

DESIGN GUIDANCE NOTE NO: 9 WALLS FENCES & GATES

This guidance note is one of a series which provides advice on various types of development within the Borough. It deals with “*Boundary Treatment*” or “*Means of Enclosure*” around properties. This includes walls, fences, railings, hedges, trees, gates and any other feature that encloses a property.

“Throughout the leaflet, ‘fencing’ is used as a common term to refer to any of these types of means of enclosure.”

Fencing is an important feature of a property whether to its front, side or rear. It encloses not only the buildings but the space between the buildings which is often a road or street. Therefore the fencing should relate to the property that it surrounds and the space in front of it.

In many parts of the Borough consistency in the height of fencing contributes to the character of the area. Small rustic fences, hedges and low level walls are typical of old village centres such as Mill Hill whereas in the Hampstead Garden Suburb hedges are used almost exclusively. Many inter-war suburbs have uniform low brick walls along their front boundaries. In such areas we aim to maintain the overall character of boundaries in the area. If other fencing such as high brick walls were used in these areas the appearance would be marred.

This leaflet sets out principles of good practice, and gives advice on what fencing is most appropriate where. Planning applications will be judged against the criteria set out below. The leaflet also explains the circumstances in which the formal consent of the Council is required.

By following the detailed advice in this leaflet you will help to protect and enhance the quality of the local environment.

PRINCIPLES OF GOOD DESIGN

1. In considering the design and siting of fencing a balance has to be struck between privacy, safety and security on the one hand and aesthetic considerations on the other. The need for security does not outstrip other relevant considerations such as the visual impact and effects on local amenity.

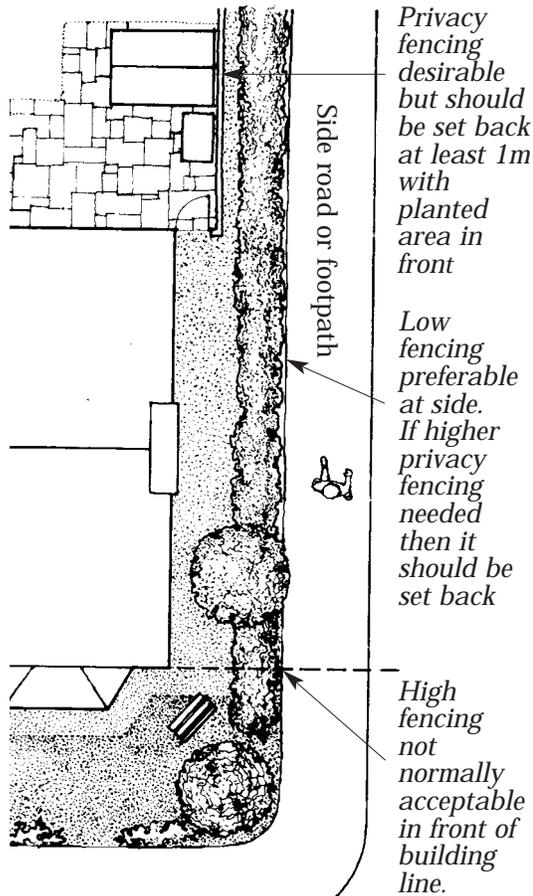
Siting and Height

2. As a general rule rear gardens are enclosed by fencing which provides privacy but this is not usually an issue for front gardens or other areas adjoining roads and footpaths. Privacy screens are particularly important between the sitting areas of adjoining gardens where fences should usually be higher than eye level.

3. As a general rule the height of the front boundary enclosure should reflect the scale of the building. Therefore, the smaller the building, the lower the fence or wall should be. Any fencing should be appropriate to the appearance, style and the scale of the individual building.

4. High level boundary features between neighbouring front gardens are inappropriate in most situations and can be particularly unsightly.

