



Perimeter Fencing

White Paper 1

Planning A Fencing Project

Planning a fencing project - hints and tips for achieving success

Jeremy Procter, Managing Director of Procter Fencing Systems, offers guidance for planning fencing projects. The advice will be of assistance to people new to planning fencing projects and those who are experienced but who want to ensure they minimise costs.

Planning a fencing project - hints and tips for achieving success

Specifying fencing may sound easy but there is more to this task than many people realise. Furthermore, there is plenty of scope to get things wrong and end up with fencing that does not meet the requirements fully or costs more than it should. As with any project, the secret to success lies in careful planning.

Broadly speaking there are three main reasons for erecting fencing: security, aesthetics and boundary demarcation. In reality, it is often a combination of two of these reasons so that, for example, the fencing provides the necessary level of security but with the right aesthetics for the site in question.

Security assessment

If security is the primary reason for the fencing then the first step in the planning process is to establish what level of security is required. Ideally a full risk assessment should be undertaken, but first consider which of these is the main aim:

- Prevent trespass - this requires relatively low levels of security. Types of fencing that would be suitable include mesh panel (weldmesh), timber closeboard and palisade up to 2m high.
- Prevent theft from the site - depending on the value of what might be stolen from the site, this typically requires a higher level of security. Suitable fencing would include mesh panel fencing higher than 2m, possibly with the mesh being to a higher specification (such as 358), railings, or palisade enhanced by the addition of, for example, lightweight mesh cladding or pales buried in a concrete cill.
- Prevent vandalism - this is often a problem on larger sites and at locations such as alongside railways. For these applications typical fencing types would include palisade fencing, secure mesh (eg 358) or railings, all of which need to be 2.4m high or taller. Extensions can be added to carry barbed wire, razor wire or rotating spikes.
- Deter terrorism - this is the most serious threat, requiring very high levels of perimeter security, of which fencing is likely to be only one element. Typical fencing would be over 3m high and might be secure welded mesh or enhanced palisade with additional anti-climb features. Complementary measures range from barbed tape (razor wire) and rotating toppings to electric pulse fencing, acoustic cable and a second fence line to create a sterile area between the two fences. The space between the fences can be filled with coils of razor wire.

Aesthetics and boundary demarcation

Aesthetics are often an important consideration when erecting fencing. In such cases bespoke fencing and gates can be manufactured to architects' drawings, fully finished, delivered to site and installed. Custom-designed fencing and gates can therefore be in almost any style or colour, with the appropriate level of security built in as unobtrusively as possible.

Where the requirement is simply for boundary demarcation, no significant level of security is required, which gives a broad choice of fencing types: chainlink, mesh panel fencing, closeboard timber or low-level railings. If aesthetics are a major consideration, then bespoke fencing and gates can be manufactured to order.

Access

A perimeter fence will only ever be as secure as the access points, so make sure that gates and access controls are planned at the same time as the fencing. Fencing suppliers should be able to provide powered and manually operated gates in the same style and with the same level of security as the fencing, and access controls can be specified according to the security and site requirements. Typical controls include keypads, swipecards, automatic vehicle number plate recognition and remote control of powered gates having established the visitor's identity by means of an intercom and/or CCTV.

Other considerations

Before committing to a particular specification, it is important to determine whether or not planning consent is required. The detailed requirements vary from one planning authority to the next but, in general, planning consent will almost certainly be required if the fence height is 2m or more.

When planning a fencing project, especially if security is an issue, take time to 'think beyond the fence'. After all, there is little point in spending money on fencing if a tree adjacent to the fence line makes climbing easy. Other examples of 'climbing aids' to look for are parked cars, wheelie bins and architectural features abutting the fence.

In addition, today's fencing is often finished in a tough, long-lasting polyester powder coat, but make sure that maintenance is not forgotten. Periodic inspections should be carried out to check the fencing and gates for damage, as well as for any new potential weak spots such as altered parking arrangements or trees that have grown since the last inspection.

Installation

The final point to consider when planning a fencing project is who will install the fencing, gates and, if required, complementary security measures. Some installers simply hire unskilled labour as necessary, whereas others - such as Procter Fencing Systems - employ full-time, skilled and experienced installation teams that can travel anywhere in the country. Moreover, all Procter Fencing personnel have received the required CISS Health & Safety training, and Procter Fencing Systems is a CHAS registered company. Contracts are carried out in accordance with ISO 9001:2000 procedures that are independently audited.

Further information

Procter Fencing Systems has published a free guide to perimeter security, All-Round Protection, which explains the pros and cons of alternative types of perimeter security fencing and associated complementary security features. This is available free of charge on request or it can be downloaded from the company's website at www.fencing-systems.co.uk. Alternatively, contact Procter Fencing Systems for more information about perimeter fencing by telephoning 029 2088 2111 or emailing fences@procterbedwas.co.uk

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The information contained in this publication is intended as a guide only and is believed to be correct at the time of going to press. However, it is the reader's responsibility to ensure that all applicable legislation is complied with when specifying and installing perimeter fencing and complementary security measures.

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