

Policy CS24 – Gypsies and Travellers

Policy CS24 – Criteria for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

Permanent and/or temporary pitches for Gypsies and Travellers will be permitted in line with the requirements set out in Policy CS24A, where it can be demonstrated that:

1. the relevant requirements of Policy CS21 will be met;
2. the scale of the proposal will not dominate the nearest settled community;
3. safe and convenient access will be provided for the manoeuvring, parking and storage of caravans and other vehicles into and within the site, without causing nuisance or danger to adjoining uses;
4. ~~there is~~ adequate provision will be made for safe children's play;
5. ~~the site is capable of being~~ will be served by an adequate water and energy supply, water treatment and waste collection infrastructure; and
6. in the case of temporary permissions, that the applicant will make provision to restore the site to a condition consistent with the character of the surrounding area when it ceases to be used.

Permanent sites will normally be required to provide a warden's office.

Provision for transit sites and for Travelling Showpeople will also be considered in accordance with these criteria.

Sites for Travelling Showpeople will also need to make appropriate provision for the storage, maintenance and testing of equipment, where required, without creating unacceptable nuisance; a risk to the health and safety of residents or neighbours; or visual intrusion within the wider landscape.

Planning conditions will be applied to limit the impact of any business operations; specify the number of caravans that will be permitted and the number of days a site can be occupied by additional visitors' caravans; and to limit the maximum number of days for which a caravan might be permitted to stay on a transit site.

~~Sites to provide an ongoing five-year supply of deliverable sites to meet assessed requirements will be allocated in a site-specific Local Plan~~

- 20.43 The Borough does not currently have any Gypsy and Traveller sites but a number of Gypsy and Traveller families currently reside in bricks and mortar housing. The Borough has, however, experienced short-term unauthorised encampments, normally related to existing family ties.
- 20.44 The Council has a legal duty to consider the needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. National policy requires local planning authorities to make their own assessment of need and to include a criteria-based policy in their local plans, even where no need has yet been identified. Policy CS24 identifies the criteria that will be applied in Wirral.
- 20.45 Making provision for permanent residential and transit ~~provision~~ sites in appropriate locations will support the control of unauthorised encampments in unsuitable locations. Providing a formally designated site may also help to prevent the social exclusion of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and relieve any tensions that may exist between the settled and Travelling communities.
- ~~20.46 The provision of pitches for Gypsies and Travellers is also subject to the national need to identify an ongoing five-year supply of deliverable sites throughout the plan period.~~

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- 20.47 Pitches for Gypsies and Travellers and plots for Travelling Showpeople, often have a permanent structure for residential amenities and are used as a base to travel from. They also allow Gypsies and Travellers to obtain access to education, health and other essential public services. Transit pitches are often designed to a similar format but are only intended to accommodate Gypsies and Travellers for short periods whilst moving between permanent sites or visiting the area for events or family occasions. For security and good management, a warden's office is normally provided on most permanent sites.
- 20.47A National policy allows the Council to apply conditions to overcome planning objections to particular proposals, by limiting any business operations to minimise visual impact and limit the effect of noise; to limit the number of days that a site can be occupied by more than the allowed number of caravans, to permit visitors and allow attendance at family or community events; and to limit the maximum number of days for which caravans might be permitted to stay on a transit site.
- 20.48 Policy CS24 will primarily be delivered through the policies for development management set out in Section 26 of the Core Strategy and the allocation of land for future development in a site-specific Local Plan. Additional guidance on the design and layout of appropriate sites to reflect national best practice may be included in a relevant Supplementary Planning Document.

Policy CS24A – Requirements for Gypsies and Travellers

Provision will be made for a minimum of at least eight permanent residential pitches and four transit pitches for the use of gypsies and travellers in Wirral over the plan period to 2030.

Provision for a minimum of six permanent residential pitches will be made in the period up to April 2018. Provision for an additional permanent residential pitch will be made both in the period up to April 2023 and in the period up to April 2030.

Sites to provide an ongoing five-year supply of deliverable sites to meet assessed requirements will be allocated in a site-specific Local Plan, in accordance with the criteria set out in Policy CS24.

- 20.48A Policy CS24A sets out the number of residential and transit pitches that the Council will seek to provide for in the period to 2030, in line with the findings of the [Merseyside and West Lancashire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2014](#).
- 20.48B The Assessment showed an objectively assessed need for up to eight residential pitches and four transit pitches for Gypsies and Travellers over the period to 2033. Six residential pitches were required during the period up to 2018, with a additional pitch required in the period up to 2023 and an additional pitch in the period up to 2033. There was no requirement for residential accommodation for Travelling Showpeople.
- 20.48C The provision of pitches for Gypsies and Travellers is also subject to the national need to identify an ongoing five-year supply of deliverable sites throughout the plan period, which will be subject to continuous annual monitoring.