



Caerphilly County Borough
2nd Replacement Local Development Plan 2020-2035

EB11: Gypsy and Traveller Evidence Paper

October 2026



Caerphilly County Borough
2nd Replacement Local Development Plan
2020 - 2035

EB11

Gypsy and Traveller Site Provision

Evidence Base Paper

September 2026

Introduction

The 2nd Replacement Local Development Plan (2RLDP) will guide development in the County Borough between 2020 and 2035. The 2RLDP will identify certain locations where new development, such as housing and employment will be permitted, whilst also seeking to protect other areas from development. Once adopted, the 2RLDP will form the basis for making decisions on individual planning applications within the County Borough.

This background paper is one of a range of papers prepared to support the 2RLDP and explains the Council's methodology for meeting the identified need for mobile home pitches from the Gypsy and Traveller community.

Each background paper can be read as a stand-alone paper or in conjunction with the Deposit Plan and the earlier topic papers and other background papers that have been prepared.

Background

The Adopted Local Development Plan (LDP) contains a criteria-based policy approach towards the provision of Gypsy and Traveller sites but does not allocate sites.

Part 3 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 places a legal duty on local authorities to ensure the accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers are properly assessed and that any identified need for additional pitches is met.

This Paper considers the Council's latest Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTAA) (Updated March 2024) and clarifies instances where the situation has changed since the GTAA was published. The Paper outlines the total and type of identified need for pitches over the 2RLDP period, before evaluating a range of site options to accommodate this need.

National Planning Policy and Legislative Context

The Housing (Wales) Act 2014

The Housing (Wales) Act requires local authorities to assess and address the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers within their areas. Gypsies and Travellers are defined as:

- a) persons of a nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin, including—

- i. persons who, on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependant's educational or health needs or old age, have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, and
 - ii. members of an organised group of travelling show people or circus people (whether or not travelling together as such), and
- b) all other persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or of living in a mobile home.

Each authority must carry out an assessment of households residing in or resorting to the area and prepare a report for submission to the Welsh Ministers. This report must:

- Explain the methodology used for the assessment,
- Summarise the consultation undertaken and the responses received, and
- Set out the accommodation needs identified.

Local authorities must complete a GTAA at least every five years, although they may do so more frequently if there is evidence of a material change in need. Once approved locally, the GTAA must be submitted to Welsh Ministers for approval. Where the approved assessment identifies a need for additional pitches, the Local Housing Authority has a statutory duty to meet that need using its powers under section 56 of the Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013.

Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013

The GTAA Guidance requires local authorities to fulfil their statutory duty to provide mobile home pitches where a need has been identified. This responsibility is set out under Section 60 of the Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013. For the purposes of the Act, a 'mobile home' is defined as follows:

- 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 designed or adapted for human habitation but does not include any railway rolling stock which is for the time being on rails forming part of a railway system, or any tent.
- A structure designed or adapted for human habitation which is composed of not more than 2 sections separately constructed and designed to be assembled on a site by means of bolts, clamps, or other devices, and is, when assembled, physically capable of being moved by road from one place to another (whether by being towed, or by being transported on a motor vehicle or trailer).

The Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 places a duty on the Council to take reasonable steps to meet its sustainable development objectives. This report has been prepared in line with that duty and the Act's "sustainable development principle." In doing so, the Council has sought to meet present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own.

Welsh Government Circular 005/2018 Planning for Gypsy, Traveller and Showpeople Sites

The Circular reinforces that 'The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 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. Local authorities are required to exercise their powers under section 56 of the Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013, as far as necessary, to ensure Gypsy and Traveller sites are provided for the unmet need'.

Local Authorities are advised in paragraph 38 of the Circular that 'In deciding where to provide for Gypsy and Traveller sites, planning authorities must first consider sustainable locations within or adjacent to existing settlement boundaries with access to local services e.g., education settings, health services and shops'.

Paragraph 39 goes on to state that: 'Sites in the countryside, away from existing settlements, can be considered for Gypsy and Traveller sites if there is a lack of suitable sustainable locations within or adjacent to existing settlement boundaries. In assessing the suitability of such sites, local authorities should be realistic about the availability, or likely availability, of alternatives to the car in accessing local services. Over rigid application of national or development plan policies that seek a reduction in car borne travel to effectively block proposals for any Gypsy and Traveller Site in a countryside location would be inappropriate. Sites should be considered in context and in relation to the local infrastructure, population size and density to ensure they are in proportion to local settled communities.'

Welsh Government Guidance – Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites

Delivering more sites, whether public or private, is an issue for Local Authorities to address, to find local solutions for local needs. Paragraph 3.17 of the Guidance states: 'When considering locations for permanent residential sites, the preferences of community members should be included in the assessment process. However, Local Authorities are not expected to always provide sites in locations which mirror these aspirations. It is recognised other factors such as availability of land; site sustainability and achievability of planning permission will be more significant matters to consider'.

