



Gypsy and Traveller Guidance Note

June 2012

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Guidance Note provides advice on the provision and design of Gypsy and Traveller sites in Stratford-on-Avon District. At the District Council's Cabinet meeting on 23 May 2011, a resolution was taken to prepare a Gypsy and Traveller Guidance Note, to add detail to saved Local Plan policy CTY.7 in light of a revised Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) and recent appeal decisions. It is the intention that this Guidance Note is replaced when the Core Strategy is adopted.

2. National Policy

- 2.1. The Housing Act 2004 requires local housing authorities to assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Showmen as part of their housing requirements.

- 2.2. The Government's Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (Department for Communities and Local Government, March 2012) lists a number of the Government's overarching aims in respect of traveller sites. These include policy recommendations that Local Planning Authorities should:

- make their own assessment of need for the purposes of planning;
- work collaboratively to develop fair and effective strategies to meet need through the identification of land for sites;
- plan for sites over a reasonable timescale;
- protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development;
- enable the provision of suitable accommodation from which travellers can access education, health, welfare and employment infrastructure; and
- have due regard to the protection of local amenity and local environment.

- 2.3. As a result of the introduction of the Localism Act and the expected revocation of the Regional Spatial Strategy, Local Planning Authorities need to set their own pitch targets to accommodate the needs of travellers in their areas. Local Planning Authorities should, in producing their Local Plans:

- Identify a five year supply of deliverable sites;
- Identify developable sites or broad locations for years 6 – 10 and if possible years 11 -15;
- Set targets on a cross-authority basis;
- Relate the number of pitches or plots to the size and location of the site with the surrounding population's size and density; and
- Protect local amenity and environment.

(Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, Department for Communities and Local Government, March 2012)

2.4 This national planning policy guidance also states that:

‘Inappropriate development is harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved, except in very special circumstances. Traveller sites (temporary or permanent) in the Green Belt are classified as inappropriate development.

Green Belt boundaries should be altered only in exceptional circumstances. If a Local Planning Authority wishes to make an exceptional limited alteration to the defined Green Belt boundary, for example to meet a specific, identified need for a traveller site, it should do so only through the plan-making process and not in response to a planning application. If land is removed from the Green Belt in this way, it should be specifically allocated in the development plan as a traveller site only.’

2.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (Department for Communities and Local Government, March 2012) requires Local Planning Authorities to have regard to the policies in the Framework when preparing plans on traveller sites. Of particular relevance is paragraph 87 which says that ‘inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances’.

2.6 Policy H of the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites provides guidance on the assessment of planning applications for traveller sites. Paragraph 24 encourages local planning authorities to attach weight to:

- The effective use of previously developed (brownfield), untidy or derelict land;
- The landscaping of sites that enhance the environment and increase openness;
- The promotion of healthy lifestyles by providing adequate landscaping and children play areas; and
- Not enclosing a site with hard landscaping, high walls or fencing.

2.7 It should be noted that ODPM *Circular 01/06: Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites* and *Circular 04/07: Planning for Travelling Showpeople* have now been replaced by the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. Definitions

3.1. **Gypsies and Travellers** are a distinct ethnic group and can be defined as:

‘Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family’s or dependants’ educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such’ (Planning Policy for Traveller

Sites, Department for Communities and Local Government, March 2012)'.

- 3.2. By contrast, **Travelling Showpeople** are defined as: 'Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family's or dependants' more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined above' (Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, Department for Communities and Local Government, March 2012).
- 3.3. Throughout the Guidance Note the term '**pitch**' is referred to. Pitches are defined as: Spaces which are occupied by a single family (on a Gypsy and Traveller site), and usually will accommodate more than one residential caravan or mobile home (A Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment for the South Housing Market Area of the West Midlands Region, March 2008). Generally, a pitch is an area which is large enough for one household to occupy and typically contains enough space for two caravans.
- 3.4. A **site** will comprise of one to several **pitches**.

