

**Development Control Committee**  
Meeting to be held on 7 June 2023

Electoral Division affected:  
Chorley South

**Chorley Council: application number LCC/2023/0007**

**Proposed 2.4 metre high mesh fence to front boundary of school to replace existing hoop top fence. Gillibrand Primary School, Grosvenor Road, Chorley**

Contact for further information:  
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### **Brief Summary**

Proposed 2.4 metre high mesh fence to front boundary of school to replace existing hoop top fence. Gillibrand Primary School, Grosvenor Road, Chorley

### **Recommendation**

That planning permission be **Granted** subject to conditions controlling approved plans and tree protection.

### **Applicant's Proposal**

Planning permission is sought for the erection of a 2.4m high open mesh and wire steel panel security fence to the front of Gillibrand Primary School, Grosvenor Road, Chorley. The proposed fence would replace the existing perimeter fencing that consists of an approximately 1.3m high hoop top metal railings. The proposed fencing would replace the existing fencing along the frontage with Grosvenor Road, up to the school car park entrance. The fence would then continue around the rear of the car park, in front of the school buildings, where it would eventually join the boundary with the rear garden of no. 4 Grosvenor Road, on the north eastern side of the school playing fields. The proposed fence would be coloured moss green. A 4.8m wide double entry gate and a 1.5m wide pedestrian gate would be included in the same location as the existing gates. These would also be 2.4m in height and constructed from the same materials. The new fence would be approximately 180 metres in length.

The proposed fencing would match the design and colour of existing fencing erected to the sides and rear of the school boundaries that was granted planning permission in 2010. The fencing is required to improve security at the school in response to instances of trespass and vandalism.



## **Description and Location of Site**

Gillibrand Primary School is located off Grosvenor Road in the residential area of Weld Bank approximately 1.2 km to the south west of Chorley town centre. The boundary of the school playing fields to the north and west is formed by the fences and hedgerows of residential properties on Cunningham Avenue, Beatty Avenue, Collingwood Road and Grosvenor Road, whose rear gardens back onto the school. There are also residential properties to the south, on the opposite side of Grosvenor Road, facing the school. To the west the school is bordered by an existing mature woodland area.

## **Planning Policy**

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Paragraphs 11 - 14, and 126 - 136 are relevant in terms of the presumption in favour of sustainable development, and the need for high standards of design.

Chorley Local Plan 2012-2026

Policy V2 – Settlement Areas

Policy BNE1 - Design Criteria for New Development

Policy HW2 – Existing Open Space

Central Lancashire Core Strategy (adopted 2012)

Policy 1 – Locating Growth

Policy 14 - Education

## **Consultations**

Chorley Council: Advise that they have no objections to the proposals.

Lancashire County Council (LCC) Highways: Advise that they have no objections and that they consider that the proposal would not have a significant impact on highway safety, capacity or amenity in the immediate vicinity of the site.

Representations: The application has been advertised by site notice and neighbouring residents informed by individual letter. Three letters of objection have been received making the following comments:

- The existing hoop top fence is approximately 1.2m high and blends into the surrounding area.
- The proposed fencing will cut the school off from the adjacent residents and surrounding community and will aesthetically be a barrier.
- It will make the pleasant residential area look more like an industrial estate.
- The proposed fence would not be in keeping with the character of the area.
- The proposed fence would be a waste of money.
- The proposed fence would not improve security as it could be removed with wire cutters easily.



- The proposed fence and gates would have a terrible impact on my property (as it would be right to the side of the property).

## **Background**

The site is an established educational facility. The planning history of the site is as follows:

LCC/2021/0013 - Single storey extension to create a nurture room  
Approved May 2021

09/13/0580 - Installation of 1 x 6m high lighting column to staff car park  
Approved July 2013

09/10/0720 - Erection of 2.4m high security fencing and gates to boundary of school  
Approved October 2010

09/02/0513 - Proposed infill of existing courtyard to provide additional classroom  
Approved

9/00/0418 - Classroom extension into existing courtyard to provide new toilet block and wet play area.  
Approved

## **Advice**

The proposed development is located at Gillibrand Primary School which is mainstream primary school catering for pupils aged 4 - 11 years old. There are just over 200 pupils on roll at the school.

