REBECCA LORD
PLANNING

Lawful Development Certificate Application Report

Site: 2 Red Tiles, Dunt Lane, Hurst, Reading, RG10 0TE

Client: Mrs Sandra Dean

Prepared by Mrs. Rebecca Lord MSc MRTPI

Date: 09/01/2025

Ref: RL/566/LDC 2

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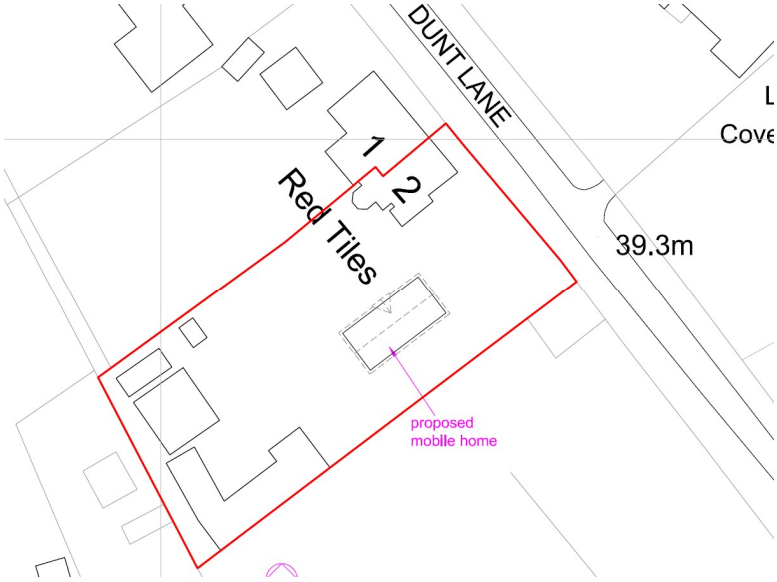
1. Introduction and Preliminary Issues

1.1 This report is submitted in support of an application for a Lawful Development Certificate (LDC) pursuant to S.191 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

1.2 This application by Sandra Dean is made to confirm that the retention of a twin unit mobile home in the garden of her family home, which has been stationed on the land to provide additional family accommodation, does not comprise either operational development or a material change of use, and as such planning permission is not required. Sandra and her husband have owned and occupied the application site for 34 years.

1.3 The property comprises a semi-detached house and gardens. The location of the mobile home in the garden is shown in the block plan extract below, although the location within the garden is immaterial in the consideration of the application.



1.4 The vehicle access and main parking area are unchanged. No separate vehicle access to the mobile home unit is either provided or proposed.

1.5 The twin unit mobile home has maximum external measurements of 13.8m by 6.8m with a maximum internal floor to ceiling height of 3.04m.

1.6 The area of the garden where the mobile home has been sited has a close physical and functional association to the dwelling house. The mobile home unit sits on adjustable base pads that are de minimis and as such planning permission is not required.

1.7 The dwelling house and its occupation by the applicant and her family is lawful. There are no know planning enforcement notices, conditions, or Article 4 Directions to prevent the siting of

a twin unit mobile home in the garden of the property for use as additional accommodation within the single residential planning unit.

1.8 No Caravan Site Licence or Building Regulations are required for the mobile home.

1.9 A LDC for the proposed siting of a mobile home for use as 'incidental' accommodation was issued in 2018. Family circumstances have changed since that time, so this application addresses the current family uses, needs and intentions.

1.10 This report also addresses the legal issues around the residential planning unit and the provision of additional primary accommodation within that planning unit rather than the provision of something that is described as 'incidental' or 'ancillary'.

1.11 A second LDC application for an existing use as additional accommodation was recently withdrawn as the LPA considered the occasional use as sleeping and living accommodation up until the date of submission did not fully amount to use as additional accommodation or an ancillary use as is their preferred description.

1.12 Whilst it is acknowledged it is the applicant's responsibility to provide the necessary evidence for an LDC to be issued, the following is noted from the Government's Guide on LDC Appeals:

2.1.1. While the LPA should always co-operate with an LDC applicant asking for information about the planning status of the land by making records readily available they need not go to great lengths to show that the subject of the application is or is not lawful.