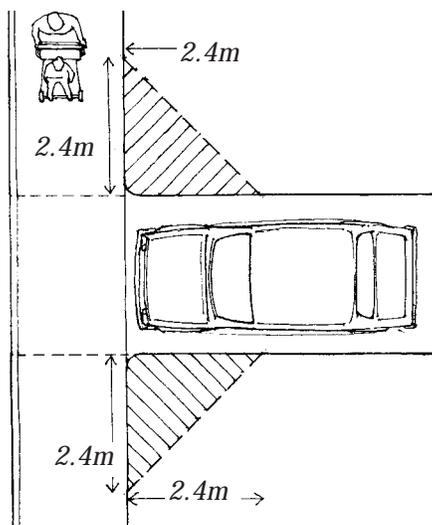
5. Corner properties require careful consideration to avoid a monotonous and



oppressive street scene. Walls and fences should provide seclusion to private rear

gardens. They should be set back from the property at the front and side to ensure an attractive and lively street

Visibility



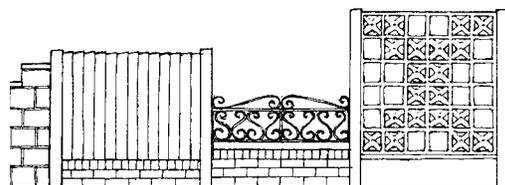
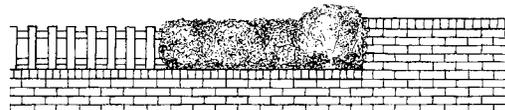
scene. Sensitive planting can be used to make street corners more attractive.

6. At vehicle access points fencing should not be higher than 850mm (2ft 9in) within 2.4m (7ft 10in) of the access point. This is so that car drivers can have full view of pedestrians on the footway.

7. Where a long run of fencing of eye level height or above is proposed on a road boundary, for example where the rear gardens of a line of houses back on to a main road, it is sometimes desirable to 'break the line' of the fencing. This can be achieved, for example, by indenting a section of the fence or by interspersing a different type of fencing, for example a section of brick wall between two sections of close boarded fence.

Style of Fencing

8. As a starting point, look at the boundaries that already exist locally, and consider which might be most appropriate to your property, considering its size and style.



9. In rural and semi-rural areas, where hedges, trees and small fences predominate these should be retained. High walls or wrought iron are more appropriate in an urban setting. In suburban areas wooden fences and low walls, often supplemented by hedges, are

the most common forms of fencing. Where housing estates have been designed to be open plan, then additional fencing which changes their character is likely to be unacceptable.

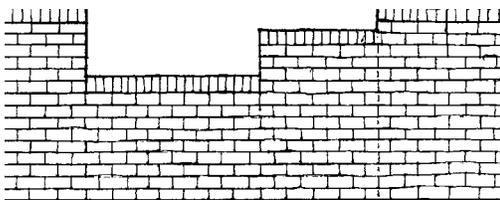
10. If your property is individually styled there is likely to be more scope for individuality in the design of your fencing.

Soft Landscaping

11. Plants can help to soften or enhance the visual impact of fences and walls whilst also helping to protect the site. Care should be taken to choose appropriate species which are easy to maintain and will grow to the required size. Detailed advice can be found in the Council's leaflets "Planting Trees in Barnet" and "Planting Hedges in Barnet".

Walls

12. In areas where properties have an open appearance, for example with low front walls, prominent solid walls are not appropriate. Walls, especially if they are of the same brick as those used on neighbouring properties, provide a unified visual extension to the buildings. Major differences in height cause vertical steps which give an untidy and restless appearance to the area.



