



Joint Circular from the

LIBRARY COPY

Department of the Environment  
2 Marsham Street London SW1P 3EB

Welsh Office  
Cathays Park Cardiff CF1 3NQ

Sir

19 September 1983

### Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960

#### Model Standards

#### Effect on existing touring caravan sites

1. We are directed by the Secretary of State for the Environment and the Secretary of State for Wales to refer to the Revised Model Standards for licensed caravan sites in England and Wales specified under the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 which were brought to the attention of local authorities in DOE Circular 119/77 (Welsh Office Circular 42/77). We also refer to the use of site-licence control as an alternative to enforcement procedures under the Town and Country Planning Act 1971 when caravans are stationed on an unauthorised site; and to the provision of winter quarters for members of the Showmen's Guild of Great Britain who, although exempt from site licensing requirements, are still required to obtain planning permission for the sites they occupy.
2. Although the current standards may have been taken to apply to sites used for touring caravans, that was not the intention, and the opportunity has now been taken to clarify the situation by the formulation of model standards for touring caravan sites. The 1977 Revised Model Standards will have effect hereafter as applying only to permanent residential sites, to static holiday caravan sites and to sites on which there are both static and touring caravans but where the predominant use is for static holiday caravans.
3. In considering licences for sites which serve touring caravans, local authorities should have regard to the new Model Standards which have been published as an Annex to this Circular. These represent the standards normally to be expected, as a matter of good practice, on sites used wholly or predominantly by touring caravans which are not permanently placed on the site throughout the year or the holiday season.
4. Particular attention is drawn, however, to the possibility that lower standards in respect of communal toilet and washing facilities may be appropriate in some circumstances.
5. In the light of this Circular, local authorities should consider the alteration of conditions attached to site licences, after consultation with the holder of the licence, under the provisions of Section 8(1) of the 1960 Act. The fire authority should also be consulted before any conditions appertaining to their interests are altered.

## Emergency Services

6. Local authorities are reminded that, when emergency services are called to a caravan site, valuable time can be saved if the site is readily identifiable. They may wish to ensure, by attaching a condition to that effect to the site licence, that a sign indicating the name of the site is displayed at the site entrance. Provided it comes within the specified size-limits, a sign of this type will usually benefit from the 'deemed consent' provided by Class II in Regulation 14 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1969 (SI 1969/1532).

## Site Licence Control as an Alternative to Enforcement Procedures

7. Attention is drawn to the fact that the use of land as a caravan site (whether for residential or static holiday caravans, for touring caravans, or for gypsy caravans) is subject to a system of dual control. Consequently, a caravan site which is not authorised by a specific grant of planning permission for that use is likely to be in breach both of planning control, under the Town and Country Planning Act 1971, and of site-licence control under the 1960 Act, so that the enforcement powers in both enactments would be available to the local authority in order to remedy the unlawful use of land. In such cases, local authorities should consider which method of enforcement is likely to be the more effective and appropriate, bearing in mind that enforcement of planning control under the 1971 Act is likely to result in delay if the statutory right of appeal to the Secretary of State against an enforcement notice is exercised.

## Travelling showmen

8. Showmen are businessmen who travel the country during the summer months holding fairs. Each autumn showmen and their families return to "winter quarters" with their caravans, vehicles and equipment. During the winter and for short periods at other times they live on these sites where they maintain their fairground equipment. Winter quarters sites need to be fairly large with good vehicular access. They must be reasonably convenient for schools and other amenities, and available for sufficient time to make the provision of sewerage and other services worthwhile.

9. Most showmen are members of the Showmen's Guild of Great Britain and are required by the Guild to follow a code of practice on the use of winter quarters sites. Membership of the Guild provides showmen with exemption from the site licensing requirements of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960. However, they do not enjoy permitted development rights under Class XXII of Schedule 1 to the Town and Country Planning General Development Order 1977. Nor do they benefit from the provisions of the Caravan Sites Act 1968. Showmen have therefore to find their own sites and obtain permission.

