

Gypsy and Traveller Sites Candidate Site Call

Draft Site Assessment Methodology

1. Introduction

This paper sets out the Vale of Glamorgan Council's proposed approach to undertaking a general 'Call' for candidate sites and assessment methodology in order to meet the need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation identified in the Vale of Glamorgan Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2016 (GTAA).

The approach and assessment methodology will be used to identify and select the most appropriate site(s) to provide suitable and deliverable site to meet the identified need in accordance with the Council's statutory obligations under section of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014.

2. Legislative and Policy Background

There are a range of policy and guidance documents on this topic and the most relevant are outlined below by way of background.

Housing (Wales) Act 2014 - sections 102 and 103 the places a legal duty upon local authorities to ensure that the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers are properly assessed and that the identified need for pitches is met.

Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013 – Section 56 of the Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013 gives local authorities the powers to provide sites for the accommodation of Gypsies and Travellers, working space and facilities for the carrying on of activities normally carried on by them.

Planning Policy Wales Edition 10 (December 2018) (PPW) - sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government (WG) and directs that local authorities are required to assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and where a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) identifies an unmet need, a planning authority should allocate sufficient sites in their development plan to ensure that the identified pitch requirements can be met (Para 4.2.35 refers).

Welsh Government Circular 30/2007 'Planning for Gypsy and Caravan Sites' (December 2007) provides guidance to local authorities in Wales on the planning aspects of finding suitable sites for Gypsies and Travellers. It requires that where a GTAA identifies an unmet need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in an area, Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) should allocate sufficient sites in LDPs to ensure that the identified pitch requirements for residential and transit use can be met.

Draft Welsh Government Circular (February 2017) 'Planning For Gypsy, Traveller and Showpeople Sites' will replace Welsh Government Circular 30/2007 'Planning for Gypsy and Caravan Sites' and provides advice on considerations for Local Authorities when planning to meet the need for Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation.

The Vale of Glamorgan Local Development Plan 2011-2016 (LDP) identified a site at Llangan to meet the short term need for accommodation with further provision in the LDP monitoring framework to identify a further site or sites to meet the longer term need for 18 pitches (Policies MG5 and MD18 refer).

Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites (May 2015) is a Welsh Government document intended as a guide to Local Authorities in providing appropriate services at reasonable

cost to the public purse for Gypsies and Travellers living on residential sites in Wales. It contains practical guidance to assist Local Authorities to ensure their sites are fit-for-purpose.

Managing Gypsy and Traveller Sites (May 2015) has been prepared by the Welsh Government to encourage and support the sharing of good practice and consistent approaches to managing accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers.

Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites (2008) is a Welsh Government guide to help Gypsies and Travellers plan their caravan sites.

The Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 places a duty on the Council to take reasonable steps in exercising its functions to meet its sustainable development (or wellbeing) objectives. The preparation of this report and the site assessment has been prepared in consideration of the Council's duty and the "sustainable development principle", as set out in the 2015 Act. The Council has sought to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

3. **Need for Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation**

Part 3 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 requires local authorities in Wales undertake a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) and to make provision for sites where the assessment identifies an unmet need for mobile home pitches.

The GTAA is to be prepared in accordance with guidance produced by the Welsh Government and provides a robust and credible evidence base to further the understanding of gypsy and traveller accommodation needs in each local authority area.

The latest Vale of Glamorgan Council GTAA was prepared by Opinion Research Services Ltd on behalf of the Council in 2016 and was formally approved by the Welsh Ministers in accordance with the provisions of section 102 of the Housing (Wales) Act on the 28th March 2017.

The GTAA identified a short term need in the Vale of Glamorgan (up to 2021) for 2 additional pitches, and in the longer term (up to 2026) a need for a further 18 pitches. This gives a total need for the whole LDP period to 2026 of 20 pitches. The GTAA identified that there was currently no requirement for transit provision within the Vale of Glamorgan but that the Council should continue to monitor the number of unauthorised encampments and consider the use of short-term toleration or Negotiated Stopping Arrangements to deal with short term transient stops.

The Vale of Glamorgan Local Development Plan 2011-2026 (LDP) was formally adopted by the Council on the 28th June 2017 and includes Policy MG5 which makes provision for a 2 pitch gypsy and traveller site at Llangan on a site in the ownership of the Council to meet the short to medium term accommodation needs of gypsy and travellers identified within the GTAA up to 2021.

The LDP Monitoring Framework sets out a 2 year timetable for the identification of an appropriate site to accommodate the additional 18 pitches that the GTAA has found

will be required by 2026 and includes the establishment of a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Board (the Board) to oversee the identification and delivery of the site (Appendix 1 refers).

