# Mr Singh's driveway house dispute exposes clash between planning rules and community priorities



In a convoluted saga that showcases the tension between municipal regulations and individual aspirations, Mr M Singh's initiative to transform his driveway into a two-storey residence instead of a mere garage has ignited a protracted dispute with Birmingham City Council. Initially granted permission in 2009 for a single-storey garage, the family's audacious alteration has not only captured public attention but has also raised questions about planning authority enforcement.

The local council's dismay was palpable when they discovered that what was meant to be a modest garage had morphed into a fully-fledged house, complete with a dormer window. Originally intended as a simple structure, it stood as an illustration of how planning permissions can be circumvented, leading to community discontent and regulatory pushback. Although the Singh family mounted an unsuccessful appeal against the council's demolition order, the saga continued to unfold over several years. By late 2022, a compromise had seemingly emerged between the council and Mr Singh, with alterations that softened the appearance of the building, reintroducing garage-like features while retaining the entrance.

This case reflects broader concerns around planning regulations, particularly in areas like Highgate, where many residents feel the pressure of urban blight. Local sentiments varied, with some community members expressing sympathy for the Singh family, citing the considerable effort that had gone into the construction. One resident commented on the extensive hours the family dedicated to building the home, validating their right to utilise their property in a manner they saw fit. A nearby student remarked, “It wasn’t affecting anyone or blocking anyone’s view of anything,” underscoring the discontent with council actions.

Despite the modifications made to comply with regulations—such as substituting the large dormer window for a more traditional garage door—community members have expressed frustration regarding the priorities of local authorities. Some locals noted that pressing issues such as littering and drug use are rampant in the area, yet council resources are directed towards enforcing planning decisions around the Singh family's home. Concerns were voiced that the council could be focusing on more pressing community needs rather than on a modified structure that posed no harm.

Several residents highlighted how the building had been repurposed for practical uses, including storage, without compromising the aesthetics or functionality of the neighbourhood. The couple's initial vision, however, seemed lost as they faced mounting pressure to conform. A local teacher noted, “This is a very deprived area,” and called attention to the tangible problems faced by children in the vicinity, reinforcing the argument that a small building should not warrant the level of scrutiny it received.

Community opinions diverged, with some viewing the Singh family’s construction as an entrepreneurial effort, while others found fault in their apparent disregard for planning regulations. As one local business owner expressed, “You can’t say you want a garage and build a house, even if it does make no difference. The rules are the rules.” This sentiment encapsulates the longstanding struggle faced by homeowners against strict municipal codes and the nuances that must be navigated in urban development.

Ultimately, the Singh family's story reflects not just a singular conflict over property rights, but the larger dialogue surrounding urban development and community standards. The reimagining of their garage has become a touchstone for discussions about the practical implications of planning permissions, raising fundamental questions about homeownership and individual agency within the constraints imposed by authority.

As the Singh family moves forward, the community watches, embodying the balance between adherence to regulations and the evolving nature of neighbourhood dynamics.

### Reference Map

* Paragraph 1: [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14719169/The-man-built-two-storey-HOUSE-driveway-family-waged-war-council-illegal-home-three-years-later-won.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/homeowner-who-built-house-drive-29107023), [[4]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1689323/birmingham-news-homeowners-refuse-to-pull-down-house-highgate)
* Paragraph 2: [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14719169/The-man-built-two-storey-HOUSE-driveway-family-waged-war-council-illegal-home-three-years-later-won.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[3]](https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/midlands-news/it-needs-bulldozing-angry-reaction-25385393), [[4]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1689323/birmingham-news-homeowners-refuse-to-pull-down-house-highgate)
* Paragraph 3: [[2]](https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/homeowner-who-built-house-drive-29107023), [[4]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1689323/birmingham-news-homeowners-refuse-to-pull-down-house-highgate)
* Paragraph 4: [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14719169/The-man-built-two-storey-HOUSE-driveway-family-waged-war-council-illegal-home-three-years-later-won.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/homeowner-who-built-house-drive-29107023), [[3]](https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/midlands-news/it-needs-bulldozing-angry-reaction-25385393)
* Paragraph 5: [[4]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1689323/birmingham-news-homeowners-refuse-to-pull-down-house-highgate), [[6]](https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/black-country/homeowner-finally-tearing-down-monster-28234298)
* Paragraph 6: [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14719169/The-man-built-two-storey-HOUSE-driveway-family-waged-war-council-illegal-home-three-years-later-won.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[3]](https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/midlands-news/it-needs-bulldozing-angry-reaction-25385393), [[4]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1689323/birmingham-news-homeowners-refuse-to-pull-down-house-highgate)
* Paragraph 7: [[2]](https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/homeowner-who-built-house-drive-29107023), [[4]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1689323/birmingham-news-homeowners-refuse-to-pull-down-house-highgate)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14719169/The-man-built-two-storey-HOUSE-driveway-family-waged-war-council-illegal-home-three-years-later-won.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/homeowner-who-built-house-drive-29107023> - A homeowner in Birmingham, Mr. M Singh, was granted permission in 2019 to build a single-storey garage on his driveway. However, he constructed a two-storey house instead. The council ordered its demolition after an unsuccessful appeal, and the structure was eventually reduced to resemble the originally approved garage. The family had previously used the building as a gym and insisted it would remain. The case highlights the importance of adhering to planning permissions and the consequences of unauthorized construction.
3. <https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/midlands-news/it-needs-bulldozing-angry-reaction-25385393> - Residents in Birmingham expressed strong disapproval after a homeowner built a two-storey house on his driveway without proper authorization. The council had approved a single-storey garage, but the larger structure led to complaints from neighbors. Despite the homeowner's appeal, the council ordered the demolition of the unauthorized building. The incident underscores the community's concerns over planning regulations and the impact of unauthorized constructions on local neighborhoods.
4. <https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1689323/birmingham-news-homeowners-refuse-to-pull-down-house-highgate> - In Highgate, Birmingham, a family constructed a two-storey house on their driveway instead of the approved single-storey garage. Despite council orders for demolition, the family used the building as a gym and resisted removal. The case drew attention to the challenges councils face in enforcing planning regulations and the tensions between homeowners and local authorities over unauthorized constructions.
5. <https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/black-country/man-ordered-demolish-monster-mansion-23654300> - Gurwinder Singh, a resident of Willenhall, built a four-bedroom house without planning permission, replacing his original semi-detached home. Neighbors described the new structure as a 'monster mansion' and complained about its size and impact on the area. Walsall Council issued an enforcement notice for demolition, highlighting the importance of adhering to planning regulations and the consequences of unauthorized building.
6. <https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/black-country/homeowner-finally-tearing-down-monster-28234298> - A homeowner in Willenhall, Birmingham, is in the process of demolishing a large house built without planning permission. The structure, described as a 'monster mansion,' faced significant opposition from neighbors who found it out of place in the area. The council's enforcement action underscores the importance of complying with planning regulations and the community's role in reporting unauthorized constructions.
7. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/house-planning-permission-walsall-council-b2055345.html> - Gurwinder Singh, a resident of Willenhall, built a four-bedroom house without planning permission, replacing his original semi-detached home. Neighbors described the new structure as a 'monster mansion' and complained about its size and impact on the area. Walsall Council issued an enforcement notice for demolition, highlighting the importance of adhering to planning regulations and the consequences of unauthorized building.