



# Review Statement

Stoneywood Park Industrial Estate Security Fence

THE-21-0015

Woollard & Henry

February 23, 2022

# Table of Contents

1 Introduction and site description \_\_\_\_\_ 2

2 Background \_\_\_\_\_ 3

3 Design of Fence \_\_\_\_\_ 5

4 Consideration of Reasons for Refusal \_\_\_\_\_ 5

5 Previous Application and Appeal Decision (PPA-100-2105) \_\_\_\_\_ 9

6 Conclusion \_\_\_\_\_ 10

## 1 INTRODUCTION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

This statement has been prepared on behalf of the Applicant, Woollard and Henry Ltd. To provide detail on the reasons for seeking a Review of application 210657/DPP by the Local Review Body for planning permission for the relocation of a secondary security fence around their premises at Stoneywood Park Industrial Estate as contained in Documents 1-5.

Woollard & Henry own the site and operate a long-standing manufacturing business from the site. They are specialists in paper and pulp services and benefit from the close location to Stoneywood Papermill and their premises are important to the continued success of the business. The nature of the Applicant's business is that there are high value items stored within the premises and the unsocial behaviour being carried out to the rear of the building is of concern to the business and insurance provider. Woollard and Henry produce equipment used in the manufacture of currency and other high security documents. As a result security is imperative and customers will carry out audits to ensure that the site is adequately secure, without this the company would not be allowed to carry out the work and employment could be lost in what is the last remaining company in the UK to undertake this work.

This is a long-standing operation and the site and collections of images of production at the works is recorded by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (Document 7<sup>1</sup>) Residential development in the area to the south has changed the character of this area.

The building is located within an industrial area and is now surrounded by a designation for Residential Area (OP17) and is also covered by a Green Space Network. Other than the erection of the fence there is no other development proposed by this application.

A fence has been erected at the site, which is does not have permission and an enforcement notice has been served on the owner. Given the ongoing security concerns the applicant seeks to retain this fence in place until a suitable solution to replacement fencing can be agreed.

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<sup>1</sup> [Dyce, Woollard and Henry, Engineers | Canmore](#)

## 2 BACKGROUND

As a part of the residential development of the Stoneywood estate a 3.2m wide public footpath has been constructed to the eastern boundary of the industrial premises as shown in Figure 1. The path is to the western edge of a wider woodland between the development and the River Don.



Figure 1: Footpath Running Within Close Proximity to Industrial Estate

It is not clear the process for approval being granted for this footpath as all available planning documents related to the residential development identify this path approximately 50m further to the east of its current location. The applicant understands that prior to this footpath there was only a trodden route but no a private way or public footpath to this extent. The location identified in planning documents is identified in Figure 1 and 2. The location as proposed would provide for a more appropriate setting surrounded by woodland on both sides and maintain a

buffer to industrial uses. The applicant is also not aware of having been notified of the proposal to create this formal footpath in such close proximity to their boundary.

With the formal footpath constructed as a departure to the approved Masterplan and with a large residential development this now promotes and brings members of public close to the industrial edge of Stoneywood Park Industrial Estate and in particular the applicant's premises. Its location does therefore have a more industrial feel because of this decision.