Initial work undertaken by the Board including investigations into Council owned land and approaches to large land owners in the Vale have proved unsuccessful in identifying a suitable gypsy and traveller site. Therefore it is now recommended that a general 'Call' for candidate sites for use as a gypsy and traveller site is an appropriate way forward.

The assessment methodology set out below will be used to fully assess sites submitted through the candidate site call.

4. Site Size

Welsh Government Circular 30/2007 states that it is not considered appropriate to set a national maximum size for a site, but that sites should be considered in context and in relation to the local infrastructure and population size and density to ensure they do not dominate local settled communities.

As a minimum, the Good Practice Guide in Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites in Wales, states that each pitch should be capable of accommodating a range of specific facilities including an amenity block, large trailer, touring caravan and parking for two vehicles. Where additional space permits the inclusion of children's play space is considered essential. In general, pitches should include inter alia, the following:

- A service unit connected to water supply, drainage, electricity and other services/facilities;
- A hard surfaced level area with drainage falls;
- Provision for drying clothes;
- A lockable shed for tools, bikes, extra storage;
- A suitable container for domestic refuse and/or access to container for bulkier waste;
- A distribution of electricity hook-up points to allow for the different positioning of caravans and trailers;
- A way of securing caravans and trailers during high winds such as steel rings laid in concrete which would allow ropes to be threaded through and secured to keep caravans and trailers from being buffeted by the wind;
- Hook up to drains and sewage systems; and Alleviation from flood risk.

Through engagement with the occupiers of the Hayes Road site, it has been made clear that the Welsh Government guidance on formal pitch provision does not accurately meet their requirements and aspirations for how they would like to live on the site, for example, they have indicated a desire for more informal / organic arrangements and some shared / communal facilities and this will be taken into account at Stage 3 of the assessment process set out below.

For the purposes of the 'Call for Candidate Sites', an appropriate pitch size has been determined to be between 400 - 450 square meters which would equate to a requirement for a site of approximately 0.81 hectares. It is considered prudent to

consider the possible development of multiple sites to meet the need identified in the GTAA. In this regard it is considered appropriate, to set the minimum site size threshold at 0.5 hectares.

5. Methodology

While there is no prescribed methodology or timescale for a 'Call for candidate sites' specifically for gypsy and traveller sites, a general candidate site process is specifically identified within the Local Development Plan Manual Edition 3 (Draft June 2019).

As in previous editions of the LDP manual, a 'Call' for candidate sites is a core component of the LDP plan making process and while no specific details are provided, various elements are specified within the manual as being necessary components to a successful call for candidate sites such as the use of a prescribed form specifying the information required to ensure that information is gathered in a consistent and comprehensive manner. While there is no specific time period for the 'call for sites' stage, the Welsh Government suggests a minimum consultation period of six weeks when calling for candidate sites. It is therefore considered that these elements should also form a part of any 'Call' for gypsy and traveller sites.

The following process is therefore proposed:

- Prepare a candidate site form for use in the call for sites;
- Place an advertisement in local newspapers circulating in the Vale of Glamorgan on two consecutive weeks. The advert will outline the 'call' process, the timeframe during which sites must be submitted and where further information and submission forms can be obtained – a copy of the suggested advertisement is attached at Appendix 5;
- Place all relevant information relating to the 'Call' for candidate sites, including the requisite submission form, on the Council's web pages for the duration of the defined six week period;
- Use social media and posters in main Council offices to promote the call for candidate site process; and
- Write to a range of interested parties, individuals, companies and large landowners present in the Vale of Glamorgan advising them of the 'Call' for candidate gypsy and traveller sites and of the opportunity to submit sites.
- Undertake site assessment process in line with the assessment methodology set out within this paper.

Candidate Site Form

The Welsh Government suggests that LPAs should invite the submission of candidate sites on a standard form which specifies the information required to ensure it is gathered in a consistent and comprehensive manner.

While all sites submitted will be subject to a full and thorough assessment initially, information required on the candidate Site submission form will be limited to information necessary to identify the site location, any major constraints and all relevant contact details of the individuals/owners submitting the site. A proposed Candidate Site form is attached at Appendix 2.

Candidate Site Register

All sites submitted for consideration within the timeframe will be compiled into a Candidate Site Register. The register will be made available for inspection on the Councils web pages and will include basic information on the site including, its location, size and current use. A page from the Councils previous Candidate Site Register (initial Call for LDP Candidate Sites Register May 2007) is attached as Appendix 4 which will form the basis for the gypsy and traveller candidate site register.

Assessment of Submitted Sites

All sites submitted will be subject to a three stage assessment.

