

Caravan assembly proposed for 5 Forge Lane, Higham, Rochester

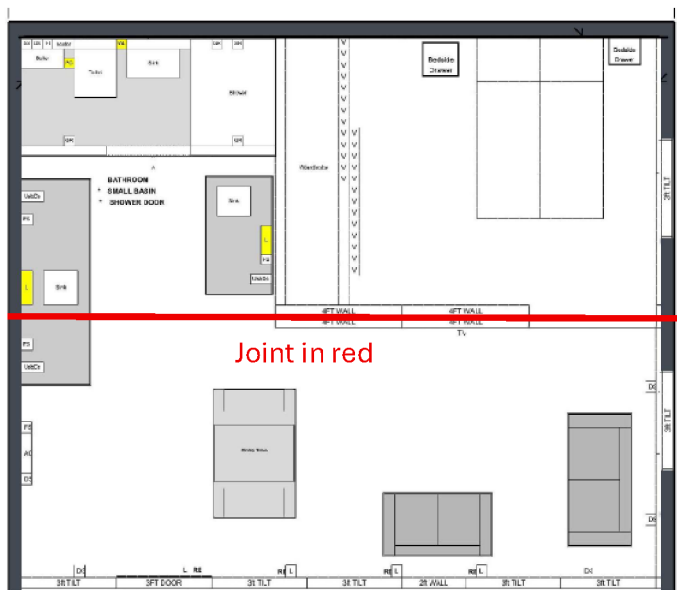
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At the request of the Council the following statement is intended to explain the methods to be employed for the installation of the proposed caravan at 5 Forge Lane. it is to be read in conjunction with documents already provided to the Council within the Statement of Evidence and accompanying Appendices.

1. In advance of the installation

The intended location for the caravan is at the foot of the garden as shown in the Statement of Evidence. Access to the garden may prove difficult and so in this case the caravan will be delivered in kit form comprising many preformed parts.

All the manufacturer's caravans are assembled from precision engineered components prefabricated under factory conditions. The structures are designed in modular form and consequently have common components such as wall sections, doors and windows, each with common dimensions so that smaller modular structures may stand alone, or they may be combined as is the case with the caravan proposed at Forge Lane, which will actually comprise of two separate structures stood alongside each other and then joined to create a larger whole. Each half effectively stands independently but instead of being fully and separately enclosed with external wall sections, windows and doors, where the two structures meet the wall sections/ windows and doors are absent to allow movement between the two structures and to create the larger internal open space (see illustration below).



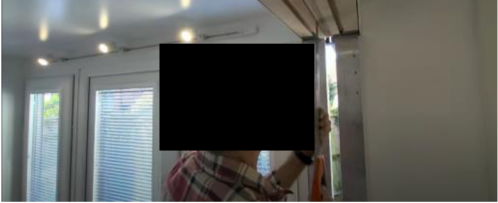
A planned consequence of this modular design with each 'half' being a separate structure capable of independent use is that there are no service links between the two halves of the

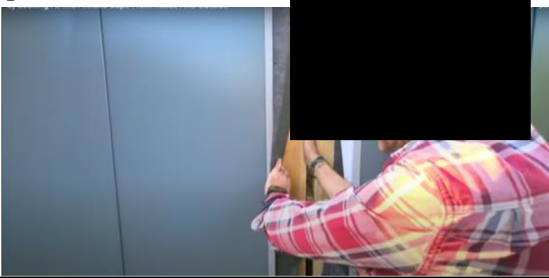
caravan. Each part is independently wired and has its own electricity consumer unit there is no water connection between the two parts and they do not share a common floor or roof; they merely abut one another enabling their joining together to be final act of assembly. This means the final act of assembly on site is when the two halves are joined.

Whilst it is common for many mobile homes to be delivered as a complete unit or as two halves that are then joined together on site, case law has established that there is no requirement that the process of creating the caravan must even take place away from site. In *Byrne v SSE and Arun DC QED 1997* concerning a twin unit mobile home, it was found that: "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 two separate sections must take place away from the site on which they are joined together. It is necessary only that the act of joining the two sections together should be the final act of assembly". In the West Devon Borough Council appeal case (Ref: APP/Q1153/C/08/2064995) attached at Appendix 1A the Inspector held that it was only necessary that, in the case of larger mobile homes, the act of joining the two sections together should be the final act of assembly. The same conclusion was reached in connection with the London Borough of Romford Case (Ref: APP/B5480/C/17/3174314) attached at Appendix 1.

The construction location for a caravan need not be in a remote factory in order for the structure to be identifiable as a caravan, it would not fail to be a caravan because it were assembled in a location other than a factory. In this case the caravan proposed for Forge Lane has not yet been assembled however the photographs below show how once in place alongside each other, the two separate halves of the manufacturers caravans with a gap separating them are to be joined, how the gap is closed and the two halves are joined by screws and bolts as the final act of assembly. The Statement of Evidence accompany the application should also be referenced.

1 	Interior of caravan with two parts separate but aligned. Internal joint cover panels absent in photograph showing separately constructed frame of each structure (each half) in parallel to one another, but separate. The movement of a saw blade through the gap between the two parts shows there is no connection between the two structures, each standing separately in situ. In other respects, the assembly of the two sections is complete.
2	

	Gap between two halves showing daylight and space in readiness for jointing section. Note that in this case the lights are already switched on.
3  4 	Gap between two halves in the floor showing daylight and space for jointing section. The Joint between two halves needs very careful alignment which is achieved by using a straight edge (typically sacrificial sheets of OSB) tacked across the divide between the two structures which allows the fine positioning of each half over their length, depth and floor level of each structure. Floor is ultimately covered with vinyl floor covering.
5 	Joining piece being inserted between the two structures, filling the gap, and holding the two halves securely. Jointing takes place between each wall, ceiling, and floor.
6 	Joining piece between two parallel floors.
7	Joint across ceilings to join two caravan halves to be connected.

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8 	External view of joint showing separate halves.
9 	Cover panel being inserted over joint between two halves. The cover panel is non-structural and simply provides a neat finish.
10 	Separate consumer unit in each half so there are no cable or pipe connections between the two parts after their joining.
11 	Separate consumer unit in each half so there are no connections between the two halves after their joining.

Please refer to the Statement of Evidence for further photographs illustrating the assembly and joining of the caravans two halves. In particular, note that the photographs in the Statement of Evidence show the two halves at slightly different heights and slightly misaligned. The two halves are assembled alongside each other and may then be pulled apart slightly before fine adjustments to height and alignment are carried out as part of the final assembly and joining on site and is why the 'feet' of the caravans will often include wheels (see document titled forms of

caravan feet). In this way fine tuning of the positioning enables perfect alignment and levelling between the two halves to be achieved.

2. Installation

The structure at 5 Forge Lane will be assembled in this way. Whilst the installation is to some extent affected by weather the process of assembling the preformed kit of parts is typically completed in two days. It will arrive on the first day, the installation team will unload and then assemble the two halves from the pre-packaged kits alongside each other. The two halves will be checked at various stages for position and alignment whilst they are each assembled with a final check being carried out before they are then joined, typically on day two of the installation.

There may then be final checks for safety (such as electrical installations) which will then be certified and the structure will be ready for use.

3. Use of the caravan

