

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE LOCAL PLAN

Publication stage

BACKGROUND PAPER 5

**Policy H7 – Provision for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling
Showpeople**

June 2016

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This is one of a number of background papers which have been published to support the Local Plan. The purpose of this paper is to provide more information in support of Policy H7 (Provision for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople) than can be included in the Local Plan document itself if it is to remain of a manageable size.
- 1.2 The base date used for pitch and plot numbers is 1 October 2015. We update these figures twice a year (at 1 April and 1 October) but figures for 1 April 2016 were not available at the time that the publication version of the Local Plan was being drafted. The figures will be updated prior to examination to reflect the most up-to-date position.

2 THE POLICY

- 2.1 Policy H7 sets out the level of provision to meet the identified needs of gypsies and travellers and travelling show people in the district up to 2031 and how we intend to address this need. It also sets out criteria against which to assess proposals for new provision. It states:

Policy H7 – Provision for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

- (1) **Provision will be made to meet the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople between 2012-2031 for a minimum of:**
- **2012-2017: 27 pitches plus 20 transit pitches**
 - **2017-2022: 11 pitches plus 3 plots for showpeople**
 - **2022-2027: 14 pitches plus 3 plots for showpeople**
 - **2027-2031: 16 pitches plus 3 plots for showpeople**
- (2) **The required provision will be identified through the production of a Gypsy and Travellers Site Allocations Development Plan Document, taking into account the most up-to-date Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment.**
- (3) **A five year supply of deliverable sites will be identified as well as a supply of developable sites or broad locations for the following years. The following criteria will be used to guide the site allocation process, and for the purposes of considering planning applications for such sites.**
- (4) **Proposal for new sites or extensions to existing sites should meet the following requirements:**
- (a) **Be located with reasonable access to a range of services, such as shops, schools, welfare facilities or public transport**
 - (b) **Be proportionate to the scale of the nearest settlement, its local services and infrastructure**

- (c) **Have suitable highway access, and is not detrimental to public highway safety**
- (d) **Provides for adequate on-site parking and turning of vehicles as well as appropriate facilities for servicing and storage**
- (e) **Be capable of being provided with adequate essential services including water supply, power, drainage, sewage proposal, and waste disposal facilities**
- (f) **Be compatible with landscape, environment and biodiversity as well as the physical and visual character of the area**
- (g) **Be compatible with the amenities of neighbouring properties and land uses**

(5) Authorised, existing and new, sites will be safeguarded for Gypsy and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople groups unless they are no longer required to meet an identified need.

2.2 For clarification, a “pitch” refers to space on a gypsy and traveller site, whilst a ‘plot’ refers to a space on a ‘travelling showpeople’ site (sometime referred to as a ‘yard’). This allows there to be differentiation between the two, as a travelling showpeople plot may need to incorporate space for storage of equipment due to the nature of their work, as well as space for residential accommodation.

2.3 The following section provides more detail behind how we have determined these requirements.

3 GYPSY AND TRAVELLER AND TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE PROVISION – NATIONAL BACKGROUND

3.1 The shortage of authorised sites for Gypsies and Travellers is a national, regional and local issue which often leads to unauthorised development in many parts of the country. This situation creates a considerable amount of uncertainty for both travelling and settled communities, and with some decisions being made through the appeals process.

3.2 In determining the amount of new pitches and plots the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) set out the relevant planning policy and provide advice to which it is necessary to have regard.

National Planning Policy Framework

3.3 One of its Core Planning Principles is for planning to identify and then meet the housing needs of an area.

National Planning Policy for Traveller Sites

- 3.4 This document sets out the Government’s planning policy for traveller sites and must be taken into account in the preparation of development plans, and is a material consideration in decision taking. It places a responsibility on local authorities, amongst other things, to make an assessment of needs for the purposes of planning, develop fair, effective and inclusive strategies and local plan policies to meet need through the identification of land for sites and plan for sites over a reasonable timescale. (Para 4)
- 3.5 Local Plans must also include pitch targets for gypsies and travellers, and plot targets for travelling showpeople, to address both permanent and transit accommodation need (Para 8). A five year supply of specific deliverable sites against locally set targets should be identified for the first five years and a supply of specific developable sites or broad location should then be identified for the following five years (Para 9).

