

Revised Local 2018-2033 Development Plan

January 2019

Gypsy and Traveller Site Assessment Methodology

Site Assessment Methodology – Call for Gypsy and Traveller Sites

1.1 The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 became law in Wales on 17 September 2014. It contains provisions on providing Gypsy and Traveller Sites and in particular the requirement for each local authority across Wales to carry out an assessment of the Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs (over a period of at least every 5 years). The Act also contains further provisions requiring each local authority to meet those accommodation needs.

1.2 The County Council has undertaken and published a Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTAA) which identified a current unmet need for Gypsy and Traveller pitches within the County. The GTAA also identified an unmet need for Travelling Show People.

1.3 As part of the preparation of the evidence base for the Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan (LDP) and meet the identified unmet need, the Council is inviting landowners, developers, and any other interested parties to suggest sites for Gypsy and Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople for potential consideration within the LDP. The invitation is set for a 10-week period, starting on 28th January 2019 and finishing at 2pm, 8th April 2019.

Assessment of Submitted Sites

1.4 All Submitted Sites will be assessed against national and local planning policy in addition to other site assessment considerations. Appendix 1 identifies the questions which proposers of land should complete for a detailed consideration of the site.

1.5 The site assessment methodology for any submitted sites is considered in two stages, with the first stage broken up into two parts.

Stage 1, Part 1 - In the first instance, any site for the two forms of need (Gypsy Travellers and Travelling Show people) will be considered against its location.

- A new Gypsy and Traveller site is required within the Llanelli area, and only sites within the general location of Llanelli will be considered.
- For Travelling Showpeople, the call for sites is county wide.

Stage 1, Part 2 – A desktop assessment and a site visit is undertaken which considers criteria highlighted by the Council, in addition to criteria which is set out within Welsh Government's 'Designing Gypsy and Travellers Site' guidance document, May 2015.

1.6 The assessment is based upon the scoring of the following criteria.

Access –

- Access to public roads leading to the site.
- Access to footpaths leading to the site – including impact on Public Rights of Way.
- Easily reachable by emergency vehicles.
- Access to public transport.
- Proximity to Employment sites and major roads.

Sustainability and Suitability of the Land

- Compatible with adjacent uses.
- Visual Impact considerations.
- The site should be available for use as a Gypsy and Traveller site for at least 21 years.

Environment

- Contamination of land.
- Acceptable form of surface water discharge.
- Free from air, noise, water and soil pollution.
- Impact on European or National ecological designations.
- Natural Environment – including protected sites and species, landscape, biodiversity etc.
- Historic Environment – including conservation areas, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Coal Workings etc.
- Risk of flooding – TAN 15 Development Advice Maps

Utilities

- The ability to connect to local infrastructure, including water and sewerage connections.
- Near Electricity, refuse disposal and BT.

Local Services

- Near educational facilities.
- Near health services.
- Near local shops.
- Compliance with Learner Travel Act Wales.

Size and Shape of Site

- Sufficient sized site to meet the unmet need
- Sufficient circulation area
- Adequate area for the siting of caravans etc.
- Potential for expansion for future needs

Topography

- Feasibility of mitigating steep gradients
- Level areas for pitches and children's play

Availability and Use

- Designation of land within the existing LDP.
- Any covenants on the land.
- Land on the market for sale.

Cost

- Reasonable cost for the purchase of the land.
- Cost for environmental mitigation.
- Reasonable cost for site preparation including road infrastructure, drainage, demolishing existing structures, etc.

1.7 The information presented at Stage 1 will include a brief site description, photographs of the current site condition, and a planning appraisal of the site, which will include an assessment of any constraints which would need to be overcome. In addition, an annotated aerial map depicting the indicative land take up will be considered.