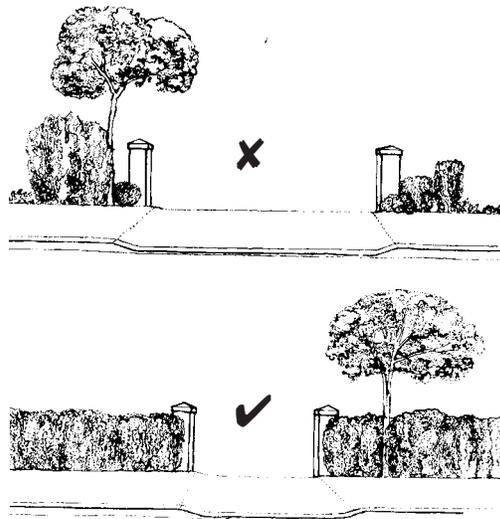
13. Similarly, where high solid walls predominate, any reduction in height, or the total demolition of a wall will alter the degree of enclosure to the street.

14. Wall finishes should complement the house eg render, stone, brick. Where brick

is used the type of facing brick, bonding and mortar joint should match or complement the house. Facing Bricks with a robust top protective coping course should be used. Advice on construction is available from the Building Control Section of the Council's Directorate of Environmental Services.

Hedges

15. Hedges, when mature, provide a high degree of privacy and excellent security. They also add visual interest, greenery and softness to the street scene. Hedge styles can have a significant impact on the character of an area and in these cases any replacement or new hedge should preferably be of a similar species to the existing one. Householders should refer to the Council's leaflet "Planting Hedges in Barnet" available from the Planning Group. Hedges should be maintained regularly to avoid them obstructing the highway.



16. Where hedges border the road, they can provide a strong uniform composition. However in such hedges gaps create a patchy appearance and a loss of greenery. When installing a vehicle access the minimum possible length of hedge should be removed, so that the gap

does not dominate the street scene. Gates should be set in from the frontage to minimise the loss of greenery.

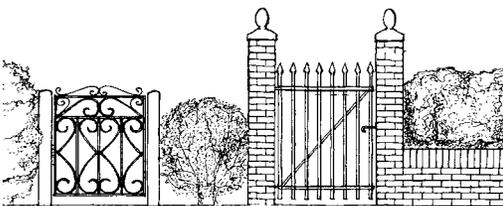
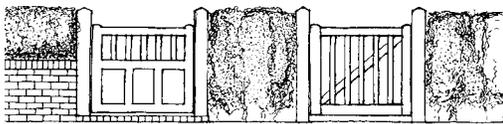
Householders should refer to the Council's leaflet "The construction of Hardstandings and Vehicle Crossovers" available from the Council.

Fences

17. A wide variety of wooden fence types and sizes are available. The correctly chosen fence can be visually pleasing while still providing the desired degree of privacy and security. Low picket and post and rail fences can mark a boundary without giving a solid or intrusive feel. As such they are particularly appropriate for front boundaries and should be painted or stained to complement the house. Close boarded timber fences are often used to enclose back gardens, and when combined with planted areas can provide a pleasing and economical finish. Wooden support posts are less intrusive than concrete posts. A sympathetic colour stain can help the fence blend in with its surroundings.

Gates

18. Should relate to the property and the boundary in terms of size, design and



scale. In an area where there is a characteristic style of gate this should be retained or reinstated wherever possible.

SECURITY AND SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

19. Boundary fences, if well designed and positioned, can help to repel the intruder. Care needs to be taken to make sure they are safe and are not likely to cause harm to passers by.

20. **Crime prevention** measures include taking care not to produce 'natural steps' through the positioning of walls, bin stores, posts and trees etc. A post next to a fence can make a thief's life easier. A fence with a flexible or flimsy top, such as a trellis on top of close boarded fencing, aids security because it is more difficult to climb than a robust fence. Fancy fences and walls with 'texture' such as protruding bricks or horizontal boards may be very easy to climb. Many fencing systems are available which are vandal resistant and deter intruders.

Thorny shrubbery at the base of fences and walls can prevent intruders climbing into the site as can prickly species trained up the fence. Hawthorn, Blackthorn and Mohonia are all suitable for such uses. However planted areas can offer good hiding places for the intruder and so should be kept dense.

