

CP22 Traveller Accommodation

Provision will be made to meet **the city's needs for traveller accommodation**²²⁵.

The council will seek to deliver 16 permanent residential pitches to meet assessed needs for the period to 2016. Ongoing traveller accommodation needs will be reviewed. Any additional or outstanding requirements will be facilitated through site allocations in Part 2 of the City Plan or through joint working with adjacent local planning authorities.

In assessing the suitability of new traveller sites (or extensions to existing sites), the local planning authority will have regard to the following planning considerations and will need to be satisfied that:

- a) there is safe and convenient access to the road network;
- b) there is satisfactory access to local services and facilities (including health services, GPs, schools, shops);
- c) the potential for noise and other disturbance from the movement of vehicles to and from the site and any on-site business activities is not detrimental to the character and appearance of surrounding areas;
- d) there is scope for appropriate landscaping and planting to help give structure and privacy and to maintain visual amenity; and
- e) there is capacity to provide the necessary physical and social infrastructure (water, electricity, drainage, sanitation, play areas);
- f) the location of sites will not compromise the essential features of designated areas of landscape, historical or nature conservation protection including the South Downs National Park;

The following locations should be avoided:

- Sites on or near to significantly contaminated land, industrial processes or other hazards where there would be a detrimental effect on the general health and well-being of residents; and
- Sites in areas of high flood risk; and
- SACs, SPAs, Ramsar Sites and other areas with internationally recognised designations.

Existing traveller sites will be safeguarded. Proposals that would result in the loss of all or part of an existing site will be refused unless:

- a) the local planning authority is satisfied that the need for the provision of the site no longer exists; or
- b) the proposal complies with the policies in the development plan and a replacement site is to be provided in a suitable location.

Supporting text

²²⁵ The definition of traveller accords with the definition of Gypsies and Travellers as set out in government guidance 'Planning Policy for Traveller sites', March 2012.

4.219 The council's 'Traveller Strategy' aims to promote community cohesion and to protect the rights and needs of both the settled and travelling communities. The Strategy²²⁶ acknowledges that traveller communities have a right to a nomadic lifestyle, to equal access to services (such as education, health and accommodation) and to protection from discrimination and harassment. The city's Traveller Strategy together with government guidance and the local evidence base²²⁷ provide the appropriate context for planning to meet the accommodation needs of travellers either living in or passing through the city.

4.220 The city's local need for permanent (residential) pitch provision was established through the Partial Review of the South East Plan process (2007 – 2010). Technical work undertaken as part of that process provides a robust evidence base for the local need for permanent pitch provision in the period to 2016. This establishes a need for 16 pitches to be provided in Brighton & Hove. This is additional to the short term transit site provision²²⁸ that the council currently makes at the Horsdean site just north of the A27. There is no local evidence of any need for Travelling Showpeople plots in the city²²⁹.

4.221 The council has undertaken a comprehensive site search exercise and has identified a site to accommodate its permanent need requirements to 2016²³⁰. As the site falls within the boundaries of the South Downs National Park, a planning application will be made to, and determined by, the South Downs National Park Authority.

4.222 Beyond this, levels of need for both permanent and transit site provision²³¹ will clearly need to be kept under review and updated through further local assessments of the need for traveller accommodation. The council will work with its adjacent local planning authorities to secure the provision of suitable sites should it not prove to be possible to identify sites within the City.

4.223 Government planning guidance also advises that plans should set out the relevant planning criteria and considerations for the location of traveller sites which may be used to guide the allocation of sites and to assess any planning applications that may come forward. These criteria can be used to meet unexpected demand for sites and to assist the city council in granting planning consent for suitable applications in advance of the formal adoption of Local Plan Documents.

4.224 There is a need to ensure that all sites (whether new or existing/improved):

- are sustainable, easy to manage and maintain;
- are of a decent standard, equitable to that which would be expected for affordable housing in the settled community; and
- support harmonious relations between gypsies and travellers and the settled community.

²²⁶ Traveller Commissioning Strategy 2012, Strategy March 2012.

²²⁷ Local evidence base consists of the East Sussex and Brighton & Hove Gypsy and Traveller Study as benchmarked, audited and amended through the Partial Review of the South East Plan process (2007 – 2010) and further needs assessment exercises.

²²⁸ Transit site provision – Horsdean provides 23 pitches for temporary accommodation for up to 3 months.

²²⁹ Draft Panel Report, Examination in Public of Partial Review of the South East Plan, 2010.

²³⁰ Site Search exercise and selection of preferred site was reported to the Council's Cabinet Meeting, 15th March 2012.

²³¹ Transit site provision relates to temporary provision and may include stopping places rather than additional formal transit provision

4.225 Any sites considered for allocation in Part 2 of the City Plan will be subject to consultation and have their social, environmental and economic impacts assessed in accordance with the requirements of the sustainability appraisal.