

**NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL**

**HOUSING AND STRATEGIC PLANNING CABINET MEMBER**

**HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT LAND ALLOCATIONS ADDITIONAL ISSUES  
AND OPTIONS FOR GYPSY AND TRAVELLER SITES 2008.**

**1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT**

- 1.1 To report on consultation received on the Housing and Employment Land Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) Additional Issues and Options for Gypsy and Traveller Sites 2008.
- 1.2 To recommend potential sites for inclusion in the next stage of consultation as part of the DPD.

**2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1. The Housing Act 2004 introduced a specific requirement for Local Authorities to assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers within their area in the same way they assess the accommodation needs of the settled community.
- 2.2. In 2007 Salford Housing and Urban Studies Unit were commissioned by North Lincolnshire Council to undertake a cross boundary Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) with the neighbouring authority of North East Lincolnshire Council.
- 2.3. The GTAA was finalised in May 2008. This study concluded that there was an additional need in North Lincolnshire for: -
  - 34 residential pitches between 2007 and 2012;
  - 10 residential pitches between 2012 and 2016;
  - Twp Showpeople pitches between 2007 and 2016;
  - 10 transit pitches across North and North East Lincolnshire between 2007 and 2016.
- 2.4. Through the 'Issues and Options' stage of the Housing and Employment Land Allocations DPD October 2007, the public were consulted and asked to submit any possible locations for Gypsy and Traveller sites. Unfortunately, no sites were identified at this stage, therefore the council looked to their own land for potential sites as

outlined in the ODPM Circular 01/2006 'Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites'.

- 2.5. Following on from this the 'Housing and Employment DPD Additional Issues and Options for Gypsy and Traveller Sites' paper was produced in August 2008. This paper proposed seven potential sites, in council ownership, which may be appropriate for Gypsy and Travellers. These potential sites were then subject to extensive consultation with the public.
- 2.6. Gypsies and Travellers are traditionally 'hard to engage' groups and as such are underrepresented in most public consultation exercises. Salford Housing and Urban Studies Unit carried out a consultation exercise in Autumn 2008, where members of the North Lincolnshire Gypsy and Traveller population were actively consulted on the proposed sites and their views documented.

### 3. **OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 3.1. The seven sites in council ownership which were put forward as potential sites were:-

- Site Reference GT7-1- Falkland Way, Barton Upon Humber
- Site Reference GT7-2- Falkland Way, Barton Upon Humber
- Site Reference GT7-3- Caistor Road, Barton Upon Humber
- Site Reference GT10-1- Station Road, Brigg
- Site Reference GT10-2- Station Road, Brigg
- Site Reference GT10-3- Station Road, Brigg
- Site Reference GT36-1 Normanby Road, Scunthorpe

- 3.2. **General Comments**

The council received over 900 representations on the potential sites. These included general comments, objections and support. Fifty eight representations were received which were general comments. Broadly the consultation exercise was supported and there was a good understanding of why the council must provide accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers. There was concern that no non-council sites had been brought forward and the length of time to get the sites in place was also seen as an issue.

- 3.3 Gypsies and Travellers reported that they wanted pitches, which were owner occupied, some form of shared ownership or managed by a Gypsy or a Traveller.
- 3.4 The council has received three petitions about the potential sites. The outcomes from the petition hearings can be fed into the next round of consultation as part of the LDF process.

### **Barton Upon Humber**

- 3.5 Site GT7-1- Falkland Way received 51 objections and none for support. Site GT7-2- Falkland Way received 41 objections and none for support. Site GT7-3 Caistor Road received 31 objections and 1 in support.
- 3.6 The main comments received for the sites in Barton upon Humber were that the sites were located on an important gateway into Barton upon Humber and it was felt that providing Gypsy and Traveller sites here would have a negative impact on the image of the town. The proximity of the roads was seen as a safety issue as well as proximity to existing residential and employment areas. Other comments received were the possibility of rubbish being left on the site, noise from the sites and the loss of valuable public open green space.
- 3.7 Gypsy and Travellers felt the sites were well located near shops, schools and the local authority housing scheme. The sites were seen to be good in size, well drained and not located on flood plain. The sites have no neighbours overlooking and any work carried out on the sites or noise emanating from these sites would not cause distress to neighbours. Some concerns were raised over the proximity to the road. It was raised that site GT7-3 has been a traditional stopping place for the Gypsy and Traveller community for several generations.

