Horsham District Council

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:

DC/26/1544
17 Thornden, Cowfold, West Sussex, RH13 8AG

DESCRIPTION:

Siting of single storey mobile home for ancillary use to the main dwelling (Lawful Development Certificate - Proposed).

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

None relevant to this application.

SITE LOCATION & APPLICATION DESCRIPTION

The application site is located on the eastern side of Thornden. The property is a large two storey detached dwelling with an attached double garage. The application site is positioned within the defined built-up area of Cowfold. However, the site does not fall within a Conservation Area nor is the main dwelling a Listed Building.

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Operational Development

The application is accompanied with a planning statement that states the proposal would satisfy the definition of a 'caravan' as defined under the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 and Caravan Sites Act 1968 (as amended) (CSA). The proposal meets the three key tests as set out in the CSA:

- Size
- Mobility
- Construction

The submitted plans confirm that the proposal would not exceed the dimensions of a caravan as referenced at S.13(2) of the 1968 Caravan Sites Act, as amended by the 2006 Order. The physical size of the proposal would conform to the above Act requiring the dimension of the proposal not to exceed;

(a) *a length of 20 metres*; the proposal would be 9.70m in length
(b) *a width of 6.8 metres*; the proposal would be 6.8m in width
(c) *an overall height of living accommodation (measured internally from the floor at the lowest level to the ceiling at the highest level) of 3.05 metres*. The proposal would be 2.30m in height from internal floor to ceiling.

Furthermore, the proposal would satisfy the mobility test as stipulated in section 13(1)(b) of the 1968 Act, that the proposal should remain physically capable of being moved:

'(b) when assembled, (is) physically capable of being moved by road from one place to another (whether by being towed, or by being transported on a motor vehicle or trailer), shall not be treated as not being (or as not having been) a caravan within the meaning of Part I of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 by reason only that it cannot lawfully be so moved on a highway when assembled.'

The submitted planning statement explains that the proposed caravan would be placed on screw pile foundation system and rest on these foundations under its own weight but not fixed down. A 150mm ground clearance would be provided to allow lifting straps and rig to be placed under the structure for it to be lifted by crane and placed on a flatbed lorry. The electricity would be connected via a mobile home box connector which can easily be unplugged for the caravan to be lifted. Similarly, the water connection would be through a fast-connecting element accessible under the caravan which can simply be unplugged for the caravan to be lifted. Likewise, the sewage connection would be using a flexible rubber connect which would allow 100mm pipe to slide off during lifting or slide on during installation.

Additionally, the proposal would satisfy the construction test which states in section 13(1)(b) of the 1968 Caravan Sites Act, that:

'(1) A structure designed or adapted for human habitation which—
(a) is composed of not more than two sections separately constructed and designed to be assembled on a site by means of bolts, clamps or other devices;'

The accompanying planning statement confirms that the proposed caravan would consist of two sections. The structures would be delivered on site by using car lifting equipment which involves metal hollow squares placed under and above the units then lifted to be placed on top of the large ground screw plates. The structures would be joined and bolted together. To move the caravan in the future the hollow squares would be placed under the whole structure and taken away by a crane as a single unit.

The Inspectorate has previously held that it is the final joining together of sections which describes the final act of assembly for the purposes of the S.13(1) of the 1968 Act, with no requirement that a separate section(s) be constructed away from the site. Provided that the final assembly does not comprise of the joining together of more than two-sections a structure assembled on site could still benefit from the definition contained under S.13(1)(a) of the 1968 Act, assuming that such a structure remains physically capable of being moved. The Act states that:

'(b) is, when assembled, physically capable of being moved by road from one place to another (whether by being towed, or by being transported on a motor vehicle or trailer), shall not be treated as not being (or as not having been) a caravan within the meaning of Part I of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 by reason only that it cannot lawfully be so moved on a highway when assembled.'

It is therefore considered that the proposal when constructed and assembled would satisfy the definition of a caravan/mobile home. The siting of a caravan would not therefore represent a form of operational development.

Use of land

The structure would be sited far west corner of the application site within the rear garden of 17 Thornden, Cowfold. As a matter of fact and degree this land is considered integral of the main dwelling's residential curtilage.

As previously held by the Inspectorate, the stationing of a mobile home occupied as part and parcel of the primary dwellinghouse would not constitute a change of use of land requiring planning permission. As such, notwithstanding the capability of independent occupation, it is the manner of occupation which would inform the potential creation of an independent planning unit as a material change in the use of land.

The planning statement explains that the intended use of the caravan is for ancillary use to accommodate family members as an extension of the main existing dwelling. The use of the caravan would depend on a connection with the main dwelling by sharing the services such as washing, internet, phone line and television. Therefore, the occupiers of the caravan would have reliance on the main dwelling and would be used interchangeably.

On the basis of information available to the Authority, the use of the caravan to accommodate family members as an extension of the main existing dwelling would not be considered to give rise to the creation of an independent planning unit.

Conclusion

It is considered on the balance of probabilities, that the caravan will form part of the primary use of 17 Thornden, as a single planning unit, would maintain a functional link between the two and would comply with the relevant statutory definitions of a caravan/mobile home. Therefore, the proposal would neither constitute a material change of use of land within the residential curtilage that it is to be sited, or operational development as defined under Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. On this basis, it is recommended that a Lawful Development Certificate be granted in accordance with Section 192(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Recommendation: Application Permitted

Reason:

1 The siting of a mobile home, which meets the definition of a caravan under Section 29(1) of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 and Section 13(1) of the Caravan Sites Act 1968, within the incidental curtilage of 17 Thornden,Cowfold and its use to provide accommodation ancillary to the occupation of '17 Thornden' as a single planning unit, would not constitute development as defined by Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended.

Plans list for: DC/26/1544

Schedule of plans/documents:

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Location plan	Location Plan	NONE	28.09.2026
Plans	Mobile Home Overview	01	28.09.2026
Elevation plan	Elevations	02	28.09.2026
Floor plan	Mobile Home Floor Plan	03	28.09.2026
Roof plan	Mobile Home Roof Plan	04	28.09.2026
Plans	Mobile Home Division	05	28.09.2026
Site plan	Proposed Site Plan	06	28.09.2026
Plans	Size Constraints	07	28.09.2026
Supporting Statement	Verification of Application Validation by VIZARCHi dated 20/09/2026	NONE	28.09.2026
Supporting Statement	Summary of Key Tests in Caravan Sites Act Appeal Decisions Supporting Information by VIZARCHi	NONE	28.09.2026

Supporting Statement	Personal Statement by VIZARCHi dated 20.09.2026	NONE	28.09.2026
Supporting Statement	Planning Statement by VIZARCHi dated 20.09.2026		28.09.2026

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Halima Chowdhury Date: 12.11.2026

Authorising Officer sign/initial Tamara Dale Date: 20.11.2026