

Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Topic Paper

November 2024

Basildon Borough Council

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Basildon Council

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Introduction

The purpose of this topic paper is to provide an overview of the primary options available to the Council when considering the provision of new Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople pitches and plots within the Borough. It also provides a legislative and national policy context as well as case law that must be taken into account.

The Local Plan should reflect the housing needs for different groups in the community including Gypsy, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

Local Challenges

Basildon Borough has a relatively large Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population. As of 2023 Basildon Borough contained:

- 1 public sites (25 pitches);
- 55 private sites with permanent planning permission (106 pitches);
- No private sites with temporary planning permission;
- 21 sites that are tolerated for planning purposes (26 pitches). This means that the site does not have planning permission but it has been occupied for so long that it cannot have any enforcement action taken against the original occupants;
- 26 unauthorised sites (59 pitches);
- 3 Travelling Showmen's yards (15 plots);
- No public transit sites

A biannual caravan count is held each year. This only provides a 'snapshot' of a single day. The most recent Traveller Caravan Count in January 2024 recorded 32 caravans on socially rented sites; 335 caravans on sites with permanent permissions; 325 caravans on unauthorised sites; and 36 caravans on Travelling Showpeople's yards. As a point to note, the number of caravans does not directly correlate to the number of pitches or plots.

Basildon Borough has a high proportion of land which is of a Plotlands designation, most of which is also within the designated Green Belt. Plotland areas refer to small pieces of privately owned land laid out in regular plots on which a number of self-built settlements were established in the south-east of England from the late 1800s and up to the Second World war. They tend to be a mixture of developed plots interspersed with vacant plots covered in trees and vegetation. The development in Plotlands tends to be characterised by single storey bungalows or Chalets or caravans used for residential occupation. Plotland areas are very vulnerable to unauthorised development and tend to be attractive to the Gypsy and Traveller community who may buy land which they then develop for residential occupation of caravans. This frequently results in Planning Enforcement investigations and either a process of regularisation of development through a retrospective application or lengthy enforcement action and Appeals process. Currently there is a national backlog of cases awaiting appeal determinations by the Planning Inspectorate which can take as long as 12-18 months.

Another Local Challenge is that increasing caravans on Gypsy and Traveller sites are being rented privately to non-Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople households. The most recent Gypsy, and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2024 found that 23 private sites with planning permission were occupied by non-travellers. This is a growing problem in Basildon, and is also believed to be a national problem, where caravans on authorised or unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller plots are being used for the private rental market. Such occupants are frequently found

to be foreign nationals or other vulnerable individuals who are at risk. This issue has led to complaints from members of the public who see this activity as an abuse of the planning control system. Recent Enforcement actions in Basildon have involved a multi-agency approach including Police and Officers from the Home Office Immigration Service. Whilst enforcement action either for Breach of Conditions or by other enforcement measures can be undertaken; realistically, positive outcomes to return sites to Gypsy and Traveller use are not guaranteed and usually very challenging and time consuming to pursue. This can lead to a lack of confidence in the planning control system and can detrimentally affect public support for the provision of sites for Gypsies and Travellers in the borough.

Policy Context

Legislation and National Policy

Decision-making for policy concerning Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople sits within a complex legislative and national policy framework and this study must be viewed in the context of this legislation and guidance. For example, the following key pieces of legislation and guidance are relevant when developing policies relating to Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople:

- The Housing Act, 1985
- Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS), 2023
- The Housing and Planning Act, 2016
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2023
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), 2021

In addition, Case Law, Ministerial Statements, the outcomes of Local Plan Examinations and Planning Appeals, and Judicial Reviews need to be taken into consideration. Relevant examples have been included in this topic paper.

The primary guidance for undertaking the assessment of housing need for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople is set out in the PPTS (2023). It should be read in conjunction with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023. In addition, the Housing and Planning Act (2016) makes provisions for the assessment of need for those Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople households living on sites and yards who do not meet the planning definition – through the assessment of all households living in caravans.

Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) 2023

PPTS sets out the direction of Government policy. As well as introducing the planning definition of a Traveller, PPTS is closely linked to the NPPF. Among other objectives, the aims of the policy in respect of Traveller sites are (PPTS Paragraph 4):

- Local planning authorities should make their own assessment of need for the purposes of planning.
- To ensure that local planning authorities, working collaboratively, develop fair and effective strategies to meet need through the identification of land for sites.
- To encourage local planning authorities to plan for sites over a reasonable timescale.
- That plan-making and decision-taking should protect Green Belt from inappropriate development.
- To promote more private Traveller site provision while recognising that there will always be those Travellers who cannot provide their own sites.

- That plan-making and decision-taking should aim to reduce the number of unauthorised developments and encampments and make enforcement more effective.
- For local planning authorities to ensure that their Local Plan includes fair, realistic and inclusive policies.
- To increase the number of Traveller sites in appropriate locations with planning permission, to address under provision and maintain an appropriate level of supply.
- To reduce tensions between settled and Traveller communities in plan-making and planning decisions.
- To enable provision of suitable accommodation from which Travellers can access education, health, welfare, and employment infrastructure.
- For local planning authorities to have due regard to the protection of local amenity and local environment.

In practice, the document states that (PPTS Paragraph 9):

- Local planning authorities should set pitch targets for Gypsies and Travellers and plot targets for Travelling Showpeople, which address the likely permanent and transit site accommodation needs of Travellers in their area, working collaboratively with neighbouring local planning authorities.

PPTS goes on to state (Paragraph 10) that in producing their Local Plan, local planning authorities should:

- Identify and annually update a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years' worth of sites against their locally set targets.
- Identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15.
- Consider production of joint development plans that set targets on a cross-authority basis, to provide more flexibility in identifying sites, particularly if a local planning authority has special or strict planning constraints across its area (local planning authorities have a Duty- to-Cooperate on strategic planning issues that cross administrative boundaries).
- Relate the number of pitches or plots to the circumstances of the specific size and location of the site and the surrounding population's size and density.
- Protect local amenity and environment.

Local Authorities now have a duty to ensure a 5-year land supply to meet the identified needs for Traveller sites. However, PPTS also notes in Paragraph 11 that:

- Where there is no identified need, criteria-based policies should be included to provide a basis for decisions in case applications nevertheless come forward. Criteria-based policies should be fair and should facilitate the traditional and nomadic life of Travellers, while respecting the interests of the settled community.

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

The most recent version of the National Planning Policy Framework was issued in December 2023. Paragraph 62 of the NPPF sets out that in determining the minimum number of homes needed, strategic plans should be based upon a local housing need assessment conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance.

Paragraph 63 then states that: ‘Within this context of establishing need, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies. These groups should include (but are not limited to) those who require affordable housing; families with children; older people (including those who require retirement housing, housing- with-care and care homes); students; people with disabilities; service families; travellers; people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes’. The footnote to this section states that ‘Planning Policy for Traveller Sites sets out how travellers’ housing needs should be assessed for those covered by the definition in Annex 1 of that document.’

This essentially sets out that the needs of households that meet the planning definition should be assessed under the PPTS and that the needs of households that are not found to meet the planning definition should be assessed as part of the wider housing needs of an area.

In an Appeal Decision that was published in March 2020 for an appeal in Central Bedfordshire (APP/P0240/C/18/3213822) the Inspector concluded in relation to the then Paragraph 61 of the NPPF (now paragraph 62) that:

It seems to me that this wording makes clear that it is only those meeting that definition that should be included in an assessment of need for ‘planning definition’ travellers and that gypsies who have ceased travelling should be counted and provided for elsewhere and this is the approach proposed in the emerging Local Plan. This does not, of course mean that these gypsies should be allocated ‘bricks and mortar’ type housing. They will also need a suitable supply of caravan sites to meet their needs.

Case Law

In October 2022 the Court of Appeal handed down judgment in *Lisa Smith v The Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities* [2022] EWCA Civ 1391. The case was a challenge to a specific appeal decision and concerned whether the planning definition of Gypsies and Travellers contained in Annex 1 of the PPTS (2015) is discriminatory against Travellers who are settled and who no longer travel for work due to old age or disability. The Court of Appeal allowed the appeal and quashed the Inspectors decision from 2018 and referred the case back to The Secretary of State for redetermination.

Whilst certain parts of the PPTS planning definition of a Traveller were found to be discriminatory, as the PPTS 2015 itself was not the subject of the case it has not been quashed or declared unlawful at this time.

