



# Gypsy and Traveller Site Design and Layout

## Supplementary Planning Guidance- Adopted 22 February 2017

This document was produced by the Planning Policy Team of East Devon District Council and Adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document on 22 February 2017 . The Planning Policy Team can be contacted on 01395 571533 or by email at [localplan@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:localplan@eastdevon.gov.uk)

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# 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 East Devon District Council has produced this Gypsy and Traveller Site Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to provide guidance to help inform and determine planning applications for Gypsy and/or Traveller sites. It will set out guidance on pitch size, site layout and design, and provides further guidance to the Local Plan Policy H7. The SPD will apply to the whole of East Devon District.
- 1.2 This SPD should be read alongside the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Guidance (NPPG), and 'Planning policy for traveller sites (Aug 2015)', the adopted East Devon Local Plan 2013-2031, and relevant policies in adopted Neighbourhood Plans or Orders. It has also been informed by other planning documents and technical evidence, including the Devon Partnership 'Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (2015)' and best practice on sites in East Devon and surrounding Authorities.
- 1.3 The SPD draws significantly upon the Government's 'Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites Good Practice (2008)' which has been superseded by 'Planning policy for traveller sites (Aug 2015)'. The good practice guidance was based upon extensive research with the Gypsy and Traveller communities and contained considerable detail relating to site specific considerations and has proved useful in reaching planning decisions in East Devon.
- 1.4 The SPD will be produced in accordance with the following process:

SPD Process stage	What is involved?
<p><b>Stage 1</b> Development of evidence base</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of the issues and collection of the information needed to prepare the SPD</li> <li>• Engagement with relevant stakeholders to decide on content and level of detail of the SPD</li> </ul>
<p><b>Stage 2</b> Drafting of the SPD (Regulation 12 of Local Plan Regulations 2012)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drafting of SPD</li> <li>• Consultation with stakeholders and members of the public</li> <li>• Minimum of 4 weeks consultation</li> </ul>
<p><b>Stage 3</b> Finalisation of the SPD and supporting documents</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal consideration of points raised in Stage 2.</li> <li>• Amendment of the SPD as required and finalisation of the supporting documents in light of consultation.</li> <li>• Potentially further consultation</li> </ul>
<p><b>Stage 4</b> Adoption of SPD by the Council (Regulation 14 of local Plan Regulations 2012)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report to Strategic Planning Committee (for ratification by Cabinet). If Cabinet agree, then EDDC can adopt the SPD and produce an Adoption Statement</li> </ul>

- 1.5 The SPD will be regularly reviewed, and updated as necessary, to ensure it remains consistent and in conformity with National policy and legislation and emerging Development Plan Documents comprising East Devon's Local Plan.
- 1.6 This draft SPD will be subject to a minimum 6 week public consultation. It will be advertised on the Council's website and through press releases. Statutory consultees, Parish Councils, District Councillors and potentially interested parties (Including Gypsies and Travellers) on the Council's database will be informed. Copies of the SPD will be available online, through Parish Councils, at EDDC Offices and in local libraries.
- 1.7 Depending on the responses to the consultation, the document may need to be amended and a further consultation undertaken. All comments received will be considered and recorded. A final document will then be published and adopted (in line with Regulation 14 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012).

## District Wide Pitch Numbers and Distribution

- 1.8 A site is the area of land on which pitches are located, and In East Devon most existing sites are small in terms of numbers of pitches (less than 5 pitches), with the largest being 17 pitches (12 permanent and 5 transit). A shared site is a site occupied by more than one Gypsy or Traveller family.
- 1.9 A **pitch** is the space required to accommodate one household and will vary depending on the size of the household in the same way that house sizes vary depending on the needs of the settled population. The number of caravans on a pitch could be considered comparable to the bedrooms in a house. Best practice in the District, supported by the needs assessment, suggests that typical permanent pitches should be capable of accommodating an amenity building, a large trailer and touring caravan (or two trailers), drying space for clothes, a lockable shed, parking space for two vehicles and a small garden.
- 1.10 The needs assessment identifies how many pitches are required across the District between 2014 and 2034 and is the main source of evidence used in this report. In order to align with the East Devon Local Plan end-date, the projected need has been adjusted to run from 2014- 2031 and reflects the 6 permanent pitches granted permission since the assessment was carried out (previously the need was for 34 pitches, 22 of which were needed in the first 5 years). The key requirements for new sites:
  - 28 new Gypsy and/or Traveller pitches are needed between 2014- 2031
  - Of these 28 pitches, 16 are needed in the first 5 years (up to 2019)
  - 3 new Travelling Showpeople pitches are needed between 2014- 2031 (no change from the 3 required between 2014-2034)
  - Of these 3, only 1 is needed in the first 5 years (up to 2019).The family owned and occupied site from which this need arises is only partially developed and could potentially accommodate this need, so further Travelling Showpeople sites are not specifically addressed in this SPD.

- 5 emergency stopping places/transit sites, each comprising 5 pitches, are required across the Devon study area. No specific East Devon need has been identified, however provision will be made should suitable sites come forward.
- 20 Bricks and Mortar houses are required between 2014-2031 (or 23 from 2014-2034), these will be met from the general housing stock and are not addressed in this SPD.



*Above left, an authorised site at Haldon Hill in Devon financed by a Government grant, above right, an unauthorised, but tolerated site, in Devon*

- 1.11 According to the Needs Assessment, and evidence from the Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Service provided by Devon County Council, most of the need arising in the first five years will come from newly formed families on existing sites in the District. Most of this need is immediate, from families already living in overcrowded accommodation or wishing to start their own families but lacking space to do so. As most existing sites are located to the west of the District, around Exeter, this is the area where most new pitches will be required.
- 1.12 The Needs Assessment predicts the overall number of permanent pitches required but doesn't differentiate between types of Gypsy and/or Traveller who require them, instead pitches should be able to accommodate the typical basic needs of anyone falling under the Government's Traveller definition. Having said that, the Council recognises that similar ethnic groups prefer to share sites and that, whilst their fundamental space and amenity needs will be the same or similar, cultural preferences may differ eg, New Travellers may prefer soft landscaping, informal boundaries between pitches and renewable energy sources whilst Romany Gypsies may prefer formal landscaping and highly secure pitches which require minimal maintenance whilst they are travelling. Where an application proposes pitches for a specific occupier their needs and cultural preferences should be taken into account at the outset, whilst being flexible enough to accommodate other future occupiers. The requirements for transit pitches are set out at the end of this document.
- 1.13 The East Devon Local Plan makes provision for up to 30 pitches as part of a future expansion of Cranbrook, but it does not allocate specific areas of land (at Cranbrook or elsewhere in the District) for new pitches. Instead it contains Policy H7 which will be used, along with other relevant policies, to assess planning applications for new pitches as and when they arise. These other Policies include, for example, Strategy 46, which requires development to be in keeping with the local character<sup>1</sup>. Policy H7 is set out overleaf.:

<sup>1</sup>[http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural\\_environment/landscape/devon-character-areas/dca-east-devon.htm](http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/devon-character-areas/dca-east-devon.htm)

## Local Plan Policy H7 - Sites for Gypsies and Travellers:

In the period up to 2034, 37 Gypsy and Traveller pitches and 3 plots for travelling showpeople should be provided. During the first 5 years, from 2014-2019, at least 22 of the Gypsy and Traveller pitches should be provided and 1 of the travelling showpeople's plots (with this to be accommodated on an existing permitted site with spare capacity at Clyst St Mary).

Planning permission for a permanent or transit sites for Gypsies and Travellers will be granted if the proposal satisfies all of the following requirements:

1. It has a satisfactory relationship with other neighbouring land uses.
2. It has acceptable vehicular access and provision for on-site turning, parking and servicing.  
  