2.1.2. However, it is best practice for the LPA to have constructive discussions with applicants and, if it has any concerns, give the applicant the opportunity to amend the application before it is decided. This should help to avoid the need to appeal, especially appeals where the LPA has failed to make a decision.

1.13 It is therefore requested that should any issues arise in the course of the LPAs assessment that this is communicated to the applicant's agent so a response can be made. This might avoid the need for a planning appeal and the attendant costs to both parties.

2. Assessment

2.1 The judgment in Gabbitas v SSE & Newham LBC [1985] JPL 630 makes it clear that if the local planning authority has no evidence of its own, or from others, to contradict or otherwise make the Appellant's version of events less than probable, there is no good reason not to grant a LDC, provided the Appellant's evidence is sufficiently precise and unambiguous.

2.2 This is also stated in the relevant Planning Practice Guidance, extract below:

> **Who is responsible for providing sufficient information to support an application?**
>
> The applicant is responsible for providing sufficient information to support an application, although a local planning authority always needs to co-operate with an applicant who is seeking information that the authority may hold about the planning status of the land. A local planning authority is entitled to canvass evidence if it so wishes before determining an application. If a local planning authority obtains evidence, this needs to be shared with the applicant who needs to have the opportunity to comment on it and possibly produce counter-evidence.
>
> In the case of applications for existing use, if a local planning authority has no evidence itself, nor any from others, to contradict or otherwise make the applicant's version of events less than probable, there is no good reason to refuse the application, provided the applicant's evidence alone is sufficiently precise and unambiguous to justify the grant of a certificate on the balance of probability.
>
> In the case of applications for proposed development, an applicant needs to describe the proposal with sufficient clarity and precision to enable a local planning authority to understand exactly what is involved.
>
> Paragraph: 006 Reference ID: 17c-006-20140306
>
> Revision date: 06 03 2014

2.3 In making the assessment of the proposal in this case the following matters need to be addressed:

- Does the proposal comprise operational development?
- Is the mobile home unit a caravan within the legal definition?
- Is the use consistent with the lawful use of the land or does it give rise to a material change of use?

Operational Development

2.4 Section 55 1A) of the Act defines development as including 'operations normally undertaken by a person carrying on a business as a builder.

2.5 The twin unit mobile unit has not been constructed by a builder. It was provided by a manufacturer who made the two parts from premanufactured parts on site with the final act of assembly being the joining of those parts with bolts. There are no foundations, and the twin unit mobile home is not physically attached to the land.

2.6 Details of how the twin unit mobile home is connected to services are provided in the manufacturer's information pack produced at **Appendix 1** of this report. The Courts have long held that such connections to utilities do not amount to attachment as detachment from the services is a simple matter which can be achieved within minutes.

2.7 In the case of Measor v SSETR [1999] JPL 182 the Deputy Judge said that whilst he would be wary of holding, as a matter of law, that a 'structure' which satisfies the definition of, for example, a caravan under section 13 could never be a 'building' for the purpose of the 1990 Act as amended, he also found that a caravan would not generally satisfy the well-established definition of a building, having regard to factors of permanence and attachment. Indeed, it would be contrary to the purposes of the 1990 Act as amended to hold that because caravans were defined as 'structures' in the 1960 Act they fell within the definition of 'building' in the 1990 Act. It can therefore be concluded that compliance with the definition of a 'caravan' is a useful indicator of whether operational development would be taking place.

2.8 Regarding the issue of permanence, the unit is required to meet the need for additional accommodation for the family as explained in the following subsection on use. The length of time the mobile home unit is required cannot be specified beyond this. Nonetheless it is not intended to be a permanent addition to the land and can be readily and simply be removed once it is no longer needed.

2.9 Attention is drawn to the recent appeal decision (3277752) produced at **Appendix 2** of this report and to paragraphs 27, 28 and 29 concerning the issue of permanence, in which an Inspector noted that *'…..the proposed caravan may well remain in place for many years. But this is not unusual for a twin-unit caravan and does not necessarily mean therefore that the proposal would be permanent. There is no evidence that the proposal would result in a permanent physical alteration to the land or interfere with its physical characteristics…… Taking into account all of the above, and as a matter of fact and degree, I give greater weight to the lack of permanence and physical attachment to the ground than to the size of the proposal.'* The Inspector concluded the structure was a twin unit mobile home and not a building, costs were awarded in favour of the appellant (copy appended).