Surveillance is a good form of security in itself and where possible views should not be completely blocked because of fencing. Blind alleys can be a particular problem and should be fitted with gates at their road entrances.

21. **Safety** measures include making sure that the fence or wall is secure and is not likely to fall over. Regular maintenance will help to prevent accidents but poor design and inappropriate materials can cause problems. Barbed wire and broken

glass should not be used except in exceptional cases. Not only are they unsightly, but they are potentially dangerous. If barbed wire is to be used it should be fitted above walls or fences and should be angled inwards. Care should be taken that fence supports and wall widths offer sufficient support. More detailed advice is available in the leaflet "Your Garden Walls, Better to be Safe than Sorry" produced by the Department of the Environment. Railings with spikes or spiked chains should not be used where children play while prickly shrubs are good for deterring intruders they can also be dangerous to children and a nuisance to gardeners.

Commercial Properties

22. Commercial properties may hold expensive stock or equipment and are often unsupervised at night. Because of this, security is a particularly important consideration to the owner when choosing fencing. In addition low maintenance is often a priority. A balance needs to be struck between security and general amenity and there are many suitable fencing systems available that are both attractive and secure. The following points should be taken into account when selecting appropriate systems.

23. **Good Quality Materials** appropriate to the location should be used. Chain link fencing is cheap, but it is not particularly durable or secure and better alternatives are available at a modest extra price. Where mesh-type fences are used, then dark green or black coloured mesh is usually much more sympathetic to its surroundings than a bright green or galvanised finish. Concrete fence posts should be avoided, solid metal, metal pylon or timber being preferable as appropriate. Walls should be constructed of a good quality brick appropriate to the locality; some types of cheaper brick are easily susceptible to water or frost damage in the exposed conditions typical of boundary walls.

24. **Areas fronting roads and car parks** often benefit from open views to and from the road. Where a building fronts onto a

road the building itself should wherever possible form part of the secure perimeter of the site rather than positioning unattractive security fencing in front of it. Low level walls, railings or raised planters are often appropriate as they define private space, allow for good visibility and give no shelter to the potential criminal. If secure fencing is essential on the frontage then it should be of a high standard of design, for example steel railings or other quality products appropriate to the character of the area.

25. **Service and storage areas** to commercial properties often need to be accessible during the day and well protected at night. They may be the 'soft' target for criminals but can also look unsightly and generate activity and noise. As such they should not be directly open to the road or other public areas and should be protected by high level walls and solid gates. In prominent locations tree planting can be used to supplement the screening provided by a wall or fence. For security reasons, the trees should be inside or set away from the wall to prevent them being used to climb over. Care should be taken to protect walls or fences around service yards from damage by vehicles.

Effects on Trees

26. Building or erecting fencing may require the removal of trees or cause their deterioration through root damage. In particular the foundations needed for walls or fencing posts can cause serious damage to tree roots. This may kill or seriously harm the health of the tree. This can occur even if the tree is several metres away from the proposed wall. If there is a tree in the near vicinity contact the Trees and Landscaping Officers in the Planning Group. They will advise if it is protected in any way. They can advise you if a tree

should be retained and will also be able to suggest suitable species for replanting if appropriate.

You should try not to disturb the ground near to a tree or large shrub which is to be retained. Impervious surfaces should be avoided near to tree roots, and any new walls should include lintels to bridge over roots.

DO YOU NEED PLANNING PERMISSION FROM THE COUNCIL ?

If you live in a house or a flat planning permission is needed to erect or increase the height of a boundary wall, fence, gate or any other means of enclosure if the answer to any of the following questions is YES.

- Would it be 1m or over in height at any point along its length where it fronts on to a highway used by vehicles?
- Would it be over 2m in any other location?
- Would the view of those using the highway be obstructed?

Planning permission is not required to plant a hedge, tree or other plant. If in doubt check with the Council.

