

SG SHN3: Gypsy and traveller sites

We will approve a site to accommodate a permanent or temporary halting place for gypsies and travellers, subject to other policies, if:

- 1) it meets an identified need and is located on a site that has been identified within the plan; OR**
- 2) a newly arising need can be proven.**

In either case the applicant must also demonstrate that:

- a) the site would not appreciably detract from the character or appearance of the area; AND**
- b) the site would not significantly detract from the amenity currently enjoyed by residents in the area; AND**
- c) the site can be sympathetically located in a secure environment and provided with essential services (in the case of halting sites: water connection, refuse facilities and portable toilet); AND**
- d) the location allows reasonable access to employment, education, community facilities and the main road network; AND**
- e) it has been demonstrated that the site will be properly managed.**

Reasoned Justification

The policy is to ensure development proposals for gypsy and traveller sites are located on land specifically for that purpose and are identified and allocated within the development plan. This ensures sites have been scrutinised within the development plan process and provides certainty to gypsies and travellers and settled communities. The policy will reduce the number of unauthorised encampments by meeting need identified and considered within the Housing Need and Demand Assessment and the Local Housing Strategy. It ensures that the policy can meet newly arising need as and when required, and also ensures demand for small privately owned sites can be considered against a relevant policy.

Travelling showpeople

The Housing Need and Demand Assessment and Local Housing Strategy confirm that travelling showpeople and gypsy travellers have different housing needs, and specific approaches to their needs require to be taken. In Aberdeenshire there is a long history of travelling showpeople using sites for temporary accommodation needs, having approached the Council with proposals. These sites are known traditional fairground sites, familiar to the Council and communities, and are used regularly on a seasonal basis. Occupancy of these sites is usually very temporary, transient and incidental to their primary uses as public open spaces. Should a proposal arise to make such a use more permanent in nature, then the above criteria would be used to judge their appropriateness.