2.10 Whilst a unit of this kind cannot be moved around with the same ease as a touring caravan for instance, the same can be said for 'static' caravans and mobile homes located on residential caravan sites or Park Homes. Such units are not readily transportable without the aid of cranes with lifting beams and straps or cradles and flatbed lorries, yet these are recognised in law as caravans not amounting to buildings. The issues regarding mobility of the unit are examined in the following CSA assessment.

2.11 In addition, the appeal decision (3142534) produced in **Appendix 3** examines the relevance of the 2012 'Woolley Chickens' case concerning the interpretation of a building. The Inspector concluded that the case law, which concerned large poultry units subject to Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, was distinguishable from the consideration of a LDC application for a caravan as in that case there was no need to consider the statutory definition of a caravan (paragraph 24) which had greater weight in the determination of the appeal. It was concluded that the mobile home was a caravan and not a building. Other Inspectors have also referred to this case as having limited, if any, weight in the assessment of lawfulness of a caravan, for instance see Appendix 2 para 31 of the decision letter and para 6 of the costs decision.

Definition of a Caravan

2.12 The Law: A caravan is defined in Section 29 of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 as any structure designed or adapted for human habitation which is capable of being moved from one place to another (whether by being towed, or by being transported on a motor vehicle or trailer) and any other motor vehicle so designed or adapted, but does not include a) any railway rolling stock which is for the time being on rails forming part of a railway system, or b) any tent.

2.13 Section 13 of the Caravan Sites Act 1968 extends the definition of caravan to include twin unit caravans, which must be (in order to meet the expanded definition) composed of not more than two sections, constructed, or designed to be assembled on site by means of bolts, clamps or other devices, and should not exceed 60 feet in length, 20 feet in width and 10 feet in height overall (size later changed see below).

2.14 The size limitation of caravans as originally set out in the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 was updated through The Caravan Sites Act 1968 and Social Landlords (Permissible Additional Purposes) (England) Order 2006 (Definition of Caravan) (Amendment) (England) Order 2006. The Order introduced the following maximum dimensions:

- Length (exclusive of any drawbar): 20 metres (65.616 feet)
- Width: 6.8 metres (23.309 feet)
- Height measured internally from the floor at the lowest level to the ceiling at the highest level: 3.05 metres (10.006 feet).

2.15 Evidence: The manufacturer has provided a certificate of compliance with the legislative limitations of the Caravan Sites Act (CSA) which is produced at **Appendix 1**. This includes technical details about the manufacturing process and installation of the proposed twin unit mobile home on site.

2.16 It should be noted that this document is signed by the Operations Director of the manufacturer in the full knowledge of the penalties for providing false or misleading information in seeking a LDC, and as such in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, it should be given significant weight when applying 'the balance of probability' test in the LDC assessment.

2.17 Design: As confirmed in Appendix 1 the twin unit mobile home has been designed to have two bedrooms, a living room, kitchen and bathroom. It is therefore designed for human habitation.

2.18 Size: The dimensions of the twin unit mobile home (see para 1.5) do not exceed the CSA size limitations.

2.19 Construction: It should be noted that there is no requirement in the CSA for a caravan, whether it is a touring caravan, single unit, or twin unit mobile home to be made in any particular materials, or for it to be made in any particular location. Further it is not uncommon for mobile homes to be made in timber materials.

2.20 The method used for the manufacture and installation of the twin unit mobile home is set out in **Appendix 1**. Due to the restricted access to the property in this case the twin unit mobile home unit was pre-manufactured in a factory and then assembled in two parts on site with the joining of these two parts as the final act of assembly.

2.21 It is common practice to build or assemble caravans in hard to access back gardens. In Byrne v SSE and Arun DC QED 1997 concerning a twin unit mobile home it was found that the two parts need not be identifiable as caravans or capable of human habitation individually, only that the two parts should be separately constructed and then joined together.

2.22 The assembly of a caravan unit on site also complies with the construction tests as discussed in the extract of the appeal decision APP/N1025/C/01/1074589 (Erewash Borough Council). A full copy is produced in **Appendix 4**.

