

Filton House
204 Stow Hill
Newport
NP20 4HB

27th January, 2026

Dear Members of the Planning Committee,

Re: 25/1037 Retrospective Planning Permission for Timber Boundary Fence at 202 Stow Hill

We write as the owners of 204 Stow Hill to formally object to the retrospective planning application submitted by Mr Ali in respect of the timber boundary fence at 202 Stow Hill, within the Stow Park Conservation Area.

Impact on the Conservation Area

202 Stow Hill is identified as a Positive Contributor within the Stow Park Conservation Area Appraisal and forms part of a pair of characterful Victorian villas whose setting, boundary treatments and verdant planting are integral to the area's historic and architectural significance. The traditionally constructed masonry boundary wall, formerly softened by a mature hedge, was entirely consistent with the established character of the Conservation Area.

While limited consent was granted for the removal of two trees whose roots were damaging the wall, no permission was granted for the removal of approximately 40m of mature hedge as a whole. Its wholesale removal, followed by the erection of an imposing close-boarded timber fence, has fundamentally altered the appearance of the property and caused clear harm to the streetscape and wider Conservation Area.

It is important to note that there are no other properties within the Stow Park Conservation Area where this style of close-boarded fencing appears in such a prominent and elevated position. The development is therefore not reflective of any established pattern or prevailing character, but rather represents a visually discordant and isolated intervention.

Policy and Legislative Context

Section 160 of the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023 places a statutory duty on decision-makers to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area. Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12) and Policy CE7 of the Newport Local Development Plan reinforce a strong presumption against development that causes harm to conservation areas, particularly where traditional boundary treatments, green infrastructure and important views are affected.

The fence, by virtue of its height, materials and visual dominance, neither preserves nor enhances the character of the Conservation Area. It introduces an uncharacteristic and visually intrusive form of enclosure that conflicts with the established masonry-and-planting boundary typology identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal.

In this context, I strongly support the submission of the Council's Principal Heritage Officer, Mr Guy Arnall, and agree with his conclusion that the development results in unacceptable harm and should be refused.

Consideration of Anticipated Justifications

It may be argued that the fence improves privacy or security for the occupiers. While such concerns are understandable, they do not constitute exceptional circumstances capable of outweighing the statutory duty to preserve or enhance the Conservation Area. Privacy and security have historically been achieved at this property through traditional means—namely a masonry wall supplemented by mature planting—and there is no evidence that these arrangements were inadequate.

It should also be noted that the sole gate to the property is habitually left open and unsecured. No fence, or hedge for that matter, can secure a property where this is the case.

It may also be suggested that the fence is reversible, and therefore that any harm is temporary. However, reversibility does not negate harm in policy terms. Planning decisions must be based on the impact of the development as it exists, and the erection of visually harmful development within a conservation area cannot be justified on the basis that it could, in theory, be removed at a later date.

Inadequacy of Proposed Mitigation

The applicant's proposed mitigation—painting the fence green and attaching artificial plastic ivy—does not address the fundamental harm caused. These measures are cosmetic, temporary and inappropriate in a historic context. They do not replicate the visual softness, ecological value or seasonal variation provided by genuine planting, nor do they resolve the issues of height, enclosure and material incompatibility.

Furthermore, in the context of the South Wales climate, such mitigation is likely to deteriorate over time, resulting in a visually degraded boundary treatment and the release of avoidable plastic waste into the environment. As such, the proposals fall well short of the neutral or positive outcome required by Planning Policy Wales.

Unauthorised Works and Pattern of Non-Compliance

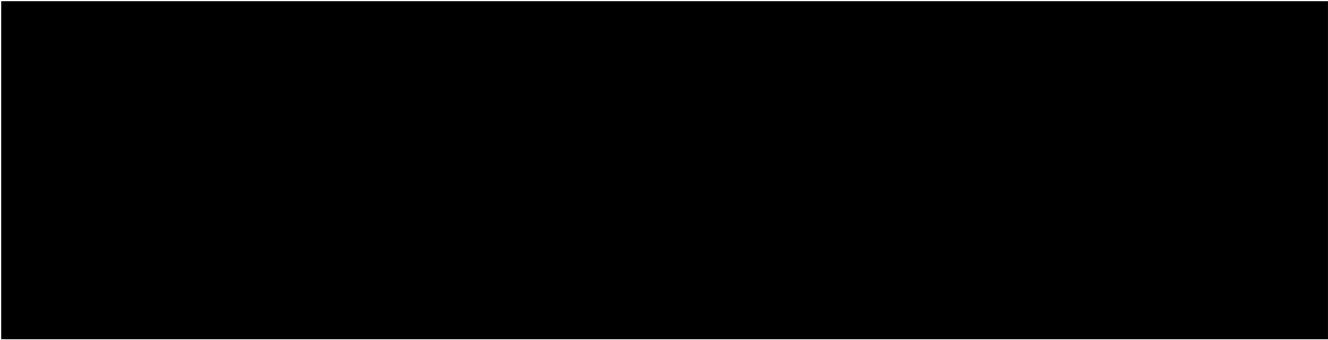
It is material that the hedge was removed without consent, despite permission having been granted only for the removal of two trees. The subsequent erection of the fence without planning permission further compounds this unauthorised harm.

The applicant has previously failed to adhere Newport City Council's planning process, building an unauthorised extension to the property (see Newport City Council Planning Application 17/1179).

This history of non-compliance fatally undermines any confidence that conditions attached to a retrospective approval would be respected or effectively maintained over time.

Applicant's Submission

The applicant's written justification includes the assertion that removal of the two approved trees necessitated the removal of the entire hedge. This is not supported by standard arboricultural or landscape practice, which routinely allows for selective replanting or phased replacement. No evidence has been submitted to demonstrate that the hedge could not reasonably have been retained or reinstated.



Conclusion

For the reasons set out above, and having regard to the statutory duties under the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023, national and local planning policy, the absence of effective mitigation, the lack of precedent within the Conservation Area, and the clear professional advice of the Council's Heritage Officer, I respectfully submit that the retrospective planning application should be refused.

Yours faithfully,