4 THE EVIDENCE BASE

Accommodation Need

- 4.1 The PPTS requires local planning authorities to use a robust evidence base to establish accommodation needs to inform the preparation of local plans. The Council, along with other Leicestershire Authorities, commissioned the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Gypsy and Travellers’ Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTAA) (2007). This identified the level of provision at that time and an estimate of future need for the period 2006-2016.
- 4.2 As time moved on it was decided that the 2007 assessment was becoming somewhat dated and also only went up to 2016. Therefore a 2013 refresh of the original 2007 GTAA Study has been undertaken by De Montfort University for all the Leicester and Leicestershire authorities apart from Hinckley and Bosworth and Rutland, and was published in May 2013. This has assessed the need for pitches and plots for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople respectively, up to 2031, taking into account unmet need identified in the initial GTAA (2007). This sets out the need for gypsy and traveller pitches in the District, as follows:
- 2012-2017: 27 pitches plus 20 transit pitches
 - 2017-2022: 11 pitches plus 3 plots for showpeople
 - 2022-2027: 14 pitches plus 3 plots for showpeople
 - 2027-2031: 16 pitches plus 3 plots for showpeople

These minimum requirements for the period 2012-2031 are set out in Policy H7.

- 4.3 The methodology for the GTAA refresh includes a mixed approach of primary and secondary data analysis. It updates and refreshes the 2007 GTAA but does not replace it. It does however provide a more up to date assessment of pitch and plot requirements. Survey work and interviews with the travelling community as well as stakeholder were undertaken. Secondary data sourced included the GTAA 2007, unauthorised camp data and council site waiting list data sourced from the Leicestershire Multi Agency Traveller Units, planning permissions granted since 2007, an estimate of the housed gypsy and traveller population as well as local strategies and policies.
- 4.4 However the GTAA refresh does suggest that the evidence of need should be reviewed and refreshed on a five yearly basis in order to provide a more robust and up to date evidence of need. Therefore given the amount of time that has elapsed since the 2013 GTAA Refresh, as well as a recent change in the national definition of gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople, we are in the process of commissioning a new GTAA along with a number of the other Leicester and Leicestershire authorities. This work is timetable to commence in July 2016 and anticipated to be completed by the end of November 2016.

Current provision

- 4.5 In terms of Gypsy and Travellers, the majority of the district's provision is in the form of private pitches, with only one pitch being socially rented. Table 1 below shows current information regarding the number of known pitches. The provision is spread across a relatively small number of sites across the district. The majority of these have been granted permission and a small number of pitches have become lawful due to the number of years they have been in existence.
- 4.6 The table also identifies that there is an outstanding application that has not yet been determined, for an additional five pitches, at an existing site at Land at Shortheath Road, Moira.
- 4.7 In terms of transit site provision permission was granted in 2006 for the provision of 12 pitches. However this approval was never implemented and the permission has now expired. There is no existing transit site provision within the district.

Site Type	Private (No of pitches)	Public (No of pitches)
Authorised site with permanent permission	47	1
Authorised site with temporary	6	-

permission		
Unauthorised sites awaiting outcome of planning application	7	-
Lawful sites	2	-
Transit Site	-	-
TOTAL	67	1
Planning application under consideration	5 additional pitches	-

Table 1: Existing Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Provision in NWLDC (21 September 2015)

Table 1A contained within the Appendix to this paper provides the site details of these known pitches.

- 4.9 In terms of Travelling Showpeople, all of the district's provision is in the form of private plots. Table 2 below shows the current information regarding the number of known plots. The provision is spread across a relatively small number of sites across the district. The majority of these have been granted permission and one site has become lawful due to the number of years it has been in existence.

Site Type	Private (No of plots)	Public (No of plots)
Authorised sites with permanent permission	21	-
Lawful Sites	Unable to confirm plot numbers	-
TOTAL	21+	-

Table 2: Existing Travelling Showpeople Plot Provision in NWLDC (21 September 2015)

Table 2A contained within the Appendix to this paper provides the site details of these known plots.