The construction test

5. The local planning authority draws my attention to the analysis of the meaning of the words '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' which was given in *Byrne v SSE and Arun DC, QBD 1997*. There is no requirement for the 2 sections to be each identifiable as caravans, or capable of habitation, before they are joined together. However, it was found that it was an 'essential part of the construction process in order to bring a structure which would not otherwise be a caravan, within the definition of that which is deemed to be a caravan, that there should be two sections separately constructed which are then designed to be assembled on a site..... If the process of construction was not by the creation of two separately constructed sections then joined together, the terms of the paragraph [section 13(1)(a) of the Caravan Sites Act 1968] are not satisfied'. They were not in that case because the log cabin concerned, composed of individual timbers clamped together as in that before me, had not at any time been composed of 2 separately constructed sections which were then joined together on the site.

6. That was not so in the case before me. Though the Park Home was delivered by lorry in many pieces I see no requirement in section 13(1)(a) that the process of creating the 2 separate sections must take place away from the site on which they are then joined together. It is necessary only that the act of joining the 2 sections together should be the final act of assembly. The appellant's evidence and photographs taken during the process of assembly demonstrate that the 2 sections, split at the base and ridge and each with a separate ridge beam, were constructed separately. The appellant was clear on this point. His evidence as to the facts of the matter was not disputed. In my opinion the process of construction fulfilled the test of section 13(1)(a).

2.23 It is important to note that in this decision it is confirmed that there is no requirement in S.13(1)(a) that the creation or manufacture of the two parts of a twin unit mobile home need take place elsewhere. This is also confirmed in the planning enforcement appeal decision produced at **Appendix 5** (3174314) in which an Inspector held that it was lawful to make the two parts of a twin unit mobile side by side on site prior to joining those two parts by bolts as the last act of assembly (see paras 10 and 11).

2.24 On this evidence it is clear that the twin unit mobile home meets the construction test.

2.25 Mobility: The twin unit mobile home need not have direct access to a road to be deemed a caravan, it must simply be capable of being moved in terms of its structural integrity.

2.26 The manufacturer confirms in **Appendix 1** that the mobile home is capable of being moved as one unit. The usual method for transportation by road is to lift the mobile home unit onto a flatbed lorry using a crane. As with most mobile homes a cradle or lifting beams and straps would be employed, as noted by the Inspector in paragraph 19 of the appeal decision at Appendix 2.

2.27 **Appendix 1** includes photographic evidence of the movement of twin unit mobile homes (made by the same manufacturer) by crane both in two parts and as one (see pages 11 and 12).

2.28 The Inspector in the appeal decision at Appendix 5 stated '*As to the mobility test, the mobile home for which the certificate was granted should once fully assembled be physically capable of being moved as a whole by road, by being towed or transported. A lack of intention to move is not relevant, nor is the absence of a suitable means of access or an adequate road network, but the mobile home should possess the necessary structural qualities to permit its movement in one piece without structural damage.*' As such the mobility test is about the completed structure and not the site on which it is located. Indeed many of the mobile home in the LDCs issued by Inspector's in the appendices to this report are in effect land locked, see Appendix 3, 8 and 11.

2.29 On the basis of the precise technical evidence presented in this application it is clear that in applying the correct test of the balance of probability the structure as provided meets the mobility test as required by the CSA. There is no known evidence to contradict this submission or to make it less than likely.

2.30 Conclusion: On the information provided it can be concluded that on the balance of probability the mobile home unit:

- Is designed for human habitation
- conforms to all the size and constructional requirements of the CSA.
- conforms with the mobility criteria of the CSA
- that is not proposed to be physically attached to the land, and
- It is not a permanent building (as noted in the preceding section)

2.31 It is therefore concluded that the provision of the proposed twin unit mobile home on the land has not resulted in operational development.

Previous, Current and Continued Use

2.32 The application site is a single dwelling house with gardens. This comprises one residential planning unit with no planning restrictions on occupation. The issue of 'curtilage' is not relevant to the assessment as this is not a land use and permitted development rights are not being considered.

