

PLANNING SUPPORTING STATEMENT

Coombewick House, London Road, Ashington, West Sussex RH20 3AU Further Temporary Permission for the Existing Mobile Home with Associated Decking/Ramped Access, and Permanent Retention of the Existing Access Track

Applicant: Timothy Walker

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Supporting Statement accompanies a full planning application at Coombewick House. The application is deliberately framed as a limited and proportionate proposal. It does not seek unrestricted permanent residential permission for the mobile home. Instead, it seeks a further temporary permission for the existing mobile home and its associated decking/ramped access, together with permanent retention of the already constructed access track.

This distinction is central to the planning case. The mobile home and decking/ramped access form one temporary accommodation arrangement. The access track is separate infrastructure which has already been implemented, assessed and accepted in principle through the planning and appeal process.

The planning history is unusual and highly material. The proposal has been affected by appeal proceedings, implementation delays, neighbour-triggered investigations, bereavement and changes in development strategy, replacement dwelling proposals, extensive technical work and prolonged Water Neutrality constraints.

The proposal should therefore be determined on its current planning merits, having regard to actual demonstrable planning harm rather than assumptions arising solely from the passage of time. The previous appeal decision remains a material consideration of substantial weight.

1. INTRODUCTION

This statement is submitted in support of an application for a further temporary three-year permission for the siting and residential occupation of the existing mobile home, including associated decking and ramped access, together with permanent retention of the existing access track serving the site.

The application responds to the Local Planning Authority's position that a fresh standalone planning application is now required following expiry and procedural disposal of earlier temporary permissions and associated applications.

The planning case rests on the established site circumstances, the previous appeal findings, the absence of unacceptable planning harm, and the proportionate nature of the proposal now before the Council.

2. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

The planning history of the site is highly material and demonstrates longstanding and continuous engagement with the planning system over a prolonged period.

Reference / Stage	Proposal	Outcome	Planning Relevance
Barn Conversion Approval	Residential conversion of agricultural barn	Approved	Established residential development strategy for the site
Temporary Mobile Home Applications	Temporary siting of mobile home and access arrangements	Progressed through planning and appeal process	Led to Inspectorate assessment of principle and impacts
APP/Z3825/W/17/3168013	Appeal relating to mobile home and access track	Allowed	Inspector accepted temporary accommodation and access arrangements
Replacement Dwelling Proposals	Revised redevelopment strategy involving extensive technical work	Pursued over several years	Demonstrated continuing development intent and substantial professional engagement
Current Application	Further temporary permission and permanent retention of access track	Pending determination	Seeks proportionate regularisation of established planning position

The planning history reflects appeal proceedings, revised proposals, technical investigations, implementation delays and evolving development strategies rather than any absence of intention to pursue lawful development at the site.

3. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The site forms part of the wider Coombewick House holding near Ashington and lies within a rural area outside the defined built-up area boundary.

The site includes the former agricultural barn, stable buildings, the existing mobile home, associated decking/ramped access, and the implemented access track.

The mobile home is visually associated with an existing cluster of modest rural buildings and is not experienced as an isolated structure within open countryside. Existing vegetation, buildings and landform assist in visually containing the development. The Planning Inspector also noted that the mobile home is not readily visible from North Road, further limiting its wider visual presence within the surrounding countryside.

Importantly, the Planning Inspector previously accepted that the mobile home “would not appear visually incongruous within the countryside setting”. The Inspector further noted that the structure sat comfortably within a cluster of relatively modest buildings associated with the wider holding.

The access track is already assimilated into the site and operates as a functional access arrangement serving the wider holding.

4. CHRONOLOGY OF DELAYS AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRESSION

The original process of securing permission for the mobile home and associated access arrangements required a full appeal process before implementation could properly proceed.

Following the appeal decision, implementation of the approved access works was materially delayed due to allegations regarding alleged business activity at the site. These allegations required investigation by the Local Planning Authority and were ultimately not substantiated.

Following the death of a family member connected with the site in 2019, the wider development strategy evolved and a replacement dwelling proposal was pursued in place of the earlier conversion approach.

This revised strategy involved substantial professional expenditure, including planning consultancy work, revised architectural proposals, ecological surveys, arboricultural reports, drainage assessments and supporting technical documentation.

Progression of the replacement dwelling proposal was then significantly delayed by Water Neutrality constraints affecting development proposals across the wider Sussex North Water Supply Zone.

