



Designing an Aire

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Overview

This document aims to give practical advice and offer suggestions for the creation of successful parking spaces for Aires.

This document should be read in conjunction with the Fire Safety report commissioned by CAMpRA.

Motorcaravans vary in size and height; however 96% sold in the UK are under 3 meters in height and 8 meters in length. There are larger motorhomes which are the size of coaches i.e., up to 11 meters in length and up to 4m in height, which may also need consideration when designing an Aire.

What are the Different Types of Aire?

This is the first question to answer.

Overnight parking and sleeping – This is the easiest for a council to provide as they can use their existing powers or a Traffic Regulation Order to allow overnight parking for self-contained motorcaravans only (no camping behaviour) in car parks or on any plot of level land. Preferably with specific allocated motorcaravan bays. Income up to £5 per night.

Overnight parking with water and waste points - These will require an initial investment which can be kept to a minimum if toilets already exist as it is simply a case of adding an outside tap and toilet waste disposal point emptying. Ideally a drive over drain for grey waste (washing up and shower water) could be provided and bins for rubbish. Costs would be offset by Income up to £10 per night.

Service points only - These can be installed where there is access for one vehicle but no parking. Good examples are public toilets as this is a great way of funding the upkeep of a public toilet through a charge of £3-5 per use. Also suitable for car wash, local garage, village hall, church or any local businesses that have water and sewage.

Small 5 van Aire - These can be set up by small businesses as just overnight parking and sleeping or with waste and water using the exemption certification issued by an exempted organisation. CAMpRA can assist with applications for exemption certification that do not require membership of an organisation.

Commercial Aire - These require some initial investment or can be outsourced to a professional body who will install and manage these on your behalf. You retain ownership of the land and receive of percentage of the revenue from parking. These are secure areas with entrance barriers, CCTV, electric points and are accessed by a pre-paid card (we are able to provide details of a company specialising in these). Income up to £15.

Converting Existing Parking for Motorhomes

Where there are existing car parks with good access it is possible to create some designated motorcaravan parking. Some towns allow motorcaravans to park in the same bays as coaches. However the preference is to have designated parking areas to avoid any potential confusion especially when allowing overnight parking. Large motorhomes between 8m and 11m in length would require coach bays regardless.

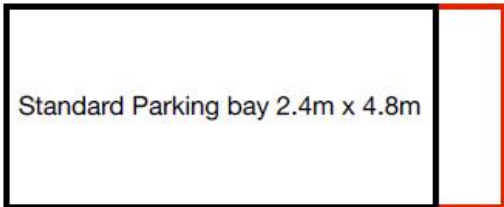
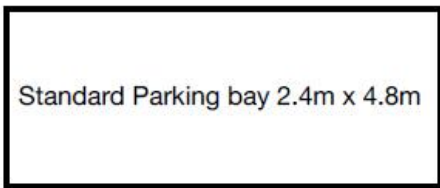
Access

Access into the parking area would need to be reviewed. Some vehicles towards the 8m length have an overhang at the rear which can cause issues when accessing parking. This is mainly due to the longer wheel base and overhang which on steep slopes may cause grounding the rear end. This may restrict the number of potential users and impact revenue. (Our survey indicates 95% of UK Motorcaravans are 8m or less)

Raised curbs at entranceways can be an issue for long wheel-based vans, along with tight turning circles.

Size of Parking Space

The majority of vehicles are built on a standard van chassis with a rear overhang of some description. On the larger vehicles it is possible to keep the parking bay shorter if the vehicle can reverse into the bay with the rear over a grass area. These overhangs can be over Kerbs as long as they are low level.



Short Wheelbase Van Conversion 2.26 x 4.96



Long Wheel Base Van Conversion 2.26 x 6.36



Motorhome 2.34 up to 8m long

Space Between Parked Vehicles

CAMpRA commissioned a Fire Safety Report (31st December 2020) following initial feedback from potential sites that it would not be possible to introduce continental style Aires due to the '6 meter Rule' as outlined in the Model Standards to the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960.