2.33 The twin unit mobile home is, as required by the legal definition of a caravan, designed for human habitation in that it has bedroom, living, bathroom and kitchen facilities, but such facilities do not define the actual use of the accommodation as these nominal descriptions do not necessarily denote the actual use. For instance a room described as a bedroom could be used for storage or as a hobby room or study. Further a caravan could in law be up to 20m by 6.8 m in size (136 sqm) in size with one large open plan living / sleeping area and a bathroom, or it can be divided up into a number of smaller rooms, either way it remains as a caravan.

2.34 The main house is currently occupied by the applicant Sandra Dean [redacted] her husband [redacted] their daughter [redacted] and son in law [redacted]

2.35 The twin unit mobile home unit was originally installed on site in January 2024 to provide level access additional accommodation for the Applicant's mother in law [redacted] This was mostly utilised at weekends [redacted] Subsequently the family used the additional accommodation provided by the twin unit mobile home mainly at weekends. On the 19th December 2024 [redacted] commenced using the additional accommodation as their main bedroom for sleeping, along with the bathroom, and the rest of the accommodation for recreation and leisure whilst still living as part of the one family household unit.

2.36 [redacted] It is probable that in the future the twin unit mobile home will be needed to provide level access bedroom and bathroom accommodation [redacted] at which time [redacted] will reside in the main house, again continuing to live one family household. More details [redacted] can be provided in confidence if the LPA considers this necessary.

2.37 The facts of the proposed use are as follows:

1. The twin mobile home unit has not and will not be physically separated from the garden of the main dwelling.
2. The garden is and will continue to be shared by all occupants.
3. No separate services are provided or proposed, there is one household electricity and water bill.

4. There has not and will not be a separate postal address for the twin unit mobile home.
5. The twin unit mobile home unit provides bedroom, bathroom and living room accommodation with kitchenette facilities for the preparation of hot drinks, and snacks.
6. The family will continue to regularly share main meals together in the house, mostly on a daily basis.
7. The family will continue to socialise with each other in the main house and all family members will have access to both the house and the twin unit mobile home.
8. There is and will be no washing machine or laundry facilities other than in the main house, these are and will continue to be used by all family members.

2.38 The assessment of a planning unit and the relevant three tests is set out in the leading case of Burdle v Secretary of State for the Environment (1972):

1. Where it is possible to recognise a single main purpose of the occupier's use of his land to which secondary activities were incidental or ancillary, the whole unit of occupation should be considered as the planning unit.
2. Secondly however, it may be apt to consider the entire unit of occupation even though the occupier carries on a variety of activities, it is not possible to say that one is incidental or ancillary to the other. In these instances, there would be a composite use where the component activities could fluctuate in their intensity from time to time, but the different activities would not be confined within separate or physically distinct areas of land.
3. Thirdly though, it was recognised that it may frequently occur that within a single unit of occupation, two or more physically separate or distinct areas are occupied for substantially different and unrelated purposes. In such a case, each area used for a different main purpose ought to be considered as a separate planning unit.

2.39 In this case the property has been and remains in one ownership and control and the single main use has been as a one residential dwelling house. There is no intention to change this.

2.40 [redacted] it should be noted that there is no requirements in law for any member of the family to have [redacted] for any such additional accommodation to be considered as forming part of one household.

2.41 Based on the information provided it is clear that the mobile home simply provides additional accommodation for use by one family. As explained, this use is consistent with, and indeed part of, the primary residential dwelling house use, as such the property as a whole is and will remain as one planning unit with the single primary use as a C3 dwelling house. The existing use and its continuation does not therefore amount to a change of use for planning purposes.

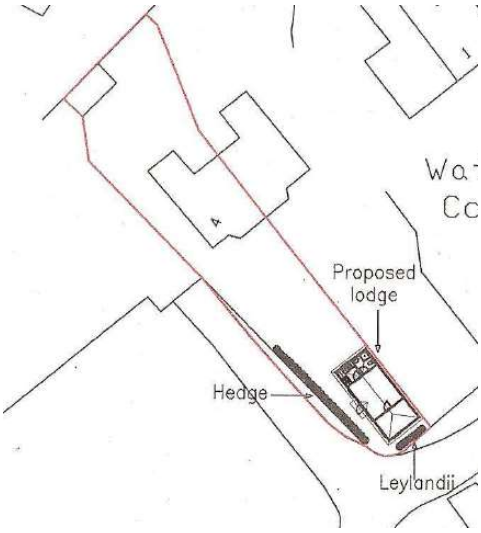
2.42 This assessment is consistent with a Secretary of State decision reported at page 144 in the Journal of Planning Law [1987], and as referred to in the Whitehead judgment (1992 JPL report copy **Appendix 6** concerned the meaning of incidental. In that case, the Secretary of