(There is no criterion 3- this was deleted during the Local Plan process)
4. It contains satisfactory proposals for screening and landscaping.
5. It has no significant adverse impact on the appearance or character of the landscape or amenity of occupiers of neighbouring properties and any impacts will be mitigated to an acceptable level.
6. In respect of proposals outside Built-up Area Boundaries, the local East Devon need has been proven and cannot be met elsewhere In the District.
7. Where sites already exist within the locality, new pitches should be accommodated through expansion/ increased use of these existing sites though as smaller sites can be more acceptable, site size restrictions could be applicable to ensure sites do not become too large. Where it is not possible to expand/intensify existing sites, the cumulative impacts of additional sites, particularly on the character of the local area and existing community, will be taken into account in addition to other considerations.

Permanent sites should be conveniently located for access to existing community services and facilities and within 30 minutes travel time by public transport, walking or cycling of a primary school.

- 1.13 As well as these overarching locational considerations, there are also a number of issues specific to the design of Gypsy and Traveller sites which are not covered in detail in the Local Plan. A design policy is needed to establish what the Council expect to see in terms of the design and layout of new sites although it is acknowledged that, as all sites will have different characteristics, it will need to be applied with a degree of flexibility. The policy will include criteria relating to the quality of a site and facilities that it must include in order to meet the needs of the Gypsy and Traveller communities. The policy would apply to all sites seeking to gain planning permission, whether allocation or windfall.

## 2.0 Permanent Site Requirements

### Number of pitches per site

- 2.1 The needs assessment suggests that sustainable, small, family sized sites are usually preferred by Gypsies and Travellers and that larger sites should not exceed 15 pitches. This is supported by Government research (Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites (2008)) which found that residents and site managers alike considered 15 pitches to be the maximum conducive to providing a comfortable environment which is easy to manage. Larger sites are also more likely to impact upon the settled community, and integrate with existing residents to a lesser degree.



*Early in 2012, the Homes and Communities Agency allocated £1.2m to provide a 15 pitch, 0.8 ha, traveller site at Haldon Ridge, in Teignbridge. The site has been open since early December, 2014 and the new site consists of residential traveller pitches with individual utility blocks that have a shower, toilet and small kitchen area, as well as a storage shed.*

*The site is laid out in an 'H' pattern with a central area of communal open space and communal allotment areas and compost bins around the site. A refuse collection point is located at the entrance to the site, beside a community building which includes space for the site Manager and a large meeting room for use by residents. This building and the individual amenity buildings are designed to be low impact in terms of visual intrusion and are all finished in natural timber with a slate roof to be consistent with the woodland character of the site*



## Pitch size and space requirements

- 2.2 There is no minimum pitch site area specified in Government guidance, however for practical reasons, caravan sites require a greater degree of land usage per family than bricks and mortar housing. Most permanent pitches in East Devon are at least 500m<sup>2</sup>, or 20 dwellings to the hectare, and this is considered an appropriate minimum size (as recommended in the needs assessment) given the uses to be accommodated within each pitch and the need for large vehicle turning space and landscaping, it is also the figure used in our neighbouring authority of Teignbridge. This size pitch does not include specific 'work space', for example for the storage of scrap metal/materials, machinery and equipment, or for the keeping of animals (both discussed later in the document). Where additional pitches are proposed as an extension to existing family pitches (e.g. to accommodate growing families) and existing facilities are to be shared, space needs will be assessed on an individual basis.
- 2.3 On large sites where there is an identified demand for pitches for one or two person households, space standards for those pitches only, may be reduced to reflect the reduced need for sleeping accommodation, garden space and parking space (the , turning and amenity requirements will remain the same). Since this will restrict the sites suitability for family occupation in the future, this will need to be justified on a case-by-case basis.



*Examples of existing Traveller sites operated by local authorities (clockwise from top left- Merryfield and Tintinhull in South Somerset and Elbury Close in East Devon). All three sites meet the recommended density of 20 pitches per ha (500 square metres per pitch) but the layout at Merryfield is designed to allow future expansion whilst Tintinhull and Elbury Close are tightly constrained with layouts dominated by hardsurfacing and highway.*

## Site Boundaries

- 2.4 The perimeter boundary must clearly demarcate the site and should act to prevent unauthorised access, screen unpleasant characteristics (for example if the site is adjacent an industrial area) and help to ensure the safety of residents, particularly children.
- 2.5 A range of boundary treatments may be used depending upon the character of the local area, including planting, fencing, low walls and natural features, but they should be of a material and height sympathetic to, and in keeping with, the local area. In residential areas, more open or low, boundaries may be preferred to increase integration with neighbouring residents and promote community cohesion. Based on the model standards for park homes, a gap of 3 metres should be provided within the perimeter of all sites to reduce fire risk.

## Orientation of pitches

- 2.6 Site layout and design should ensure a degree of privacy for individual households on shared sites, but still encourage the important sense of community. To improve security, it is useful if individual households are able to have reasonable vision of the site in general and this is an advantage of a circular or horseshoe layout with communal space at its heart.
- 2.7 In designing the layout of a site enough space must be provided to permit the easy manoeuvrability of resident's own living accommodation both to the site and subsequently onto a pitch. In order to overcome this, the site design should strike a balance between enabling a variety of accommodation to be catered for, and making best use of available space. Access roads and the site design itself should be capable of providing sufficient space for the manoeuvrability of average size trailers of up to 15 metres in length, with capacity for larger mobile homes on a limited number of pitches on larger sites. Gates and fences should be capable of being movable if they are located on the roadside and may block access or manoeuvrability.

Photograph below- Crown copyright- RNAS Yeovilton



*Above and below, Merryfield, a local authority operated site in South Somerset. The site is densely screened from public view at the front and is accessed via a height restricted private road. The photograph shows 10 permanent pitches, 6 with homes provided and 4 pitches where residents provide their own accommodation. All have private amenity blocks. Adjacent to the access is a grassed area suitable for grazing. To the rear of the site is a surfaced area suitable for future expansion of the site.*



## Layout of pitches

- 2.8 The layout of individual pitches will be dependent on the layout of the overall site and the needs of immediate, and future, residents. Wherever possible, measures should be taken to ensure that pitches are suitable for all members of the community, including those with disabilities, the elderly and those with young children.

### Boundaries

- 2.9 Each pitch should be clearly demarcated to make it entirely clear what each individual household may occupy in return for the fee paid and their responsibilities for the pitch they occupy. A range of different boundaries may be used including fences, low walls, hedges and natural features, although consistency in height and materials across the site will ensure a cohesive design. Between and to the rear of pitches, boundaries of up to 2m will be acceptable and reduce overlooking, but front boundaries should usually be much lower to offer surveillance of any public areas.

### Car parking

- 2.10 Adequate parking space for resident's use will be essential on any site and spaces must be a minimum of 2.4 x 4.8 metres and allow space for disabled residents to manoeuvre wheelchairs and for child car seats to be easily accessed. Resident parking should largely be provided for on individual pitches but a site could also contain additional parking

facilities for visitors, as parking on the roadside could otherwise impede access of fire and other emergency services.

#### Separation Distance

- 2.11 To ensure safety in the event of a fire, it is essential that every caravan or mobile home is separated from any other caravan or mobile home that is occupied separately, by a distance of at least 6 metres. Other structures are allowed in the separation zone if they are made of non-combustible materials (such as a brick built amenity building), as long as they do not impede means of escape. For further guidance refer to the Model Standards for Park Homes.

#### Hardstanding

- 2.12 Each pitch should include a hard standing area constructed of a hard wearing material which extends over the whole area to be occupied by a mobile home, touring caravan or other vehicle (not the whole pitch). These standings should project a sufficient distance outwards to enable occupants to enter and leave safely. The base must be sufficient to bear the load placed on it by the home or vehicle and its contents, and the anticipated level of vehicle movement.
- 2.13 Hardstanding should be part of the landscape design and allow for surface water run-off to be managed e.g. through permeable blocks, gravel or grass. Some New Travellers have expressed a preference for 'natural' sites, without hard landscaping, however it will still be necessary for the living accommodation to be located on a hard, supporting, surface.

