

# **A Planning guide to Caravans**

## **Introduction**

These notes are designed to give clear and concise guidance on when there is a need to obtain planning permission for the stationing of one or more caravans on land. It is hoped that this is sufficiently clear but as the subject is complex, further advice should be requested if you are unsure, or do not understand any of the points here-in.

The notes are based on legislation contained within the **Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960, Caravan Sites Act 1968, Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and associated Regulations.**

## **Definitions**

A caravan is a structure that is designed or adapted to be lived in and which is able to be moved (eg. by being towed or transported on a lorry). Vehicles such as motorised caravans or converted coaches or vans are also considered to be caravans but tents are not. These notes are concerned with caravans which are intended to be, or capable of being lived in, whether permanently (as in residential caravans or mobile homes), or for a temporary period like holiday caravans. Both static and touring caravans are included.

These notes apply equally to single caravans and also to a holiday or residential caravan site or park. A Caravan Site is used to describe the land on which the caravan is stationed, as well as the surrounding land. The notes do not cover so called 'shacks', these are treated quite differently in planning legislation.

## **The need for Planning Permission**

A caravan can only be stationed on land without the need to obtain planning permission or a site licence in the following circumstances:

[Part 5 of the General Development Order- Schedule 1 of 1960]

### **Within the curtilage of a dwelling**

A caravan may be parked on the drive or in the garden of a dwelling, provided it is being used as though it were part of the house (like an extra bedroom) by members of the immediate family or by friends occasionally. It cannot be used as a separate dwelling or hired out (eg. for holidays).

## **In all the following cases, these two points must be met:**

1. No new access is made to a trunk or classified road, or an existing access altered.
2. The view of drivers or pedestrians using an adjoining road is not blocked or obstructed, especially at or near a bend, corner or junction.

## **Use of land as a Caravan Site for 1 or 2 nights**

One caravan can be stationed on land for no more than two nights provided :-

It is the only caravan on the land and that in the last 12 months there have been no more than 28 days when one caravan has been on that, or adjoining, land.

This is to allow for the overnight stops of travelling people. In such cases the caravan must be moved after 2 nights.

## **Siting on Agricultural Holdings of five acres or more**

Land comprising at least 5 acres can be used as a Caravan Site providing that in the past twelve months :-

1. There has not been any caravan on the land for more than 28 days.
2. There have been no more than 3 Caravans on the land at any time.

You can station up to 3 caravans on land of 5 acres or more, for up to 28 days in a twelve month period.

## **Sites exempted and supervised by Exempted Organisations**

Land occupied by an Exempted Organisation can be used as a Caravan Site provided :-

It is for recreational use and the site is supervised by the organisation

*Exempted Organisations include:*

*Camping Club of Great Britain and Ireland Ltd., Motor Caravaners Club, Caravan Club, and the Boy Scouts/Girl Guide Associations. Certificates of exemption are issued by the Secretary of State and can be withdrawn at any time.*

## **Sites Approved by Exempted Organisations**

Land can be used as a Caravan Site where an exempted organisation has issued a certificate provided that:

1. No more than five caravans are situated on the land at any one time;
2. The caravan site is used only by members of the organisation;
3. The caravan site is only for the purposes of recreation;

Certificates are issued by the organisations on a yearly basis. The organisation will consult with the Local Planning Authority before the issue of a new certificate.

## **Meetings organised by exempted organisations (Rallies).**

Land can be used for a caravan meeting under the supervision of an exempted organisation provided:

*The land is used only by members of the organisation, the meeting does not last for more than 5 days unless the land is expressly leased to the organisation concerned.*

Exempted organisations include those mentioned earlier, as well as many others.

## **Travelling Showmen.**

Land may be used as a Caravan Site provided: -

The showman is a member of a recognised 'certificate' organisation like the Showman's Guild of Great Britain. He is travelling for the purposes of his business. (Travelling Showmen's 'Winter Quarters' require planning permission).

## **Agricultural and forestry workers.**

Agricultural land can be used as a Caravan Site to accommodate people being employed in farming work on adjoining land provided: -

The work is seasonal, (like fruit picking or lambing) and not an activity which occurs at regular intervals throughout the year. The caravan(s) is/are moved from the land at the end of the season. A permanent caravan site for agricultural workers will require planning permission even if only occupied for one particular season.

Similarly where land is already forested or is being afforested it can be used as a Caravan Site for forestry workers provided: -

The work is seasonal. The caravan site is removed at the end of the season. A permanent site for forestry workers will need planning permission even if only used seasonally.

The use of caravans for mobile farm storage needs to be considered on a case by case basis.

## **Building and Engineering Sites.**

Land may be used as a caravan site to accommodate people taking part in authorised building or engineering work on the same or adjoining land. This covers workers camps on large scale projects, like bridges, roads or dams, as well as small scale building projects, like self build housing. The caravans shall only be used to house workers and not workers' families. The caravan(s) must be removed immediately once the building or engineering work is finished.

## **Site Licences.**

A site licence is required in addition to planning permission in all cases where a caravan is to be lived in permanently or for short period, except when used as described previously in this note. You should contact the Council's Planning, Health and Environment Division for advice.

## **Development on Licensed Caravans Sites.**

Development which must be carried out to comply with the conditions of a site licence which is in force does not require planning permission. Any other development such as garages, hard standings or sheds on residential caravan sites will require planning permission.

## **Building Regulations.**

Building Regulations approval is required for septic tanks, and associated drainage works, and for permanent buildings, like toilet blocks. Where using land as a caravan site is likely to involve any of these contact your Local Authority Building Control Section for advice.