4. Types of Sites

- 4.1. The following types of sites are generally understood to meet the needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community (Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites, A Good Practice Guide, DCLG, 2008):
- Permanent sites – providing residents with a permanent home. These can be public sites with ownership remaining with the local authority, or a registered social landlord, and continuing as a Gypsy and Traveller site for at least ten years. Alternatively, permanent sites may be private sites, developed by the Gypsy and Traveller community themselves.
 - Transit sites – providing permanent sites for temporary accommodation, with length of stay varying between 28 days and 3 months, not intended to be a permanent base for individual households.
 - Temporary stopping places – providing pieces of land in temporary use as authorised short-term (less than 28 days) stopping places for travelling communities.

5. Need for sites

- 5.1. The Stratford-on-Avon District Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment, prepared in October 2011, shows the number of permanent, authorised, public and private pitches in the District. In

addition, there is one unauthorised site (refer to Table 1). During July 2011 four sites had planning permission and one site at Friday Furlong did not. There were no transit sites recorded in the District.

Table 1: Existing Pitches and Caravans (July 2011)

Authorised Public Sites		Authorised Private Sites		Unauthorised Site Tolerated
Pitches	Caravans	Pitches	Caravans	
30	46	-	28	32

- 5.2. The same Assessment concluded that there is a need for 52 pitches in the District over the next five years (refer to Table 2), 25 of which should be developed as public pitches. Further research needs to be undertaken to assess the requirement for pitches after 2016.

Table 2: Five Year Pitch Requirement – Until 2016

Reason for Requirement / Supply	Gross Requirement	Supply	Net Requirement
Current unauthorised developments or encampments	13	-	13
Currently on sites with temporary planning permission	10	-	10
Waiting list for public sites	22	-	22
Migration from elsewhere	0	-	0
New household formation	10	0	10
Movement from bricks and mortar	0	0	0
Currently overcrowded and require to move	6	6	0
Additional supply from out-migration	-	3	(3)
Additional supply from empty pitches		0	0
Additional supply new sites	-	0	0
Total	61	9	52

- 5.3. There was no identified need for Travelling Showpeople or transit sites in the District (Stratford-on-Avon District Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment, Main Report for Study Findings, October 2011). Warwickshire County Council is seeking to allocate a transit site within the County in consultation with its partners.

5.4. Since the time of writing the GTAA, 6 permanent pitches have been authorised through planning appeals allowed on 21 September 2011 and 30 September 2011.

6. Consideration of planning applications - Local Plan Review

6.1 Saved Policy CTY.7 (see below) provides some guidance on the need for gypsy and traveller sites and criteria for assessing applications for Gypsy and Traveller provision.

Proposals for the provision of permanent gypsy sites will be supported where all the following criteria are met:

- (a) monitoring indicates that there is a significant unmet need for further provision within the District;**
- (b) the proposed site would not cause harm to the character of the local area or to features of acknowledged importance, or unduly affect any neighbouring properties or activities; and**
- (c) appropriate facilities are provided to meet the requirements of people living on the site.**

6.2 However, this policy was adopted in 2006 and, as a result of the updated GTAA and recent changes to national policy, it is now considered out of date.

7. Consideration of planning applications - Emerging Core Strategy Policy

7.1. Public consultation on the Draft Core Strategy 2012 was undertaken between February-March 2012. This includes Policy CS 21 which seeks to provide an updated Gypsy and Traveller policy for the District and relates to Core Strategy Strategic Objective 5 - *Planning to provide for housing needs.*

Policy CS 21

Provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

Provision will be made for an additional 52 (net) permanent gypsy and traveller pitches over the next five years, of which 25 pitches will be public (if funding becomes available), and an extra 10 pitches for every five years thereafter during the period to 2028.

The District Council's preferred locations for Gypsy and Traveller provision are in Broad location 1 or Broad location 2 as shown on Map 1.