As a result of the Lisa Smith Judgement to Government made changes to the PPTS in December 2023 to reintroduce those who have ceased to travel permanently under the definition.

Local Policy Context

The Basildon District Local Plan Saved Policies 2007 sets out the local planning policies currently applied by the Council to guide development in the Borough. The Saved Policies 2007 does not include a policy for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation.

The Council is preparing a new Local Plan. The latest Local Development Scheme (LDS) covers the period 2024 - 2026 and sets out the timeframe for preparing a new Local Plan. The LDS is presented in Table 1 below. The next stage for the Local Plan is a Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan Consultation which is scheduled to commence for a period of eight weeks from the 18th November 2024 until 13th January 2025.

Table 1: Basildon Council LDS 2024 - 2026

Stages	Estimated Timescale
Regulation 18 - Preparation of a Local Plan (including consultation)	Consultation Winter 2024
Regulation 19 - Publication of a Local Plan (including consultation)	Consultation early Spring 2025
Regulation 22 - Submission of a Local Plan to the Secretary of State	Submission Summer 2025
Regulation 24 - Independent Examination	From Autumn 2025
Regulation 25 - Recommendation from the Independent Examiner	Received in Spring 2026
Regulation 26 - Adoption of the Local Plan.	Adoption Summer 2026

Regulation 18: Issues and Options Consultation

The Regulation 18 Issues and Options Consultation took place over a 10-week period, starting from Tuesday 27 June 2023 until Tuesday 5 September 2023.

The Regulation 18 Issues and Options Consultation provided the following information:

‘Basildon Borough also has a large Gypsy and Traveller community. Under the Housing and Planning Act 2016, local authorities have a duty to assess the housing needs of those residing in caravans. The Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) in conjunction with the NPPF also set out how the planning system should make provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.’

‘A key priority for the council is to identify new sites to accommodate its Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population. The latest assessment identifies a need for 85 Gypsy and Traveller pitches and 3 Travelling Showpeople plots over the period 2019-2038, for those meeting the planning definition (in essence those who have a nomadic habit of life). It also shows a need to provide 93 Gypsy and Traveller pitches and 86 Travelling Showpeople plots over the period 2019-2038 for those residing in caravans who no longer travel and therefore do not meet the planning definition. We will be reviewing our evidence to inform the new Local Plan.’

The Issues and Options Consultation document asked the following questions outlined in Table below, to help capture views on the key issues for the Borough, including improving access to Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation.

Table 2: Issues and Options Questions relating to Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation

Q31. Do you think allocating new sites would improve access to Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation? Select one option		
Yes		No
Q32. How should the Local Plan seek to meet the need for additional Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites in the borough? (Sort in order of importance with 1-most important and 5-least important).		
Expand existing sites.		
Allocate new sites (using Green Belt Locations).		
Allocate New Sites (using non-Green Belt Locations).		
Delivered as part of future housing and employment allocations i.e., develop mixed use sites.		
Granting Planning Permission to existing unauthorised sites.		
Other (please specify)		
Q33. Please explain the reason(s) for the option(s) you selected		

76 responses were received to the question ‘Do you think allocating new sites would improve access to Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation?’ (Q31). Respondents answered as follows:

- 60 responses answered no (79%); and
- 16 responses answered yes (21%)

Respondents were also asked to rank the following options for the question ‘How should the Local Plan seek to meet the need for additional Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites in the borough?’ (Q32). Table 3 sets out the number and percentage of respondents ranking each option as the first priority.

Table 3: Responses to Q32 of the I&O Consultation

Option	No of responses ranking as 1 st priority	Percentage of responses ranking as 1 st priority
Expand existing sites	48	67%
Other	13	6%
Allocate New Sites (using Non-Green Belt Locations)	6	8%
Granting Planning Permission to Existing Unauthorised Sites	4	5%
Delivered as part of future housing and employment allocations	1	1%
Allocate New Sites (using Green Belt Locations)	0	0%

Under the category of 'other', the following suggestions were received:

- Promoting the use of brownfield land - 3 responses;
- Promoting transit sites - 2 responses; and
- Promoting further council run sites - 2 responses.