- 4.10 With respect to the estimated future requirements, it must be borne in mind that these numbers are based on need where it arises, i.e. based on where the existing gypsy and traveller population resides and therefore reflects the uneven distribution of the gypsy and traveller population across the district. The GTAA Refresh therefore advises that when developing planning policies, authorities will, under their duty to co-operate obligations, need to discuss the distribution of pitch provision across administrative boundaries where need cannot be fully met in the district where it arises. At this stage we are unaware as to whether we can accommodate our identified need wholly within the district and it is considered that initially a search of sites will need to be undertaken.
- 4.11 It is also the intention for the recently commissioned GTAA (2016) to also provide an estimate of future requirements based on where need arises.

5 IDENTIFICATION OF FUTURE SITES

- 5.1 In order to provide for a range of sites to meet the identified need the local authority is committed to producing a Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocations Development Plan Document. Information contained within the most current and up to date GTAAs, will be used to inform the preparation of this document.
- 5.2 The Development Plan Document (DPD) could include the following information:-
- Identification of specific sites illustrated on the proposals map;
 - Identification of the broad location where specific sites will be identified at a later date.

It could also identify possible ways that future site provision could be made, such as:-

- Intensification of an existing site;
 - Extension of an existing site;
 - Allocation of new sites, which could either, be in the form of a few larger sites or a series of smaller sites.
- 5.3 The need for publicly owned sites may also need to be addressed as evidence indicates that there is a need for site provision to be made by public bodies, such as local authorities or social landlords. Options for site ownership/management could include:-
- Gypsy, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople to develop and manage their own sites;
 - Private developers to make provision of sites and sell or rent the individual pitches/plots;

- Housing Associations to make provision and sell or rent the individual pitches/plots;
- Local Authority to develop the site and sell or lease the pitches/plots

5.4 When developing this planning document and its policies the authority, under its duty to co-operate obligations, may need to discuss the distribution of pitch provision with neighbouring local authorities if it is found that the district's needs cannot be fully met within its boundaries.

5.5 Work has commenced on this document and an initial consultation (Regulation 18 Consultation) was carried out from 1 February 2016 to 4 April 2016. We invited the submission of information regarding potential sites (Call for Sites) to meet the needs of the Gypsy and traveller communities and travelling showpeople as well as representations about how we might best plan to meet those needs. Further information and detail was contained within an accompanying consultation document. In order to identify as wide a range as possible of Gypsy and Traveller sites and broad locations for development, the Council is not simply relying on sites that it has been informed about through the 'Call for Sites' process. We are also considering other types of sites and sources of data that may be relevant in the assessment process.

APPENDIX

Table 1A: Existing Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Provision in NWLDC (21 September 2015)

Site Address	Tenure of Site	No. of Pitches	Site Type
Station Yard, Station Road, Hemington	Public	1	Permanent site with planning permission.
Newton Road, Heather	Private	1	Permanent site with planning permission
The Spinney Caravan Site, Ashby Road, Sinope	Private	21	Permanent site with planning permission
The Moorlands Caravan Site, Ashby Road, Sinope	Private	15	Permanent site with planning permission
Land adjoining The Moorlands, Ashby Road, Sinope	Private	6	Permanent site with planning permission
46 Bardon Road, Coalville	Private	2	Permanent site with planning permission
Land adjacent to 81 Shortheath Road, Moira	Private	2	Permanent site with planning permission
Land at Newton Road, Swepton	Private	6	Site with temporary planning permission
Midsummer Stables, Netherfield Lane, Hemington	Private	7	Unauthorised sites awaiting outcome of planning application
Toons Scrap Yard, Adjacent to 135 Leicester Road, Ellistown	Private	1	Lawful Site

Dorans, 3 Brook Lane, Thringstone	Private	1	Lawful Site
Land adjacent to 81 Shortheath Road, Moira	private	5	Permission is being sought for 5 additional pitches. The application has not yet been determined.

Table 2A: Existing Travelling Showpeople Plot Provision in NWLDC (21 September 2015)

Site Address	Tenure of Site	No. of Pitches	Site Type
TheHaven, Melbourne Road, Ibstock	Private	1	Permanent site with planning permission.
Hemington Park, Rycroft Road, Hemington	Private	7	Permanent site with planning permission
Kelham Bridge, Ravenstone	Private	4	Permanent site with planning permission
Land at Fair Oak, Burton Road, Oakthorpe	Private	9	Permanent site with planning permission
Hough Hill/Station Road, Swannington	Private	Unsown as unable to gain access	Lawful