#### Space for waste and water storage

- 2.14 An area which is accessible for waste collection should be provided for the storage of a large wheelie bin and recycling boxes within each pitch. A water butt should also be provided for the collection of rainwater for gardening, car washing etc. Schemes should incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems at the outset in order to manage surface water in the most environmentally appropriate way.

### Illustrative Site Layout Plans

- 2.15 The following pages illustrate several different types of possible Gypsy and Traveller site layout and could be used as a starting point to work up actual layouts. Please note that the schemes are diagrammatic and are not intended to be scaled. Actual design and layout will depend on the individual site characteristics and the needs of residents as well as the need to incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS). The final layout is an example of a typical scheme where pitches are provided for rent by a number of families. It would not comply with the guidance in this SPD due to the poor boundary screening, lack of soft landscaping within the scheme, lack of drainage and high degrees of hardsurfacing and vehicular dominance.



A constrained urban site in a Victorian terrace. Homes could be positioned so that they reflect the regular spacing and orientation of the existing houses, but probably need to be delivered to the site in sections due to the narrow access road layout.

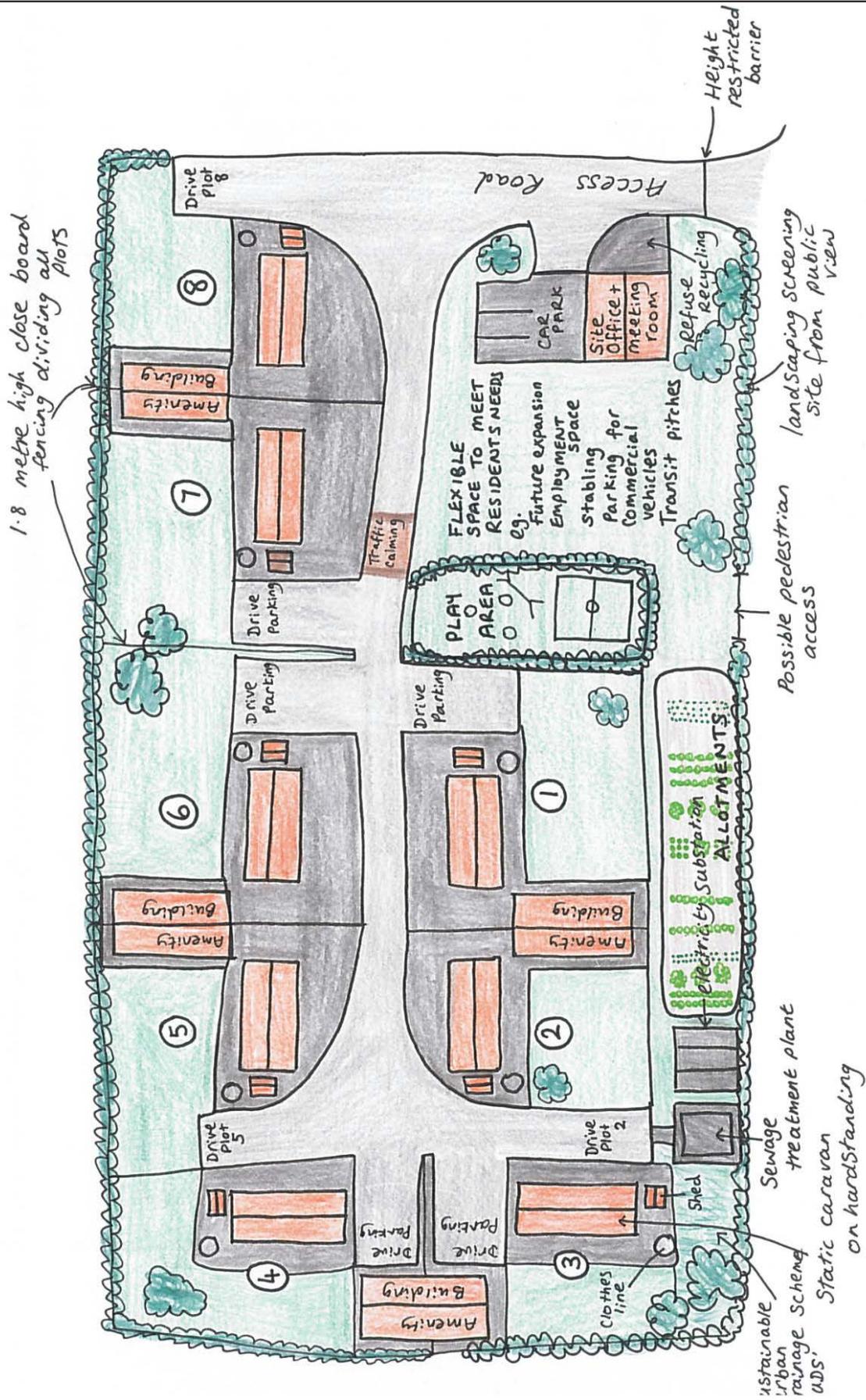
There are relatively few areas of this type of housing in East Devon and it is unlikely that 'retrofitted' urban schemes such as this would be proposed.

Urban sites- Probably the most sustainably located type of scheme due to close proximity of services and facilities. This also reduces the land required as play facilities and open space are available close-by so do not need to be provided within the site boundary. This type of scheme will usually be able to connect into mains water, gas and sewerage and potentially benefit from a District Heating scheme if provided as part of an urban extension.



An urban site on a modern housing estate. A scheme such as this could easily be incorporated into a larger housing estate scheme, similar to the inclusion of affordable housing.

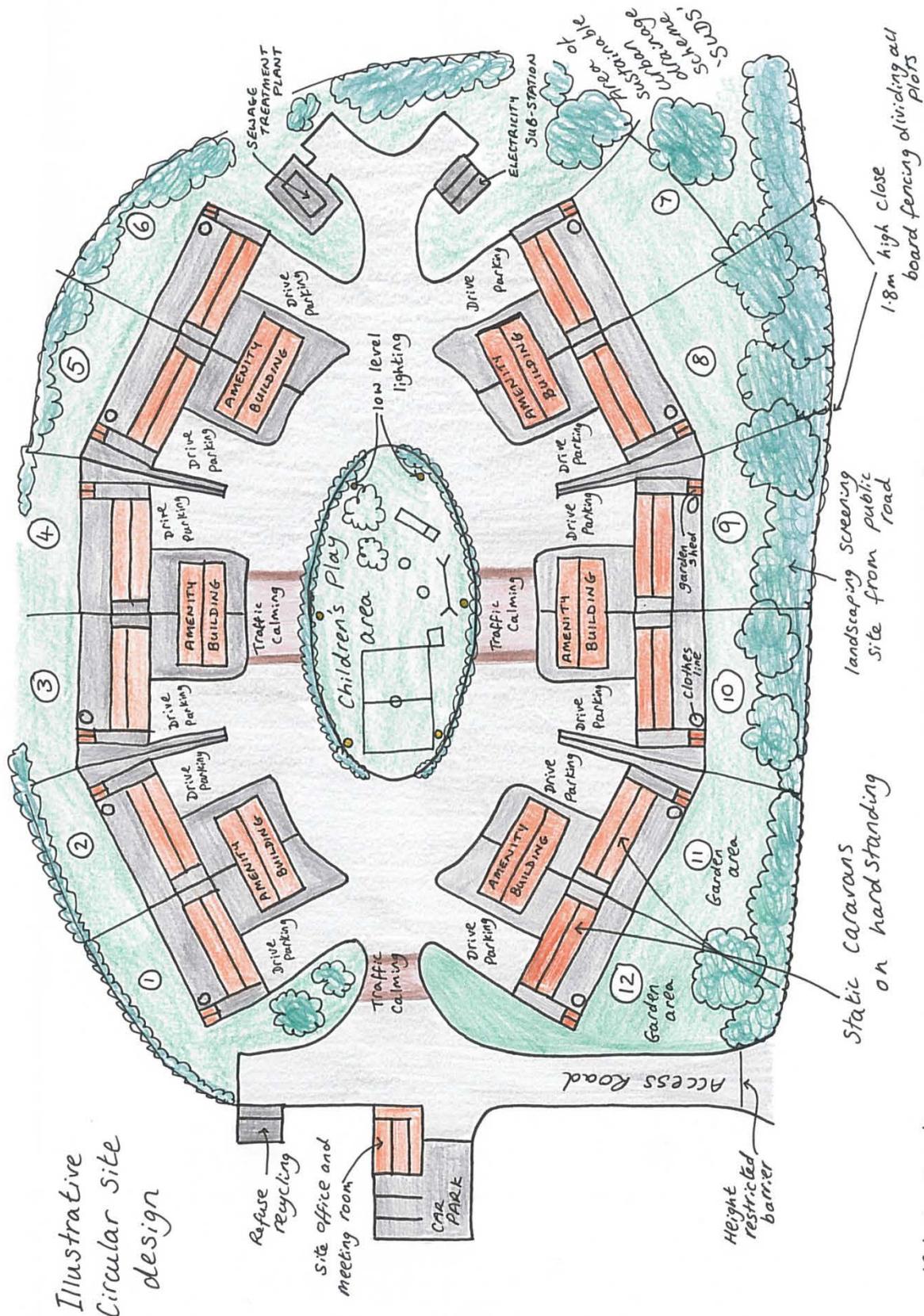
'H'layout- A very effective layout for sites of between 5 and 15 pitches which can be adapted to suit different widths of site (particularly narrow sites). All residents are close to community facilities and there is good visibility through and across the site. This layout allows for straightforward future expansion to accommodate an extra pitch or visitors.