Respondents were asked to 'Please explain the reason(s) for the option(s) selected' (Q33). Some respondents provided further information on the reason for these responses. The early review of responses indicates key issues around development within the Green Belt and consideration for further expansion of authorised sites.

Local Plan Next Steps

The views expressed during the I&O consultation alongside other evidence, including a targeted call for sites, will help inform future policy wording and new site allocations for an additional Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan consultation proposed in Spring 2025.

An Essex-wide GTAA Update has been undertaken by ORS to provide an assessment of current and future accommodation needs of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities in Essex. The update also seeks to address some of the challenges associated with obtaining data on undetermined households within the Borough and the occupation of pitches by non-travellers.

The new Local Plan will set the overall vision and framework for guiding future growth and development within the borough. The Plan will make provision for additional Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople pitches/plots through a comprehensive strategy which will improve the supply of sites for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation as required by the PPTS.

Need for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople pitches / plots

Gypsy Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (GTAA)

The Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) provides an up to date, robust assessment of need for new pitches and plots within the Borough

Basildon Council published a GTAA in August 2018¹. This identified a need for 47 Gypsy and Traveller pitches and 3 Travelling Showpeople yards.

Table 4: GTAA 2018

Years	2016-21	2021-26	2026-31	2031-2034	Total
Need-Gypsy and Traveller	32	5	6	4	47
Need-Travelling Showpeople	1	1	0	1	3

An updated report was published in June 2020². This identified a need for 68 Gypsy and Traveller pitches and 3 Travelling Showpeople yards.

Table 5: GTAA 2020

Years	2019-23	2024-28	2029-33	2034-38	Total
Need-Gypsy and Traveller	43	13	11	1	68
Need-Travelling Showpeople	1	1	1	0	3

A new GTAA has been published covering the period 2024 to 2042 which is available to view here: [Basildon - GTAA Report](#)

The GTAA has sought to understand the accommodation needs of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population in the Basildon Borough through a combination of desk-based research and engagement with members of the travelling community living on all known pitches/sites and plots/yards.

Through the GTAA and business as usual, ORS (the Council's appointed consultants) and officers have undertaken a number of site visits and interviews to ensure the need figures are robust. The Council is satisfied that the need figures are as set out below.

Total Need

The pitch needs for Gypsies and Travellers for the period 2024-2042 are set out below. Needs are set out for those households that met the 2023 PPTS planning definition of a Gypsy or Traveller; for any undetermined households where an interview was not able to be completed; and for

¹ [Basildon Council Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment - Jan 2018.pdf](#)

² [Basildon Council Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment GTAA Update Report - June 2020.pdf](#)

those households that did not meet the 2023 PPTS planning definition – although this is not a requirement for a GTAA. Only the need from those households who met the 2023 PPTS planning definition should be formally considered as need arising from the GTAA.

However, the GTAA recommends that the local proportion of those households who met the planning definition (77%) should be applied to the undetermined need when considering planning policies. Consequently, the need period over the years 2024 – 2042 is as follows:

Need for gypsy and traveller households that meet the planning definition = 127 pitches

Need for undetermined households = $0.77 \times 140 = 108$ pitches

$108 + 127 = 235$ pitches over the years 2024 – 2042

The plot needs for Travelling Showpeople for the period 2024-2042 are set as follows:

Need for Travelling Showpeople that meet the planning definition = 13 plots

Need for undetermined households = 0 pitches

= 13 pitches over the years 2024 – 2042

Table 6: Total Need

Gypsies and Travellers - Local %	GTAA	SHMA	TOTAL
Meet Planning Definition (+ 77% Undetermined)	235	0	235
Not meeting Planning Definition (+ 23% Undetermined)	0	67	67
TOTAL	235	67	302
Travelling Showpeople - Local %	GTAA	SHMA	TOTAL
Meet Planning Definition (+ 95% Undetermined)	13	0	13
Not meeting Planning Definition (+ 5% Undetermined)	0	1	1
TOTAL	13	1	14

Makeup of need

Gypsies and Travellers

Table 7 outlines the makeup of need for Gypsy and Traveller households. The GTAA indicates that there is a need from 25 pitches from households on unauthorised developments; 28 pitches from concealed/doubled-up/over-crowded households or single adults; 36 pitches from a 5-year need from teenage children; 4 households from in-migration; 3 households living roadside in the area; and 32 from new household formation using a rate of 1.35% derived from the household demographics. This is netted of against supply from 1 vacant pitch across public sites. Therefore, the overall level of need for those households who met the planning definition of a Gypsy or Traveller in Basildon is for 127 pitches over the GTAA period.