The Guidance also requires Local Authorities to consider the long-term impact of a concentration of pitches / sites in one part of the authority area. It is important the provision of large or multiple sites in one small area does not create spatial segregation of these communities and reduce interaction and long-term inclusion within mainstream services.

In July 2026, the WG published guidance for Designing Gypsy and Traveller sites. The Welsh Government are still considering the responses to the public consultation however the main changes proposed to the consultation included:

- Updating references to the Housing (Wales) Act 2015.
- Updating references to the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan.
- Clarification of the descriptions of different Gypsy and Traveller sites.
- A greater emphasis on consultation with Gypsy and Traveller residents.
- Removing any pitch minimum requirement.

Planning Policy Wales, Edition 12 – February 2024

In relation to Gypsies and Travellers, paragraph 4.2.35 states that local authorities must assess the accommodation needs of Gypsy and Traveller families and allocate sites to meet any identified need. Planning Policy Wales (PPW) further advises that where a GTAA identifies an unmet need, planning authorities should allocate sufficient sites within their development plan to accommodate both residential and transit pitch requirements. The guidance also emphasises that 'Planning authorities will need to demonstrate that sites are suitable for development and deliverable in the identified timescales.'

Development Plans Manual, Edition 3 2020

The Development Plans Manual (DPM) states that 'Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) must ensure the GTAA is up to date and identifies a need for the entire plan period. This work will need to be completed, in addition to the provision of appropriate site allocations (where relevant) prior to the statutory deposit stage. LPAs must ensure the GTAA has had formal sign off by the relevant Welsh Minister. The status of the GTAA supporting the plan must be clear' (para 5.79).

Welsh Government wrote to all Local Authorities in September 2019 to confirm those undertaking a LDP Review must ensure the GTAA establishes an evidence base for Gypsy and Traveller needs across the entire plan period. Welsh Government also confirmed that this may necessitate undertaking of a new GTAA (and providing appropriate site allocations, where relevant) prior to the statutory deposit LDP consultation to ensure plans can be found sound through the examination process and are able to be adopted.

The 2RLDP must be clear of the results of the GTAA in terms of the total and type of need over the plan period and the required timescales for meeting the need in line with the evidence. The Manual clarifies, "where there is a need for site allocations,

LPAs should include a specific policy identifying the Gypsy and Traveller allocation(s) making clear the location and total number of pitches to be accommodated. The Plan must also clarify if the situation has changed since the GTAA was published and include a criteria-based policy to make provision for any additional need arising throughout the Plan period”.

The Identification of Need

Caerphilly County Borough Council Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA), February 2022, updated August 2026.

The Council's most recent GTAA was undertaken in 2021.

An Addendum was included to reflect the subsequent approval of two planning applications. The GTAA was agreed by Welsh Government in 2024.

A further Addendum has been prepared to reflect an additional planning permission.

Revised Residential Unmet Need Calculation

Table 1 provides a breakdown of the current residential supply in the County Borough. It shows a total supply of 13 pitches, made up of occupied authorised private sector pitches.

Table 5.1: Current residential supply (Revised)

Current residential supply	Number of pitches
A. Occupied Local Authority pitches	0
B. Occupied authorised private pitches	13
Total	13

Table 2 provides a breakdown of the planned residential supply. There is currently no local authority provision in the County Borough.

Given that the three sites are relatively new, the Council has assumed that there will be no pitch turnover on these sites during the five-year period. Therefore, the total planned residential supply is nil.

Table 2: Planned residential supply (Revised)

Planned residential supply	Number of pitches
C. Vacant Local Authority pitches and available vacant private pitches	0

D. Pitches expected to become vacant in near future (see note 1)	0
E. New Local Authority and private pitches with planning permission	0
Total	0

In the absence of any survey data from one of the identified sites, information submitted as part of the planning application was used to estimate current residential demand and future household growth on this site.

At the time of writing, the Council is investigating a site in Abertysswg. Based on current information, the site appears to be used solely for leisure purposes. As such, it has been excluded from the calculation below. The site has been recorded on DataMapWales and will be updated accordingly should its status change.

Table 3 below provides a breakdown of current residential demand. It shows there is currently nil residential demand.

Table 3: Current residential demand (Revised)

Current residential demand	Pitch demand
F. unauthorised encampments	0
G. unauthorised development	0
H. overcrowded pitches (see note 2)	0
I. conventional housing (see note 3)	0
J. new households to arrive (see note 4)	0
Total	0

Table 4 provides a breakdown of future household growth, with growth being estimated on the basis of the age of all residents. The growth rate is calculated at 2% per annum, in accordance with Welsh Government advice.

Table 4 shows a growth of nil pitches within the next 5 years, and 5 pitches in total over the period of the emerging LDP (up to 2035). The previous assessment identified a need for one additional household over the next five years. An increase in the number of pitches at this site has now addressed this need.

