

November 2006

Dark evenings and frosty nights are upon us, and we nearly get blown away...

Saturday 4th November

Had another meeting today with the builder from our village. Went through the plans with him, and gave him a copy.

He seems very keen, and very open to us helping/labouring or doing stuff at weekends to help keep costs down. We've asked him to give an estimate for the cost of labour, he wants to work on the basis of us paying him for labour, and materials are bought on our accounts from builders merchants (but with his discount). That way he's not out of pocket buying materials for what is quite a big project.

We will still get other prices to compare, but our gut feeling is pointing in his direction...Friday 10th November

Another meeting with the architect this weekend, to hopefully tie up all the loose ends. There have been a few minor queries back from our building regs application (which is normal), plus a few details need clarifying with the structural engineer and a couple of minor revisions need clearing with the planners. When these are all sorted, one final update will be required to the drawings - and that should hopefully it for the architects. Saturday 11th November

Today saw a fun day fitting a "skirt" to most of the caravan. I bought some very thick clear polythene sheeting and some timber battening to fix it to the underside edges of the caravan with. The idea is to reduce the amount of wind whistling underneath, and hopefully reduce a bit of heat loss and the likelihood of pipes freezing.

Also made sure that all the bits of pipe insulation that got pulled off when I fixed the initial leaks are back in place. Sunday 19th November

Sunday night was one of the most sleepless nights in the caravan so far. The wind got increasingly strong, and with each gust the caravan felt like it was going to get blown off its wooden blocks. I laid awake nearly all night, gritting my teeth and waiting for us to start rolling down the plot. It made me realise that I really ought to anchor the caravan down properly, not just in case of wind, but in case it gets knocked into by any vehicles/machinery during the build. At the moment it's stood on 4 piles of 6x2 timber lengths, plus the 4 jacks (which are all fairly rusty, 2 of which have bent anyway). Tuesday 21st November

After buying a load of hefty chain and tensioners from the local farmers merchants, I made a start at anchoring the caravan down. I had some spare lengths of angle iron laying about, so cut a couple of 3ft lengths with an angle grinder, and hammered them into the ground in a manly fashion with a sledgehammer near the two front corners of the caravan, a bit like giant tent pegs. With loops of chain around suitable chunky points of the caravan chassis, and tensioners to hold it down, I feel slightly happier that it's not going anywhere now, or blow over...

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Thursday 23rd November

On the way home from work, I stop by and pay another visit to the Food Fairy ™ ... The freezer is now nicely restocked with all manner of soups & stews that just need popping in the microwave - thanks Mum ! Sunday 26th November

An early start to pay a visit to the Laundry Fairy ™. Thanks, Emma's Mum ! What with getting food made by the Food Fairy ™ and washing done by the Laundry Fairy ™ we start to think maybe we'll forget the house build and live in the caravan permanently.

In the afternoon I made a good start on building an extension....to the caravan. The idea is to build a big porch area around the door, so we have somewhere dry to take off muddy boots, and so we can open the caravan door without the elements blowing directly in.

Here's my efforts so far:

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