Table 7: Need for Gypsy and Traveller households in Basildon that met the Planning Definition

Supply of Pitches	
Available supply from vacant public and private pitches	1
Available supply from pitches on new sites	0
Pitches vacated by households moving to bricks and mortar	0
Pitches vacated by households moving away from the study area	0
Total Supply	1
Current Need	
Households on unauthorised developments	25
Households on unauthorised encampments	0
Concealed households/Doubling-Up/Over-Crowding	28
5 year need from teenage children	36
Movement from bricks and mortar	0
In-Migration/Roadside	7
Households on waiting lists for public sites	0
Total Current Need	96
Future Need	
Households on pitches with temporary planning permission	0
New household formation	32
<i>(Household base 146 and formation rate 1.35%)</i>	
Total Future Need	32
Net Pitch Need = (Current and Future Need – Total Supply)	127

The GTAA also identified a need for up to 26 households on unauthorised developments; modelled need for 35 pitches from concealed/doubled-up/over-crowded households or single adults; modelled need for 39 pitches from a 5-year need from teenage children; and 40 from new household formation, using the ORS national formation rate of 1.50%. If the locally derived proportion of households that met the planning definition (77%) were applied, this could result in a need for 108 pitches over the plan period.

Travelling Showpeople

Table 8 outlines the makeup of need for Travelling Showpeople households that meet the planning definition. The GTAA indicates that there is a need from 13 plots for households that met the planning definition. This is made up of 7 plots from concealed/doubled-up/over-crowded households or single adults; 1 plot from a 5-year need from teenage children; and 5 from new household formation, derived from the household demographics.

Table 8: Need for Travelling Showpeople households in Basildon that met the Planning Definition

Supply of Plots	
Available supply from vacant public and private plots	0
Available supply from plots on new yards	0
Plots vacated by households moving to bricks and mortar	0
Plots vacated by households moving away from the study area	0
Total Supply	0
Current Need	
Households on unauthorised developments	0
Households on unauthorised encampments	0
Concealed households/Doubling-Up/Over-Crowding	7
5 year need from teenage children	1
Movement from bricks and mortar	0
In-Migration/Roadside	0
Total Current Need	8
Future Need	
Households on plots with temporary planning permission	0
New household formation	5
<i>(Formation from demographics)</i>	
Total Future Need	5
Net Plot Need = (Current and Future Need – Total Supply)	13

Timescale of need

Table 9 outlines the timescale of need for Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople plots over the plan period, broken down into five-year periods.

The findings of the GTAA indicate that there is a need for 127 pitches for gypsies and travellers that met the planning definition and a need for up to 108 pitches for undetermined households over the period 2024 – 2042. The five-year need from 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2028 is 95 pitches for households that meet the planning definition and 77 pitches for undetermined households, or 172 pitches in total.

Additionally, the GTAA indicates that there is a need for 13 travelling Showpeople plots over the period 2024 – 2042, the five-year need from 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2028 is 8 plots.

Table 9: Timescale of Need

G&T - Local Travelling 77%	GTAA				HMA				TOTAL
	2024-28	2029-33	2034-38	2039-42	2024-28	2029-33	2034-38	2039-42	2024-42
Meet Definition (+77% undetermined)	172	22	23	18	0	0	0	0	235
Not Meet Definition (+23% Undetermined)	0	0	0	0	42	8	9	8	67
TOTAL	172	22	23	18	42	8	9	8	302
TSP - Local Travelling 95%	GTAA				HMA				TOTAL
	2024-28	2029-33	2034-38	2039-42	2024-28	2029-33	2034-38	2039-42	2024-42
Meet Definition (+95% undetermined)	8	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	13
Not Meet Definition (+5% Undetermined)	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
TOTAL	8	3	1	1	1	0	0	0	14

Supply and Delivery of Sites

Consents granted from the 1st April 2024

The consents outlined in Table 10 have been granted since the 1st April 2024 for gypsy and traveller pitches, contributing 3 pitches towards the 5 – year need, no consents have been granted for Travelling Showpeople plots since the base date of the 2024 GTAA. Windfall alone is insufficient to meet the 5 – year supply for Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation, 23 gypsy and traveller pitches have been granted consent since the publication of the GTAA update 2020 (including the consents listed below). Whilst the delivery of 23 pitches is comparatively substantial compared to other LPA's, this is inadequate when considering the extent of need required, particularly within the first 5 years. The Council is aware that it cannot demonstrate that a 5-year supply of deliverable pitches in line with national planning policy requirements and is seeking to address this through its emerging Local Plan.