State's view was that the use of **an existing building in a residential garden as a bedroom was not incidental to the use of the dwelling, but <u>an integral part of the main use of the planning unit</u>**. See the extract below:

Mr. Sales also referred to a decision of the Secretary of State [1987] J.P.L. 144 where at the bottom of page 145 the Secretary of State said:

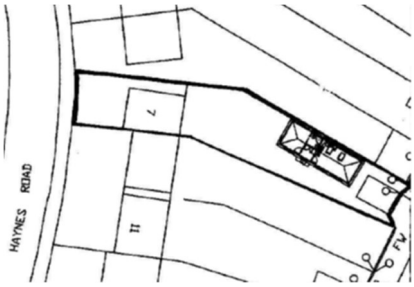
> "The view is taken that the word 'incidental,' on the other hand, means something occurring together with something else and being subordinate to it. Accordingly, a purpose which is incidental to the enjoyment of a dwelling-house is distinct from activities which constitute actually living in a dwelling-house. Incidental purposes are regarded as being those connected with the running of the dwelling-house or with the domestic or leisure activities of the persons living in it, rather than with the use as ordinary living accommodation. Similarly, with regard to the earlier case cited in [1975] J.P.L. 104, the Department's present view is that the use of an existing building in the garden of a dwelling-house for the provision of additional bedroom accommodation is not now to be regarded as being 'incidental' to the enjoyment of the dwelling-house as such for the purposes of section 22(2)(*d*) [the Town and Country Planning Act 1971]: it merely constitutes an integral part of the main use of the planning unit as a single dwelling-house and, provided that the planning unit remains in single family occupation, does not therefore involve any material change of use of the land; in those circumstances it is now considered that there is therefore no need to rely on section 22(2)(*d*)."

2.43 The following planning appeal decisions support the methodology of the assessment undertaken in this report. **Appendix 7** 2159970: 4 Waterwork Cottage Redricks Lane, Sawbridgeworth: East Hertfordshire DC. Whilst this case primarily addressed the issue of development in terms of construction and size, it is noted that the Council did not dispute that the mobile home would have facilities that enabled a degree of independent living and that the unit would in effect be a granny annexe. At paragraph 8 the Inspector confirms that the unit is a caravan therefore it would involve a use of land. As that use would be the same as the lawful use in the remainder of the planning unit it would not involve a change of use that requires planning permission.



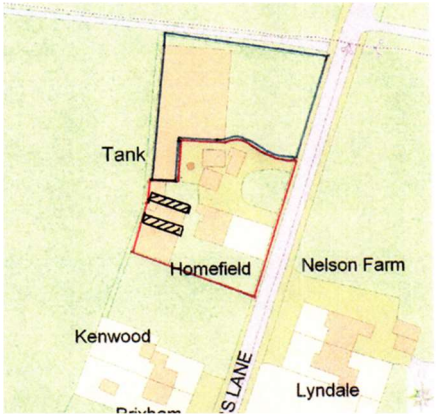
Extract of LDC plan showing relationship to house and scale.

2.44 **Appendix 8** 2190398: 7 Haynes Road, Northfleet, Gravesend: Gravesham BC. In this case the Inspector concluded that the use of a caravan (log cabin style) as a granny annexe would not amount to a change of use, see paragraphs 1, 2, 9 and 10. A LDC was issued for 'The stationing of a mobile home in the rear garden for use as a granny annexe'.



Extract of LDC plan showing relationship to house and scale.