The school are experiencing issues with vandalism and unauthorised access to the school grounds out of hours. There have been incidents where playground equipment has been vandalised and also attempted arson. The applicant has stated that the existing fencing to the front is of an insufficient height to deter access and the new fencing would provide a higher degree of security at the school.

Policy 17 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy seeks to ensure that the design of new development takes account of the character and appearance of the local area including siting, design and landscaping and that it is sympathetic to surrounding land uses and occupiers and avoids demonstrable harm to the amenities of the local area.

Policy BNE1 of the Chorley Local Plan states that planning permission will be granted for new development, including extensions, conversions and free standing structures, provided that, where relevant to the development, the proposal does not have a significantly detrimental impact on the surrounding area by virtue of its density, siting, layout building to plot ratio, height, scale and massing, design, orientation and use of materials. The policy also supports measures to help to prevent crime and promote community safety.



The principal concerns raised by local residents are that the proposed fencing would be out of keeping with the character of the area, and harmful to visual amenity. It was originally proposed that the replacement fencing would run the full length of the front perimeter with Grosvenor Road (abutting the pavement), from the south west boundary with the adjacent woodland up to the north east boundary with no. 4 Grosvenor Road (including a length of fencing that would be adjacent to the driveway of no. 4). The proposals have been amended so that the proposed fencing would run around the perimeter of school car park thereby avoiding the fencing adjacent to no. 4. This is considered to reduce the impact of the proposed fencing on the residents of no. 4 Grosvenor Road and would slightly reduce the impact of the proposed fencing on the overall street scene.

It is acknowledged that the proposed fence would be higher than the existing fencing. The neighbouring properties in the immediate locality are predominantly residential bungalows, and existing boundary features comprise mainly low fences and walls, with mixed shrub and hedge planting, although there a number of higher fences and gates visible within the area. However, the proposed fence is of a design and appearance that is now commonplace around schools in the area and would match the existing fencing to the side and rear of the school grounds. Furthermore, it is important to note that under The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 the school could erect a fence of up to 2m in height, in this location, without requiring planning permission. This is considered to be an important fallback position, which has a realistic prospect of being implemented. Planning case law has established that this is a material consideration in determining a planning application.

The size, scale and appearance of the proposed fencing is considered to be in keeping with the proposed development and existing use of the site as a school. It would be viewed in the context of the existing school building and is sufficiently far from the adjacent residential properties so as not to form an unduly overbearing or obtrusive feature. The front elevation of properties facing the school would be approximately 15m from the proposed fence. The application site is located within the settlement boundary, and not within any areas designated for their landscape, visual or historic importance.

There are a number of mature trees along the boundary, set back approximately 2m from the fencing within the school grounds. The applicant has stated that no trees would need to be felled as a result of the proposals and that any branches affected by the installation of the fencing would be carefully trimmed using a qualified tree surgeon. The trees are a prominent feature that enhance the street scene. It is therefore considered to be appropriate to attach a condition preventing the removal of any trees or shrubs during the works.

Taking all of the above matters into consideration, the proposed development is considered to comply with the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the policies of the Development Plan and is accordingly recommended for approval.

In view of the scale, design and nature of the development it is considered that no Convention Rights set out in the Human Rights Act 1998 would be affected.



## Recommendation

That planning permission be **Granted** subject to the following conditions

### Time Limits

1. The development shall commence not later than 3 years from the date of this permission.

*Reason: Imposed pursuant to Section 91 (1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.*

### Working Programme

2. The development shall be carried out, except where modified by the conditions to this permission, in accordance with the following documents:

- a) The Planning Application and supporting statement received by the County Planning Authority on 15 March 2023.
- b) Submitted Plans and documents:

Proposed fencing Plan ref. 13751/RW Rev. A

*Reason: To minimise the impact of the development on the amenities of the area and to conform with Policy BNE1 of the Chorley Local Plan.*

3. No trees or shrubs shall be removed in order to construct the new fencing.

*Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the area and to conform with Policy BNE1 of the Chorley Local Plan.*

## Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

### List of Background Papers

| Paper         | Date      | Contact/Directorate/Ext                                    |
|---------------|-----------|--|
| LCC/2023/0007 | June 2023 | Helen Ashworth<br>Planning and Environment<br>01772 530084 |

Reason for Inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A

