

14 February 2011

Planning & Transportation
PO Box 604
Barnsley
S70 9FE

Mr Ayres
The Caravan Park
Shaw Lane
Carlton
Barnsley
S71 3HD

Dear Sirs

For the attention of Steve Kirkham

Application Number: 2011/0143
Description: Change of use of land for siting of 2 no. residential caravans, a static caravan and associated facilities
Location: The Caravan Park, Shaw Lane, Carlton, Barnsley S71 3HD

Please find my supporting application for the above request.

As you are aware, I, Mr Ayres, and my partner reside at the above address and now have another addition to my family recently born baby boy. My son Jack also resides at this address and uses the other caravan.

I also have access to my 4 children from a previous relationship and am finding it difficult to house their stays comfortably for all, they have no play area comfortable to sustain a nurturing upbringing whilst at my home.

My family and I are Gypsies who have lived on this land for some 8 years without any cause for action from Barnsley MBC with, as far as we are aware, no complaints. I have always paid council tax for the land each year for the 8 years or so, and the council has provided waste management services since this date.

I have lived around the Barnsley area all of my life although nomadic at times. I also support my elderly parents who live quite close to my home.

I would accommodate two caravans, a static mobile home. In addition to these caravans I need an reasonable sized amenities block.

This proposal requests to amenities block to be situated at the far top left hand corner of my land. It will contain a single storey day room containing a kitchen/dining room, utility room and bathroom; it will comprise about 70 square metres of floor space.

I will be adding an extra driveway up to this building and turning area so that it would not add a danger to other road users whilst entry/exiting the land from Shaw Lane.

The land is already screen by post/panel fencing to the front therefore affording privacy. My closest neighbours are easily over 400 yds away. The application site is extremely well screened by an allotment site to one side (which I have stopped people fly tipping on that site)

and heavy wooded area to the other. There are only limited public views of the site which remain mainly through the site access from Shaw Lane.

The proposed amenities building would be brick built with a pitched tile roof.

Government guidance published in May 2008, entitled Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites – A Good Practice Guide, identifies design features which are considered to be essential when developing a new site, or refurbishing an existing site. Paragraph 7.17 of the Guide makes clear that it is essential for an amenity building to be provided on each pitch, which must 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. These facilities are deemed to be essential whether or not Gypsies are occupying static caravans, and irrespective of the location of the caravan site. In addition, it is recommended that such amenity buildings include a sitting room, where the family can gather together and socialise, and that amenity buildings should have a domestic appearance.

Most static caravans, including the largest twin-unit mobile home, only contain limited kitchen, dining and bathroom facilities. Generally they make no allowance for the need to accommodate freezers, washing machines and dryers. Gypsies and Travellers also tend to have a cultural aversion to using toilets within their caravans. These factors apply to the home occupied by my partner, my child/children and me.

I need a larger kitchen and utility, dining and indoor recreational space due to the size of my large family. It is hygienic for all the family to have a sustainable cooking, washing and toilet facilities in a suitable permanent structure.

Substantial weight can also be accorded to the Government's Design Guidance now that it has been published in final form.

Access to the application site would be from Shaw Lane via the existing gateway. There would be no extra traffic from the site than already exists from Mr Ayres and his family. The application site is in an extremely sustainable location, adjoining the edge of Barnsley within walking distance of community services and facilities including public transport.

In this case the application site is in the Green Belt where the development of a gypsy caravan site would normally cause harm by reason of inappropriateness and loss of openness. Any loss of openness would be relatively minor, as would encroachment into the countryside. No other purpose of including land in Green Belts would be affected. Furthermore, the proposed development would not have an unacceptable impact upon the character or appearance of the surrounding locality. When I took this land it was in a dilapidated state full of rubbish, it has taken over two years to fully clear the site, grass the area, plant shrubs; all to provide a habitable situation for our home life.

Against this harm to the Green Belt, must be weighed the material consideration in favour of planning permission being granted.

There is a substantial general need for gypsy sites in Barnsley. The South Yorkshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment identified a need for 48 additional residential pitches in Barnsley during the period of 2006-2011. Apart from sites along Smithies Lane, sites granted planning permission since 2006 have been temporary sites and do not count towards permanent provision. A substantial unmet need therefore remains.

I and my family also have a personal need for accommodation in this locality where I am close to my elderly parents to provide support, have access to my children who also live in the locality, access to the healthcare provision for my partner and newly born son.

The lack of development plan policies capable of bringing forward new sites and the absence of a five-year supply of deliverable sites for gypsies are matter which must be given considerable weight in the determination of this application. Paragraph 71 of PPS3 carries a presumption in favour of housing proposals, including proposals for gypsy sites, where there is no identified five-year supply of deliverable land.

On balance the general unmet need for gypsy sites; I need lawful accommodation in this locality; the absence of alternative sites, the lack of existing or emerging development plan policies capable of satisfying the identified need within the foreseeable future; the lack of a five year supply of deliverable sites; and the personal health care and education requirements of my family, are matters which, bearing in mind that my family have been living on this site for over 8 years without coming to the Council's attention, clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and constitutes the very special circumstances necessary to justify granting of planning permission for a considerable sustainable number of years as I would like to ensure I have a strong base for my family.

I look forward to receiving the Council's decision.

Yours faithfully

Mr G J Ayres