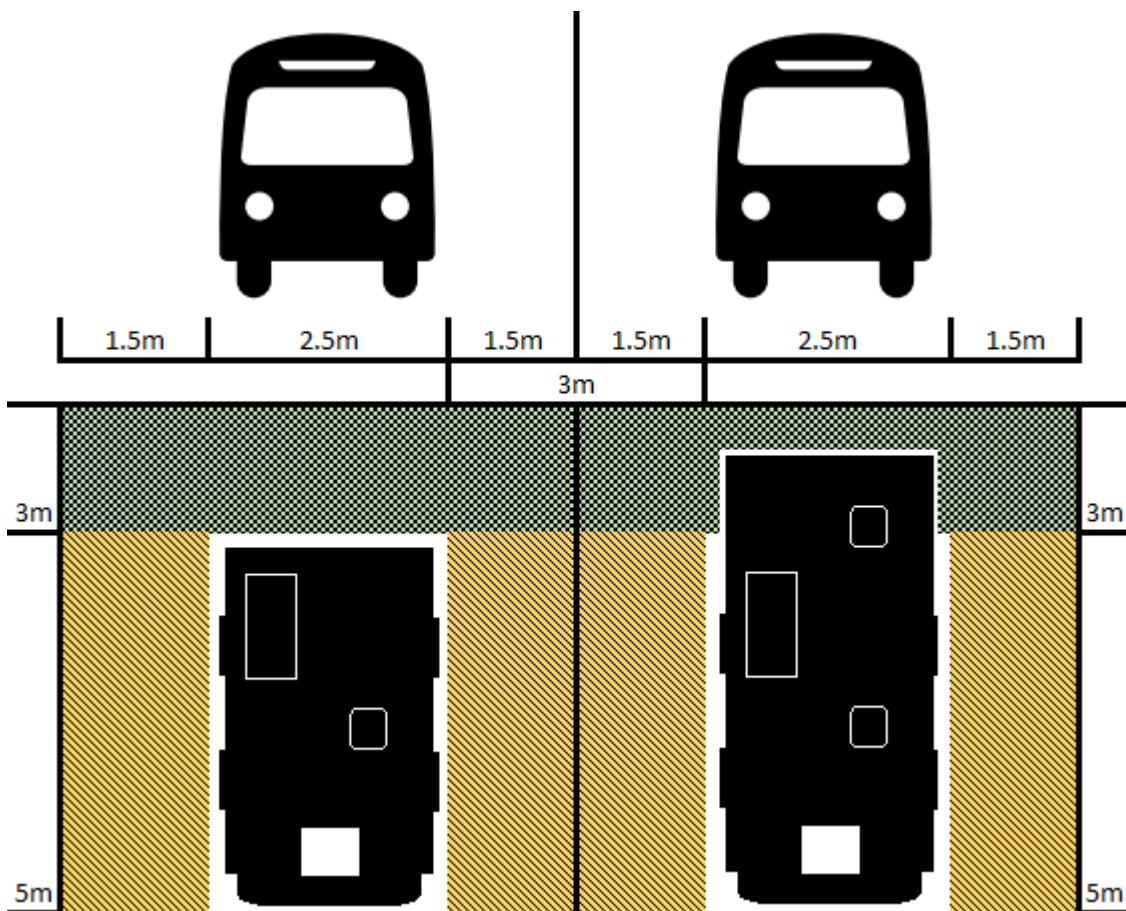
The extract from the report below which can be found in full [on the CAMpRA Business Hub](#), outlines that this is actually 3m when applied to the specific situation of parking of motorcaravans who are not Camping i.e. no awnings out and is based on a maximum width of vehicle being 2.5m wide:

"This would mean that a 2.5m wide parking space would allow a vehicle to park and the occupants to exit the vehicle. With an additional 3 m (1.5 m either side) would mean that no motor caravan is less than 3 m apart. So the total width of the parking bay would be 5.5 m.

