



Costs Decision

Site visit made on 12 August 2025

by Mr M Brooker DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 3rd September 2025

Costs application in relation to Appeal Ref: APP/L3815/W/24/3354232

Land East of Rownberts, Woodmancote Lane, Woodmancote, Chichester, West Sussex PO10 8RD

- The application is made under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, sections 78, 322 and Schedule 6, and the Local Government Act 1972, section 250(5).
 - The application is made by Mr and Mrs Lee Murfin for a full award of costs against Chichester District Council.
 - The appeal was against the refusal of planning permission for the change of use of land for the siting of 1 showman's mobile home with storage of associated vehicles and equipment.
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Decision

1. The application for an award of costs is refused.

Reasons

2. Parties in planning appeals normally meet their own expenses. However, the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) advises that costs may be awarded against a party who has behaved unreasonably and thereby caused the party applying for costs to incur unnecessary or wasted expense in the appeal process.
3. The applicant makes reference to the application being determined by elected members contrary to the recommendation from council officers. This is entirely reasonable, elected members are not required to follow the recommendations of their officers and in any event, I note that the Officer's report did identify some harm resulting from the appeal scheme.
4. The nearby settlement contains few services and transport links and the appeal site, being located outside of the built-up area of the nearby settlement, would be changed from a predominantly open site with the addition of a mobile home and storage of trucks and vehicles. In determining the appeal, I have concluded otherwise, but the location of the site and the effect of the appeal scheme on the character and appearance of the area are not unreasonable for concerns for the council to hold.
5. Furthermore, while the need for sites is acknowledged by the council, the appellant submitted little evidence with regards the absence of alternative sites, a matter also referred to by an interested party and specifically required by the Neighbourhood Plan. Therefore, I again consider that this was not an unreasonable concern for the council and one that I shared, albeit I concluded against the council in determining the appeal.

6. Therefore, I conclude that unreasonable behaviour resulting in unnecessary or wasted expense has not occurred and an award of costs is not warranted.

Mr M Brooker

INSPECTOR