Figure 2: Extract from Masterplan for Northern River Park

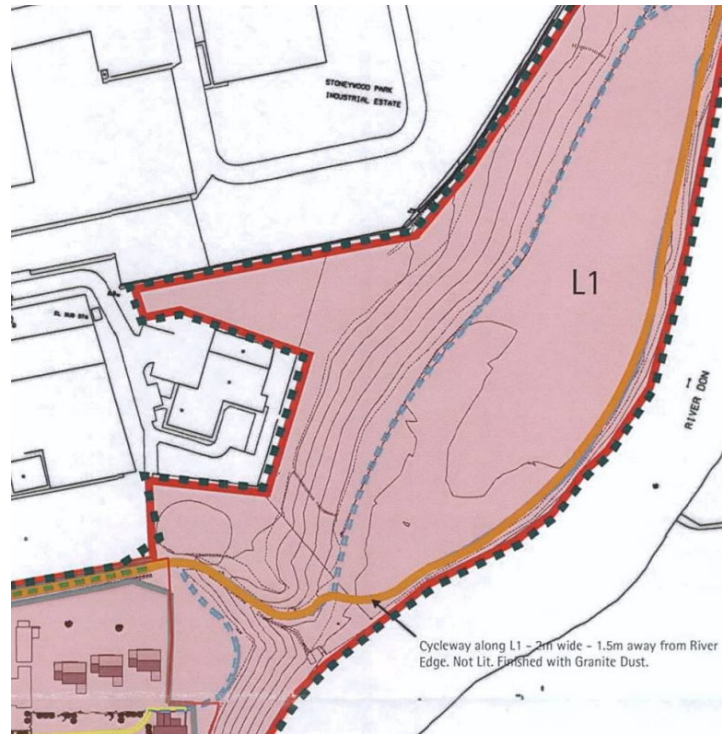


Figure 3: Extract from Paths Plan Approved with P110790

The result of the footpath amendments encourages public access very close to the edge of the industrial area and causes Woollard & Henry security concerns. The installation of a secondary fence will provide for a greater deterrent. Since the construction of the path there have also been issues with people using the land for unsocial behaviour outwith operating hours with several attempts to gain access to Woolard & Henry's premises and this application was seen as an opportunity to reduce this risk.

### 3 DESIGN OF FENCE

The fence design has been amended through proposals to address the concerns outlined in the Appeal Decision. The application is only for the erection of the security fence and there is no application to seek a change of use. The fence line has been chosen to avoid impact on trees.

The fence line proposed in this application has moved further from the view of the surrounding residential areas mostly located behind existing woodland and further from the path and SUDS basin.

The building is currently very close to the footpath at some points and in this area hedge planting is proposed. This planting will provide screening for the proposed fence as well as establish some landscaping that will help visually separate the industrial estate from the woodland walks. This is similar in approach to the design of the boundary treatment along Cedar Avenue as shown in Figure 4.



Figure 4: Land fenced off forms part of Green Space Network on Cedar Avenue

### 4 CONSIDERATION OF REASONS FOR REFUSAL

Application 210657/DPP was refused for the following reasons (Document 8):

- 1. Impact on Residential Amenity Due to the industrial character and appearance of the development and its proximity to a well-used recreational path forming an integral amenity within a designated open space associated to a residential area, the fence is considered to have an adverse impact on the residential amenity of the area and therefore conflict with policy H1 (Residential Areas) of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2017.*
- 2. Loss of Access to Greenspace / Open Space Notwithstanding that the site has been purchased by the applicant, the position of the proposed fence would result in loss / severance of public access to the*

*woodland area within the site, which forms part of a consented housing development, in conflict with the objectives of policies NE1 (Green Space Network), NE3 (Urban Green Space) and NE9 (Access and Informal Recreation) of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2017 and PAN 65. Although some mitigatory planting is proposed, it is considered that this is not sufficient to warrant approval of the proposal or justify the loss of access to the open space. No replacement public open space is proposed. By preventing public access to existing open space which was required to be delivered as part of the Stoneywood housing development, which is a valued open space resource for the wider community, the proposal would conflict with the Stoneywood Development Framework and Masterplan approved by the Council in 2011.*

- 3. Precedent Approval of this application would establish an undesirable precedent for further / similar proposals that would be likely to erode the extent and purpose of established public open space / woodland areas within housing and industrial areas.*

The following sections will consider the relevant aspects of these reasons setting out the case for the Applicant.

### **Residential Amenity**

The first reason given relates to the fact that the fence is of an industrial appearance and is not considered suitable within a residential area and the recreational path that runs alongside. It is accepted that the fence in its current position which can be seen from the housing and is located next to the footpath along its length is not appropriate and the Appeal decision confirmed this. What is proposed by this application results in minimal change to the character of the residential area. The proposal is for a secondary fence running a length of 64m off-set by a maximum of 3.5m from the original boundary fence. It is proposed to plant hedging to the east of the fence to further improve security and soften the appearance of the boundary with this area of public open space.

Policy H1 states that development should “not have an unacceptable impact on the character and amenity of the surrounding area.” In terms of its appearance it will be visible, but is of little difference to the existing and other boundaries along the edge of the industrial estate. With the amendments made to the application this fence will only be seen from the remote footpath and will have minimal impact on the character or amenity of the setting of this area.

The Policy also states that the development should not result in the loss of valuable and valued areas of open space. Reference is made within the Report of Handling that this area formed part of the area of public open space associated with the residential development. The proposal results in the enclosure of part of the area of open space extending to 168sq.m. The wider area of open space noted at L1 in the Open Space Plan (Document 9) extends to 50,620sq.m. The area of space affected represents just 0.3% of this space. The proposal only restricts access to the area between the existing fence and the new fence and there would be no detrimental effect on the value of this area of open space. Further consideration of impact on open space is considered in relation to Reason 2.

### **Loss of Access to Green Space**

Policy NE3 deals with the development of Urban Green Space and requires where there is loss of Urban Green Space that it is replaced in the local area. In this case the proposal does not result in the loss of green space only public access to this area. Whilst replacement could be provided to the north of the building this would involve the removal of the existing fence and concrete

posts and relocation within the woodland. The public benefit of this alteration is to be of very little value and not considered of benefit in the context of the potential for damage to trees in relocating the fence.