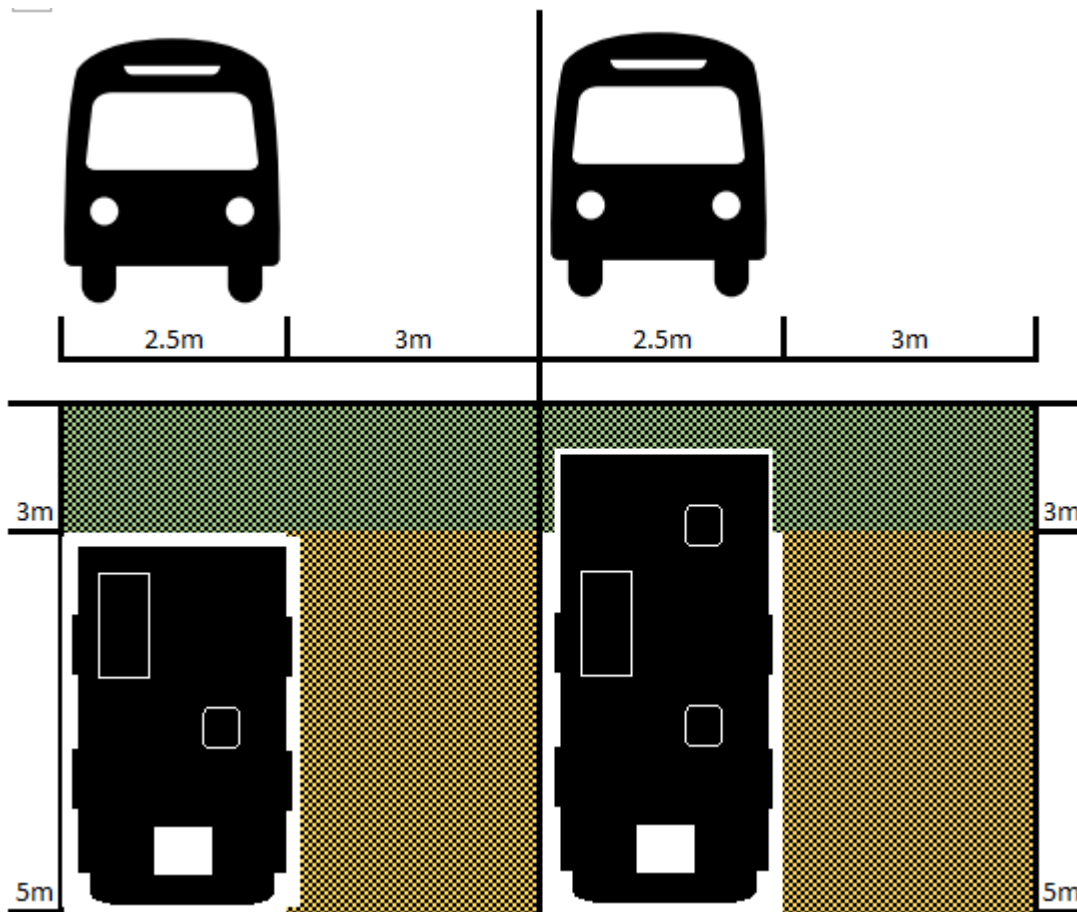
If the parking bay is made any wider without some form of solid divider between the two, then the extra space between vehicles could allow additional motor caravans to inadvertently park in this area when the area becomes full.

Those using the bays should be encouraged to park in the centre of the bay; this can be enforced through the use of appropriate signage.

If a solid barrier is used between pitches then the space between them could be wider."



Parking centrally.



Parking to one side possible when using a barrier to prevent use of 3m gap.

Other Considerations

Hardstandings

Preferably hardstandings are required as motorcaravans will get stuck in soft ground. Grass pitches are only suitable if well drained and dry which limits year-round availability. Hard standing can be made with reinforced matting, hardcore or tarmac etc. What is important is that motorcaravan pitches need to be fairly level. If you have limited space the 5 units can be on separate areas, for example 3 spaces on one area of hard standing and 2 more in a separate tarmac area.

