

Gypsy & Traveller Note

1. This note has been prepared following the St Helens Local Plan Examination Matter 7 hearing session ('specific housing needs and standards') in order to provide clarification and an update on the Council's Gypsy and Traveller need requirement.
2. The Council's Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) was published in August 2014 and revised in January 2015. It outlines the Council's current supply and future need as part of the wider Merseyside and West Lancashire area. It found that 8 permanent pitches were required for the period 2013/14 to 2032/33. This is broken down into a need for 6 pitches from 2013/14 to 2017/18 and 2 pitches from 2028/29 to 2032/33.
3. The Plan recognises that the net need for new pitches could change each year as occupancy of sites alters and pitches are gained and lost and due to the rise in non-authorised sites. This is reflected in Paragraph 6.9.6 of the Reasoned Justification of Policy LPC03, which estimates that the need had risen to around 18 pitches by 2016. The new need for an estimated 18 pitches is made up of the 8 pitches identified within the GTAA (as above), 4 private pitches which are not authorised but tolerated, an additional 2 unauthorised pitches and 4 pitches provided for the loss of pitches at Berry's Lane which is a closed site and at Suez Street due to the construction of a bungalow on the site.
4. Planning permission was granted for 12 pitches on land east of Sherdley Road Caravan Park. Policy LPC03 allocates an additional site (referenced GTA01 - to the west of the existing Council owned Sherdley Road Caravan Park) for the delivery of additional permanent provision. Its estimated capacity of 8 pitches is capable, in combination with the site with existing planning permission, of meeting the total estimated net need for permanent site provision over the Plan period. However, the Council will keep the need and supply of sites under regular review to ensure that needs can be met over the Plan period.