

Application No: 20/00660/P

**12 Station Row, Macmerry,
Tranent, EH33 1PD**

Applicant's Supporting Documentation

Mono Blocking Appeal

(part 1)

To whom it may concern,

There are two areas of concern for this appeal. Situated at the front of the cottage at 12 Station Row, Macmerry.

First area is the 3 metre of footpath, which we own, covering the width of 12 Station Row.

Second area is the 2.5 metre wide area that formed part of the long grassed verge also covering the width of 12 Station Row.



Before dealing with the specific areas we would like to let you know the reason we started this project in the first place.

The storm drain cover, outside 12 Station Row, had sunk into the footpath. I went to John Muir House in 2019 and met a representative of roads and paths department. He very clearly told me, as we own the path, it was my problem to repair, make safe, and nothing to do with the council. When talking to him I intimated the idea of changing the cover to mono blocks, he answered that it was up to us.



Mono Blocking Appeal (part 2) Area 1 - 3 metre wide footpath

Thus in 2020 when we started we decided to use mono blocks. As we were using the most of our savings to cover the repairs, mono blocks would allow for a more cost effect way of covering any potential repairs in any future time. Since we own the 3 metre footpath land and after the conversation at the council buildings in 2019, we fully believed we had the ability to change the covering material, without the need to seek further permissions.



As we have received nothing but praise for both the look of the mono blocking as bookending the row of cottages and the quality of the work carried out, by both members of the public and some members of the council and community council we hope you can look at overturning the refusal of permission for this area.



Mono Blocking Appeal (part 3) Area 2 - 2.5 metre verge area

After my meeting at the council buildings 2019 where I was told that we were responsible for maintaining the footpath, I asked about responsibility for the grassed area and was told it was cut as a courtesy. This statement led to the mistaken assumption that we also owned that area as well, therefore we planned the same type of covering. We came to this decision since we are the only house with a lamppost directly outside our front door and less than 4 metres away. This lamppost was constantly being used as a dog's toilet with very few owners lifting their dogs messages. This was leading to very high numbers of flies in our house over the summer months. Since laying the mono blocking we have seen almost no flies in our house.



When we started the project a representative of the roads department, Mr Neil Murray, arrived within half an hour and asked what we were doing. I explained we were going to mono block the two areas. He did say he was concerned about the area of the verge. At this time we had only lifted the turf and I offered to reinstate but he said no and we should carry on and finish it when he would see how it looked. I can get you statements from the 3 workmen present at both times if you desire them.

We now understand that we should not have mono blocked this area without planning permission as we don't own it, thus the application for retrospective permission.

We at no time ever entertained the idea of using as parking as it is directly opposite a traffic island and marked cycleway.



We already have ample parking at the rear of our property, for 3 vehicles, in the form of hard standing and a garage.
Several times the planning officer has tried to add parking as a reason for change of use, as if it was our request, but we managed to have all these removed, or so we thought.



Now we see he is using the same argument in part for refusal as someone, at sometime in the future may look for permission for parking. Should this not be an independent decision at such future time, if indeed, it is ever asked?

All we were trying to do with this area was to create a neat and permanently tidy area at front of our cottage. We have not done anything but change the ground covering and in no way cause any obstruction to any maintenance the council roads might need. We also discovered a quarter of a metre more path that had become overgrown by unmaintained grass edging as can be seen along the row.



Mono Blocking Appeal (part 4a) Addressing the 2 specific reasons for removal

When we thought of mono blocking the grass verge area all we were thinking of was making it smarter than the hacked grass of the verge and stopping the dogs fouling around the area of the lamppost and the associated health issues within our house caused by the proximity of the lamppost to the front door.



While we agree this has interrupted the linear flow of the grass verge. We feel it has only added to the betterment and symmetry of the row, since artificial grass, slabs and cobbles have already been laid at the other end of the row.



As to the second point that of the resurfacing of the footpath giving a strong association with the cottage. I would refer you to the 2 cottages at the other end of the row. One cottage who has already changed the hard footpath surface to rough cobbles with an open drain along the centre making walking difficult. This gives a strong association of the footpath to that cottage as does the artificial grass and slabs on the verge of the cottage next door.

There were no objections raised at that time or indeed now though brought to the planning officers attention, even though one of these alterations is less than 3 years old.



We would repeat that those areas along with our mono blocking give these cottages a sense of pride in their appearances and an added sense of symmetry to the row as a whole.

We have received nothing but compliments about the completed mono blocked areas by members of the public, some community and county councillors.

There was even one comment, from a councillor, to the effect of how much better and tidier the row would look if this were applied along the length.

We would ask you to please reverse the planning permission for all or at least the footpath area.

**Mono Blocking Appeal
(part 4b)
Addressing the 2 specific reasons for removal**

The planning officer further made a point of saying the twin areas of mono blocking detracted from the character of the village, I presume he can only mean that scalped grass, untrimmed grass edges and multiple sections of differing tar are more characterful than neatly trimmed mono blocks?



The planning officer further states that he feels it is overly domestic in character, this has not stopped an increasing number of pedestrians using it as a crossing point in conjunction with the traffic island.

If still required, we understand that we will have to replace the grass covering, although we feel that this is unfair if wholly at our expense, as Mr Neil Murray from the Roads Department told us to finish it, when we could have put the original turf back for almost nothing.

We will repeat we have received nothing but praise for both the look of the mono blocking and the quality of the work carried out, by both public and some members of the council and community

We hope you can look at overturning the refusal of permission for these areas.

Thank you for your time and consideration with this appeal.

Neil and Rosemary Arnott

Mono Blocking Appeal
(part 5)

Some of our neighbours have asked if we would include their letters of support and they are included below.

[REDACTED]
Macnerry
EH33 1PD
6/1/2021

To whom it may concern,

I write to you in regards to the recent
land alteration at 12 Station Row, Macnerry.
As a neighbour [REDACTED] who uses the
path frequently, I, and my partner, have
no objections or concerns regarding the
change in surface.

If anything, the path has created a
smoother surface for the public to use.
I hope you'll consider my notes.

Yours sincerely
[REDACTED]



Mono block paving at 12 Station row, Macmerry, East Lothian

1 message

Sat, 2 Jan 2021 at 18:52

[REDACTED]

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in regards to the Mono paving outside 12 Station Row, Macmerry, East Lothian.

We are the occupants of [REDACTED] Macmerry, East Lothian. We would like to make you aware that we have no issues with the change of paving outside the above address. It cannot be seen from our windows and everyone along the row uses their back doors as the main entrance to their properties and cannot see how this is impacting on anyone.

I do not believe it to be an eye sore and have no problem with it remaining in situ.

Regards

[REDACTED]