Whilst it is noted as being applicable to householder developments The Householder Development Supplementary Guidance provides useful guidance on determining applications like this in residential situations. Given the fence is within a zoned residential area it is considered that its guidance is of relevance. Section 3.1.11 of the Householder Development Guide advises that each application is dealt with on its own merits and the following table considers the proposal against the criteria set out.

Criteria	Proposed Development
<p>The proposal should not adversely affect amenity space which makes a worthwhile contribution to the character and amenity of the area. In most circumstances the amenity ground will make a contribution, however sometimes small incidental areas of ground make little contribution to the appearance of the neighbourhood. For instance it may be acceptable to include within garden ground secluded areas that are not visible from footpaths or roads and that do not make a contribution to the wider visual amenity of the area. Similarly it may be acceptable to include small corners of space that can be logically incorporated into garden ground by continuing existing fence lines;</p>	<p>The proposal results in the enclosure of part of the area of open space extending to 168sq.m. The wider area of open space noted at L1 in the Open Space Plan (Document 9) extends to 50,620sq.m. The area of space affected represents just 0.3% of this space. The proposal only restricts access to the area between the existing fence and the new fence and there would be no detrimental effect on the value of this area of open space.</p> <p>It is not considered that there would be an adverse affect on the wider open space resulting from the proposal.</p>
<p>The proposal should not fragment or, if replicated, be likely to incrementally erode larger areas of public open space or landscaping;</p>	<p>The proposal represents an insignificant proportion of the open space. The consideration against reason 3 Precedent is considered separately.</p>
<p>The proposal should not worsen or create a deficiency in recreational public open space in the area. The less amenity space there is in an area the more value is likely to be placed on the existing amenity space. The Open Space Audit identifies areas of the city where there is a deficiency and should this be the case there will be a presumption against the granting of planning permission;</p>	<p>As noted within the Committee Report for the approval of the residential application it was noted that "Over 20 hectares of public open space would be provided by the application proposals, which is well in excess of current Council standards." Page 3 Document 10)</p>
<p>The proposal should not result in any loss of visual amenity including incorporating established landscaping features such as mature trees or trees that make a significant contribution to the area. It is unlikely the Council would support the incorporation and likely loss of such features, however in</p>	<p>As confirmed in the Report of Handling (Document 8) there is no adverse impact on landscape features and the proposal does incorporate landscaping that will soften the appearance of the boundary to the industrial premises.</p>



circumstances where it is acceptable replacement planting to compensate will normally be required;	
The proposal should not result in an irregular boundary layout that would be out of keeping with the otherwise uniform character of the area;	This is a boundary to an industrial area and the boundary is set within woodland. The current boundary line is not so regular that this would have a material affect on the amenity of the surrounding area.
The proposal should not result in the narrowing of footpath corridors or lead to a loss of important views along such footpaths, making them less inviting or safe to use;	The proposal does not create an infringement on any footpath. The fence is located between the industrial estate and a path and is of little difference to the existing and other boundaries along the edge of the industrial estate. With the amendments made to the application this fence will only be seen from the remote footpath and will have minimal impact on the character or amenity of the setting of this area.
The proposal should not prejudice road or pedestrian safety. Areas of amenity space often function as visibility splays for roads and junctions;	No impact on road safety.

### Impact on Green Space Network

Policy NE1 seeks to protect, promote and enhance the wildlife, access, recreation, ecosystem services and landscape value of the Green Space Network, which is identified on the Proposals Map. The proposed fence does not impact on the ecosystem or trees within this area. The access path to the east of the site remains, as does access to the woodland for the purposes of recreation.

As considered by the Reporter in the determination of PPA-100-2105 (Document 11) there is significant opportunity to exercise meaningful unrestricted public access to the woodland between the footpath and the river. The level of loss of publicly accessible land resulting from the proposal, when taken in its own right, would not be insurmountable when considered on balance against any potential benefits and mitigation. The loss of access to green space network has been further reduced in the revised proposal through the relocation of the fence.

It is noted that the policy expects Masterplans to determine the location, extent, and configuration of the green space network. However, it is because of the path not being in accordance with the masterplan that has created both the conflict with the industrial area and the concerns regarding visual amenity of this path. The presence of a fence does little more to make the user aware of the industrial area to the west than the existing buildings, cranes and storage yards already do.

Around Stoneywood Park Industrial Estate there are other parts of the Green Space Network that are not publicly accessible, but still contribute value to the landscape and biodiversity of

the area. The woodland that separates the industrial estate to Cedar Avenue is both Green Space Network and privately owned and fenced within the industrial estate, see Figure 4. It is considered that the woodland within, but on the edge of the industrial estate in these areas does still provide an important role in separating the land uses and any conflict.