Stage 1 Assessment

The Stage 1 assessment will involve an initial desk-based assessment of the sites using a simple 'traffic lights' system which assesses sites against a range of general constraints e.g. environmental designations, policy designations etc. This will highlight any constraints or issues that might prevent the use of the site as proposed e.g. C2 flooding or issues which might require furthermore detailed considerations in order to fully consider their possible impacts. The traffic light system would operate as follows:

- Green - no issues or constraints identified.
- Amber - issues or constraints identified, however these might be able to be mitigated and would not necessarily prevent the site from being developed - further investigations are warranted.
- Red - major issues and constraints identified which would prevent the site from being developed no further investigations considered necessary.

The proposed stage 2 assessment form is attached at Appendix 3.

Stage 2 Assessment

Any sites which progress as amber or green from the initial evaluation will be subject to a second more detailed assessment involving more robust investigations into any issues identified within Stage 1. This will include seeking detailed comments from internal departments and external agencies on the site, the proposed use and any issues identified including considerations against national and local planning policies. Any sites that have major issues and /or constraints identified at this stage which would prevent the site from being developed will be discounted at this stage.

Stage 3 Assessment

The final stage of the assessment process will involve an assessment of the remaining sites against the Councils Sustainability Assessment Framework (SA) which was developed during the scoping stage of the LDP preparation and remains relevant. The Framework consists of 15 environmental, economic and social Sustainability Objectives which when taken considered together provide an overall indication of the sustainability of the LDP or a site.

A further qualitative assessment will be undertaken to identify a preferred site, including consideration of (in no particular order) the needs and desires of the Traveller community, the potential integration with nearby communities and / or businesses, the deliverability of the site, the suitability to meet identified and potential future need, and value for money.

Assessment Conclusions/Recommendations

Once fully assessed, should a site ultimately be considered suitable for development as a gypsy and traveller site, the Strategic Housing Board will further consider the merits of the site and recommend a future programme of works to progress the site through the development process e.g. planning permission, funding etc.

Appendix 1: Extract from the Vale of Glamorgan Local Development Plan 2011 – 2026 Monitoring Framework.

Ref No.	Indicator – Core / Local	Monitoring Target	Trigger Point	Relevant Policies/SA Objectives	Data Source
7.5	LOCAL: Meeting the identified future need for authorised Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation.	Establish a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Board	By June 2016	Strategic Policies: SP1 Managing Growth /Development Policies: MD18	VOGC / GTAA
		Agree project Management arrangements including reporting structure.	By end of June 2016		
		Make initial contact and maintain contact with the Hayes Road occupiers.	July 2016 to May 2018		
		Agree methodology for undertaking site search and assessment.	By end of December 2016		
		Undertake a site search and assessment and secure approval of findings including identification of an appropriate site or sites and secure planning permission and, if appropriate, funding (including any grant from Welsh Government) for the identified site.	By end of May 2018		

Appendix 2: Candidate Site Form



For Office use only

Submission No.

Date Received.....

Vale of Glamorgan Council
Initial Call for Candidate Sites
Gypsy and Traveller Sites

Data Protection

How your candidate site submission and the information that you give us will be used.

All information submitted will be seen in full by the Vale of Glamorgan Council staff dealing with the search for a gypsy and traveller site. Your name, the site details and the information provided as provided on this form will be published in a Candidate Site Register that will be made available for inspection on the Councils web site.

To assist you in making representations, an electronic version of this form can be completed online at www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/ldp.

Please complete a separate candidate site form for each site that you wish to submit for consideration. All candidate site forms submitted **MUST** be accompanied by a clear Ordnance Survey Plan at an appropriate scale (1:1250, 1:2500). The submitted candidate site boundary should be clearly illustrated by a red line.

Additional candidate site forms can be obtained from the Policy LDP Team on 01446 700111 or may be downloaded from the Council's web site at: www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/ldp or you may photocopy this form.

When making comments please use additional sheets as required clearly numbering each consecutive sheet.

This document is available in other formats upon request
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Part 1: Contact Details (the Proposer)

	Your Details / Your Client's Details	Agent's Details (if relevant)
Name		
Address		

Postcode		
Telephone No.		
Email Address		

Part 2a: About the Site.

Site Name			
Site Address			
Post Code			
Grid Ref	Easting		Northing
Site size (Ha)			
Current Site Use			
Surrounding Uses			

Part 2b: Utilities – Does the site have/is the site capable of connecting to these utilities?