If the building is listed as a building of architectural or historic interest, planning permission will always be required to:

- increase the height of an existing wall, fence, gate or other means of enclosure,
- or build a new one regardless of its height.

Listed Building Consent

is required for:

- any works that would materially affect the special architectural or historic interest of a building that is listed.

Walls, fences, gates or other means of enclosure are usually important elements of a listed building. It is usually inappropriate to remove them. Alterations should be very carefully considered. The Council has a list of buildings of local architectural or historic interest. There are no special controls for these buildings but the Council aims that development proposals affecting buildings on the "Local List" comply with advice in this leaflet.

If the Building is in a Conservation Area.

The Council has additional planning controls in many of its conservation areas. ***Conservation area consent*** is needed to remove most unlisted walls and fencing, while planning permission is normally required to alter or erect fencing. Planning permission and conservation area consent will normally be refused for proposals which would damage the character or appearance of a conservation area.

Do I need any other Consent?

If your proposal would affect a ***tree (including the roots) protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO)*** then you need consent from the Council. This includes building or erecting a boundary which would involve removal of a tree or damage to its roots. If the tree is not included in a TPO but is sited within a ***conservation area*** then six weeks notice in writing must be given to the Council before beginning work. Please note that these additional consents are not required if the works to the tree are necessary to

build a boundary for which a valid planning permission exists.

Lessees and tenants whose property is under the management of a landlord should seek advice from that landlord before incurring any expense.

If you live In Hampstead Garden Suburb.

Any external change to a property, including the reinstatement of original work, is likely to require the consent of the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust Ltd. This includes alteration to an existing wall, fence, gate or other means of enclosure including *hedges*, and trees or a new boundary. You should always check with the Trust Architect at the earliest possible stage.

The Council and the Trust have produced a design guidance leaflet for the Suburb. This is available from the Council.

POWERS TO ENFORCE THE ADVICE IN THIS LEAFLET

If unauthorised works are carried out the Council has the power to ensure that the breach of planning legislation is remedied. This could require reinstating fencing to its former appearance. This is likely to be a very expensive for the owner. In the case of a listed building the person who executed, or caused the works to be executed is liable to prosecution in addition to enforcement proceedings outlined above.

This document supplements and expands upon the policies within the adopted Unitary Development Plan. The advice it contains is consistent with those policies and therefore has the status of supplementary planning guidance.

The document has benefited from Council resolution and a consultation exercise. This has enhanced its status, and due weight will be accorded to it as a material consideration in the determination of development proposals.

Following boundary changes in April 1993 and April 1994, several small areas formerly within Hertsmere district and the London Boroughs of Camden, Enfield and Haringey are now included within Barnet. Pending the statutory review of the UDP, the policy context in these areas remains the statutory development plan of the former local planning authority.

নতুন বিল্ডিং এর কাজের জন্য রং ও দ্রব্যাদি ব্যবহার ও বাছাই সম্পর্কে এই ডকুমেন্টে উপদেশ দেয়া আছে। কাউন্সিল হতে কখন পরিকল্পনার অনুমতি বা অন্যান্য সম্মতি নিতে হবে এতে সে সম্পর্কেও উপদেশ দেয়া আছে। যদি আপনি নিজের ভাষায় আরো কিছু জানতে চান তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে (020) 8359 6114 নম্বরে টেলিফোন করুন। তারিখ

這份文件說明對於新建樓宇有關材料及顏色的選擇和使用。它還說明在何種情況可能需要向市政府申請規劃許可證或其他的同意。如果你需要以你的語言供給更多的信息，請打電話號碼 (020) 8359 6114。

To éγγραφο αυτό παρέχει συμβουλές για την κατάλληλη χρήση υλικών και χρωμάτων για νέα οικοδομικά έργα. Επίσης σας δίνει πληροφορίες για το πότε χρειάζεται άδεια σχεδιασμού ή άλλη έγκριση από το Δημαρχείο. Εάν χρειάζεστε περισσότερες πληροφορίες στη γλώσσα σας, παρακαλώ τηλεφωνήστε στο (020) 8359 6114

