

Thames Valley School Reading Replacement anti-climb fence for The National Autistic Society Planning Statement

On Behalf of The National Autistic Society

DOCUMENT 117 02 02

Job No: 117 02
Prepared by
Simul Consultants Ltd

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01 INTRODUCTION

01.1 Simul Consultants Ltd has been appointed by The National Autistic Society (NAS) to prepare a supporting Planning Statement for the proposed full planning application for **Erection of replacement 3 m high weld-mesh anti climb fence in green. ("the Application")**.

Address: Thames Valley School Conwy Close Tilehurst RG30 4BZ

NGR: 467613 173076

Application Site Area: 300 sm.

Local Authority: Reading Borough Council

01.2 The Site Location Plan **drawing 117 02 01** is included with the application supporting documents; along with additional Site Plan **117 02 10**, details of the fence in drawing **117 02 11**, Block Plan **117 02 12** and Tree Survey and Root Area Plan **WCM/SSR/DS/SC/TVS/TSP/1; WCM/SSR/DS/SC/TVS/RPA/1**.

01.3 The proposal is to replace the existing 2 m high fence on the north-east and east boundary of the school with a 3 m anti-climb mesh fence for security reasons and safety of Pupils.

01.4 There is an urgency to obtain permission and undertake the works quickly.

02 PLANNING HISTORY

02.1 Thames Valley School was granted full permission (ref **13/00254/FUL**) on 26th April 2013.

The application site formed part of the former Meadway School site which closed in 2001. The application was submitted with a comprehensive range of supporting documents including a transport assessment, energy report, landscaping, ecology and environmental assessment. The construction work commenced in May 2013 and the school opened in September 2013.

As part of that approval the existing boundary fencing and control measures were approved and a 2 m high steel mesh fencing erected around the perimeter of the school with controlled access and egress gates off Conwy Close.

02.2 The existing fence is shown below in the view from Meadway to the main exit .



02.3 Full permission has been granted on 19th April 2018 to extend the school but this has not yet been implemented (ref **180018**).

02.4 The trees along the north -east boundary and south entrance are protected by Tree Preservation Orders and shown on drawing **WCM/SSR/DS/SC/TVS/TSP/1** and the **Tree Survey Schedule**.

03 JUSTIFICATION

03.1 The proposal is to re-erect a new fence in the same green colour to 3 m high. It will be a similar steel mesh but a tighter mesh designed to be more robust, anti-climb and more secure.

03.2 Thames Valley School is a special school for pupils with an autistic spectrum condition. Pupils are often high functioning but some present challenging behaviour because of their autism.

03.3 The school site is generally very secure and there are clear systems for signing in and for managing safeguarding for pupils, visitors and agency staff. However, the fence on the east main entrance side of the school grounds has proved not to be as robust as originally designed and being only 2 m in height is capable of being climbed over. This creates a risk to pupils and needs to be more robust and to allow the school to meet its safeguarding policy.

03.4 The latest Department for Education also signposts the school's obligations and expectations of "Keeping children safe in Education" (2015).

04 PROPOSALS

04.1 The proposed fence is shown in drawing **117 02 11** and the photograph below. The green steel mesh is similar in construction to the existing steel mesh but proposed to be 1 m higher with closer mesh spacing so that it should not be possible to provide a finger grip. The posts and gates will be of the same framework construction as existing and 1 m higher and clad in the anti-climb steel mesh. The mesh fencing will remain visually permeable.

04.2 The fence will be erected along the existing alignment with posts in the same locations. It will therefore not adversely impact on existing tree root protection areas. Also the fence along the north east boundary will be obscured by the existing tall hedgerow of trees and shrubs as seen in the photograph above from Meadway.

04.3 It is considered that the proposal would ensure that the safeguarding requirements of the school are met. The design modifications and alterations of the fence are modest changes which will not significantly change the outward appearance of the site nor adversely impact on the existing trees on the north-east boundary along Meadway.

04.4 It is considered that the changes meet the relevant Local Planning Policy requirements and in particular:

Policy 38 *Trees, Hedges and Woodlands*. The proposal has no adverse construction impact and access will not affect the setting of the trees and therefore the health and vitality of the trees are maintained.

Policy CS 1 and **CS 7** *Design and the Public Realm*. The raising of the fence in the same green colour will not significantly or adversely impact on the openness or views into the site.



Photograph of the type of proposed steel mesh fence in the green colour proposed and which is visually permeable.