Table 4: Future household growth (Revised)

Current households	Future households (at year 5)	Future households (Plan period)
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K. 11 (see note 7)	12 (see note 5)	14 (see note 6)
L. Additional household pitch need	0	5

Table 5 provides a breakdown of future residential demand for pitches and any unmet need. It shows a current requirement of nil pitches, and nil increase over the next 5 years.

Over the period of the 2RLDP the requirement is expected to increase from nil to 5 pitches. This table is populated by taking the outputs from tables 1 to 4.

Table 5: Unmet need (Revised)

Unmet Need	Need arising	Need accommodated
M. Current residential demand	0	
N. Future residential demand (5 year)	0	
O. Future residential demand (plan period)	5	
P. Planned residential supply		0
Q. Unmet need (5 year)	0 pitches	
R. Unmet need (Plan period)	5 pitches	

Meeting the Identified Need

Call for Candidate Sites

The Council undertook three Calls for Candidate Sites between July 2021 and February 2025, during which any landowner, developer or other interested person could put forward land for consideration for inclusion in the 2RLDP. A total of 236 sites were submitted to the Council for consideration; one site was submitted for a Gypsy and Traveller proposal (HOV009 - Land at Former Station House, Rhymney).

HOV009 - Land at Former Station House, Rhymney was submitted as candidate site as part of the first call for sites in 2021. At the time of submission, the site was an unauthorised development comprising 5 pitches. Planning permission had been refused, and an Appeal Decision was awaited. The development was allowed at appeal, and a subsequent planning permission has been granted for an additional pitch.

In 2025, the candidate site submission was amended to reflect a larger site area, allowing for expansion of the site to provide an additional 6 pitches.

Authorised Sites within Caerphilly County Borough

There are 3 authorised Gypsy and Traveller sites within Caerphilly County Borough:

Former Station House, Rhymney - Planning permission has been granted for 6 pitches. There is potential for expansion to provide an additional 6 pitches, and this has been considered through the candidate site process.

Whilst site design needs further consideration, there are no significant constraints, and as an extension to the existing site, the site is considered suitable for allocation.

The provision of 6 additional pitches covers the identified need.

Ynysddu - Planning permission has been granted for 2 pitches.

Lylac Ridge, Risca - Permission has recently been granted for 5 pitches.

Transit Provision

In respect of transit provision, the GTAA recognises that, based on current evidence, there is no need to provide a transit site within Caerphilly County Borough.

While transit provision is being considered at a regional level, this research has been placed on hold pending the outcome of national research commissioned by Welsh Government.

Temporary Stopping Places

Recent Welsh Government Guidance encourages local authorities to create temporary/negotiated stopping places to reduce unauthorised encampments.

A temporary/negotiated stopping place is a site with appropriate planning permission where Gypsies and Travellers are permitted to stay with the permission of the landowner, usually a local authority. Temporary/negotiated stopping places can be provided to relocate unlawfully located encampments whilst alternative sites are progressed. These are intended to be a strictly temporary measure where local authorities do not have suitable permanent or transit provision available within their area.

Whilst there are currently no temporary/negotiated stopping places within Caerphilly County Borough, the Council is currently considering such provision.

Conclusion

The preparation of the 2RLDP has been accompanied by a GTAA and a further update, both of which have identified a need for Gypsy and Traveller pitches over the

2RLDP period. Despite seeking to identify additional sites through a Call for Candidate Sites, no new sites have been identified.

The 2RLDP has therefore responded to market conditions by addressing approaches from the existing gypsy and traveller community to extend an existing site. Land at Former Station House will be allocated in the Deposit Plan for a total of 12 pitches.

2nd Replacement Local Development Plan Policy Framework

Allocation Policy

The following allocation policy will be included in the 2RLDP to meet the identified need for Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation:

HO8: Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation

To meet the identified need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation and to allow for the potential future expansion of Gypsy and Traveller households the following site is allocated for the provision of a total of 12 pitches:

HO8.1 Land at Former Station House, Rhymney

Criteria Based Policy

In addition to allocation policy HO8, it is important to include a detailed criteria-based policy to meet any future or unexpected need:

HO9: Locational Constraints – Gypsy and Traveller Sites

Proposals for the provision of new, or extensions to, Gypsy and Traveller sites will be permitted provided:

- A** The site is well related to suitable community facilities and services for the prospective occupants;
- B** The site is capable of being served by utilities including sustainable waste disposal and recovery and emergency services;
- C** The site affords satisfactory amenity standards both for its occupants and for neighbouring land uses;
- D** The site can accommodate residential and home-based business uses without detriment to the amenity and character of the area;
- E** The site is not in an area at risk of flooding given the particular vulnerability of caravans; and
- F** The use of the site would not result in the loss of important recreational or amenity land or land with significant natural heritage value.