Illustrative 'H' road layout  
Site design

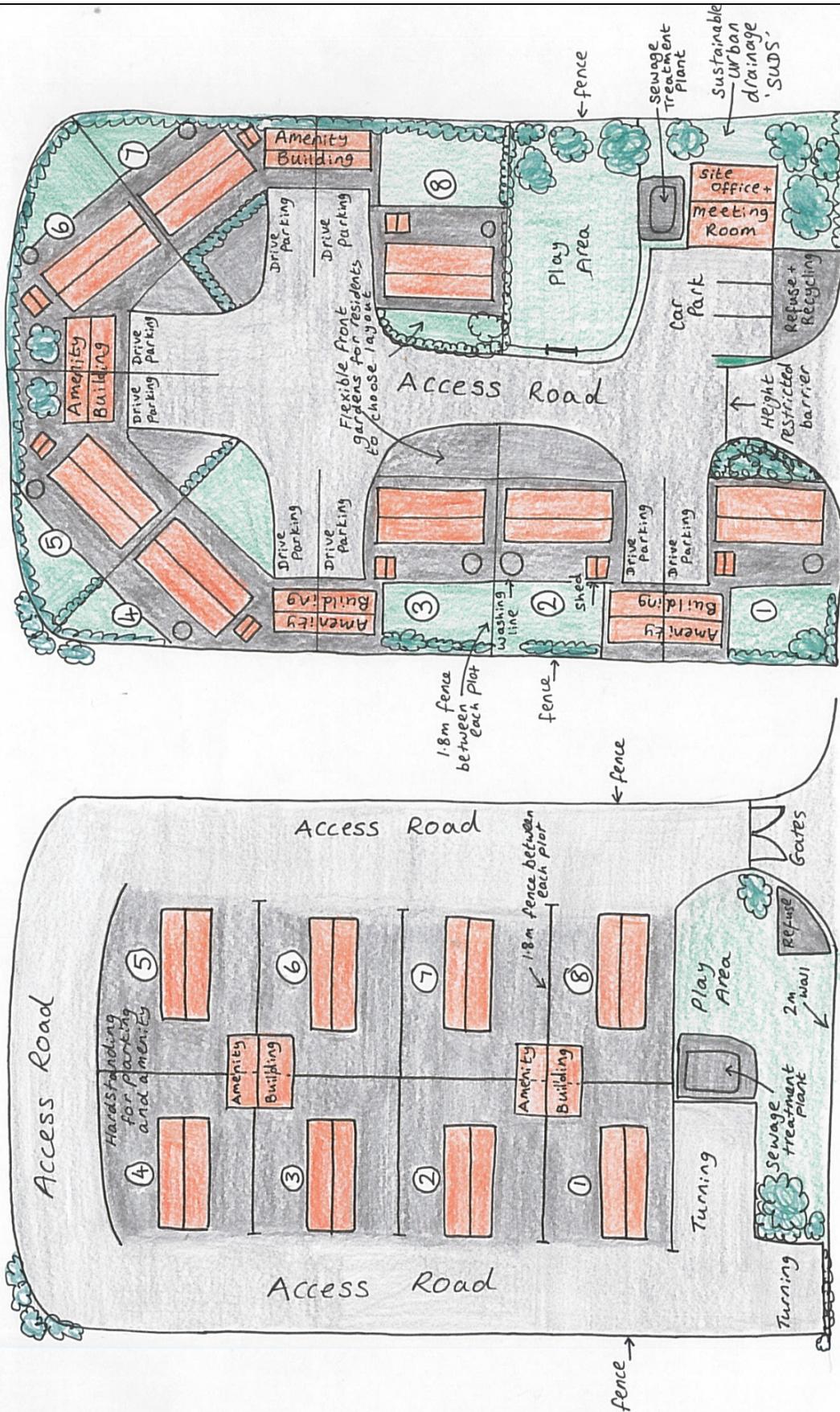
Not to scale

Circular layout- Probably the most efficient and effective layout for any site of 3 or more pitches. The main drawback is that it requires a sufficiently wide and deep site to accommodate a central turning circle and isn't well suited to narrow or irregularly shaped sites. There is a strong focus on safety and all residents are close to community facilities.



A clearly defined boundary integrates the scheme into the wider countryside. Dense planting in native species screens the site from public view and provides some mitigation of road noise

Alternative schemes for the same site. The traditional layout (bottom) is car dominated with little space for landscaping or community facilities. A scheme which focuses on social inclusion rather than traffic circulation is still accessible to vehicles but residents look across the site, it creates space for a manager's office and community meeting room as well as extensive landscaping



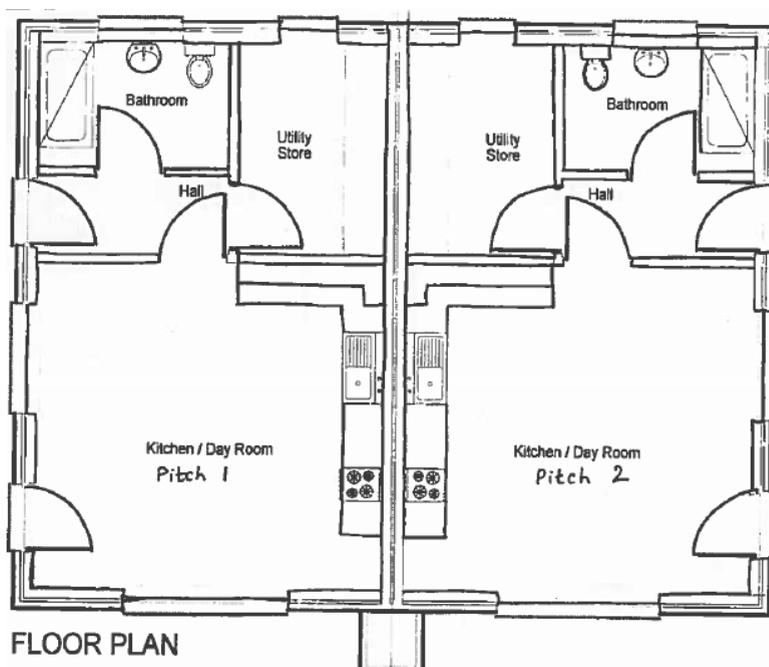
Alternative layout for the same site incorporating SPD design principles NOT TO SCALE

Illustrative traditional multi-family site layout

The traditional layout (above) would not comply with the guidance in this SPD and is unacceptable. As well as improving the scheme by reducing the hardstanding and vehicular space, there is a real opportunity to provide a boundary treatment to assist integration into the wider landscape.

