

Gypsy and Traveller Sites – Additional Site Search

Action 22: Appraise any relevant smaller private sites sifted out of Site Selection Methodology owing to site area being under 1ha, for use as additional Traveller sites. Include consideration of Council-owned Green Belt sites and any other sites promoted for Traveller use.

Method

1. The scope of the exercise comprises two main elements. The first focusses on consideration of small pieces of privately owned and Council land within the existing built-up area. The second element considers Council owned land within the Green Belt, in addition to other sites promoted for Traveller use.

Small Sites – urban area

2. Previous site selection carried out to identify potential locations for Gypsy and Traveller sites (see Site Selection Methodology CD56, part 3c and Appendix 4 and Planning for Travellers Topic Paper HS10) considered that sites for Gypsies and Travellers should ideally provide accommodation for between 10 – 20 pitches, or a size of between 1 – 2 hectares. Table 3 of the Planning for Travellers Topic Paper identifies the sites considered through the Site Selection process that were ruled out due to being too small.
3. Further work now carried out has considered whether there are options for delivering smaller Gypsy and Traveller sites within the urban area, including on privately owned sites. For this exercise 588 sites within the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) database were filtered to take account of the following factors:
 - a. Size. A lower site size threshold of 0.06 hectares used to reflect the minimum size required to accommodate one pitch, based on analysis of pitch size and screening at an existing site in the city.
 - i. Sites between 0.4 – 1 hectare were drawn from the list of sites appraised as potential site allocations in the Sheffield Plan that were in the Site Selection Methodology (CD56). [52 sites]
 - ii. Sites between 0.06 – 0.4 hectares were taken from the HELAA database. [536 sites]
 - b. Planning permission status
 - c. Land use – sites within the curtilage of existing residential dwellings were ruled out
 - d. Flood Zone – Sites falling within flood zone 3a and 3b were ruled out
 - e. Initial planning appraisal reviewed the extent and nature of existing uses on site and site access.
4. Following this, 18 sites remained, and further consideration was given to topography, a more detailed critique of access, neighbouring uses, ecology and historic environment. They were also considered against the sustainability Appraisal indicators (Stage 3a of Site Selection Methodology).
5. Following this no sites remained as reasonable alternatives.

Green Belt

6. Land in Council ownership within the Green Belt, in addition to land promoted in part for Travelling Showpeople use was considered. This comprised 31 land parcels in Council ownership with a lease, 19 without a lease and 1 privately owned promoted site.
7. No maximum size was applied to sites in the Green Belt on the basis that a small area of a larger land parcel could potentially be utilised.
8. Initial assessment considered whether land is in existing active use, and whether access to the site could reasonably be gained from the highway. Following this exercise 8 sites remained. As with sites in the urban area, planning appraisal was then carried out including taking account of topography, a more detailed critique of access, neighbouring uses, ecology and historic environment. They were also considered against the sustainability Appraisal indicators (Stage 3a of Site Selection Methodology).
9. For Council owned sites with a lease, the length and nature of lease was considered to determine whether land would have a realistic prospect of becoming available.
10. One promoted site, at Hesley Wood, was indicated as having potential for Travelling Showpeople if it could be brought forward as part of a larger, employment-led development. The site was not indicated as being available for other Gypsy and Traveller site use. The site lies within the Green Belt and is not considered to be previously developed; therefore, not falling within the scope of the spatial strategy for the Plan. Given that the Sheffield Plan proposes allocation of site SES03 for a Travelling Showpeople and Employment site, which is consistent with the spatial strategy, the land at Hesley Wood is not required as an alternative location for that use. As it is not available for Gypsy and Traveller site use, it is not a reasonable alternative location for that use.
11. Following this no sites within the Green Belt remained as reasonable alternatives.

Outputs

12. Following application of the criteria set out above, no suitable, available sites have been identified and we do not consider that there are any reasonable alternatives to provide additional sites for Gypsies and Travellers.