	Yes	No	Additional comments/further details
Mains Water Supply	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Mains Electrical Supply	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Mains Gas Supply	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Mains Sewerage System	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Part 2c: Site Ownership

	Yes	No
Is the site wholly in the ownership of the proposer?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If No, are all of the other land owners aware of this submission?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If multiple land owners are involved please provide contact details of all additional landowners not specified in Part 1 above.	
Additional Owner 1	
Additional Owner 2	
Additional Owner 3	

Part 2d: Sustainability Issues.			
	Yes	No	Additional comments/further details
Are there any physical constraints affecting the site e.g. topography, access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the site subject to flooding?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any known ecological interests on the site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is there a possibility of contamination at the site resulting from previous land uses?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the site affected by known bad neighbour issues e.g. railway lines, heavy industry, power lines?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are public transport services available in close proximity to the site e.g. within 500m?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Part 3: Additional Information in support of the site.
<p style="text-align: right;"><i>Please use additional sheet if necessary.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Please state how many additional sheets have been used.....</i></p>

Signed:		Dated:	
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THANK YOU FOR THE INFORMATION ON THE CANDIDATE SITE

Completed Candidate Site forms should be returned to the LDP Team either:

ONLINE: By completing the electronic form at www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/ldp

BY EMAIL: To ldp@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

BY POST: By sending to: The LDP Team, Vale of Glamorgan Council, Dock Office, Barry Docks, Barry, CF63 4RT

**CANDIDATE SITE FORMS SHOULD BE RETURNED BY NO LATER THAN
5.00 pm on the [date]**

FORMS RECEIVED AFTER THIS TIME WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED

Please remember to attach an Ordnance Survey plan at an appropriate scale (1:2500, 1:1250) clearly outlining in red the boundary of the candidate site proposed.


One form should be completed for each candidate site submitted.

NOTE: candidate sites submitted as a part of this process will only be considered against the Councils need to identify a suitable gypsy and traveller site. Any acceptance of the site for this use will not indicate/imply that the site may be considered suitable for alternative uses e.g. market housing.


Appendix 3 Example Site Assessment Table

Site Name	Site ID			Level
Site Address				
Site Area (ha)				
Ward				
Grid Ref	Easting		Northing	
Current Use				
Surrounding Uses				
Topography				
Ownership	Single	<input type="checkbox"/>	Multiple	<input type="checkbox"/>
Site Constraints				
Flooding				
SSSI				
Quarry / Quarry Buffer Zone				
Green Wedge				
Access				
Surface Water Flooding				
GHC				
SLA				
Listed Buildings				
PROW				
SINC				
Conservation Area				
Ancient Woodland				
Ancient Monument				
Agricultural Land				
TPO				
Other LDP Designations				
Other Designations				
Availability of Utilities				
Mains Water				
Mains Electricity				
Mains Gas				
Mains Sewerage				
Departmental Comments				
Property				
Legal Services				
Leisure				
Regeneration				
General				
Overall Assessment				
	No constraints identified which might affect the development of the site for the proposed use.			
	Some constraints identified which could affect the development of the site for the proposed use. Further assessment required to ascertain whether these issues could be mitigated to enable the development of the site.			
	Constraint identified which would prevent the development of the site. No further assessment deemed necessary.			


Appendix 4: Candidate Site Register Example



Local Development Plan Candidate Site Register
(as at 31st May 2007)



Map:



Site ID No: 2570/CS. 1

Ward: Cadoc

Area:(Ha) 3.685

Site Location: land at Pencoedtre, North East Barry.

Existing Use: Agriculture

Proposed Use: Residential

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Easting: 312378 Northing: 170467

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Appendix 5: Candidate Site Press Notice

LAND REQUIRED FOR A GYPSY AND TRAVELLER SITE

VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

INVITATION TO SUBMIT CANDIDATE SITES FOR GYPSY AND TRAVELLER ACCOMODATION

The Vale of Glamorgan Local Development Plan 2011 – 2026 was adopted in June 2018 and includes a commitment in the approved Monitoring Framework to identify a suitable site for gypsy and travellers to accommodate the need identified in the Councils Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2016.

The Council is therefore making a 'Call' for candidate sites in order to provide for a gypsy and traveller site within the county and is inviting developers, landowners and other interested parties to identify land to nominate candidate sites for use as a gypsy and traveller site.

The 'Call' for sites will be open from [DATE] and will run until 5 p.m. on [DATE].

Candidate sites should be submitted on the Candidate Site Form which is available from the Council's web pages at www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/LDP or from the Council's Dock Office, Barry.

All candidate sites submitted must be at least 0.5 hectares in area.

Completed Forms should be returned by no later than [DATE] to:

The LDP Team
Docks Office
Barry Docks
Barry
CF63 4RT

E mail: ldp@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

Further information is available on the Councils web site at www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/LDP or by contacting the LDP Team on 01446 704665.