## Amenity buildings

- 2.16 An amenity building must be provided for each pitch, although this can be provided across two pitches as semi-detached units provided they are entirely self contained. The design of the amenity building should consider the landscape and visual impacts within the design and site selection process. It should be sympathetic to the local vernacular, and should not dominate the pitch or mobile home in terms of height or scale. It should incorporate cost effective energy efficiency measures such as passive solar gain, insulation of plumbing systems, the use of low energy light fittings and appropriate heating and ventilation systems. Any opportunities for using energy from renewable sources should be considered.
- 2.17 The amenity building should be constructed so that residents with reduced mobility are able to reach and use all rooms (e.g. wheelchair accessible doorways, mobility aids in the bathroom). Buildings must include, as a minimum: cold and hot (thermostatically controlled) water supply; electricity supply with sockets in each room; a separate toilet and hand wash basin; a (suitably tiled) bath/shower room; a fire/smoke alarm; a kitchen (with several metres of worksurface and cupboards) and dining area. The access to the toilet should be through a lobbied area or by separate access direct from the pitch.
- 2.18 The amenity building must also include: secure storage space for harmful substances/ medicines; enclosed storage for food, brooms, washing, cleaning items etc; and space for connection of cooker, fridge/freezer and washing machine (plus a microwave, if possible). Means of heating should be installed in each room which is economical and capable of individual control for each room.
- 2.19 Where possible, a day/living room for family meals should be included in the amenity building. This space could be combined with the kitchen area to make best use of space. It is desirable that the day/living room should not be part of essential circulation space, nor contain essential storage. A plan of a typical modern amenity building (serving two adjacent pitches) is featured below:



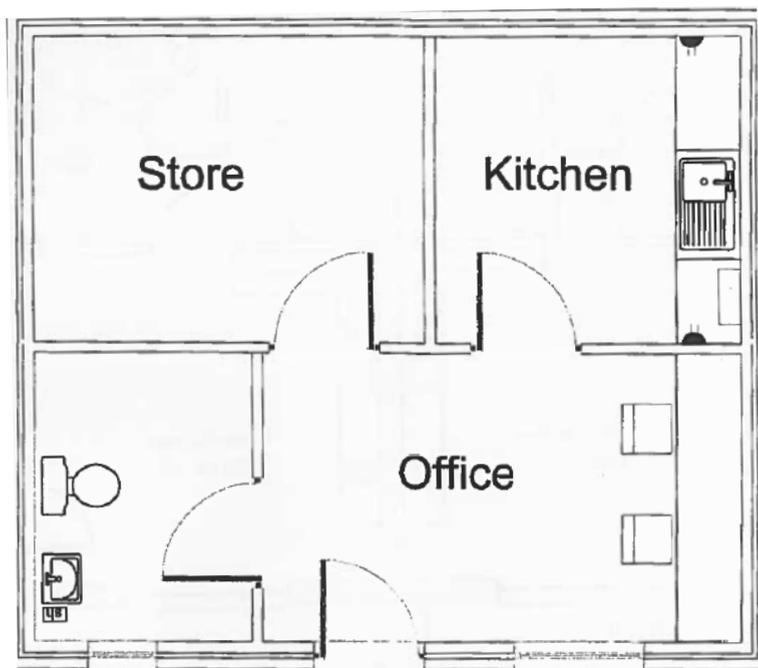
## 3.0 Site Layout

### Safety

- 3.1 All sites are required to have a 'responsible person' identified who will be responsible for safety matters, particularly with regard to fire. In the case of a caravan site, this could be an employer or any other person who may have control of any part of the site, e.g. occupier or owner, manager etc. The 'responsible' person must carry out a fire risk assessment, which must focus on the safety in case of fire of all 'relevant persons'. It should pay particular attention to those at special risk, such as children, and must include consideration of any dangerous substance liable to be on the site. Fire risk assessment will help identify the risks that can be removed or reduced, and to decide the nature and extent of the general fire precautions that need to be taken. The significant findings of the assessment should be recorded if the site is licensed or the site operator (e.g. the local authority) employs five or more staff, however, it is good practice to record the significant findings in any case.
- 3.2 The 'responsible person' is required to take such "general fire precautions" as will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of any of his employees and other relevant persons. General fire precautions include measures to reduce the risk of fire on the premises and the risk of the spread of fire on the premises (e.g. on the caravan site). Further guidance can be found in the Model Standards, for Park Homes. A series of guides and checklist have been developed which may assist the 'responsible person' to comply with the fire safety law and provide help to carry out a fire risk assessment. These guides and checklist are available from the Communities and Local Government website.
- 3.3 When designing the layout of a site, careful consideration must be given to reducing the potential for accidents between vehicles and pedestrians (particularly children). This will be a more significant issue on larger and shared sites, and can be addressed through measures such as traffic calming, separate pedestrian pavements and clear signage.
- 3.4 Where sites are located close to hazards (for example, main roads, level crossings, railways, rivers) boundaries should be appropriately fenced and planted to ensure that residents (particularly children) are protected.
- 3.5 Flammable or hazardous material should be kept in purposely constructed storage away from residential caravans to reduce the risk of fire and explosion. This is particularly relevant where bottled gas or wood are used for cooking and heating.
- 3.6 Site layout should include sufficient space for the turning and reversing requirements of emergency vehicles and suitably surfaced roads must be provided, with no mobile home more than 50 metres from a road. Roads must have no overhead cable less than 4.5 metres above the ground and vehicular access and gateways must be at least 3.1 metres wide and have a minimum clearance of 3.7 metres. Fire hydrants must be clearly marked.

## Site Manager Facilities

- 3.7 Some, particularly larger, sites may require a site manager to be present regularly. This is a matter for the site owner, possibly in consultation with residents to decide, and the manager may live on-site (and could be a resident) or travel to the site to work.
- 3.8 Where a site manager is present, they would usually require an office, storage, a car parking space, and toilet and kitchen facilities. This could be provided as a standalone building or in the communal building, if there is one but the location should be visible to users and have a good overview of the site. The site manager should provide a visible presence to residents and visitors, ensure that safety and other requirements are met and manage the collection of site fees and resolution of disputes. On transit sites, a site manager would need to attend the site particularly regularly given the frequent turnover of residents.
- 3.9 Many Gypsies and Travellers are in favour of controlled access to sites, for example using a lockable gate. Their experience has been that such controls can prevent unauthorised parking and unauthorised caravans being pitched on the site. However, the presence of such gates can sometimes act as a psychological barrier to effective social inclusion and a site manager may perform a similar role in controlling access.



## Play areas and communal facilities

- 3.10 On larger sites, and smaller sites where other provision is not available within reasonable walking distance (400m-800m depending on the topography and availability of pavements and lighting), a communal recreation space should be provided. This space will provide a

focus for outdoor social activity and should be laid out in consultation with residents and with ongoing maintenance in mind. Where individual pitches lack space for children's play equipment within their private gardens, a range of equipment suited to all age groups will be particularly important. The space should be located where it is easily accessible, allowing for natural supervision and with children's safety as a priority.

3.11 Generally, sites should be located where they are accessible to a range of shops and facilities. Where a site is isolated from local facilities however and/or is large enough to contain a diverse community of residents rather than one extended family, provision of a communal building is recommended. This facility can be an important resource in sustaining a more remote site, offering an opportunity for visits by health visitors, youth workers and education services, as well as for use by site management and residents alike.

3.12 Any such building should include:

- Community room
- Toilets (male and female, with disabled and baby changing facilities)
- Kitchenette.