### Precedent of Approval

In relation to the concern regarding precedent this is a consideration set out in the Householder Development Supplementary Guidance. The policy makes it clear that each application is dealt with on its own merits. There are only two other industrial premises with a boundary to this space and a pumping station to the north end. Heading north from the application site the first unit has an outdoor yard storing pipes on the boundary and the second premises is at a higher level and has a landscape buffer along with parking separating the buildings from this open space. These properties do not share the same circumstances as the applicants building which is located close to the boundary with the open space and footpath. This creates security concerns for the ongoing operation of the business not shared by the other premises.

## 5 PREVIOUS APPLICATION AND APPEAL DECISION (PPA-100-2105)

A previous application submitted for the erection of the fence and a change of use of the land from residential to industrial along with the erection of the fence retrospectively was refused by the Planning Authority and subsequently dismissed at appeal (Document 11).

A review of this decision has informed the revised proposals and the following points highlight how the revised proposals have responded to issues of concern from previous application.

- Loss of Trees would be detrimental to the area and insufficient space for compensatory planting – **No trees are affected by the proposal as confirmed in Report of Handling (Document 8)**
- The removal of trees and extension of yard space would erode an element of the green space network – **No longer a concern with this application.**
- The level of loss of publicly accessible land resulting from the proposal, when taken in its own right, would not be insurmountable when considered on balance against any potential benefits and mitigation – **As discussed there is negligible impact on the value of the surrounding open space.**
- Finish of the unauthorised fence clearly makes it incongruous and more prominent a feature than the original black fence – **Landscaping has been proposed to mitigate the appearance of the boundary to the existing industrial estate.**
- The physical proximity of the fence to the footpath has a greater impact than the original fence – **The fence is proposed to be relocated from its current position. The path curves to and from the building, but the fence will be separated by between 2.5m to 7.5m.**
- The relocated boundary fence significantly detracts from the amenity of path users, distinctly changing the character of the open space. The impression of walking through a woodland has diminished with the experience shifting more toward a path which skirts the edge of a woodland, beside an industrial area - **The building is currently very close to the footpath at some points and in this area hedge planting is proposed. This planting will provide screening for the proposed fence as well as establish some landscaping that will help visually separate the industrial estate from the woodland walks. This is similar in approach to the design of the boundary treatment along Cedar Avenue as shown in Figure 4.**

- Not sufficient space between the path and the fence to undertake planting of an effective screen so any screen would need to be positioned beyond the fence within the site itself – **Planting can now be introduced, which also adds to the biodiversity value.**

## 6 GUIDANCE FROM PLANNING AUTHORITY

Document 12 is a letter from the Planning Authority to the Applicant's agent dated 28/08/2019. At this time it was advised that there would be no objection to the creation of the boundary fence. Since the letter was issued there has been no change to the policies of the Local Development Plan applicable to this application. There was a subsequent refusal on appeal, but as set out in Section 5 the matters of concern have now been addressed.

## 7 CONCLUSION

This application seeks permission to amend the design and location of the fence that has been erected without planning permission to the south and eastern boundaries of the existing engineering works within the Stoneywood Park Industrial Estate. The fence has been erected out of security concerns arising from the formal footpath that has been constructed very close to the boundary of the premises not in accordance with the approved Masterplan for the area.

The design of the fence has been sympathetic to seek to achieve the security requirements and retain and enhance through landscaping the visual amenity of the woodland walks.

The fencing does restrict access to a very small area of woodland to people, but the trees are retained, and it will continue to provide a positive contribution to the Green Space Network in the area. The loss of this will have an insignificant impact on the ability of people to use and enjoy the woodland walks for responsible recreational purposes.

Access to this small area of woodland provides no through route and contributes little to the recreation and enjoyment of the woodland in this area. The proposal introduces additional landscaping hedging similar to that along Cedar Avenue, that will add to the screening between the industrial estate along Woollard & Henry's boundary and the path that has been constructed much closer to the industrial estate than originally planned.

It is requested that the Local Review Body take into consideration the reasons set out for seeking a Review of this application.

## 8 DOCUMENT LIST

Document 1 – Location Plan

Document 2 – Site Plan

Document 3 – Fence Detail

Document 4 – Tree Report

Document 5 – Tree Plan

Document 6 – Site Photographs

Document 7 - Canmore Record

Document 8 - Report of Handling (210657/DPP)

Document 9 – Open Space Plan

Document 10 – Committee Report (P110790)

Document 11 – Planning Appeal Report

Document 12 – Planning Authority Letter