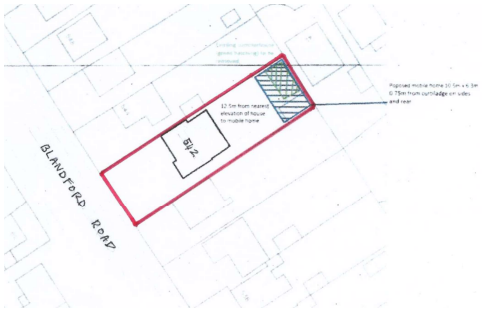
2.45 In appeal decision 2109940 concerning Homefield, Moss Lane, Burscough, Ormskirk an Inspector found that the siting of two number static caravans within the grounds of a house to provide sleeping accommodation for two adult sons and for social and entertaining purposes was found to provide additional accommodation to the main dwelling, and the use of the words 'incidental and subordinate' were not relevant. Costs were awarded to the appellants as the local planning authority had incorrectly assessed the proposal. The appeal decision, site plan and costs decision are contained in **Appendix 9**. Attention is drawn to paragraph 4 of the costs decision.



Extract of plan showing relationship of two units to the house

2.46 A further Appeal decision (2181651) concerned the provision of a log cabin type mobile home for staff accommodation at a site in Black Hills, Esher. On the evidence provided the Inspector concluded that 'given the clear functional link between the mobile home and the dwelling, and the ancillary and subordinate nature of the accommodation to be provided, the siting of a mobile home for the purposes described would not amount to a material change of use. Extract of the LDC plan with unit highlighted yellow below, copy of decision produced as **Appendix 10**.

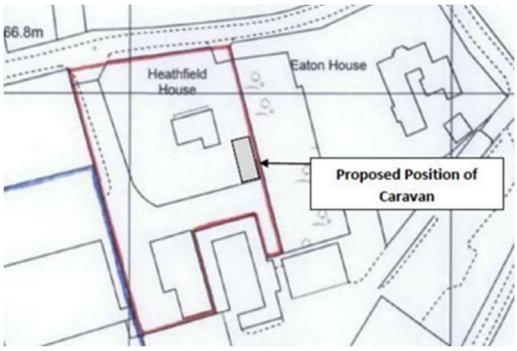
2.47 In addition, attention is drawn to the appeal decision (3142534) at **Appendix 3** concerning a mobile home for use as a granny annex in the garden of a house in Poole. On the basis of circumstances that were very similar to this case the Inspector found at paragraph 20 that whilst the mobile home unit would have all the facilities for independent living, it would not be used in a manner independent from the main dwelling, and the use as described would be a use that comprised part and parcel of the primary dwelling house use which was already taking place within the planning unit. Further such use would not be incidental as it provided primary living space, and no change of use would occur.



2.48 Attention is drawn the appeal and costs decisions at **Appendix 11** concerning a proposed mobile home in the rear garden of a property in Chelmsford (3151073). This decision confirms that in applying the 'balance of probabilities test' the information originally provided with the application was sufficient for it to be concluded that the siting of the unit for residential use as part of the single household was lawful at the time the application was made (para 17). Additional information submitted after the application was validated (such as detailed structural calculations from the supplier and a written statement from the future occupier) was not necessary to reach this conclusion. An award of the full costs of the appeal was made against the LPA. As the agent for that application and appeal I can confirm the information was somewhat less that provided with this application and there were no care needs for any member of the family. The accommodation was to be occupied by the applicant's daughter and son in law, as in the current application.

2.49 A further appeal and costs decision against the refusal by Colchester Borough Council to issue a LDC for a caravan for use as additional accommodation is produced at **Appendix 12** (3177321). The Inspector notes that while the Council concluded that the caravan 'is highly likely to be capable of independent occupation' that is not what was applied for, and the evidence was that it was to be used as additional accommodation. As this was what had been applied for, this is what the LPA should have tested. The LDC for a caravan for use as additional accommodation was granted on the basis that it would not constitute development, and full appeal costs were awarded in favour of the appellant.

See next page…



2.50 In addition to the above appeal decision letters, a number of LDCs issued for similar applications made to the LPA for proposed mobile home are produced in **Appendix 13 (**Ref 241616; 241311; 200219, and 170897. Each of these was for the installation of a twin unit mobile home by the same manufacturer as in this case for use as additional family accommodation. It is noted that the LDCs as issued each refer to an 'incidental' use in the reasons for issue. The occupation in each of these cases was clearly stated to be for family member/s on a full time basis, for as long as was required, as additional accommodation to the main house. The issue of an incidental use, rather than a use that is integral to the residential use and therefore simply part of the primary lawful use, or more of the same, in accordance with the legal principles in the Whitehead case discussed at para 2.42 and mentioned below. There has been no change in statute or leading case law since the LPA issued the decisions, as such the issue of an LDC would be consistent with these decisions, although we would ask for Officers to review the relevance of the use of the word 'incidental' in the reasons for issue and suggest replacing it with the word 'additional'.