3.13 Ideally it should be situated in a location towards the front of the site, to be accessible to all the community, not just site residents, and if promoted and managed well can help encourage good relations between the Gypsy and Traveller and neighbouring communities.

## Security

3.14 Site layouts should minimise crime and social exclusion through openness of design, and making travel through the site- on foot or driving- safe and easy. By maximising natural surveillance e.g. through maintaining front boundaries at low levels, facing onto public spaces and providing lighting at night, residents should be able to watch over all areas of the site as well as increasing their feeling of safety.

## Landscaping

3.15 The need to provide significant areas of hard surfacing to accommodate the vehicles associated with a travelling lifestyle can lead to sites looking stark and obtrusive in the landscape. Attractive soft landscaping (for example grassed areas, shrubs and trees) should be used to soften the appearance of sites from outside, form natural boundary screens, and can improve the quality of life of residents and Increase the biodiversity value to wildlife. Native species and traditional forms, such as Devon banks, will be favoured. The travelling lifestyle of residents may not allow for the regular cutting that grass, annual plants and fast growing shrubs may require during the summer months, and planting schemes should be planned with this in mind. Any landscape design and site layout should

take account of the management guidelines set out in the East Devon and Blackdown Hills Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and East Devon District Landscape Character Assessment & Management Guidelines 2008 and the Devon County Council Landscape Character Areas Assessment

- 3.16 Some New Travellers in East Devon have expressed a preference for minimal, if any, hard landscaping in order to reduce their environmental impact. It is likely that their living accommodation and car parking will need to be situated on/supported by some form of hardstanding (this could be compacted earth if the soil type is appropriate) to ensure that the site is habitable in winter however, provided emergency services can safely access each pitch, it may not be necessary to provide further hardsurfacing and individual circumstances will be assessed on their merits.
- 3.17 Soft landscaping can be useful to ensure spatial separation which prevents movement of trailers to positions which would breach fire safety distances from the adjoining pitch. When designing a site to include soft landscaping, consideration needs to be given to preventing grassed areas from being used for unauthorised parking or unauthorised pitching of caravans.

#### Inclusion of space for work

- 3.18 Gypsy and Traveller sites are essentially residential and those living there are entitled to a peaceful and enjoyable environment. At the same time, self-employment is very high amongst the Gypsy and Traveller communities and travelling for work and 'working from home' are fundamental to both cultures.
- 3.19 On shared sites, commercial or other work activity should be sited so that it does not cause noise or other nuisance to nearby residents (whether occupiers of the site or members of the settled community). Planning conditions may be imposed to control the hours of operation, the area where activity can take place and the types of activity which are acceptable. Specific space for the storage of scrap and/or other waste material should be provided within the commercial area and tightly controlled.

#### Inclusion of space for animals

- 3.20 Keeping animals, particularly dogs and horses, is a cultural tradition amongst many Gypsies and Travellers and residents may wish to accommodate this on their pitches. Site owners may choose to allow dogs and other domestic pets, but care should be taken to ensure that pitches are suitably fenced, that numbers are controlled and that other residents are not disturbed e.g. by barking.
- 3.21 Where Gypsies or Travellers have a specific cultural need for grazing space (where they use horse drawn wagons, for example, as part of their travelling lifestyle) an individual case will need to be made for larger pitches to the site owner (and, in planning terms, to the District Council) who should endeavour to incorporate stabling within pitches. Horses

usually need a minimum acre of grazing land per animal however, and it is unlikely to be possible to accommodate this on Council owned (or other shared) sites, so residents will need to seek local grazing land privately.

## Infrastructure

- 3.22 Each pitch should be provided with the same basic services that are available to the settled population. Ideally, separate metres (for domestic usage) should be installed on each pitch (usually located in the amenity building) by the relevant local authority to ensure that each household pays for their own usage rather than being sold from a central point on site. All provision must accord with current legislation, regulations and British Standards.
- 3.23 Consideration may be given to providing more than one electricity, water and sewerage access point on each pitch to allow for homes to be realigned either through resident's choice, family expansion or to cater for visitors.

## Water supply

- 3.24 Each pitch must have an adequate, safe drinking water supply. Water pressure must be sufficient to enable the use of fire hydrants by the emergency services which should be at a convenient place near to the front of the site. Provision of an outside tap on each pitch is also recommended.

## Drainage

- 3.25 Surface water drainage and storm water drainage must be installed as caravans and mobile homes are particularly vulnerable in the event of flooding.
- 3.26 Gypsy and Traveller sites may offer opportunities for implementing a Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) approach for dealing with surface water drainage management whereby surface water runs off to either natural water courses or municipal systems. It is recommended that consideration be given to the inclusion of interceptors within the drainage system to ensure protection against petrol, oil and other substances. The Devon County Council SUDS Manual should be used to inform the design of the scheme and any drainage scheme should show how the SUDS Management Train<sup>2</sup> has been applied.

## Sewerage

- 3.27 Wherever possible, each pitch should be connected to a public sewer. Where this is not

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.susdrain.org/delivering-suds/using-suds/suds-principles/management-train.html>

possible provision must be made for discharge to a properly constructed sealed septic tank or appropriate treatment process e.g. reed bed system.

## Electricity

3.28 The provision of mains electricity to each pitch is essential, sufficient to meet the reasonable requirements of the residents. Underground cabling must be adequately earthed. Electrical Installations should be inspected annually. All electrical work must be carried out by competent and appropriately qualified personnel.

## Renewable energy

3.29 Some New Travellers are reliant on renewable forms of energy and have expressed a preference for new pitches to be carbon-neutral. Solar panels and solar water heating are likely to be the most practical and viable providers of renewable energy and will usually be supported and encouraged. Other forms of renewable energy will also be encouraged but factors such as installation cost and operational noise may make them unsuitable for mobile homes.

## Other forms of fuel

3.30 Other forms of fuel, such as gas (mains or bottled), oil and wood may be used by residents. It is essential that the installation of equipment using such fuel is carried out by a qualified professional, and inspected annually, as fire and toxic poisoning (e.g. carbon monoxide) are particularly dangerous in confined spaces. Guidance on storage of fuel is complex and advice should be sought from the Environmental Health Section of the Council and the Fire Service. All fuel must be stored in a non-combustible structure and where leaks can be contained.

## Lighting

3.31 It is necessary to provide an appropriate level of lighting on the site to enable safe movement of vehicles and pedestrians, however this should be proportionate to the scale of the site, its location and any potential biodiversity impacts. Use of timers and three quarter length light pillars should be considered to reduce the likelihood of light pollution. The street lighting arrangements should be planned to minimise the risk of damage through vandalism and avoid problems of light pollution to the homes on the site through light shining directly into caravans, amenity buildings or mobile homes. It is recommended that external lighting is provided on each amenity building to ensure safe access.

## Waste disposal, scrap and storage

- 3.32 The District Council collects domestic waste (including recycling) from Gypsy and Traveller sites in the same way that it does for the settled community. A key element in designing the layout of the site is to ensure that sufficient space exists for local authority refuse collection vehicles to reach an appropriate point from which waste can be collected from individual pitches, as well as any communal refuse areas.
- 3.33 Each pitch should include space for a large wheelie bin and recycling bin/s to be stored in a position which is accessible for collection.
- 3.34 Scrap and storage associated with commercial activity should be stored in a separate location from the residential area (ideally each business storing their own waste within their premises) and should be collected regularly to ensure that no nuisance is created by it.
- 3.35 Experience on some sites has shown that communal refuse areas can actually encourage fly-tipping and the accumulation of non-domestic waste. If a communal refuse area is deemed necessary (in addition to individual refuse collection for each pitch), this should be designed and located so as to be convenient, accessible, robust and inconspicuous.
- 3.36 Any communal refuse areas, or commercial waste storage, should be located away from close proximity of individual pitches and from access points to the site, to ensure that fire service vehicles can enter the site and deal with any fire which might break out there.