Proposals for the provision of permanent gypsy and traveller sites will be supported where all of the following criteria are met:

1. The site will not be located within an international environmental designation;

2. If adjacent to the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) the site will have a buffer to minimise any adverse visual impact upon the AONB;
3. The site will not compromise the objectives of any nationally recognised designations and must not be located within the Green Belt unless there are special circumstances;
4. The site will not be at high risk of flooding;
5. The site will not be located on unstable or contaminated land that cannot be mitigated;
6. The site will have good road access and avoid significant impact on minor rural roads;
7. The site will be in reasonable proximity to local services and facilities;
8. The development and use of the site will not have adverse impacts on the landscape, biodiversity or the built environment. This includes unacceptable noise levels;
9. The site will have a good residential environment and be of good quality design;
10. The site will not adversely impact on neighbouring residential amenity; and
11. Arrangements are put in place to ensure the proper management and retention of the site.

Proposals for the provision of sites for travelling showpeople will be considered on a case-by-case basis and a proven need must be demonstrated.

- 7.2 Once the consultation responses have been collated, comments will be considered when finalising the above policy for submission to the Secretary of State. In light of policy CTY.7 becoming out of date it is proposed that the above Core Strategy policy, although emerging, is given weight when considering planning applications.

8. Site Locations

- 8.1. Within the Draft Core Strategy 2012, two broad locations have been identified as appropriate for investigating residential Gypsy and Traveller site allocations and for considering planning applications (refer to Map 1). Area 1 is located close to existing concentrations of traveller accommodation and Area 2 covers the remainder of the District, which historically has a wider and more sparse distribution of traveller accommodation. Gypsy and traveller development is not considered appropriate within the Green Belt and AONB. In addition, within Areas 1 and 2, constraints such as historic parks and gardens, flood zone 3, ancient woodland, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Scheduled Monuments should be avoided.
- 8.2. It should be noted that the review of the 2009 SHLAA and the preparation of the District Council's Gypsy, Traveller and Showpeople's Sites Study will be completed in 2012, informing the preparation of a Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocations DPD.

9. Existing Site Issues

- 9.1. The vast majority of Gypsies and Travellers in the District do not travel extensively. They permanently occupy sites in the area. Of those surveyed as part of the Stratford District GTAA (October 2011), 89% had not travelled in the last 12 months. Approximately 80% of those that did travel spent less than one month travelling.
- 9.2. A range of accommodation types are in use in the District, with the GTAA indicating that 70% of households have one trailer/chalet/mobile home. A proportion of existing householders are not satisfied with the quality and space of accommodation, site facilities, location and management. Issues raised included there are no play areas for children and sites are too small, dirty, unsafe, noisy and lack facilities. The majority of Travellers have access to electricity and a toilet, but far fewer have their own shower/bath and laundry. 49% of those surveyed have their refuse collected, 47% have gas, but only 16% have heating and 14% have access to visitor parking (Stratford-on-Avon District Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment, Main Report for Study Findings, October 2011). These are all factors which therefore require consideration when drawing up and assessing applications for new Gypsy and Traveller provision and improvements to existing sites.

10. Site Requirements

Permanent sites

- 10.1. A family of five or more are likely to need two or more caravans to accommodate their household. Therefore, when developing new permanent sites some of these larger pitches will need to be provided.
- 10.2. Sites need to have good road access and availability of essential services, including water, sewerage and electricity. In addition, sites need to be landscaped, flat enough to accommodate caravans and have well maintained facilities.
- 10.3. Developing smaller permanent private residential sites is preferred in the District (Stratford-on-Avon District Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment, Main Report for Study Findings, October 2011). For larger sites and public sites there may be a mix of pitch sizes, taking account of the needs of different families.
- 10.4. If there is a lack of affordable land to meet local traveller needs, DCLG advises that Local Planning Authorities in rural areas, where viable and practical, should consider allocating and releasing sites solely for affordable traveller sites. A rural exception site policy enables small sites to be used specifically for affordable traveller sites in small rural communities, that would not normally be used for traveller sites.