10. In recent years, a number of traditional winter quarters sites have been purchased compulsorily, or showmen's tenancies terminated. Showmen experience considerable difficulties in finding suitable alternative sites for purchase or rent and for which they will be granted planning permission. This can lead to showmen having to leave their home areas and may produce overcrowding on existing sites.

11. Winter quarters sites will be used both for residential accommodation and for the maintenance of vehicles and equipment. They are thus unlikely to fit neatly into existing land-use allocations. While all planning applications must be considered on their own merits, these characteristics make it important that authorities adopt a reasonably flexible approach to applications for winter quarters, and not insist on rigid conformity with zoning policies (where indeed these persist). In particular they should avoid imposing conditions prohibiting either residential use or the maintenance of equipment as such restrictions would make a permission for winter quarters useless. They should also be wary of limiting permissions to a temporary period (paragraphs 16-20 of the Memorandum to Circular 5/68 give advice

on when this is appropriate eg where a trial run is needed). When a change of use is permitted on a site currently used for winter quarters, or permission is applied for for winter quarters and refused (or granted but made temporary), local authorities may be able to help showmen by advising on sites that are likely to be available and for which permanent planning permission might be granted. Local authorities should also bear the needs of showmen in mind in the preparation of local plans.

12. Where local authorities own winter quarters sites which need to be used for other purposes, they can assist showmen by giving early notice and not normally requiring sites to be vacated until suitable alternative land has been secured. In all cases where showmen are in need of winter quarters sites, local authorities are asked to give every assistance in finding permanent publicly or privately owned sites for purchase or rental at reasonable cost and to make full use of the registers of unused and underused land owned by public bodies. Sometimes it may be possible for an authority to acquire land for winter quarters under Section 24 of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 (or to appropriate to this purpose land which they already hold) and lease it to the Showmen's Guild for the use of their members.

13. On all matters likely to affect travelling showmen, local authorities should at an early stage get in touch with the General Secretary, the Showmen's Guild of Great Britain, Guild House, 41 Clarence Street, Staines, Middlesex.

14. Paragraph 30 of Circular 49/68 is now cancelled.

We are, Sir, your obedient Servants,

A FLEXMAN *Assistant Secretary*

H K TRIMNELL *Assistant Secretary*

The Chief Executive

County Councils }  
District Councils } in England and Wales

London Borough Councils

The Town Clerk, City of London

The Director General, Greater London Council

The National Park Officer—Peak Park Joint Planning Board

Lake District Special Planning Board

[DOE DRA1/2904/4]  
[WO P35/108/03]

**Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960, Section 5  
Model Standards for Touring Caravan Sites**

I. Section 5(6) of the Act provides that the Secretary of State may from time to time specify Model Standards with respect to the lay-out of, and the provision of facilities, services and equipment for, caravan sites or particular types of caravan site; and that in deciding what (if any) conditions to attach to a site licence the local authority shall have regard to any standards so specified. Under Section 5(1)(c) such conditions may regulate the positions in which caravans are stationed for the purposes of human habitation, and the placing or erection at any time when caravans are so stationed, of structures and vehicles of any description whatsoever and of tents.

II. Section 7(1) of the Act provides that on an appeal against any condition of a site licence a magistrates' court, if satisfied (having regard amongst other things to any standards specified by the Secretary of State under Section 5(6)) that a condition is unduly burdensome, may vary or cancel the condition.

III. Section 24, which empowers local authorities to provide caravan sites, provides, in subsection (2), that in exercising their powers under the section the local authority shall have regard to any standards that may have been specified by the Secretary of State under Section 5(6) of the Act.