## Post

- 3.37 The site should be designed so that post can be delivered separately for each pitch. Experience has shown that postal deliveries to pitches can be disrupted by complaints about harassment by dangerous dogs so the provision of an individual box at the entry to a pitch would be advisable.
- 3.38 Consultation has shown that a simple but key element in helping to avoid discrimination against the residents of a Gypsy and Traveller site is to allocate site and pitch addresses which are of a similar nature to those for the settled community- and which do not highlight that the accommodation is site based.

## 4.0 Transit Sites

- 4.1 Transit sites are not intended to be occupied permanently, instead they provide a short-term stopping place for Gypsies and Travellers moving through East Devon.
- 4.2 Transit pitches may be provided on a stand-alone basis, or as part of a larger, permanent site, but they will should be located close to main routes through the District to maximise their accessibility and increase the likelihood of their being used. They will require the site owner to complete a check-in process where they can collect the fee and advise on safety procedures etc. as well as ensuring that they do not exceed the permitted temporary length of their stay.



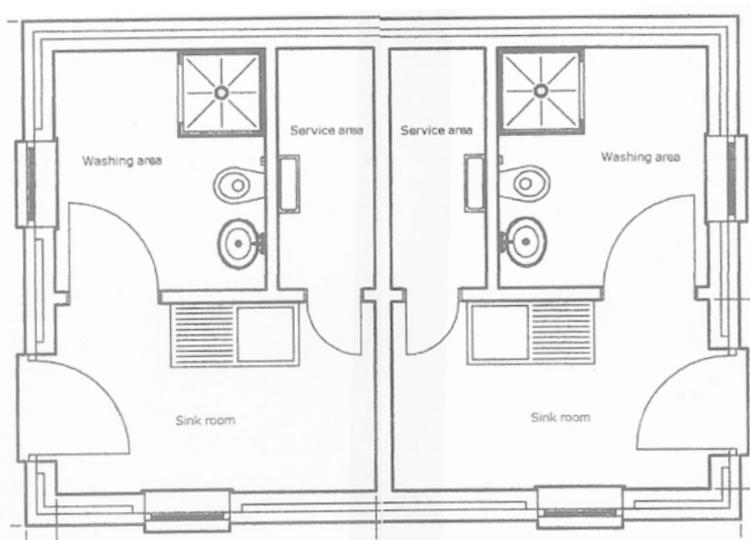
*There is a long history of Gypsies and Travellers making short term stops along the A30 on their way through the District. New development has blocked many traditional stopping places from being used, however there are still some locations- such as the layby at Daisymount roundabout near West Hill- which are regularly used as unauthorised transit sites. The top photographs illustrate this layby shortly after it was vacated by three Romany Gypsy families. The County Council provided the portable toilets. The grass verge in the bottom photo has also been regularly used by travellers to graze their horses.*

### Site layout, access and orientation

- 4.3 With regard to site layout, much of the same guidance will apply as to permanent pitches.  
The total number of permanent and transit pitches should not exceed 15, and smaller sites

of 4-5 transit pitches are advocated in the needs assessment.

- 4.4 Site boundaries - The guidance for permanent sites applies.
- 4.5 Orientation of pitches - The guidance for permanent sites applies.
- 4.6 Health and safety- The guidance for permanent sites applies.
- 4.7 Size of pitch –It is important to ensure that wherever possible each pitch is of a size sufficient to accommodate two touring caravans, two parking spaces and private amenities. It has been found (through research underpinning best practice guidance and in the Needs Assessment) that the majority of Gypsies and Travellers prefer private amenities on each pitch including a toilet, wash basin and shower with hot and cold water supply. A possible layout for a pair of amenity buildings is shown below:



Where transit sites are empty for lengthy periods there is a risk of vandalism to facilities and it may be preferable for private amenities to be removed until the site is reoccupied. In adopting this approach it is sensible to ensure that permanent waste and water pipework is in place for facilities to be easily reinstalled.

- 4.8 Access for emergency vehicles- The guidance for permanent sites applies.
- 4.9 Security- The guidance for permanent sites applies.
- 4.10 Landscaping -The guidance for permanent sites applies, although the high turnover of residents means that regular maintenance is unlikely to be undertaken by residents and so will fall to the site owner/manager. Sites will be considered individually to ascertain the degree to which soft landscaping within the site is required.
- 4.11 Parking - Parking space for at least two vehicles should be provided on each individual pitch at a minimum size of 2.4m x 4.8 metres each. Additional space for a towing

caravan may also be required.

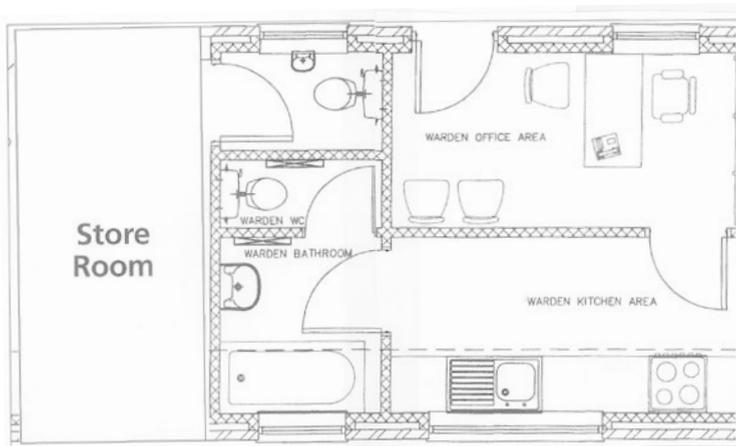
4.12 Density and spacing between vehicles -The guidance for permanent sites applies,

4.13 Inclusion of work space -Work vehicles may be accommodated on pitches, however there would not normally be a requirement for the storage/disposal of commercial waste or scrap.

4.14 Inclusion of animal space- Animals will often accompany their owners when travelling, and horses may be used to travel in a traditional manner. It is unlikely that grazing space will be provided on transit pitches, however secure tying-up places and troughs should be made available.

### Site services and facilities

4.15 Accommodation for a Resident Manager- Transit sites may present particular management challenges and depending on local circumstances and sufficient usage, it is recommended that provision is generally made for a resident manager. As the resident manager will be living on the transit site on a semi-permanent basis, facilities for the manager should comply with the guidance for permanent sites, including the provision of an amenity building. A possible layout for a resident warden's office and accommodation is shown below:



4.16 Water supply- The guidance for permanent sites applies.

4.17 Electricity supply- Where possible, the guidance for permanent sites applies, although in practice a central electricity supply administered by the site management may be provided, which would entail residents paying by meter or being charged cash retrospectively.

4.18 Gas supply - Mains gas supplies are not applicable to transit sites.

- 4.19 Drainage -The guidance for permanent sites applies.
- 4.20 Sewerage- The guidance for permanent sites applies.
- 4.21 Lighting -The guidance for permanent sites applies.
- 4.22 Waste disposal-Waste disposal for individual pitches on transit sites is recommended. Communal refuse disposal should be provided which is convenient (but away from pitches and associated dwellings on site), fenced off, robust and Inconspicuous.

# Gypsy and Traveller Supplementary Planning Guidance

## Policy 1

### DESIGN OF GYPSY AND TRAVELLER SITES

Proposals for sites for Gypsies and Travellers will be granted planning permission where they comply with the policies of the East Devon Local Plan and achieve a high quality design and layout, reflecting Government good practice guidance and the East Devon and Blackdown Hills Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and East Devon District Landscape Character Assessment & Management Guidelines 2008 and the Devon County Council Landscape Character Areas Assessment and where:

- a) The proposal clearly demarcates the site and pitch boundaries using appropriate boundary treatments and landscaping which is sympathetic to, and in keeping with, the surrounding area. There should be clear separation between public areas and private spaces, and between residential areas and any non-residential areas;
- b) Site design and layout takes account of the needs of residents, with special regard to the differing cultural or heritage requirements of different groups;
- c) Safe access for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, is provided including for turning and parking, vehicles towing caravans, emergency vehicles and servicing requirements, including waste collection;
- d) All necessary utilities can be provided on the site including mains water, electricity supply, drainage (,any drainage scheme will have to show how the SuDS Management train has been applied)) sanitation and provision for the screened storage and collection of refuse, including recyclable materials;
- e) The proposal would avoid any unacceptable adverse or detrimental impact on the health and living conditions of the residents of the site or on neighbouring uses, including as a result of contamination, excessive noise, dust, fumes, lighting, traffic generation or activity;
- f) A communal recreation area is provided for children for all larger sites, and on smaller sites where suitable provision is not available within walking distance on a safe route or using easily accessible public transport.