- 10.5. These sites should only be used for affordable traveller sites in perpetuity. It is important to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection, whilst also ensuring that rural areas continue to develop as sustainable, mixed, inclusive communities.
- 10.6. DCLG also advises that Local Planning Authorities should consider, wherever possible, allocating traveller sites suitable for mixed residential and business uses. The scope for identifying separate sites for residential and for business purposes in close proximity to one another should be investigated if mixed sites are not practicable. Mixed uses should not be permitted on rural exception sites.
- 10.7. A full list of considerations is shown in Appendix 1 and this list must be used when designing sites and considering planning applications.

Transit sites

- 10.8. These sites are not intended to be used as permanent accommodation. National Guidance suggests that they should not comprise of more than 15 pitches. Much of the National Design Guidance for permanent sites also applies to transit sites.

Temporary stopping places

- 10.9. The purpose of these places is to provide for intermittent needs / site accommodation for which the local authority may levy a charge. They are not designed to be occupied throughout the year, but must be available at times of increased demand, particularly for fairs or cultural celebrations attended by the gypsy and traveller community. These places need to have good access to the road network to minimise disrupting the surrounding community. When deciding where to locate these sites, particular consideration must be given to the safety of young children.

Site Management

- 10.10. Site management should be in accordance with the Gypsy and Traveller Site Management Good Practice Guide, DCLG (July 2009) for local authority and socially rented sites.

11. Site Design Guidance for Permanent Sites

- 11.1. The Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (Department for Communities and Local Government, March 2012) states that when assessing the suitability of sites in rural or semi-rural settings, local planning authorities should ensure that the scale of such sites does not dominate the nearest settled community.
- 11.2. Site development must accord with the design principles and specific issues contained in Appendix 1, which is a summary of the requirements contained in Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites, Good Practice Guide, DCLG (May 2008).
- 11.3. The development of small scale residential sites should be in accordance with the design templates shown in Appendices 2 and 3. These templates should also be used to inform site capacity, optimum size and pitch / plot configuration. For larger sites or sites with more than 5 pitches, the principles of the template in Appendix 4 could be followed.
- 11.4. The provision of site services and facilities for permanent sites need to be in accordance with the requirements contained in Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites, Good Practice Guide, DCLG (May 2008).
- 11.5. To ensure a high standard of design, acceptable to both the Gypsy and Traveller and settled communities, site capacity must take account of on-site constraints, landscaping, mitigation measures and access. The provision of adequate space and landscaping will contribute to conserving residential amenity.
- 11.6. Site design also should take account of resident's convenience, safety, visual and acoustic privacy, environmental compatibility and scope for social integration with the local community (Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites, Good Practice Guide, DCLG, May 2008).

12. Other Development Management Considerations

- 12.1. In order for planning applications to be consistent with national and local policy, applicants should seek pre-application advice from Stratford-on-Avon District Council. Information in this regard is available on the Council's Planning Applications Advice webpage <http://www.stratford.gov.uk/planning/planning-applications-advice.cfm> Information is also available on what is needed to make an application valid: <http://www.stratford.gov.uk/planning/1app-validation-checklist.cfm>
- 12.2. Stratford-on-Avon District Council's Statement of Community Involvement (April 2006) encourages applicants to discuss their proposals before submission. If applicants do not consult before hand this could increase the risk of objections. Developers and land owners should engage with the local community, helping them understand the proposal, to listen to their concerns and to try and