IV. Section 8(2) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1982 inserted provisions into Sections 5, 8 and 24 of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 requiring local authorities to consult fire authorities when exercising their powers under that Act in relation to the issuing of site licences for caravan sites and the provision of local authority caravan sites. The local authority is now required to consult the fire authority as to the extent to which any model standards relating to fire precautions are appropriate in relation to the site. If the fire authority considers that the standards specified are inappropriate in relation to the site, the local authority is required to consult them as to what conditions relating to fire precautions ought to be attached to the site licence. The local authority is also required to consult the fire authority before altering any condition in a site licence that relates to fire precautions or before themselves providing a caravan site.

V. In pursuance of his powers under Section 5(6) of the Act, the Secretary of State now specifies Model Standards for sites for touring caravans. Although these represent the standards normally to be expected, as a matter of good practice, the Secretary of State does not wish them to be applied to all sites, regardless of the economic and other implications for the site operators, people using the site and public amenity. They should be applied with due regard to the particular circumstances of each case, including the physical character of the site, any services or facilities that may already be available within convenient reach, and other local conditions including the kind of holidays which the site is designed to offer. Where usage is restricted to caravans equipped with their own toilet and washing facilities, communal toilet and washing facilities may not be necessary and lower standards than specified may be desirable in some locations for the avoidance of visually intrusive structures or installations.

VI. These Model Standards are for sites used by touring caravans, by which is meant caravans which are not permanently placed on the site throughout the year or the holiday season. Where a site is used both for touring caravans and for static caravans, the local authority should judge whether to refer to the Revised 1977 Model Standards or to the following

Standards according to the predominant use of the site. For example, where static caravans predominate, application of the Revised Model Standards of 1977 will be appropriate. Account should, however, be taken of the fact that significant changes in the nature of the use might warrant the alteration of site licence conditions.

### **Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 Section 5 Model Standards for Touring Caravan Sites 1983**

#### *Density*

1. Site density should not exceed 75 units (caravans or motor caravans) per hectare (30 units per acre) calculated on the basis of the useable area rather than the total site area (ie excluding crags, lakes, roads, communal services etc), provided that, where tent camping is also permitted, the maximum number of units stationed on the site at any one time should be reduced by the number of pitches occupied by main tents stationed for human habitation.

2. Where the number of units on the site is to be limited by condition, it may be appropriate to prescribe maxima by reference to specified periods so as to permit up to 10% more units during such peak holiday periods as may be agreed between the site licensing authority and the licence holder without the provision of additional facilities, provided that:

- (i) the provisions of paragraph 1 above are complied with; and
- (ii) the standards relating to spacing, as set out in paragraphs 3-5 below, are complied with.

#### *Spacing*

3. Every unit should be not less than 6 metres from any other unit in separate family occupation and not less than 3 metres should be permitted between units in any circumstances.

4. Vehicles and other ancillary equipment should be permitted within the 6 metres space between units in separate family occupation but, in order to restrict the spread of fire, there should always be 3 metres clear space within the 6 metres separation.

5. Emergency vehicles should be able to secure access at all times to within 90 metres of any unit on the site.

#### *Drinking water supply and waste water disposal*

6. There should be an adequate supply of drinking water. Each pitch on a site should be no further than 90 metres from a water tap. At each tap there should be a soakaway or gully.

7. Waste water disposal points should be provided so that each pitch is no further than 90 metres from a waste water disposal point. The appropriate Water Authority should be consulted about the arrangements for disposal of water likely to be contaminated.

#### *Toilets: WCs and chemical closets*

8. The scale of provision should be 1 WC and 1 urinal for men and 2 WCs for women per 30 pitches and their location should be to the satisfaction of the licensing authority. The pro rata scale can be reduced where sites have over 120 pitches (see also paragraph 9 below). Toilets may not be justified where sites have less than 10 pitches but on sites with between 10 and 30 pitches at least one WC and 1 urinal for men and 2 WCs for women should be provided.

9. Where the provision of WCs is not feasible or justified entry should be confined to units with their own toilets or chemical closets should be provided.

