

## Planning Officer's Addendum Report – LDCA SEPTEMBER 2025

<b>APPLICATION</b>	<b>2025/51 – Installation of Perimeter Security Fence &amp; Gates</b>
<b>PERMISSION SOUGHT</b>	Full Permission
<b>REGISTERED</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> July 2025
<b>APPLICANT</b>	Programme Management Office, St Helena Government c/o Shelley Thomas
<b>PARCEL</b>	FP0230
<b>LOCALITY</b>	St Helena Secondary School, Francis Plain
<b>ZONE</b>	Green Heartland
<b>CONSERVATION AREA</b>	None
<b>CURRENT USE</b>	School
<b>PUBLICITY</b>	The application was advertised as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Sentinel Newspaper on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2025</li><li>▪ A site notice displayed in accordance with Regulations.</li></ul>
<b>EXPIRY</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> July 2025
<b>REPRESENTATIONS</b>	One Received
<b>DECISION ROUTE</b>	<del>Delegated</del> / LDCA / <del>EXCO</del>

### A. PLANNING OFFICER'S BACKGROUND

The development application was discussed at LDCA meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> August 2025, where the item was agreed to be approved, subject to conditions listed in the report by the Authority, together with an additional condition to be drafted by the SPO relating to the alignment of the proposed fence on the western elevation of the school site.

Upon review of the application and prior to the additional condition being agreed and Decision Notice issued, it was brought to officer's attention that, although it was confirmed by the SPO in the LDCA meeting that there was a Listed Building among the school buildings, written consideration was not included in the Officer's Report in relation to the impact of the proposed development on Francis Plain House (Grade III Listed Building) which is located within the proposed fence line.

This Addendum will contain an assessment on how the proposed development will impact the listed building, as well as the drafted condition to be added on addressing the Authority's concerns with the fencing alignment on the western elevation. The Addendum should be read in conjunction with the original Officer Report of 21<sup>st</sup> August 2025.

## **LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK**

The relevant policies of the Land Development Control Plan (LDCP 2012) that are applicable in the assessment of the proposed development are set out below:

- Green Heartland Zone: GH1, GH.5, GH.6
- Social Infrastructure Policy SI1
- Built Heritage Policies: BH1 & BH3

## **OFFICER'S ASSESSMENT**

This proposal to provide fencing seeks to address the lack of sufficient security infrastructure at St Helena's Secondary School (SHSS), which leaves the site vulnerable to unauthorised access and poses a risk to the safety and welfare of students, staff, and visitors. At present, individuals can enter and exit the school premises from multiple points around the site, creating an environment where it is difficult to monitor and control access effectively. This situation compromises the school's ability to ensure that only authorised persons are on the premises and presents a safeguarding concern, as it increases the risk of students leaving the site without permission and allows potential intruders to enter undetected.

Based upon planning policies, justification of the proposal is one that can be supported as it will create a secure environment for students, staff and visitors through appropriate social infrastructure in accordance with LDCP Policy SD1. It is not considered out of context for the school to have a fence around its perimeter, as the current primary schools have fencing of some kind. COBIS requires any perimeter fencing to be installed at a height of 2m or more, in this case, the proposed fencing complies with the minimum height requirement.

There is no barbed wiring is part of the design. The fence will not be dissimilar to that seen around schools in the UK or with fencing heights to the Primary Schools on St Helena (albeit that the fence here would be stronger and less permeable).

Considering the possible visual impact, there inevitably will be some harm on the landscape and to that of Francis Plain House, however this is considered minimal from vantage points such as those as High Knoll due to the distance and the semi-transparent nature of the fence. Whilst the fence and gates does not specifically comply with retaining the undeveloped nature of the Green Heartland, the fencing would surround existing, taller buildings which have a local urbanising effect. There is existing landscaping that would be retained to the west of the listed building, and the fencing proposed would not be around the playing field which remains open/undeveloped.

The fence will not physically adjoin the listed building, however the most notable impact will be the visual impact when seen directly in front of Francis Plan House on the western elevation. Notwithstanding, it is considered that the semi-transparent fencing would have less impact than the existing (non-transparent) wall to the north of the building such that it will enable views of the Listed Building to continue from public viewpoints. It is therefore considered that the impact on the historic asset is limited, such that the proposed fence would not result in harm that would adversely affect the special interest of the historic asset or the setting of the Listed Building. This accords with Policies BH1 and BH3 of the LDCP, 2012.

In addressing the concerns highlighted by the LDCA at their meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> August 2025, condition 4 is proposed to be added to enable a minor realignment to set part of the proposed fencing back from the roadway to be assessed by the Chief Planning Officer on behalf of the LDCA.

Overall there would be a social benefit to provide a safe learning environment and it is considered the social benefit of the development outweighs the visual impact on the landscape and the setting of Francis Plain House, therefore the proposed fencing can be recommended for approval.