Consideration of an Incidental Use

2.51 In addition to the planning unit based assessment above, which we rely on as the correct assessment methodology in this case, S.55(2)(d) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (the Act) provides that any use incidental to a residential use within the curtilage of the dwelling is not development for planning purposes.

2.52 There is case law on what can reasonably be considered as an incidental to the use of a dwelling house. The Courts have determined that a degree of reasonableness has to be applied when deciding what is incidental. The word incidental is not defined in the Town and Country Planning Act, so its normal dictionary definition is used. The Oxford dictionary defines incidental as something which is minor to the main thing/event.

2.53 The Courts have looked at the question of whether a building (not a mobile home) that is substantially larger than the original dwelling house is incidental to the original dwelling house and determined that if it was so large it may no longer be incidental or ancillary [Eagles v Min of Environment and Welsh Assembly 2009 EWHC 1028].

2.54 However, in this case the twin unit mobile home is subordinate in scale to the two storey accommodation in the main dwelling and the residential use comprises the same use as the original dwelling (applying the Court's reasonableness test). The use has not created a separate dwelling and the twin unit mobile home functions as additional accommodation to the main dwelling.

2.55 Although we rely on the assessment that the provision of **primary accommodation in the twin unit mobile home is part and parcel of the use of the main dwelling house**, as in the leading case of Whitehead mentioned in paragraph 2.42 above, and as such it is not a material change of use or an incidental use, if that analysis is not accepted by the LPA it is evident that the use could be considered as incidental to the main use of the land as a residential dwelling and would not therefore constitute development.

3. Conclusion

3.1 It has been clearly demonstrated in the submissions that on the burden of proof the structure that has been provided on the land is a twin unit mobile home that complies with the statutory definition of a caravan as set out in the CSA and that providing the unit on the land has not resulted in operational development.

3.2 Further that the occupation of the mobile home as additional accommodation by members of the same family in the manner described has been and remains as part of the lawful use of the existing single residential planning unit which comprises an integral part of the primary residential use. Alternatively, the use could be described as incidental to the main use of the land as a residential dwelling and as such in either case the use has not resulted in the subdivision of the residential planning unit, or a material change of use.

3.3 The historic and continued use of the twin unit mobile home as additional accommodation by family members as part of one household has not therefore resulted in development within the definition at S.55 of the Act.

3.4 The LPA has issued LDCs for similar twin unit mobile home to be provided by the same manufacturer in the past (Appendix 13). Whilst each case has to be assessed on its own evidence there are common themes in all of these cases in that the mobile home was to be assembled on site in two parts that would be joined together, and that the proposed use was as additional family accommodation as part of one household. There has been no change in statute or leading case law since those decision were made, as such the issue of an LDC in this case would be consistent with previous decisions.

3.5 It is therefore concluded that based on the clear and unambiguous submissions that a Lawful Development Certificate should be issued in accordance with the terms of the application.

List of Appendices:

1. Certificate of conformity with the legislative limitations from the supplier
2. Appeal decision 3277752, LDC and Costs decision (RB Kingston-upon-Thames)
3. Appeal decision 3142534 and LDC (Borough of Poole)
4. Appeal decision 1074589 (Erewash Borough Council)
5. Appeal Decision 3714314 (LB Havering)
6. Whitehead judgment 1992 JPL
7. Appeal decision 2159970, LDC and plan (East Hertfordshire DC)
8. Appeal decision 2190398, LDC and plan (Gravesham BC)
9. Appeal decision 2109940 LDC and costs (West Lancashire DC)
10. Appeal decision 2181651 and LDC (Elmbridge DC)
11. Appeal decision 3151073, LDC and Costs Decision (Maldon DC)
12. Appeal decision 3177321, LDC and Costs Decision (Colchester BC)
13. Copies of LDCs issued by the LPA: WDC ref: 170897, 200219, 241311 & 241616