নবাঁ পঁখডাম (বিভিডং পক্ষ) মাঠে জড়ই হংগ অনে খীজ পস্তু ঐ.নী পসংগী কথ হিতি করবী, অে বিধে আ পত্রিকামাঁ মাঠিতি আঁপবামাঁ আঁবী ঐ. পলী, ঙাউন্সিল পাস্লেখী ক্যারে পলানীং মাঠে পরবানগী মেণবনী, অে বিধে য অেমাঁ মাঠিতি আঁপবামাঁ আঁবী ঐ. পলানী পোতানী আঁবামাঁ পধু মাঠিতি মেণবনী (020) 8359 6114 পর ফোন করবী.

Bu doküman yeni inşaatlarda kullanılacak malzeme ve renklerin seçimi ve kullanımı konusunda yardımcı bilgi vermektedir. Ayrıca, belediyeden plânlama izni veya başka bir iznin gerekebileceği durumlar hakkında yardımcı bilgi vermektedir. Kendi dilinizde daha fazla bilgi istiyorsanız lütfen, şu numaraya telefon ediniz: (020) 8359 6114.

اس دستاویز میں کسی نئی تعمیر کے لئے تعمیراتی اشیاء کے انتخاب اور اس کے رنگوں کے استعمال کے استعمال کے بارے میں مشورہ فراہم کیا گیا ہے۔ اس میں یہ بھی مشورہ دیا گیا ہے کہ کن حالات میں آپ کو کونسل سے کسی تعمیر کے لئے پلاننگ پرمیشن (منظوری) یا دوسری اجازت لینے کی ضرورت ہوگی۔ اگر آپ کو اس سلسلے میں اپنی زبان میں مزید معلومات درکار ہوں تو (020) 8359 6114 پر بروزر

ਇਸ ਲਿਖਤ ਵਿੱਚ ਮਕਾਨ ਦੀ ਨਵੀਂ ਇਮਾਰਤ ਬਣਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਮੁਨਾਸਬ ਸਮਾਨ ਦੀ ਚੋਣ ਕਰਨ ਬਾਰੇ ਅਤੇ ਇਸ ਦੇ ਰੰਗ ਬਾਰੇ ਬਾਰੇ ਸਲਾਹ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਇਹ ਵੀ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਕਿਸ ਹਾਲਤ ਵਿੱਚ ਇਸ ਦੀ ਕੌਂਸਲ ਤੋਂ ਆਗਿਆ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਸਹਿਮਤੀ ਲੈਣੀ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਹੈ। ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਅਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਹੋਰ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਤਾਂ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ (020) 8359 6114 ਨੰਬਰ ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

Waraqahani waxey ku tilmaamayaan isticmaalka qalabka iyo midabada ee shaqooyinka dhismaha cusob. Waxa kale oo ay tilmaayaan wixii kale ee qorshe ah ee ay kawonsolku u baahdaan. Haddii aad warbixin intaa ka badan u baahato oo ku qoran luqadaada af Soomaaliga, waxaad la so xidhiidhaa telefoonka (020) 8359 6114.

इस लिखित में अपने मकान की नयी बिल्डिंग बनाने के लिये उचित सामग्री का उपयोग करने व इसके रंग के बारे में सलाह दी हुई है। इस में यह भी बताया गया है कि किय स्थिति में इसकी काउंसिल से अनुमति व अन्य सहमति लेना आवश्यक है। यदि आपको इसके बारे में अपनी भाषा में और जानकारी चाहिए तो कृपया (020) 8359 6114 नम्बर पर टैलीफोन करें।

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For further information, please contact:
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Approved by the Town Planning and Research
Committee 29.9.94

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