

Planning Statement – Retrospective Planning Application

Address: 7 College Close, East Grinstead, RH19 3YA

LPA: Mid Sussex District Council

Ref: EF/23/0231

Proposal: Retrospective application for the erection of boundary fencing and associated supporting structure.

1. Introduction

This Planning Statement supports a retrospective planning application submitted by the homeowner of 7 College Close, East Grinstead, RH19 3YA for the erection of fencing along the rear and side boundary of the property. The development in question comprises a solid timber fence installed atop a gabion wall structure, which was necessary due to a level change between properties.

The fence was erected with the primary intention of preserving privacy and security for both the applicant and adjoining properties. While it was originally believed that the development fell under permitted development rights (PD), it has come to light that due to the total height exceeding 2 metres in places—when measured from ground level—the structure does not benefit from PD rights, hence this retrospective application.

2. Site and Surroundings

7 College Close is a two-storey end-of-terrace dwelling located within a quiet cul-de-sac of similar residential properties. The rear garden of the property backs onto a higher neighbouring plot, which has an existing retaining wall and fence treatment.

The surrounding area is suburban in character with a mix of mature planting and boundary enclosures. Several neighbouring properties—including those adjacent—feature fencing of comparable height and massing, with some also including retaining structures due to the sloping topography.

3. Description of the Development

The development comprises:

- A gabion wall structure running along the rear boundary, measuring approximately 1.5 metres high at the lowest point, increasing to approximately 2 metres at its highest point to follow the natural land gradient.
- A horizontal slatted timber fence, approximately 1.7 metres high, sits atop the gabion wall.
- The combined maximum height of the boundary treatment does not exceed 3.7 metres at its tallest visible point from the lower ground level (within the applicant's garden).

- The materials used are high-quality, treated softwood timber in a natural finish, visually sympathetic to surrounding fencing.

The construction was undertaken to match the fencing treatments already in place at neighbouring plots, most notably the directly adjoining property, which features both a retaining structure and a high-level timber fence, effectively shielding views in the same way.

5. Justification for the Development

a. Privacy and Amenity

The topography of the site results in significant level changes between neighbouring gardens. The fencing and gabion structure have been installed to provide a practical solution to this difference, safeguarding the privacy and usability of both the applicant's and neighbouring gardens. Without this treatment, clear sightlines exist directly into habitable rooms and outdoor spaces.

b. Design and Visual Impact

The fence is of a high standard of construction and utilises modern horizontal slatted timber panels, which provide a contemporary yet neutral appearance. It blends well with existing fencing in the immediate vicinity, including that of adjacent neighbours. Importantly, the fence is not visible from the public realm and does not contribute to any sense of enclosure or visual dominance from neighbouring gardens, due to the level differences and mature planting.

c. Precedent and Context

The immediate neighbouring property to the rear has a similar boundary treatment—comprising a retaining wall and tall timber fencing—setting a strong precedent for this form of development. In addition, other properties within the close and the surrounding area employ similar or taller fencing solutions, particularly where privacy is an issue due to sloped ground conditions.

d. Impact on Neighbours

No daylight, sunlight or overshadowing impacts arise from the development due to its location along the rear boundary, its alignment with existing neighbouring treatments, and the limited use of adjacent outdoor areas for habitable purposes. The structure does not result in any material harm to the outlook or enjoyment of neighbouring land.

6. Conclusion

This Planning Statement has demonstrated that the retrospective erection of fencing at 7 College Close is a reasonable and proportionate response to the unique topographical constraints of the site. It preserves neighbour amenity, ensures privacy, and reflects existing boundary treatments in the immediate context.

The structure is not visible from public viewpoints and is constructed to a high design

standard using appropriate materials. It does not conflict with any local or national planning policy and meets the intent of permitted development regulations were it not for the minor height exceedance caused by the gabion support.

In light of the above, the applicant respectfully requests that retrospective permission be granted.

7. Pictures