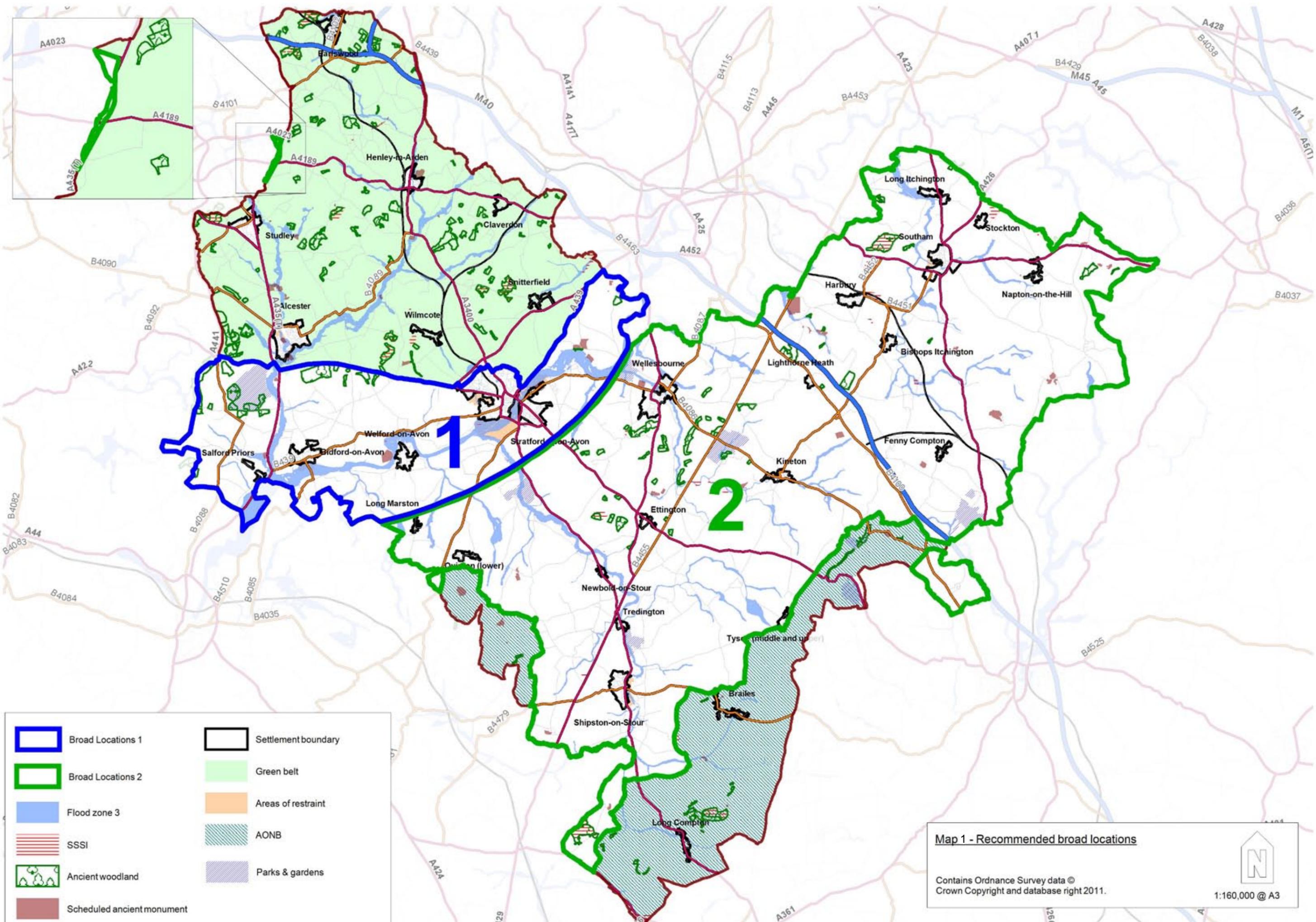
seek a resolution to any problems. A Community Involvement Exercise (CIE) is not compulsory, but it can benefit everyone involved.

- 12.3. A CIE includes explaining proposals to local residents, inviting views of the community, to consider those views and where appropriate to amend proposals.
- 12.4. The National Planning Policy Framework encourages applicants to engage with the local community before submitting their applications. Planning performance agreements between the applicant and local planning authority may even improve the application process.