1.8 The sites will be sequentially assessed against the above mentioned criteria and given scores of between 0 (being the least) and 5 (being the most). Site options which receive the highest cumulative totals proceed to the Stage 2 appraisal. If any of the site options score zero against one or more of the criterion, it will be automatically eliminated from the assessment. This also applies in the case that a site option scores high in its cumulative total, but fails to meet the minimum threshold requirement for a single criteria.

Stage 2 Appraisal

1.9 The Stage 2 assessment details a desktop study undertaken exclusively in respect of those sites that have progressed to this stage of the overall assessment. The assessment comprises the following:-

Initial sketch plan

1.10 The sketch plan comprises a 2D mapping exercise undertaken by the Local Authority to identify that the site can accommodate the proposed use, in addition to the land take of any proposed buildings being strictly in accordance with space standards. Furthermore, the proposed external environment, play areas, pitches, hardstanding, amenity block and space for caravans/Trailers are referenced against current guidance from documents such as 'Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites,' 'Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013 and other supporting material such as 'Secure by Design' principles.

Observations based on Initial Sketch Proposals

1.11 A High level observations / bullet point summary referring to the initial sketch proposal is undertaken. The information will be based on desktop information only and subject to the information that is available. This may include (where stated) any observations from the Planning Officer and various other consultees. The assessment is based upon specific technical and social categories that are listed as follows:-

- Quality of setting
- Land Use
- Highways and transport
- Drainage
- Flood Risk
- Utilities
- Ecology
- Geotechnical - constraints
- Acoustics
- Archaeology
- Construction Issues in developing the site
- Land Ownership

Significant Risks and Opportunities

1.12 Significant Risks and opportunities are established as part of a high level risk assessment. The process identifies; the consequence of the event, level of risk, costs involved, and what further action is required to be taken.

Stage 3 - Recommendation

1.13 A recommendation is put forward for the most suitable site for the proposed Gypsy and Traveller site. This will inform the revised Deposit Local Development Plan, and will be subject to consultation.

Appendix 1

As part of the invitation for Gypsy and Traveller Sites, a candidate site submission form is available to be completed by interested parties. This is available online on the Council website as part of the SNAP survey function, whilst paper copies are available at deposit locations, including libraries, and the Council's customer service centres.

A separate candidate site submission form should be used for each site that is to be considered.

Your Details/Agents Details - Please clearly indicate your personal details including your name and address and that of any agent acting in respect of this matter. It is important to note that if you complete the Agents Details all correspondence will be sent to the agent unless we are notified to the contrary.

Promoters of land are required to submit the following information.

Site Details

1. Location

Site submissions should identify on an OS map as to the location of the proposed site.

2. Type of candidate site submission

Is the candidate site for a Gypsy and Traveller site, or for Travelling Showpeople?

3. Site Area

Site submissions should identify the area of the proposed site.

4. What is the current use of the site?

The candidate site submission should identify the current land use of the site. This includes land uses such as housing, retail, employment, agriculture etc.

5. Are there any buildings on the site?

The candidate site submission should identify if there are any buildings on the site which may be demolished, or utilised as part of a new development. If the proposal does involve buildings on the site, a supporting statement is required to understand how these buildings may, or may not impact by the proposal.

6. Are the buildings in use or are they vacant?

Please provide details

Site Ownership

7. Does the proposer own the site?

Proponents of land must indicate if they own the site which they are proposing. This is to identify the potential success of delivering the site.

8. If the proposer does not own the site, has the landowner been contacted and agreed to any potential development of the site?

Please provide details

9. Does the proposer own or control any adjoining land?

Proposers of land must identify any adjoining land which they own or control. Proposers should explain their interest, and provide an up to date plan of the site, with the site edged in blue.

Accessibility

10. Is the site accessible from the existing public (adopted) highway?

Proponents should indicate Yes / No

If not, how will access to the existing public highway be obtained?

Proponents should indicate how access to the public highway is to be achieved.