*Disposal point for chemical closets*

10. Whether or not WCs are provided, a properly designed disposal point for the contents of chemical closets should be provided together with an adjacent adequate supply of water for cleansing containers. The method of disposal will need to be considered in the light of the particular circumstances and should be to the satisfaction of the local authority and the appropriate Water Authority. Where appropriate, the water supply should be clearly labelled as non-potable.

*Washing points*

11. There should be a minimum of 4 wash basins supplied with water per 30 units; 2 each for men and women. They should be adjacent to the toilets.

*Hot water: Showers*

12. Showers should not be obligatory on sites with less than 70 pitches. If showers are required, provision should be on the basis of 1 shower per 25 pitches and hot water should be available.

*Disabled persons*

13. Particular consideration should be given to the needs of the disabled in the provision made for water points, toilets, washing points and showers.

*Electrical installations*

14. Where there is an electrical installation other than Electricity Board works and circuits subject to Regulations under Section 60 of the Electricity Act 1947, it should be installed to the requirements of the Institution of Electrical Engineers' Regulations for Electrical Installations (the IEE Wiring Regulations) for the time being in force and, where appropriate, to the standard acceptable for the Electricity (Overhead Lines) Regulations 1970, SI 1970 No. 1355. Any installation should be maintained in such a way as to prevent danger as far as reasonably practicable and should be periodically inspected and tested by a competent person in accordance with the IEE Wiring Regulations.

*Refuse disposal*

15. Adequate provision should be made for the storage, collection and disposal of refuse. (It is expected that site operators should normally be able to meet their responsibilities by making arrangements with the local authority.)

*Fire precautions*

16. No unit should be further than 90 metres from a fire point. At each fire point there should be two water (gas expelled) extinguishers each of 10 litres capacity and complying with British Standard 5423:1980, together with a means of raising the alarm in the event of fire (eg a manually operated sounder, gong or hand operated siren). All fire fighting equipment susceptible to damage by frost should be suitably protected.

17. Wherever there is a likelihood of fire spreading due to vegetation catching fire, suitable beaters, of the type used by the Forestry Commission, should also be provided at each fire point.

18. The fire points should be clearly marked and easily accessible. All fire-fighting equipment should be maintained in working order and kept available for use and for inspection by the licensing authority.

19. Each fire point should exhibit a conspicuous notice indicating the action to be taken in case of fire and the location of the nearest telephone. The notice should include the following:

On discovering fire

1. Raise the alarm
2. Ensure the affected unit is evacuated
3. Call the Fire Brigade (the nearest telephone is sited.....)
4. If practicable, attack the fire using the firefighting equipment provided.

*Liquefied Petroleum Gas*

20. Arrangements for the storage of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) on the site should be in accordance with the current national Code of Practice and regulations.

*Site notices*

21. A sign indicating the name of the site should be displayed at the site entrance.

22. Notices should be displayed prominently on the site indicating the action to be taken in the event of an emergency and show where the police, fire brigade, ambulance, and local doctors can be contacted, and the location of the nearest public telephone. Where practicable a telephone should be provided on the site and the full address of the site should be displayed near the telephone.

23. At sites subject to flood risk, warning notices should be displayed giving advice about the operation of the flood warning system.

24. At sites with overhead electric lines, warning notices should be displayed on the supports for the lines and at the site entrance. Where appropriate, these should warn against the danger of contact between the lines and the masts of yachts or dinghies.

25. A copy of the site licence with its conditions should be displayed prominently on the site.

©Crown Copyrights 1983  
First published 1983

HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

*Government Bookshops*

49 High Holborn, London WC1V 6HB  
13a Castle Street, Edinburgh EH2 3AR  
Brazennose Street, Manchester M60 8AS  
Southey House, Wine Street, Bristol BS1 2BQ  
258 Broad Street, Birmingham B1 2HE  
80 Chichester Street, Belfast BT1 4JY

*Government publications are also available  
through booksellers*

£1.40 net

ISBN 0 11 751699 6