



# “How do I fill in the...

# Planning Application form?”

## How do I fill in the Planning Application form?



➤ **No-one finds this bit easy. Here's what you do.**

You might want help (for example from a friend or a Planning Consultant, see page 10) to fill in the forms. You will almost certainly want someone to draw up the plans for you.

If you use an agent such as a surveyor or a planning advisor they will charge for their time. The Council's Planning Officer is also there to help you.

Planning Aid (see page 10) or someone from a local Traveller Support Group might be able to help.

➤ **The Planning Application form asks for lots of information. You only have to answer the questions that apply to you. They will include:**

- Your name and address.
- The location of your proposed site.
- A description of your proposed site. For example: "a site for a residential caravan for one Gypsy family and a washroom". Or "hard standing with two residential caravans and a wash house". It's easier to get Planning Permission for a small site (4 – 5 pitches) than a large one (10 – 20 pitches).
- The measurement of the site in square meters and hectares, not in yards or acres. (Councils won't look at plans which use the old measurements.)
- The type of planning application. Most applications for Gypsy sites are a Change of Use with Building Operations. Some applications will be Retrospective but the new Circular 01/06 wants Gypsies and Travellers to get Planning Permission before moving on to land and doing any work.

The rest of the form will ask questions about the site (parking spaces, any Public Rights of Way or footpaths across the land, drainage, etc) and your proposed development.

### Certificate of Ownership

When you have filled in the planning part of the form, sign the Certificate about the ownership of the land.

Fill in and sign Certificate A if you own the land.

Fill in either B, C or D if you don't own the land. (You can apply for Planning Permission on land which does not belong to you, but only if you have informed the legal owners. If you do not know the owner it can get very complicated.)

★ **Tip** – It helps if you have the deeds to your land.

You will need to give details of any sewerage arrangements if your proposed site is not on, and cannot be linked to, mains sewerage. This could be a septic tank or a treatment plant, for example. Compost toilets are also possible.

Sign and date the form.

## How much will this cost?

➤ **The current flat rate fee for a Change of Use of Land is £265.**

The Planning Application fee will be a few hundred pounds. But the whole business can cost £2000 – £3000 plus VAT. Some Councils charge one fee for the application; others may try to charge one fee for each pitch. When you apply for a change of use, the fee should be for all the site regardless of how many vans you put on it. Pay the planning fee up front, with your Planning Application.

## What happens next?

➤ **The Planning Officer, or the Planning Committee, will decide your Application.**

If the Planning Committee are to decide, the Planning Officer will recommend to the Councillors on the Planning Committee whether or not to approve your Planning Application. The Councillors do not have to follow the Planning Officer's recommendations, but they usually do.

## What to do while you wait



➤ Find out when and where your Planning Application will be considered and go along to the Planning meeting. (Some Councils will let you speak at the Planning meeting. Ask if you can. And prepare what you are going to say or get someone to speak for you.)

➤ Keep in touch with the Planning Officer to check how your Planning Application is going.

➤ Neighbours and other people will be consulted for their views. Call the Planning Officer after 3 or 4 weeks to see what comments people are making. Answer any questions as quickly as you can. The Planning Office only has 8 weeks in which to grant or refuse you permission.

➤ Are there any objections to your Planning Application? Give the Planning Officer your response to them.

➤ Is the Planning Officer going to recommend refusal of the Planning Application? Find out why and see if you can amend your scheme or provide the information they need before the decision is made. For example, they may not like the suggested layout or the size of your day room. They may want details of a visibility splay at the access.

The Council **passed** my Planning Permission. What next?

➤ **Go ahead and develop the site.**

Be sure to stick to any Planning Conditions and get the necessary Building Regulations or other approvals. You must not start until you have given the Council all the information they need to satisfy any conditions. You will also need a Caravan Site Licence and it is a good idea to find out what the requirements are before you start work on hard standings, spacing of vans, proximity of vans to site boundaries, septic tanks, etc.

They **refused** me Planning Permission. What now?

➤ **It's not the end of the road.**

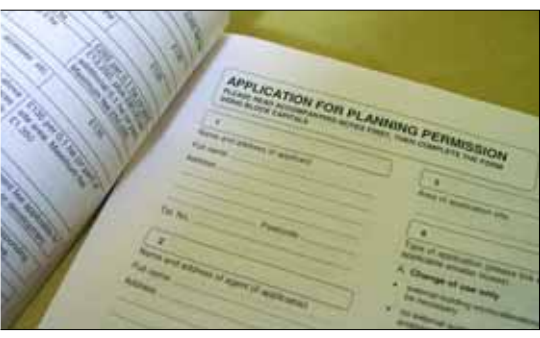
If you are refused planning permission:

➤ Speak to the Planning Officer who handled your case and find out what changes you need to make and resubmit a Revised Planning Application. You are entitled to one free resubmission, but it must be materially different.

➤ **You need to do everything you did on pages 2 and 3, but include the changes you think will help the Application be approved.**

★ **Tip** – Your Planning Officer may be able to suggest changes or alterations which will help the Resubmission get approved.

➤ **Or you might be able to appeal. See page 6.**



## What we did

When Billy Varey applied for Planning Permission to Cotswold District Council, the Council's Planning Officers recommended refusing his Plans.

“We went to the planning meeting thinking they were going to chuck it out,” said Billy. “But the Council was brilliant.”

The Councillors overruled their Planning Officer and gave Billy Planning Permission. “It was difficult because this is an Area of Outstanding Natural

Beauty and I don't like caravans scattered across the countryside,” explained one Councillor. “But people have got to live somewhere. These applicants behaved impeccably: they found a site and they talked to people.”

Billy Varey said afterwards: “We've lived in the area all our lives and been moved from pillar to post. Gypsies and Travellers have just got to take that chance (on getting planning) otherwise they will be on the roadside for the rest of their lives.”



Photo: Fred Chance