The Council have been unable to identify a sufficient number of sites to meet the need arising from the GTAA and therefore will be undertaking a targeted call for sites exercise which is outlined below.

Table 10: Gypsy and Traveller sites granted consent since 1st April 2024

Site Name	Planning reference	No of pitches
The Paddocks, Grange Road	23/01267/FULL	1
Land adj. Studland Avenue	23/01093/FULL	1
Land West Of The Ashes Meadow Way	24/00473/FULL	1

Gardiners Lane South

Gardiners Lane South, was granted planning permission in October 2021 for a hybrid planning application (part detailed/part outline) for a mixed-use development comprising up to 700 new market and affordable homes, new commercial floorspace space, land for a new school, a new Sporting Community Hub, public open space, landscaping, sustainable urban drainage areas, new roads and highway works, car and cycle parking and associated infrastructure (20/01504/FULL). One of the planning obligations secured for this development via a Section 106 legal agreement is the provision of 10 Gypsy and Traveller pitches off-site within 5 years from the implementation of the development i.e., by 2026. If suitable pitches cannot however be provided within this timeframe, the applicant will make a financial contribution of £1,000,000 (which is estimated at a delivery cost of £100,000 per pitch) to assist the Council with providing the required number of pitches within the borough.

The developer on this site (Inland Homes), has entered administration, therefore these 10 pitches cannot currently be included within the 5-year supply as they are not currently deliverable. However, this remains a potential future source of pitches.

Potential for enforcement action to prevent the change of use of Gypsy and Traveller pitches

The most recent Gypsy, and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2024 found that 23 private sites with planning permission were occupied by non-travellers. Basildon Council is exploring

potential to carry out enforcement action to return these sites to Gypsy and Traveller use. This could deliver up to 23 pitches.

Future actions to meet the housing need of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople in Basildon Borough.

To meet future needs Basildon Council has identified five key actions.

- 1) To protect current sites from change of use.

To achieve this the emerging Local Plan would make the following policy requirement:

Planning permission will be refused for the change of use of all Gypsy and Traveller sites or Travelling Showpeople yards with planning permission unless acceptable replacement accommodation can be provided, or it can be demonstrated that the site is no longer required to meet any identified needs.

The Council is also exploring potential to carry out enforcement action to return sites which are being privately rented to non-travellers to Gypsy and Traveller use.

- 2) To consider if existing sites can be expanded and, for unauthorised sites, consider if existing site should be authorised to meet need.
- 3) To allocate new sites through the emerging Local Plan.

To identify any potential new sites a specific Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople 'call for sites' commenced on the 5th November 2024 and will run for a period of six weeks until the 17th December. The aim of the call for sites is to identify a supply of sites sufficient to meet the accommodation needs identified in the GTAA. All sites will be carefully assessed in the same way that general needs housing sites are considered.

- 4) Any applications for planning permission for Gypsy and Traveller sites must meet a local design and location criteria. The proposed criteria will be set in Local Plan policy. The draft criteria is as follows:
 - a. *be reasonably accessible to community services and facilities;*
 - b. *be of sufficient size to accommodate the proposed number of caravans, vehicles and ancillary areas;*
 - c. *have no significant adverse impact on the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside;*
 - d. *would not lead to the loss of, or adverse impact on, important historic and natural environment assets;*
 - e. *have no significant risk of land contamination or unacceptable risk of flooding;*
 - f. *have or be provided with safe and convenient vehicular access to the local highway network;*
have essential services (water, electricity and foul drainage) available on-site or can be made available on-site in accordance with relevant service provider standards.
- 5) To require through the emerging Local Plan delivery of new sites on future strategic housing and employment allocations.

Appendices

Basildon - GTAA Report