13. Further Sources of Information

Further information on the provision of Gypsy and Traveller sites can be found in:

1. Stratford-on-Avon District Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment, Main Report for Study Findings, October 2011
2. Housing Act 2004
3. Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (Department for Communities and Local Government, March 2012)
4. National Planning Policy Framework (Department for Communities and Local Government, March 2012)
5. Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites, A Good Practice Guide, DCLG, 2008
6. Gypsy and Traveller Site Management Good Practice Guide, DCLG, July 2009



Map 1 - Recommended broad locations

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Appendix 1

Note: The following design principles (Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites, A Good Practice Guide, DCLG, 2008) apply to permanent sites. The Guidance makes a distinction between public and private sites.

Design Principles	Detail
Site size and layout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caravan sites need more land than small houses; • Land per household needs to be suitable for a mobile home, touring caravan and a utility building, and parking; • When considering site size, layout and pitch numbers, take account of the size of the site, the needs and demographics of resident families; • Most communities prefer a circular or horseshoe design; • Consult the local gypsy and traveller community before deciding on overall site layout; • A site with a maximum of 15 pitches is an ideal size; and • Smaller sites of 3 – 4 pitches can also be successful, particularly for extended families.
Site perimeter boundaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly demarcate the site perimeter; • Boundaries need to take account of adjoining land uses, and the safety and protection of children; • Where a site is near a busy road or industrial area, use fencing and planting as screening; • Boundaries may be fences, low walls, hedges and natural features; • Boundaries to be in keeping with the surrounding area; • Use open boundaries in residential areas to promote integration; • Need a balance between privacy and security for residents; and • As a fire prevention measure, ensure a 3 metre gap from the site perimeter.
Orientation of pitches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site layout and design needs to ensure privacy for each household. Need to ensure that householders don't overlook into each other's living quarters; • Ensure some vision of the site to improve security. This is the advantage of a circular or horseshoe layout; • Residents on larger sites may prefer more privacy through the construction of fencing or

	<p>the planting of the landscape between pitches;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There must be sufficient space to ensure easy manoeuvrability of living accommodation onto site and to the pitch. There is a tendency for residents to use mobile homes (up to 25 metres long) instead of caravans; • Access roads and site design need to be large enough to manoeuvre a trailers up to 15 metres long; • A limited number of pitches need to be large enough to be able to accommodate larger mobile homes; and • Use movable fencing and gates next to roadways to allow easy removal when residents wish to change their trailer accommodation.
Health and safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the health and safety of residents, in particular the safety of children. This is largely due to higher densities of children and high vehicle ownership; • Install traffic calming measures, but ensure that appropriate drainage can be accommodated; • Install signage to indicate speed limits, approaching speed bumps, the location of fire hydrants and one way systems; and • Consider separate vehicular/pedestrian access.
Access for emergency vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult fire and emergency services during site design; • Access roads to be large enough to accommodate emergency vehicles and the safe turning of vehicles; • No caravan or park home to be located more than 50 metres from a road; • Overhead cabling over roads must not be less than 4.5 metres above ground; • Vehicular access and gateways must be at least 3.1 metres wide, with a minimum 3.7 metres clearance; • Site roads - minimum of 5.5 metres wide to allow two vehicles to pass each other; and • Site roads - built to adoptable standards in consultation with the highways authority.
Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult prospective residents to establish levels of social cohesion early on in the design process; • Use Secure by Design standards, and maximise natural surveillance; • Site manager's office to be located near the front of a site, accessible to visitors and with views of the site;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly delineate public communal areas, such as play areas, from private areas, such as private pitches; • Avoid communal areas without a clear use; and • Take account of local preferences, requirements of the highways authority and emergency service preferences when designing front entrances.
Play areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In consultation with parents, designate a children's play area and provide equipment that will be used and readily replaced by the site manager; • Plan recreation areas with the safety of children in mind; and • Do not locate play areas in secluded parts of a site or close to the perimeter of a site.
Landscape design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use soft landscaping, such as grassed areas, shrubs and trees, instead of hard landscaping, such as paving or concrete; • Use soft landscaping to prevent movement of trailers; and • Prevent landscaping from being used for unauthorised parking or as unauthorised pitches.
Car parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide adequate parking space for residents; • Parking spaces to be a minimum of 2.4 x 4.8 metres; and • Provide parking on individual pitches.
Density and spacing of caravans and trailers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For fire safety reasons, provide a 6 metre separation distance between occupied trailers, caravans and park homes; and • Other structures to be located in a separation zone if built from non-combustible materials.
Inclusion of space for work/animals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working from residential pitches should be discouraged; • Create separate working areas from residential areas; • Provide a separate grazing area for ponies and horses; and • Surplus off site land may be required for grazing purposes.

