms Surgery (the Practice), owners of Western Elms Surgery (the Surgery).
- 1.2 The Practice is seeking planning permission to extend erect perimeter fencing to secure the premises from trespassers.
- 1.3 The Practice is a Partnership of Doctors. The Practice works under the umbrella of NHS England reporting to North and West Reading CCG.
- 1.4 Western Elms is an extremely busy medical practice with over 16,00 patients registered at the practice. The Practice is under significant pressure to offer expanded medical services to the West Reading Community.
- 1.5 There is ongoing issue with trespassing into the grounds and gardens of the surgery. There is already security gates immediately adjacent to the main entrance of the building but the remainder of the site is enclosed only by low walls and hedging.

2. Site location

- 2.1. The application site is a self-contained building on the junction of Western Elms Avenue and the Oxford Road in West Reading. The main building faces the Oxford Road and is a three storey stone and slate building. The building was extended in 1989 and again in 2018 / 2019 linked to the original building.

3. Planning history

- 3.1 The main building is likely to have been built around the turn of the 20th century. It was used as a Doctors surgery from 1947 with the inception of the NHS however previous to this it was a GP surgery probably from around 1900.
- 3.2 Planning permission was granted in 1990 and in 2018 for extensions to the surgery building.
- 3.3 Other planning applications have been made relating directly relate to works to the trees at the Oxford Road side of the site. Several trees have TPOs.
- 3.4 The site is within an urban and densely populated area where the majority of buildings have been altered and adapted over time to reflect the ongoing and constantly changing social and economic climate and community.

4. Planning Policy

- 4.1 *Trees, Hedges and Woodlands Individual trees, groups of trees, hedges and woodlands will be protected from damage or removal, and the Borough's vegetation cover will be extended.*

There are a small number of trees on the site including protected trees on the Oxford Road side of the site. The proposal is to erect fencing on the boundary only, none of the trees or other planting will be adversely affected by this application. The TPOs relating to the trees on site are covered by order

OXFORD ROAD 210/06 (T2) 317 (Western Elms Surgery).

5. Proposed development

- 5.1 The Practice is proposing to erect fencing around the boundary of the site. The practice has suffered for a number of years from trespassers both during the day and outside of normal working hours. It is clear from the debris left that some of the trespassers are drug users. It is completely unacceptable for sharps and other drug related paraphernalia to be left in a sensitive medical location such as this, where children and vulnerable people visit.

On most days the staff at Western Elms start their day by searching and clearing away dangerous and contaminated items such as needles, used condoms and often clothing.

The surgery has tried many ways of keeping the premises secure ranging from community liaison to police intervention but the problems persist.

This proposal is to erect a mesh fence around the complete boundary. The fence will allow line of sight through to the gardens and planted areas. The colour of the fence (green) is appropriate adjacent to the planted areas.

Whilst the fence aims to help the surgery to be more secure the style of fence has the least visual impact possible.

6. Other planning issues

Biodiversity and trees

- 6.1 Urban in character, the application site is sited on the busy Oxford Road. It is likely to be of low ecological value given the type and layout of the existing building – a relatively high density land coverage with hardstanding and minimal undeveloped area. The existing planted areas will be maintained
- 6.2 There are several trees within the application site and two have TPOs. It is recognised that these trees are an important landscape feature. The proposal does not affect the trees.

Foul sewage and utilities

- 6.3 The building has full FW and SW drainage. No changes to below ground drains are required. Similarly, the building is already connected to all other utilities and no changes are expected.

Landscaping

- 6.4 No alterations are proposed to the existing hard and soft landscaping to accommodate the proposed fencing.

Noise

- 6.5 The proposed fencing will have no impact on noise. Activities with the building will not change. The area of Oxford Road is a very busy urban location.

Parking provision

- 6.6 No changes to vehicle or cycle parking.

Transport and traffic impact

- 6.7 The application will have no impact on transport or traffic.

7. Design and access

Site context

- 7.1. Located in a densely developed part of West Reading Western Elms Surgery is an existing two and three-storey, pitched roofed, traditional building. It is surrounded on all sides by other residential and business uses. This is an urban application.

Design

- 7.2. The proposal is for green coloured mesh fencing. This has a minimal visual impact on the site. Timber fencing was considered but it is concluded that the impact would be too great.

Access

- 7.3. Vehicle access to the property will not be altered or changed as a result of this application.

8. Conclusions

- 8.1. The proposal includes gates at vehicular and pedestrian access points. This application seeks to prevent contaminated goods and other items being left by trespassers.
- 8.2. Planning permission is sought to assist in security of the premises. Western Elms Surgery has had a presence in this part of Reading for many years and The Practice continues to adapt to the changing Health Care needs of the community. The Practice aims to continue to provide excellent Health Care to satisfy the demands of its existing patients and the wider community.