Shade v Sun

Other considerations when sighting parking spaces will be any overhanging trees etc. The normal expectation is that shade would be required especially in the height of summer. However, many motorcaravans nowadays are completely self-sufficient and have solar panels installed to their roofs which require direct sunlight to top up leisure batteries.

Location

Motorcaravan owners prefer quieter locations, and this will have an impact on the success of the Aire especially when paying for overnight parking.

What services should be provided?

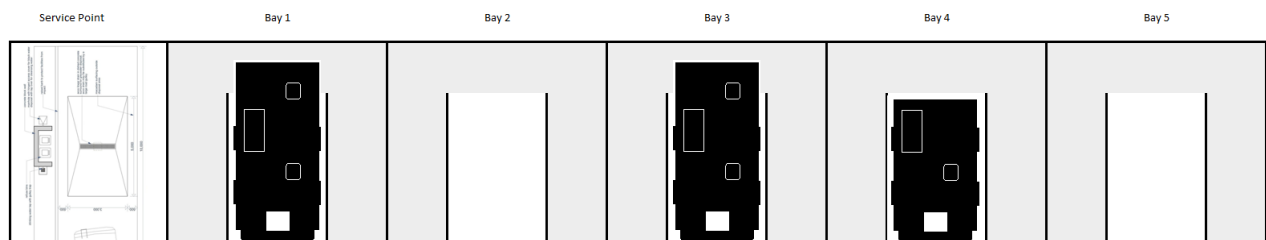
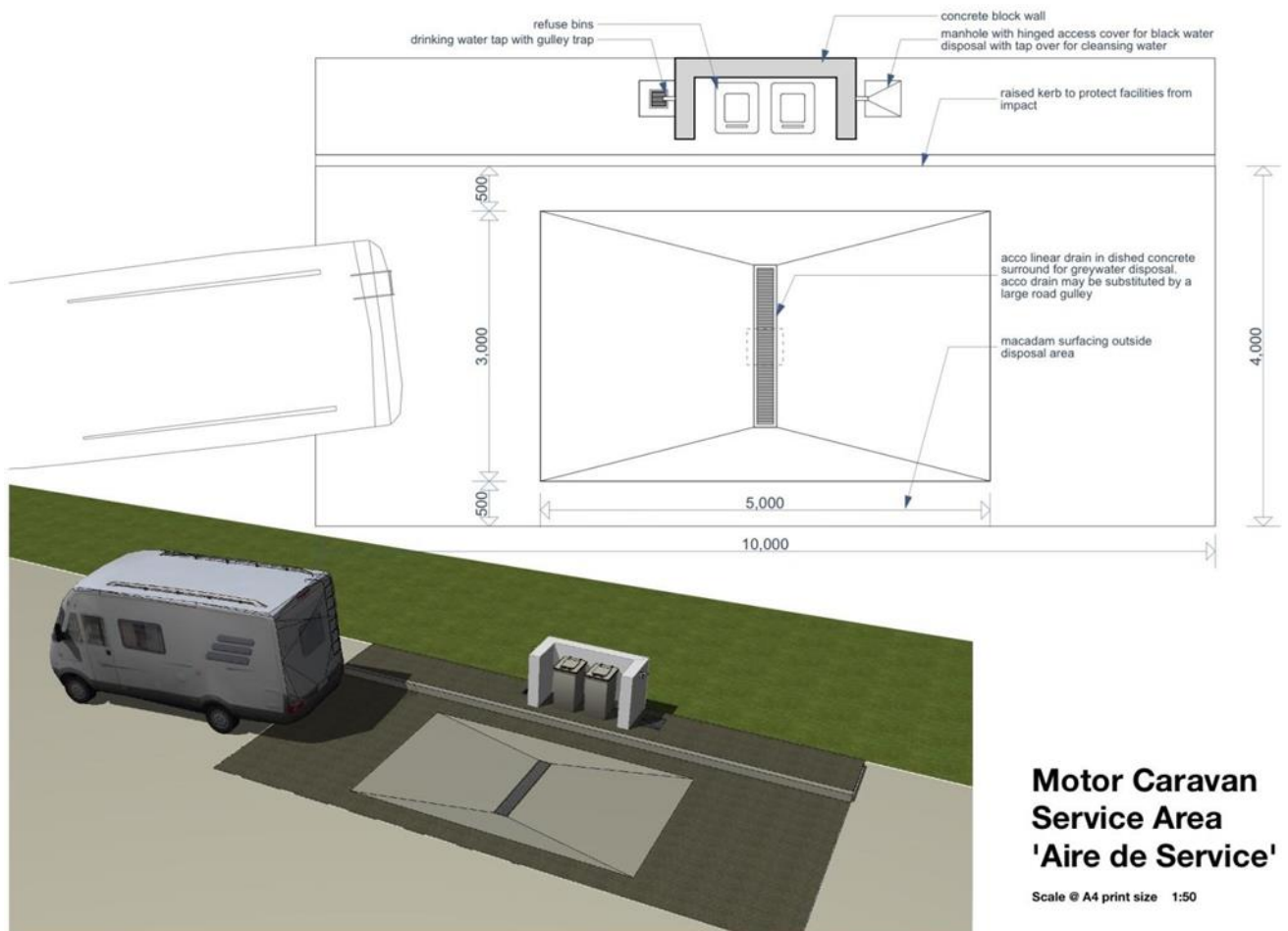
Part of designing the parking spaces is to decide whether or not there will be a service point in the vicinity and what type of services the site is able to accommodate.