EXAMPLE: 5 PITCH PUBLIC SITE (0.72 acre)

Use of existing landscaping (such as mature hedgerows) is desirable particularly if it encourages biodiversity (generally native species) and is low maintenance. It affords a good level of privacy and security without the defensive/hostile nature of gates, walls and fences. That said, each site will need to be designed with the appropriate security measures in mind as per the Police's 'Secure By Design' Principles. There will be considerable differences in these needs between urban and rural locations, for example.

There should be at least a 3m gap within the inside of all site perimeter boundaries and a 6m gap between combustible units, which includes caravans and mobile homes, though not amenity buildings if made out of non-combustible materials.

Specific additional space available for scrap storage can be well used.

A site manager's office is ideally located near the entrance for ease of access and is of a size to accommodate an office, a kitchenette, a bathroom and a storage room.

Government guidance suggests that amenity buildings should include:

- water closet (bath, toilet, bath/shower)
- (open plan) kitchen/dining/living area
- secure storage space for harmful substances/medicines
- enclosed storage for food, broom, washing/cleaning items
- space for cooker, fridge/freezer & washing machine

We suggest also that a large porch, veranda or other covered outdoor space would be useful given the limited indoor living space and the relatively high levels of cloud cover and precipitation in this country.

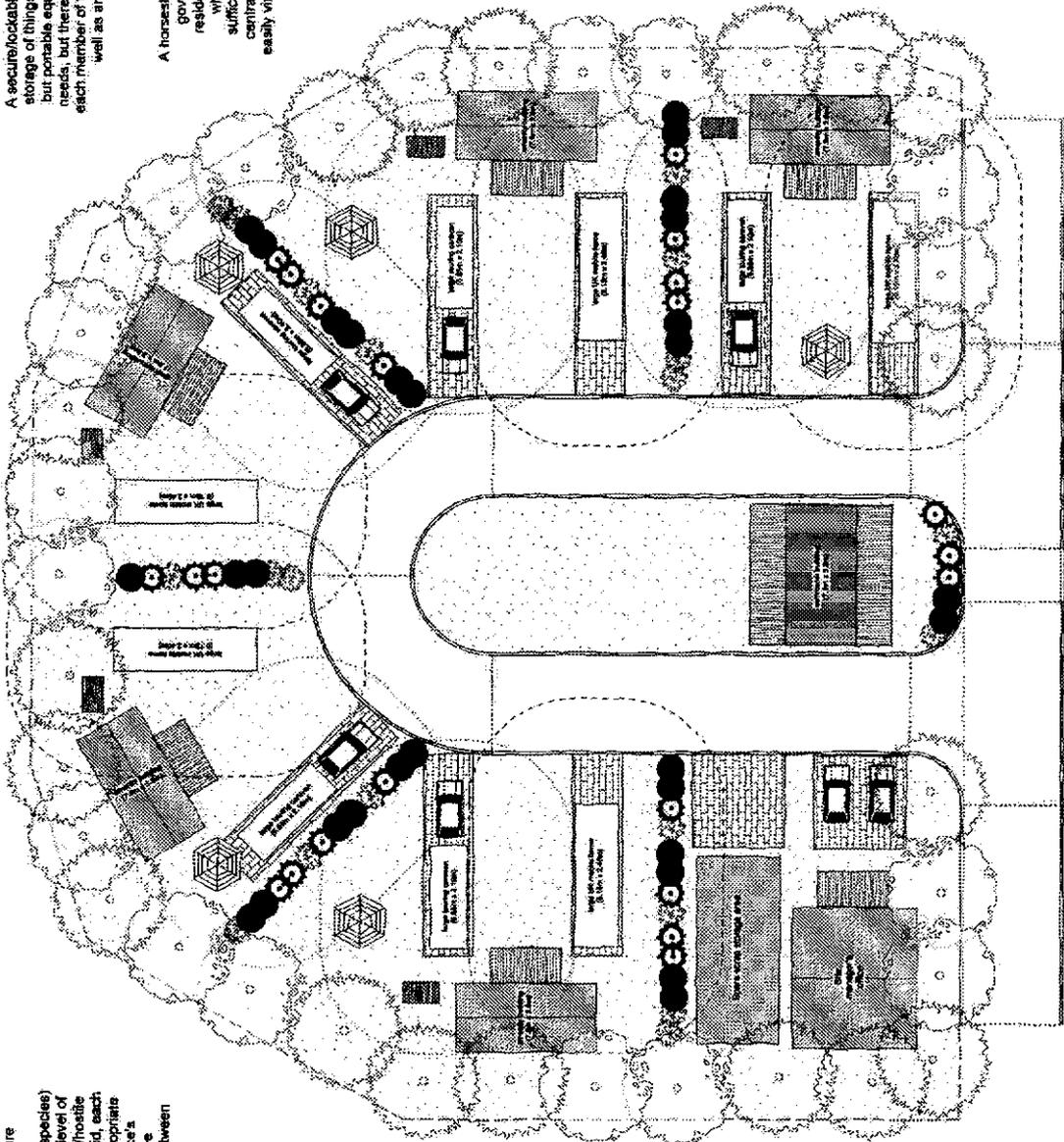
A securable/lockable shed should be provided for storage of things like bicycles and other large, but portable equipment. Size is dependent on needs, but there should be sufficient space for each member of the family to have a bicycle as well as any other gardening equipment.

