



## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 June 2023

**by C Billings BA (Hons), DipTP, MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 6<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/U4610/D/23/3322543**

**10 Poppyfield Court, Coventry, CV4 7HW**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
  - The appeal is made by Mrs S Shergill against the decision of Coventry City Council.
  - The application Ref PL/2023/0000545/HHA, dated 16 March 2023, was refused by notice dated 9 May 2023.
  - The development proposed is resubmission of LPA ref: HH/2022/2129 retrospective driveway.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Preliminary Matters

2. The Council's decision notice refers to Existing Site Plan DWG 184-01 Rev A. It has been clarified by the Council that the correct drawing number for the existing site plan is DWG 184-02 Rev A.
3. At the time of the application a Certificate A ownership certificate was completed. However, part of the site includes highway land, therefore a Certificate B ownership certificate has since been completed and appropriate notice given to Coventry City Council (as relevant highway authority) on 15 June 2023.
4. Most of the appeal proposal driveway works have been completed and therefore I am considering this appeal part retrospectively. The elements not completed to date include the reinstatement of block paving on highway land and, the introduction of landscape planting to the side boundary and between the existing garage and house.
5. The Council's decision refers to the Coventry Local Plan 2016. As noted from the front cover it is the Coventry City Council Local Plan (Local Plan) adopted on the 6 December 2017. I have determined the appeal on the basis of the Local Plan details and policies provided.

### Main Issue

6. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

### Reasons

7. The appeal property is a large detached two-storey house set within a spacious plot at the end of a cul-de-sac. The housing estate within which the appeal property lies is characterised by large plots with frontage

driveways and landscaped and/or lawned front garden areas adjacent to the driveways. Permitted Development Rights were removed from the estate to specifically protect the quality of the estate.

8. The majority of properties within the estate have block paved driveways, although there are some limited examples of alternative surfacing materials used, notably at 19 Moreall Meadows.
9. The character of the house frontages within the immediate surrounding area in Poppyfield Court include block paved driveways of either red/brown or red block paving with retained areas of front lawn and/or landscaped areas, which contribute positively to the landscape character of this part of the estate. No other property within the immediate surrounding environs of the appeal property has a similar extensive, yellow resin driveway, with limited landscaping to the edges. This combination of extent, colour of materials and limited landscaping makes the appeal proposal incongruous and out of character with the surrounding area.
10. Some properties within the estate have had driveway works undertaken, changing the surfacing materials from the original red/brown coloured block pavements to alternative type and colour of hard surfacing, although there are only limited examples within the whole estate where this has occurred. The examples I observed however, do not appear as dominant and incongruous features within the street scene. No details have been provided in regard to the planning history of most of the properties with altered front driveway/garden areas, other than 19 Moreall Meadows and therefore, I cannot comment on all of these individually.
11. In respect of No 19 Moreall Meadows, planning permission was granted in January 2023 to extend the driveway. No plans have been provided in respect of this, although I have reviewed the Council officers' report and observed this property during my site visit. No 19 has a large extended driveway area of light sand coloured resin finish with block paved edges. Whilst this driveway is large and of a light sand-colour resin finish, there are variances between this and the appeal proposal.
12. The driveway area of No 19 does not extend to the whole of its frontage, retaining an area of soft landscaped lawn area in front of the property. It includes block pavements to the edges of the resin surfacing and there is significant hedging to parts of the frontage, which provides some screening of the driveway and hence, this driveway does not appear overly prominent or incongruous in the wider street scene.
13. The appeal property driveway is in a prominent position at the end of a cul-de-sac. Whilst the appeal proposal includes bushes between the existing garage and house and hedging to the boundary with No 12 Poppyfield Court, due to the location and extent of landscaping, this would not discernibly reduce the impact or visibility of the driveway from the street scene. The proposed planting would not therefore sufficiently soften or screen the extensive, yellow-coloured driveway and reduce the harm caused to the character and appearance of the area.
14. Therefore, the examples of different driveway designs and use of similar materials in the wider estate, are not directly comparable to the appeal

proposal and its context. Furthermore, I have determined this appeal on its own merits based on the evidence before me and my observations.

15. The Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) on Extending Your Home, adopted April 2003, provides best practice guidance to householders in terms of extensions to residential dwellings. It does not refer specifically to driveway extensions or resurfacing. It includes a section on general good design, setting out that materials, colours, textures, and local distinctiveness should all be considered within the context of the local area in order to ensure a high-quality urban environment. This is consistent with the objectives of policy DE1 of the Local Plan in terms of protecting local distinctiveness.
16. For the reasons given above, the development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area, contrary to Local Plan policy DE1, which requires that all development proposals respect and enhance their surroundings and positively contribute towards the local identity and character of an area. It is not therefore a sustainable form of development and is also contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework, which requires development to be sympathetic to local character.

### **Other Matters**

17. The high standard of the surfacing works undertaken to date, that the appeal property is not within a Conservation Area, nor that the proposals would not impact on a listed building or local flooding, are not matters that overcome the harm identified above.
18. There is no substantive evidence to show that the reinstatement of the block paving on the highway land would not need to be undertaken regardless of this appeal decision. In any case, the reintroduction of block paving on the highway land would not reduce the harm identified to the character and appearance of the area, as the driveway extent and finish, with limited landscaping would remain overly prominent and incongruous in the street scene.

### **Conclusion**

19. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

*C Billings*

INSPECTOR