

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (as amended)

**Appeal on behalf of Maurice Doe
[CCW Services Ltd]**

Against the decision of Eastleigh Borough Council to refuse a Certificate of Lawful Existing
Use or Development

at

Broadway Farm,
Broad Oak,
Botley
SO30 2EU

LPA Reference: LDC/23/95111

Appeal Ref: APP/W1715/X/23/3331326

Proof of Evidence

Antony Heathfield

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1 Personal details

- 1.1 I am Antony Heathfield, Director of G&M Technical Services, St Francis, 66 St Johns Road, Hedge End, Southampton SO30 4AG.¹
- 1.2 G&M Technical Services was founded in 1988, a company specialising in surfacing and ground works as well as block paving and tarmac.
- 1.3 When I was approximately 14 years old, I started to help my Father out in the business one day a week as work experience. My Father was building his own houses as part of his property portfolio and I would assist him with housebuilding. I also completed a CITB exam to get into Eastleigh College to do a JIB electrical qualification.
- 1.4 I started work with G&M Technical Services in 1990 as an electrician's apprentice finally qualifying in 1995. During the early years I spent most of my time refurbishing industrial units by digging trenches and laying cables to increase power to the buildings.
- 1.5 In 1996/97 I started to specialise in groundworks as G&M started to diversify its business. I would dig trenches, lay electric cables and then backfill with concrete and tarmacadam. All this time I remained working with my Father, Graham Heathfield.
- 1.6 I have carried out groundworks for 34 years. The work I have been involved in has included small projects through to larger projects for Taylor Wimpey, Heathrow Airport, several Grade II listed properties, and the Boathouse on the seafront to name a few. I am currently involved in a major project involving a railway bridge.

¹ CD – A5

2 Works in 2006

- 2.1 In 2006, Maurice Doe contacted me from CCW Services to instruct G&M Technical Services to undertake some engineering works on an area of land at Broadway Farm, Broad Oak, Botley, Hampshire as illustrated by the red line on Plan 1².
- 2.2 I was informed by Maurice that the purpose of the job was to create a stable parking area for heavy vehicles and trailers because otherwise they were sinking into the mud when the ground was wet. I remember he told me he was fed up using tractors to pull the trucks and trailers out of the muddy field. Plan 2 shows the land in question³.
- 2.3 After we discussed the job, I advised Maurice that the best way of creating a hard surface was to dig out an area by about 50cm deep, lay a Terram membrane and cover it with a type one crushed concrete before laying the cellular reinforced concrete grasscrete on the top. Maurice wanted the works done quicker and cheaper. The only way we could do this was to reduce the depth as can be seen from the bore holes which I describe below.
- 2.4 I undertook the works myself with help from about 8 lads from my Company. The job took about 10 days altogether. To be clear, this is the time it took for us to carry out the main works after having dug out and prepared the sub-base.
- 2.5 We dug out several tonnes of soil and laid most of it on the other fields although we did take some away but I cannot remember exactly how much or where we took it. I do recall we imported most of the crushed concrete from a recycling store at BurrIDGE. It

² CD – A3 – Location and Block Plan

³ CD – A4 - Plan of the Parking Apron

took approximately 7 days to do this preparation work before carrying out the main works.

2.6 I also remember that Maurice was quite clear where and how much land was to be covered by the grasscrete. He wanted the area to be large enough to store trailers and trucks and have enough room to turn artic lorries with trailers because he was using the trailers for open storage at the time. We marked the land out together. The main works were then carried out by scraping the soil down to depth, laying a Terram membrane, laying a layer of type one crushed concrete, and rolling it into a level. We laid the cellular blocks and that was the end of our contract. I understood that Maurice was going to be organising for someone else to spread topsoil and seed in on top.

2.7 Unfortunately, after 17 years we do not have any paper records for the job because we do not keep old invoices or payments for more than seven years and all our contracts with Maurice are verbal. He tells us what he wants, we offer some advice and he instructs us to do the work. However, I am confident I carried out the works as described.

3 Further Works

3.1 In 2020, Maurice contacted me again because the 14-year old grasscrete required repair and some maintenance given the heavy loads had damaged the grasscrete in places. We discussed the options and I suggested topping the grasscrete with Tarmacadam which would form a much-improved robust surface to carry the heavy weight of the vehicles and trailers.

3.2 The Tarmacadam surface solution also ensured the site would be cleaner and vehicles would not leave the site with muddy tyres onto the public highway.

3.3 In my professional opinion, whilst the function of the grasscrete and the Tarmacadam surfaces was very much the same, the Tarmac solution would provide a cleaner, more supportive, longer lasting surface for parked vehicles and trailers.

3.4 Maurice instructed me to undertake the work in the Autumn of 2020, so I personally covered the grasscrete with tarmac together with about 6-8 lads in my company. This involved taking the turf and what soil we could get off of the grasscrete, regulating the surface with crushed concrete and type 1 stone to level the surface by tracking it in with a 13-tonne steel tracked machine and twin drum vibrating roller, preparing it for tarmac and laying it. The preparation work took approximately 1 week to lay and tarmacking 1 day. The previously laid Terram membrane and concrete remained as did the cellular blocks apart from any which came up with the machine during the preparation process.

4 Bore Holes

4.1 In the absence of any paperwork, I was invited by Maurice at CCW Services Ltd to prove the work was undertaken for which reason I personally created 4 x trial holes in each of the four corners of the site where the engineering operation had taken place. See Plan 2⁴ and letter⁵.

4.2 On Friday the 24th February 2023, 4 test holes were dug, taken from each corner of the car parking apron site as illustrated on **Plan 2**⁶ attached.

⁴ CD – A4

⁵ CD – A6 – G&M Technical Services letter dated 28th February 2023

⁶ CD – A4

4.3 Photograph 1⁷ clearly shows the Tarmacadam on the surface with Photograph 2⁸ illustrating the 35cm and 40cm depth of hole with the concrete grasscrete just below the tarmacadam. Beneath the grasscrete is a layer measuring some 25cm of hard core and rubble which formed the basis for the grasscrete set down in 2006. The Terram membrane is also visible at the bottom of the trial hole. Photographs 3 and 4⁹ show similar records of the below ground material.

4.4 I confirm I took the photographs.

4.5 I have since seen the Council's photographs¹⁰ of the trial holes taken on the 22nd January 2024. They are the same trial holes albeit partially filled with water. It is noted the Council suggest in their Statement of Case that my photographs are of limited value. The Council also states there is no evidence of grasscrete but in response, as I have previously explained, some incidental damage was caused to the grasscrete I laid in 2006 during the preparation of the surface for the tarmacadam.

5 Use of the Site

5.1 I have been visiting the site at various times since 2006 and I have undertaken other groundworks around the site including the majority of the tarmacadam work.

5.2 During those years since 2006 I have seen parked vehicles and trailers on the land located in the northeast corner of the site but I have not kept records of each occasion. Over the last 17 years all I can say is that I have witnessed the parking of lorries, vans and trailers on the site in question through that time.

⁷ CD – A7 - photograph of Trial Hole 1

⁸ CD – A8 and A9 – photographs of trial Hole 2

⁹ CD – A10 and A11 – photographs of Trial Holes 4 and 3

¹⁰ CD – H1 to H4

6 Summary

- 6.1 In conclusion, I personally carried out the engineering works in 2006 by the laying of the grasscrete. I repaired the surface in 2020 by laying tarmacadam on the top of the grasscrete and in February 2023 I dug the 4 trial holes and took the photographs which clearly show all the original works carried out in 2006 remain to this day.

Signed

Anthony Heathfield