A horse/shed layout is recommended in government guidance as it allows residents to look out for each other while at the same time affording sufficient privacy. It also provides a central play area/open space that is easily visible from each of the pitches.

Some families will also have need of grazing land for their horse(s). Minimum spaces are for 1 horse to 1 acre (or 0.5 acre for ponies or horses under 14.2 hands)

Living quarters should generally not be overlooked by neighbours so some further hedging may be necessary

A communal building may be needed where an existing building is inaccessible. This is particularly useful for larger sites. It can be an important resource in sustaining a more remote site, offering an opportunity for health visitors, youth workers and education services, as well as for use by residents and the site manager.



Access routes will need to accommodate all vehicles that need access to the site. In this case trucking would need to be carried out to ensure that there is sufficient turning space for a large mobile home. Standards for refuse and fire truck access will need to be met too. Again, in this case space for safe stopping only as needed as the site is small enough to ensure that distance to refuse collection points and hose length standards are met. These standards and others can be found in Building Regulations and Manual for Streets.

3		2		1	
A		B		Appendix 3	
No.	Date	Issue Notes			
				BAKER ASSOCIATES	
				6 Pitch Site Project No. M&A RUSKOPF Date: 1.300 @ A3 Drawn By: Daniel Black Approved By: N/A Date: Sheet No. 2 of 6	

1		2		3	
A		B		Appendix 3	

Annex B.2 Traditional site design (see para 4.5)

