

LOCATION: CADET TRAINING CENTRE FRIMLEY PARK, FRIMLEY ROAD, FRIMLEY, CAMBERLEY, GU16 7HD
PROPOSAL: Erection of a 3.4 metre security perimeter fence, single storey security building with associated parking.
TYPE: Full Planning Application
APPLICANT: Mr Tony Belcher
SERFCA
OFFICER: Mr N Praine

This application would normally be determined under the Council's Scheme of Delegation, however, it is being reported to the Planning Applications Committee at the request of Councillor E Hawkins.

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT subject to conditions

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This application seeks planning consent for the erection of a single storey security building with associated parking and the erection of a 3.4 metre security perimeter fence at this Ministry of Defence (MoD) site. Officers conclude that the security building and fencing would not adversely harm the character of the area or the Listed Building, impact upon residential amenity, highway safety, ecology or matters of flooding. The application is therefore recommended for approval.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The Cadet Training Centre, Frimley Park Mansion lies to the north eastern side of the Frimley Road. The building is a Regular Army Unit for various military and civilian personnel attending residential courses, conferences and meetings. The Frimley Park mansion was built approximately in the mid-18th Century. In 1949 the estate was sold to the War Department and became the Women's Royal Army Corps (WRAC) Staff College. In 1959 Frimley Park became the Cadet Training Centre. The northern half of the Park has since been developed into Frimley Park Hospital. The remainder of the site has been retained as an Army Cadet Training Centre, owned by the Ministry of Defence.
- 2.2 The building is Grade II listed and its gardens and land are registered as a Historic Park and Gardens by English Heritage for its special historic interest as early 20th century formal gardens accompanying a country house, surrounded by 19th century pleasure grounds and parkland.

3.0 RELEVANT HISTORY

- 3.1 SU/15/0182 - Erection of a single storey security building with associated parking
Granted 30/04/15
- 3.2 SU/16/0837 - Listed Building Consent for the demolition of the Quartermaster's (QM) block and adjacent outbuildings. Conversion of part of the Admin block to re-house the QM department. New build block to provide kitchen/dining hall, multifunctional space and 6No bedrooms. Remedial work to the external facade of the Grade II listed mansion and conversion of redundant kitchen area to other uses.
This proposal is considered elsewhere on this agenda.
- 3.3 SU/16/0836 - Demolition of the Quartermaster's (QM) block and adjacent outbuildings. Conversion of part of the Admin block to re-house the QM department. New build block to provide kitchen/dining hall, multifunctional space and 6No bedrooms. Remedial work to the external facade of the Grade II listed mansion and conversion of redundant kitchen area to other uses. *This proposal is considered elsewhere on this agenda.*

4.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 This application proposes the erection of a single storey security building with associated parking and the erection of a 3.4 metre security perimeter fence. The security building would measure 50sqm in footprint, housing a main counter space for booking in visitors and also functions as a base for regular security perimeter patrols beginning and concluding at this proposed building.
- 4.2 The perimeter fence will be approximately 3m high with an additional 0.5m three strand barbed wire topping and the fence would run a total length of 1,260m around the site. The fence is made from welded mesh (in order to restrict climbing) with a moss green colour (RAL 6005) to match the vegetative surroundings. The parts of the proposed fencing which backs onto residential properties will be similar in design but will have timber inserts added to improve residential amenity.
- 4.3 The Cadet Training Centre at Frimley Park is a Regular Army Unit and National Centre of Excellence providing training for over 2000 personnel attending residential courses on site. It hosts numerous conferences and meetings throughout the year. Cadet expansion within the region and MoD longer term plans will see an increase in the usage of the site. The provision of a new security building and perimeter fence form part of wider MoD proposals for Frimley Park (see paragraphs 3.2 and 3.3 above). Key tasks such as control of access and egress, 'booking in' of civilian and military personnel, perimeter patrols, fire safety watch and general site security cannot be met with the current facilities. The MoD considers this constitutes a failure in the overall provision of security on site and as such the current application has been lodged with the Local Planning Authority.
- 4.4 To address these security concerns the MoD require the following on site:
- The security building must accommodate 4 guards. The current hut is inadequate in this regard being able to house only 2 guards.