Each pitch should measure at least 500 square metres (unless extended families are sharing facilities, in which case their needs will be assessed individually) and provide, as a minimum, a utility building, an amenity area, appropriate hard standing for a trailer, touring caravan and other vehicle and be laid out to ensure the security and safety of residents and allow ease of movement, whether walking, cycling or driving;

All buildings and structures should be designed to reflect and respect the wider character of the area in which they are located and be screened and landscaped to minimise visual intrusion;

Stables and/or other outbuildings will be considered on their merits depending upon the nature of the site and the use and design proposed;

Employment uses should be restricted to purposely designed live/work pitches or areas specifically designated and properly designed for such use, recognising that large equipment is essential to the lifestyle of many Gypsies and Travellers. Outside storage, parking of unused or scrap vehicles or machinery or other materials associated with business activity should not be permitted.

In open countryside, where pitches cease to be occupied and become disused or abandoned, all structures and development should be removed from the site and the ground reinstated to its former condition within 1 year of its last occupation.

## Glossary of Terms

Term	Description
Adoption	The procedure by which a plan becomes formal council policy. The Neighbourhood Planning Regulations also call this stage 'made' for the purposes of your Neighbourhood Plans.
Allocation/Allocated Site	A piece of land that has had a particular use earmarked to it via the Development Plan or Neighbourhood Plan. This might be for housing employment or another purpose such as a Gypsy and Traveller site .
Amenity Building	A building that provides facilities for an individual Gypsy pitch (private) or a site (communal). These can vary in scale and in the facilities they provide, although a basic amenity building on a pitch should include, as a minimum: hot and cold water supply; electricity supply; a separate toilet and hand wash basin; a bath / shower room; a kitchen and dining area
Amenity space	This can refer to a garden area on an individual pitch or a communal area of open space / playground on a larger site that is shared by a number of pitches.
Authorised site	A site with planning permission for use as a Gypsy and Traveller site. These sites can be private or Council-owned. Most authorised sites in East Devon are permanent, but they can sometimes be temporary (see 'Temporary Sites').
Call for Sites	The way in which the Council gives the public an opportunity to suggest sites for potential Gypsy and Traveller or Travelling Showpeople development. Respondents fill out a form with the details of the suggested site which is then received and considered by the Council.
Caravan	<p>Mobile living vehicles also called touring caravans. Section 29 (1) of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 Act defines a caravan as 'any structure designed or adapted for human habitation which is capable of being moved from one place to another (whether by being towed, or by being transported on a motor vehicle or trailer) and any motor vehicle so designed or adapted'.</p> <p>Also referred to as 'vans' and 'mobile homes'.</p>
The Council	For the purposes of the SPD the Council is East Devon District Council, who are also the Local Planning Authority. This is distinct from Devon County Council or the Town and Parish Councils of East Devon.
Consultee	In the case of a consultation or planning application, this is a person, body or group invited to comment.
Development	The carrying out of building, engineering mining or other operations in, on or over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any buildings or other land (Town and Country Planning Act, 1990, Section

	55)
Enforcement Action	Action taken by the Council against failure to obtain planning permission for a use or development, or carrying out a use or development which doesn't accord with a permission or condition
Existing Sites	A term used in the SPD documents to refer to sites in East Devon the Borough that are currently occupied by Gypsies and Travellers or Travelling Showpeople. These may or may not be authorised at the current time.
Gypsy/Gypsies and Travellers	Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such Planning policy for traveler Sites (2015)
Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment	This was a study carried out for the Council to calculate the need for additional Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation in East Devon
Licensing	The licensing of caravan sites (both Gypsy and Traveller sites and mobile home parks) is undertaken by Environmental Health and is separate from the planning system. Site licensing focuses on matters of layout, fire safety, sanitation and other facilities. Only authorised sites (those with planning permission) can receive a licence and conditions on the licence will reflect those on the planning permission (such as the number of caravans allowed on the site).
Local Plan	The name for a document (or collection of documents) prepared by the local planning authority for the use and development of land and for changes to the transport system. The adopted Local Plan forms part of the Statutory Development Plans for the area.
Material Consideration	Any issue that should be taken into account when deciding a planning application or an appeal against a planning decision. Planning policies will guide planning application decisions unless other material considerations associated with need, impact and local circumstance are considered to carry greater weight.
Mitigate	Actions to correct for the negative impacts and effects of a development.
Mobile Home	Legally a caravan but not normally capable of being moved by towing. Also known as 'trailers', 'static caravans' or 'chalets'.
Neighbourhood Plan	A planning document created by a parish or town council or a neighbourhood forum, which sets out a vision for the neighbourhood area, and contains policies for the development and use of land in the area. Neighbourhood plans must be subjected to an independent examination to confirm that they meet legal requirements, and then to a local referendum. If approved by a majority vote of the local community, the neighbourhood

	plan will then form part of the statutory development plan.
National Planning Policy Framework	Sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied through local planning policy and decision making.
Pitch	<p>A pitch is the space required to accommodate one household and their caravans, parking space and enough room for turning vehicles. There is no 'one-size fits all' measurement for a pitch; as with standard housing, this depends on the size of individual families and their particular needs.</p> <p>An average family pitch must be capable of accommodating an amenity building, a large mobile home (trailer) and touring caravan, a small garden area and parking space for two vehicles.</p>
Planning Condition	Guided by Circular 11/95, planning conditions impose restrictions on the grant of planning permission. Planning obligations should only be agreed where planning conditions are not sufficient.
Planning Obligation	In the form of a legal agreement, planning obligations apply to an area of land and are secured to ensure that developers mitigate for the impacts of, and provide for the infrastructural requirements arising from, development.
Policy	A concise statement of the principles that a particular kind of development proposal should satisfy in order to obtain planning permission.
Section 106	Planning obligation under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, secured by a local planning authority through negotiations with a developer to offset the public cost of permitting a development proposal. Sometimes developers can self-impose obligations to pre-empt objections to planning permission being granted. They cover things like highway improvements or open space provision.
Settled community	A term used to refer to non-Travellers.
Site	An area of land where Gypsy and Travellers live. These can be privately owned (often by particular families) or socially rented (where the site owned by a council or registered social landlord). A site may consist of a single pitch, or may have a number of pitches and be home to several families/households.
Supplementary Planning Document	Guidance which amplifies and provides more detail on the policies contained within the Local Plan. SPDs are subject to public consultation and are a material consideration in determining planning applications.
Temporary site	This is an authorised site that has been granted temporary planning permission. At the end of the specified time period (usually between 2-4 years, defined by a planning condition) the use of the site must cease and the site should be restored to its former condition.
Transit site	A permanent site intended for short-term temporary use by Travellers on the move.

<p>Travelling showpeople</p>	<p>‘Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family’s or dependant’s more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers.’ (Annex 1, Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2012))</p> <p>Travelling Showpeople’s needs are distinct to the needs of the wider Gypsy and Traveller community. Pitches on a Travelling Showpeople site are referred to as plots and are usually mixed-use (i.e. residential and storage use).</p>
<p>Unauthorised development / encampment / stopping place</p>	<p>Land occupied by Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople without the benefit of planning permission or the permission of the land owner. Can include land at the side of a road.</p>