



Memo

To: Maxine Wishart, Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Date: 17 November 2021
CC: Alan Kilroe, Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Ref: 21/00652/FUL
From: DWD

Response to LPA Planning Comments

This note has been prepared by the applicant's technical consultant team in response to the comments raised by the Planning Officer in relation to planning application 21/00652/FUL for:

"Erection of a 4.0 m high timber fence to part of western boundary fronting Moorgate Road and southern side boundary"

This response follows the Applicant's first response dated 8 October 2021 which addressed technical issues in relation to the position of the fencing, the maintenance of land, existing trees, security, visual impact and highways. From discussions with the LPA, it is considered that all of these issues are resolved with the exception of further justification for the fencing.

This second response seeks to provide additional information to the LPA to justify why the fencing is required. As noted by Maxine Wishart on 21 October, the fencing has been erected and as such the Applicant accepts the suggested amendments to the description of development as set out below:

Retention of a 4.0 m high timber fence to part of western boundary fronting Moorgate Road and southern side boundary"

In summary, the fencing is required for the purposes of security, and to reduce impact on the neighbouring amenity in respect to external lighting and noise. This is set out in more detail below.

Security

The majority of the service yard and car parking is already screened by mature tree belts and/or smaller buildings, however the corner where the fencing is located was not previously screened and is open to views from Moorgate Road and the A5207, which is a busy main road. Prior to the erection of the fence, this corner of the Site was open to views compared to the surrounding boundaries as indicated below (fence line

indicated in red). This is considered to be a security risk, both to vehicles and property, but also safety of workers who would be arriving and departing at the site during the hours of darkness.

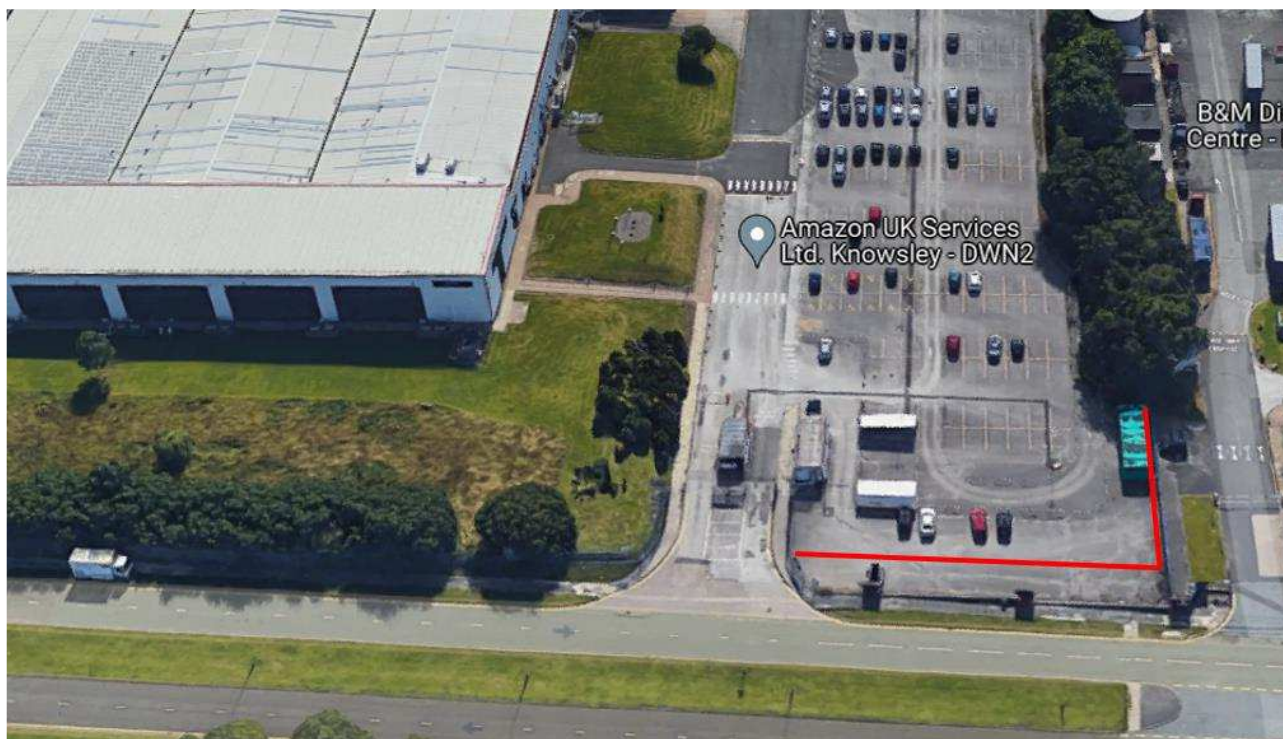


Figure 1 - Aerial Image

The proposed fencing will clearly improve the security on this prominent corner and provide immediate screening of the activity within the Site. This will also deter potential intruders who could access the car parking and yard area undetected by the staff operating the gatehouses, which are located at the Site entrances. Given the hardstanding in place and arrangement of that corner it is not feasible to plant trees to provide screening as has been implemented elsewhere. A fence of 2 metres could be installed in this location under permitted development in any case, as there are no planning conditions to the contrary. However, a fence of this height is not considered to be sufficiently high to prevent intruders getting in, merely a deterrent as it would reduce visibility.

As officers have noted from a site visit, the wooden fencing is not proposed right on the boundary of the Site up against the highway, but it is set in from the existing paladin fence and is within the Site.

Further to the above, the Police UK website confirms that there have been over 2,000 cases of burglary, over 2,000 cases of other theft and nearly 5,000 cases of criminal damage done to properties over the last 3 years in the Knowsley Community Police Team Area.

There is very little natural surveillance from Moorgate Road North, because even though it is a busy road, vehicles will simply drive past the Site quickly and would not notice if a crime was being committed. There is a row of three terrace houses in proximity to the Site, but directly opposite is a playing field for the nearby Primary School which is likely to be uninhabited in the evenings and on weekends. It is therefore considered necessary to erect additional fencing to prevent such issues and improve the security of the site.

Noise

The additional rationale for the height above Permitted Development regulations is to assist in minimising the impacts on the amenity of the local area. The operations at the Site are 24/7 and it is considered that the proposed fencing will provide additional screening from the noise associated with the development which would be beneficial to the near-by residential properties directly to the south west of the proposed fencing.

Therefore, the mitigation has been designed to reduce noise levels down as far as reasonably practicable in this area to prevent the exceedance of relevant noise level guideline criteria at the closest properties, specifically Moorgate Lane.

External Lighting

In addition to providing screening from a noise perspective the additional height on the fence serves to help contain light spill from beyond the boundary. This works in tandem with other measures such as facing the direct lights away from the residential areas, to minimise the impacts of the operation as far as possible.

Conclusion

As set out above, it is considered that the proposed fencing will improve security and visually screen activity at the Site and specifically in areas located away from the manned gatehouses.

In addition, the fencing will successfully screen external lighting and noise from the facility which is a 24-hour operation. This will result in an improvement to the existing site security and potential impacts on neighbouring properties.

As discussed in the planning statement and subsequent letters, the development is not contrary to the Development Plan and would not result in any significant adverse impacts which would warrant the refusal of the application. On the contrary the development is an investment in the Site so that it performs better from a security perspective and to protect neighbouring amenity.

We trust the above additional information is now sufficient but if the team has further comments, we would be happy to discuss further.