- The existing building, being constructed from timber, is not deemed as being ‘blast-proof’ by MoD security standards. The new building must meet this criterion.
- Parking: There currently is no area for vehicles to park whilst the ‘booking in’ process is undertaken. Currently exit/entry is entirely blocked whilst this process is undertaken, posing an overall security concern relating to vehicle borne explosives.
- Security: The guard hut is supposed to be the first point of call for matters related to security, fire, health, CCTV and perimeter patrols. It currently cannot achieve these functions.
- Perimeter: The current perimeter fencing has been identified as substandard by Military Intelligence (MI) and Security Services Group (SSG) units within the region. A new perimeter fence is required that meets current MoD standards.

5.0 CONSULTATION RESPONSES

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| 5.1 | Surrey County Council
Highway Authority | No objection. |
| 5.2 | Surrey Wildlife Trust | <i>At the time of writing this report no comments had been received [Officer comment, see paragraph 7.5.1 below and if any updates are received, these will be verbally reported to the Committee].</i> |
| 5.3 | SHBC Drainage Officer | No objection. |
| 5.4 | SHBC Tree Officer | No objection. |
| 5.5 | SHBC Historic Buildings
and Conservation
Advisor | No objection. |
| 5.6 | The Garden History
Society | <i>No response at the time of writing this report [Officer comment, if any updates are received, these will be verbally reported to the Committee].</i> |
| 5.7 | Historic England | No objection. |

6.0 REPRESENTATION

- 6.1 At the time of writing this report, one letter of objection has been received. In summary the letter raises the following concerns:
- Impact upon highway safety at the site access and ‘Toshiba Roundabout’ *[Officer comment see paragraph 7.4.1 below];*

- Impact upon wildlife including badgers [*Officer comment see paragraph 7.5.1 below*];
- Impact upon the Listed Building [*Officer comment see paragraph 7.2.1 below*];
and
- Impact upon Flood Risk [*Officer comment see paragraph 7.5.2 below*]

7.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATION

7.1 The application site falls within the curtilage of a Grade II Listed Building. The relevant policies relating to the above proposal are Policies DM9, DM11 and DM17 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Western Urban Area Appraisal are also material considerations.

7.2 The impact of the development on the character of the area and the Listed Building

7.2.1 Given the national MoD requirements for security and the need to balance these with the character of the wider area including the Grade II Listed Building, meetings have been held on site with Surrey Heath Planning Officers and the Surrey Heath Heritage and Conservation Officer to discuss the MoD's aspirations for the site. All parties felt the preferred location for the new security fence should be just inside the tree lined boundary of the site finished in dark green, so that any visual impact of the fence from public vantage points is reduced and likewise its impact is also reduced when approaching the listed building.

7.2.2 The Council's Historic Buildings Advisor has considered the application and in his 'no objection' response states:

"The erection of the security fence and guard building will result in less than substantial harm to the setting of the listed building. However I am satisfied that this harm is acceptable as the least harmful solution to providing the level of security required for a military site. The removal of the existing guard hut and security barrier will have a positive impact on the setting of the listed building."

7.2.3 In respect to the impact upon trees, the siting of the fence and security building has been designed to ensure minimum tree impact while balancing MoD requirements for site security. The fence has been sited behind the trees and the siting of the security building ensures no major trees in public view will be felled. The Council's Tree Officer is satisfied with the proposal and raises no objections.

7.2.4 Efforts have been made to site the fencing and security building in a sensitive way and also to design them to have the least impact while incorporating mandatory MoD requirements as outlined above at paragraph 4.1 to 4.4. In conclusion, it is considered that the proposal can be accommodated within the local area without significant harm to the character of the area or setting of the listed building, gardens or park. On this basis no objections are raised on these grounds.