The prolonged planning history therefore reflects a complex sequence of appeal proceedings, revised proposals, investigations, technical requirements and regulatory constraints rather than any absence of intention to pursue lawful development.

5. WEIGHT TO THE APPEAL DECISION

The 2017 Planning Inspectorate appeal decision is a material consideration of substantial weight.

The Inspector concluded that the mobile home “would not appear visually incongruous within the countryside setting”. The Inspector also concluded that the access arrangements would not result in unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the countryside location.

Those conclusions remain directly relevant. The current proposal does not introduce materially greater impacts than those previously assessed by the Inspector.

6. RESPONSE TO ANTICIPATED NEIGHBOUR OBJECTIONS

It is understood that objections may assert that the mobile home has remained on site for an extended period and that this demonstrates an intention to establish permanent residential occupation by default.

That proposition is not supported by the planning history.

The prolonged timescale is explained by appeal proceedings, implementation delays, investigations, bereavement, replacement dwelling proposals and prolonged Water Neutrality constraints.

The level of professional input, expenditure and sustained planning engagement is inconsistent with any allegation that there was never any genuine intention to pursue lawful development.

The current application is deliberately limited in scope. It seeks only a further temporary permission for the mobile home arrangement together with permanent retention of the separate access track.

7. DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND POLICY CONTEXT

The development plan includes the Horsham District Planning Framework 2015 (HDPF), together with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

HDPF Policy 1 supports sustainable development and requires a positive approach to decision making.

HDPF Policy 26 seeks to protect the rural character and undeveloped nature of the countryside. However, the present proposal is not a conventional application for a new unrestricted countryside dwelling. It is a limited continuation of an established arrangement already accepted in principle through the appeal process.

HDPF Policies 32 and 33 relate to design quality, character, amenity and development principles. The proposal is modest, visually contained and functionally related to the established site context.

HDPF Policy 40 supports safe and suitable access arrangements. The existing access track provides a practical and established means of access and reduces reliance on historic shared access movements.

The NPPF requires decision makers to consider proposals on their planning merits and to apply a proportionate planning balance having regard to all material considerations.

8. ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSAL

The mobile home already exists on site and does not create a new unrestricted countryside dwelling.

The access track is already constructed infrastructure which has been assessed through the appeal process, implemented and assimilated into the site.

The permanent retention of the access track is justified because it provides practical access to the site and has not caused demonstrable unacceptable planning harm.

The proposal does not involve substantial new operational development, significant engineering works, tree removal, hedgerow loss or material intensification of use.

9. TECHNICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

The access arrangements have previously been technically assessed and there is no evidence of unacceptable highway safety impacts.

The application does not involve additional land take, tree removal, hedgerow removal or ecological harm.

Importantly, the mobile home and access arrangements have now existed for a substantial period without demonstrable unacceptable impact on landscape character, highway safety, residential amenity, drainage or ecology.

10. ENFORCEMENT AND PROPORTIONALITY

The proposal seeks only a further temporary permission for the mobile home arrangement together with permanent retention of access infrastructure already accepted in principle and implemented.

The planning history, previous appeal findings, prolonged regulatory delays and absence of demonstrable unacceptable planning harm are all material considerations weighing in favour of a proportionate planning response.

The proposal therefore represents the most pragmatic and proportionate planning outcome in the specific circumstances of the site.

11. PLANNING BALANCE

The planning balance weighs in favour of approval.

The proposal regularises an established planning position, retains implemented infrastructure and avoids unnecessary further engineering disturbance.

Against this, the harms are limited. The proposal does not create a new unrestricted permanent countryside dwelling or demonstrable unacceptable planning harm.

The proposal therefore represents a reasonable, pragmatic and policy-compliant planning outcome.

12. CONCLUSION

The proposal represents a proportionate and pragmatic planning response to an unusually prolonged planning history shaped by appeal proceedings, evolving development proposals, technical constraints and external regulatory delays. The development has existed for a substantial period without demonstrable unacceptable planning harm, while the access arrangements have already been implemented and assimilated into the site. In these circumstances, the proposal provides a reasonable and appropriately controlled planning outcome.

The previous appeal decision, the established nature of the development, the absence of demonstrable unacceptable planning harm, and the extensive chronology of genuine planning engagement all support approval.

For these reasons, it is respectfully submitted that planning permission should be granted.