A key consideration in recognising an appropriate site is whether it has an available access point with sufficient visibility. Site submissions should identify the location of the access point for the development, and how it integrates with the remainder of the site. Evidence should be submitted to express if any works are required to create adequate visibility, and if so, the mechanisms required to achieve it. This detail will be required for both small scale developments and housing allocations.

Environment, Infrastructure and Utilities

11. Is the site located within a flood risk zone as identified in the TAN 15 Development Advice Maps?

[NRW Flood Maps.](#)

In the first instance, the Council will not consider any highly vulnerable development sites which fall within C1 and C2 flood risk zones as delineated by TAN 15 flood maps.

If a site is located within a flood risk zone, it will be a matter for the landowner to provide the appropriate evidence to NRW to demonstrate to their satisfaction that the site is not subject to the identified flood risk.

Respondents should seek endorsement by Natural Resources Wales and require the amendment of the Development Advice Maps as part of the submission of the candidate site. This information will need to form part of the evidence base for the assessment of that site.

The Council will only consider these sites which have as a result of the evidence provided been omitted from the flood risk zones as delineated with the TAN15 Development Advice Maps.

Proponents of land can contact NRW for pre planning advice, which is a free service, and would offer enough information as to whether assessment (and what level) of a particular site is required. Further guidance on this service is available at [Link to the NRW website.](#)

12. Does the site have an available water connection, but if not, describe how these facilities will be obtained?

Proposers should indicate if the site has an available and viable water connection. If the site does not have a water connection, please identify how this could be achieved.

13. Does the site have a suitable sewerage connection?

Proposers should indicate yes or no

14. Are there any historic or archaeological features or designations affecting the site?

Proposers of land should identify if the development would negatively affect historic or archaeological features and designations. If so, please provide supporting information and explain how features within the site could be retained or enhanced.

15. Are there any landscape or ecological features / designations or protected species which may be impacted upon by the development of the site?

Proposers of land should identify if there are any landscape or ecological features or protected species which may be impacted upon by the development of the site. Site submissions should be accompanied by the checklist set out in Chapter 10 of the Nature Conservation and Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Guidance.

[Link to Nature Conservation and Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Guidance.](#)

16. Are there trees or hedgerows which may be impacted upon by the proposed development?

Promoters of land should identify if there are any trees or hedgerows which may be impacted upon by the proposed development. Submissions should include details of the scale of any impact, and the mitigation or otherwise that should be taken as part of the development

Viability

17. What would be the land value of the site if it was allocated for Gypsy and Traveller use?

In respect of land values, proposers of land should consider the value of their site that they believe could be achieved if it was allocated for the use being proposed. Consideration should be given to the site's location, surrounding land values, the type of development being considered and any abnormal costs which may impact on its value.

Other

18. If you have any further comments to make in support of the proposed site, please set them out here and/or securely append additional sheets or other evidence:

Please provide any further information which has not been covered in the previous questions, or collate as part of an overall supporting statement. The supporting statement may be uploaded at this point.

What will happen to your submission?

Your submission will be added to the Call for Gypsy and Travellers Site register which will be made available for public inspection. As such it should be noted that any submission and the information it contains **cannot be treated as confidential.**

The Council will assess all sites and will, where necessary, contact proposers for any additional information that may be required or for clarification on points made as part of the assessment process.

It should be emphasised that inviting the submission of sites and their inclusion within the Call for Gypsy and Traveller Sites register should not be interpreted as a commitment by the Council that such sites will be taken forward into the LDP or indeed that the Council will seek to purchase or enter into an agreement on such sites

The inclusion of your submission within the register will assist the Council in developing a robust evidence base and informing the preparation of the LDP.

In due course, an examination will be held, chaired by an independent Inspector, who will consider the soundness of the Plan. The Inspector will make binding recommendations and the LDP will be formally adopted.

Further details of the LDP timetable and the Plan making process as set out in the Revised Delivery Agreement can be viewed on the LDP pages on the Council's website. (www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk).