



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 July 2025

by **Victor Callister BA(Hons) PGC(Oxon) DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 August 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/W1525/D/25/3366433

Greenfields, East Hanningfield Road, Rettendon, Chelmsford, Essex CM3 8EW

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr & Mrs Anthony Eden against the decision of Chelmsford City Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/00335/FUL.
 - The development proposed is for alterations to existing driveway including creation of a new access and installation of gate.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for alterations to existing driveway including creation of a new access and installation of gate at Greenfields, East Hanningfield Road, Rettendon, Chelmsford, Essex CM3 8EW in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 25/00335/FUL, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 3900-02a, 3900-03a.
 - 3) The soft landscape works as shown on the approved drawings shall be carried out in the first available planting season following commencement of the development hereby approved.
 - 4) Prior to their installation details of any means of external lighting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The lighting shall then be installed in accordance with the approved details.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect on the character and appearance of the local area.

Reasons

3. The proposal is for a driveway access to a recently developed detached leisure accommodation within the curtilage of a large, detached house in the countryside. The boundary of this property with the highway is an approximately one metre tall

timber fence backed by shrubbery/hedging. This appears to be recent and replaces a previous boundary hedge.

4. The proposed driveway with crossover and access gates would replace an existing loosely gravelled access to the recently developed leisure accommodation. The existing driveway appears to be without a planning approval. The appeal proposal follows on from and seeks to resolve the reasons for refusal, on design grounds, for previous applications for a driveway and crossover. In this case, the proposal would utilise a bound permeable gravel material for the crossover and approximately the first 6 metres of the driveway, to the road side of the proposed timber country style access gates. On the other side of the proposed gates the rest of the driveway would utilise a structural planting system that would allow grass to grow through and water to drain away permeably. The area of this system would widen towards the front of the leisure accommodation, across its full width.
5. The driveway opening would be significantly narrower than that currently in place and would be defined by a continuation of the existing boundary fence and hedging. With the proposed country style gates, the proposed entry would have the appearance of a well maintained field entrance. In combination with the grass growing through the proposed structural planting system, the overall effect would be of an open field and would reflect the appearance of the undeveloped residential grassland that surrounds the main house and the wider countryside setting. This would be further softened by the proposed native shrub planting.
6. For these reasons, I do not find that that the proposal would create an unacceptable break in a hedgerow that is in actually no longer in place, or that the proposal would have a suburban appearance. As such I also do not find that the proposed landscaping would fail to make an unacceptable development acceptable. Rather, I find that the proposal as a whole, by reflecting the rural and grassland character of its setting, would result in no significant harm to the character and appearance of the local area of countryside.
7. For these reasons, I find that the proposal would accord with policies S1, S11 and DM10 of the Chelmsford Local Plan (2020) and Paragraph 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024). These collectively seek to ensure that developments recognise and do not have an adverse impact on the identified intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, respecting the character and appearance of landscapes.

Conditions

8. Along with the standard condition for the timing of implementation, in the interest of design quality I have attached a condition requiring compliance with approved drawings. I have had regard to the suggested conditions provided by the Council should I allow the appeal. I have not included the conditions related to the materials used for the driveway, as these are clearly shown on the approved drawings as being bound and/or permeable and are therefore unnecessary.
9. I have not included the full landscaping condition proposed by the council, as the landscaping proposed is shown on the drawings and the submission of details and management plans is not therefore commensurate with the scale of the proposal and would therefore be unnecessary. To ensure that the required planting is

implemented and its screening and visually softening effect is available at the earliest opportunity, I have attached a condition requiring it to be implemented in the first planting season. To protect against light pollution in the countryside, I have attached the condition suggested by the Council requiring submission and approval of details by the LPA of any external lighting.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given the appeal is allowed

Victor Callister

INSPECTOR