A separate document '[Providing a Service Point for Motorcaravans](#)' goes into more detail on options which may be considered.

Designing from Scratch

All of the considerations listed above when creating an Aire from existing parking still apply and will depend on the location selected.

Example of Aire designed from scratch



Appendix 1

Documents in this Series

All these documents can be found on the CAMpRA UK Ltd [Business Hub](#)

Name	Overview
Introduction to Aires	
Aires and Motorcaravans	This document explains what an Aire is, why they are needed, how they are used and what if any benefits there are from them being introduced.
Aires and Tourism	This is a guide to help you understand how Aires can work positively with other tourism sectors such as campsites, bed and breakfast and hotels.
Creating Aires and Service Points	
Steps to Creating an Aire	This document aims to set out the simplified steps for creating an Aire. This document is aimed at Small Businesses and Landowners who wish to create a small Aire.
Designing an Aire	This document aims to give practical advice and offer suggestion for the creation of successful parking spaces for Aires.
Providing a Service Point for Motorcaravans	Service points are very important for responsible and environmentally friendly disposal of waste this document outlines the types of systems used and potential costs for installation and upkeep.
Planning, TRO, Site Licenses and Certificates	This document outlines what may be involved in gaining Planning Permission/licences/certification to open an Aire along with changes that might be required to Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) for existing car parking areas.
Fees and Promoting an Aire	This document aims to give practical advice and offer suggestions for what fees if any to charge for the use of an Aire and what methods can be used for promoting the new Aire.
Site Notices and Signs	This document suggests what notices and signs may be of use on an Aire.
CAMpRA Accreditation	This document explains what a CAMpRA Accredited Aire is, what this means to the site and how to get Accreditation.

Recommended Reading in Conjunction with this Document.

Name	Notes
CAMpRA - Strategy for Sustainable Motorcaravan Tourism in the UK	
CAMpRA Fire Safety Report	Commissioned by CAMpRA from and Independent professional Fire Safety Expert.
CAMpRA 2020 Survey	

Document History

Date	Version	Type	Notes
29.10.2021	2.0	Major Revision	Inclusion of following Docs Motorcaravan parking bays Parking bay spacing Guide to setting up an Aire Requirements for an Aire (parking Bays)
2020	1.0		Previous iterations