

**FAO Mr Andrew Clarke,
Mid Sussex District Council,
Planning Services,
Oaklands Road,
Haywards Heath,
RH16 1SS.**

**D. J. Hall, MRICS.
Chartered Surveyor**

**Tel. 07825 880412
Email. davidjhall1@outlook.com**

22 July 2019.

Dear Sir,

**Application DM/19/2345.
Sandhill Farm, Sandhill Lane, Crawley Down.
Retention of mobile home on a temporary basis (until November 2023) for
the safety, security and upkeep of the on-site farming operations.**

I refer to your email dated 1 July 2019 with a planning application for the proposed development described above. I have inspected the application site and read the supporting statements submitted by the applicant's agent.

1. The Property.

The property known as Sandhill Farm comprises a two-storey residential dwelling, originally constructed in about 1975, a mobile home, a large agricultural building, a range of stables and land extending in all to about 22.65 hectares (56 acres).

The land at Sandhill Farm is owned by the applicant and is all down to pasture used to keep various animals. The applicant advises that the animals kept on the property include the following;

6 Donkeys,
21 Goats,
4 Pigs,
2 Cows,
40 Sheep,

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30 Chickens,
26 Guinea pigs,
3 Rabbits,
10 Geese,
3 Guinea fowl,
3 Turkeys,
1 Peahen
Plus, several horses.

Proposed Development.

The application proposes to retain the mobile home for a period until November 2023. The mobile home is for the occupation of persons who assist with the security of the premises, undertake maintenance work and look after the livestock when the applicant is away off site undertaking other work.

National Planning Policy.

The **National Planning Policy Framework**, published in 2018, refers to development of isolated homes in the countryside. Paragraph 79 partly states; Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:

a) there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;

Local Planning Policy.

The adopted **Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 (MSDP), Policy DP15: New Homes in the Countryside**, states;

Permanent agricultural (includes forestry and certain other full-time rural worker) dwellings will only be permitted to support existing agricultural activities on well-established agricultural units where:

- The need cannot be fulfilled by another existing dwelling on or any other existing accommodation near the agricultural unit; and
- It can be proven that it is essential for the proper functioning of the enterprise for one or more workers to be readily available at most times; and
- It can be proven that the farming enterprise is economically viable; and

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- It can be proven that the size of the dwelling is commensurate with the established functional requirement of the agricultural unit.

Temporary agricultural dwellings essential to support a new farming activity either on a newly created agricultural unit or on an established one will be subject to the criteria above and should normally be provided by temporary accommodation.

Comments.

I shall comment in the same order as **Policy DP15**, as follows;

1. The need cannot be fulfilled by another existing dwelling on or any other existing accommodation near the agricultural unit.

1.1. The subject property is provided with one residential dwelling house, located next to the farmland at Sandhill Farm, which is owned and occupied by the applicant. The house is located adjacent to the farmland and very near to the farm buildings.

1.2. The need to look after livestock can be achieved by the occupants of the existing dwelling house.

1.3. It is noted that the applicant states that his work/occupation elsewhere limits his time on the farm holding and that he is unable to look after the farm on a full-time basis. This is a personal matter and is discounted from this agricultural assessment of the agricultural holding.

2. It can be proven that it is essential for the proper functioning of the enterprise for one or more workers to be readily available at most times.

2.1. I would assess that the size of the agricultural holding and the number of livestock kept on the property has a labour requirement equivalent of one person employed full time.

2.2. For reasons of animal welfare, I consider that it is essential for the proper functioning of the enterprise for one worker to be readily available at most times.

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3. It can be proven that the farming enterprise is economically viable.

3.1. The agricultural holding is not operated on a commercial basis. The applicant's agent advises that some revenue is made from the sale of eggs and poultry and goats as live animals. However, from inspection of the property the predominant purpose of the holding is to keep rescued and aged animals as well as some horses for recreational purposes.

3.2. No financial information has been submitted with the application. No audited farm accounts have been presented nor any budgets for the farm enterprise for the period that the mobile home is required.

3.3. It has not been proven that the farming enterprise is economically viable.

4. It can be proven that the size of the dwelling is commensurate with the established functional requirement of the agricultural unit.

4.1. The size of the proposed mobile home is a planning matter and I shall make no comment on this aspect of the application.

Summary.

Although the subject agricultural holding is used to keep animals, I do not consider that the proposed retention of a temporary mobile home satisfies all the criteria laid out in Policy DP15 for the following reasons;

1. It has not been proven that the farming enterprise is economically viable, and
2. The need to live on site can be fulfilled by the existing dwelling house owned by the applicant and located on the farm holding.

Yours faithfully

David J. Hall.