7.3 Impact on residential amenity

- 7.3.1 Where the fence adjoins residential properties in Gilbert Road, the applicant has selected an alternative fence type with timber infill panels. The reasons for this are two fold, firstly to offer privacy to these occupants and secondly to maintain a domestic aesthetic appearance when viewed from these dwellings. While 3.5m is tall for a fence and ordinarily would be resisted if sited adjacent to a residential property, the overarching MoD security requirements of this military site are considered to outweigh these concerns regarding neighbour amenity and for these reasons no objections are raised on these grounds.
- 7.3.2 Given the location and separation of the security building from the adjoining residential properties, closest located a minimum of 100m from the proposal, no undue loss of residential amenity is anticipated by this part of the proposed development to the occupiers of any other adjoining or nearby residential properties.
- 7.3.3 In conclusion it is envisaged that the proposal would not conflict with Policy DM9 (Design Principles) of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 and it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in residential amenity terms and no objections are therefore raised on these grounds.

7.4 Impact on highway safety

- 7.4.1 The County Highway Authority has undertaken an assessment in terms of the likely net additional traffic generation, access arrangements and parking provision and are satisfied that the proposal would not have a material impact on the safety and operation of the adjoining public highway. The County Highway Authority therefore have no highway requirements. In conclusion it is envisaged that the proposal would not conflict with Policy DM11 (Traffic Management and Highway Safety) of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012 and it is considered that the proposal is acceptable and no objections are therefore raised on these grounds.

7.5 Other matters

- 7.5.1 An ecological survey, written by a qualified ecologist, has been submitted as part of this application and the methods of the survey accord with current good practice guidelines. Surveys of this type are valuable in terms of helping to determine whether or not wildlife particularly species with special legislative protection are likely to be present in the locality and if so whether they might be affected by development. The survey concludes that general wildlife including statutorily protected and notable species would not be adversely affected should the development proposals be implemented. No objections are therefore raised on these grounds.
- 7.5.2 A flood risk assessment has been submitted with the application. The report concludes that the proposal will not cause flood risk, subject to setting of floor levels within the security building and other building flood resistance measures. Likewise the flood risk assessment concludes the proposal will not significantly impede or change flood flow and surface water flow across the site and off site.

The Council's Drainage Officer has considered the application and agrees with the conclusions of the flood risk assessment, he raises no objections to the proposal.

8.0 ARTICLE 2(3) DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (AMENDMENT) ORDER 2012 WORKING IN A POSITIVE/PROACTIVE MANNER

8.1 In assessing this application, officers have worked with the Applicant in a positive and proactive manner consistent with the requirements of paragraphs 186-187 of the NPPF. This included:

a) Provided or made available pre application advice to seek to resolve problems before the application was submitted and to foster the delivery of sustainable development.

b) Provided feedback through the validation process including information on the website, to correct identified problems to ensure that the application was correct and could be registered.

c) Have suggested/accepted/negotiated amendments to the scheme to resolve identified problems with the proposal and to seek to foster sustainable development.

d) Have proactively communicated with the Applicant through the process to advise progress, timescale or recommendation.

9.0 CONCLUSION

9.1 This application seeks planning consent for the erection of a single storey security building with associated parking and the erection of a 3.4 metre security perimeter fence at this Ministry of Defence site. Officers conclude that the security building and fencing would not adversely harm the character of the area or the Listed Building, impact upon residential amenity, highway safety, ecology or matters of flooding. The application is therefore recommended for approval.

10.0 RECOMMENDATION

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within three years of the date of this permission.

Reason: To prevent an accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions and in accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51(1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The works, hereby approved, shall be constructed in external fascia materials; to match those as specified on the Application for Planning Permission Form, Design and Access Statement and Drawings date stamped 13th July 2017.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the area and to accord with Policy DM9 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies 2012.

3. The proposed development shall be built in accordance with the following approved plans: 3874-P-02 and 3874-P-03 unless the prior written approval has been obtained from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of proper planning and as advised in ID.17a of the PPG.

Informative(s)

1. Building Regs consent req'd DF5
2. Decision Notice to be kept DS1