### **Brigg**

- 3.8 Site GT10-1 Station Road received 246 objections and two observations. Site GT10-2 Station Road received 234 objections and one other comment. Site GT10-3 Station Road received 227 objections and two observations.
- 3.9 The general comments received for all the proposed sites in Brigg were that the sites were considered to be too close to the town centre, existing residential areas and the local school. The proximity to the railway station and railway line and access and traffic congestion was highlighted as key issues. Respondents felt that providing Gypsy and Traveller sites near the Railway Station would have a negative impact on the image of the town.
- 3.10 Local residents currently use the sites for recreation and they are seen as important areas of public open space. Sites GT10-2 and GT10-3 are designated in the Local Plan as LC11 area of amenity importance. It was also raised that existing sites (albeit illegal) already exist in Brigg at Westrum lane, Mill lane and Kettleby lane and it is felt these sites should be taken into account as part of the consultation.
- 3.11 The Gypsy and travellers felt that the sites had good access to transport and local amenities, however concerns were raised that the site is an area of open parkland and too close to the railway line. The sites are used as a seasonal site by the Travelling community for the Brigg Horse Fair and it was felt the sites could still be used for this on

an annual basis but they should be maintained for all members of the community in Brigg.

- 3.12 Gypsies and Travellers reported that they wanted pitches, which were owner occupied, some form of shared ownership or managed by a Gypsy or a Traveller.

### **Scunthorpe**

- 3.13 From the general public site GT36-1 received 59 objections, 1 observations and 1 other comment. Respondents felt that the site was too close to the Scunthorpe Speedway race site.
- 3.14 Gypsies and Travellers felt the site was isolated, too far away from local amenities and too close to the quarry. If this site were to be used it was suggested it should be used as a transit site. However the site would need to be properly managed and have increased security in the forms of barriers or gating.
- 3.15 General comments received from Gypsies and Travellers in relation to the sites were inextricably linked to concerns who would manage the sites, should they be developed. Gypsies and Travellers reported that they wanted pitches, which were owner occupied, some form of shared ownership or managed by a Gypsy or a Traveller.

## **4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

- 4.1 In Barton upon Humber the site, which received the least objections from the public and received 1 support, was Site GT 7-3 Caistor Road and this was the Lincolnshire Gypsy Liaison Group (LGLG) preferred option also. A petition against any Gypsy and Traveller Sites in Barton upon Humber was also received. The Survey of Gypsies and Travellers by Salford Housing & Urban studies Unit also showed that the Caistor Road site was positively viewed by the Gypsy and travelling community. The site is seen to be well located near shops, schools and the local community and has been a traditional stopping place for the community for several generations. The site has no neighbouring developments to cause concerns and has a pleasing open outlook.
- 4.2 Site Reference GT36-1 Normanby Road, Scunthorpe has been used as a transit site in the past and does not need planning permission. Many of the objections received during the consultation were about the alleged behaviour of a group of Gypsy and Travellers who recently used the site. Many of these issues could have been alleviated if there was robust management of the site.
- 4.3 The other sites identified either had a large amount of public resistance, potential planning problems or were seen as unsuitable by the Gypsy and Traveller community.

- 4.4 The chosen sites will be taken forward and placed within the Pre-submission second stage Housing and Employment Land Allocations DPD for further consultation. All necessary consultees will be given further opportunity to comment on the sites and put forward any further sites they may feel would be suitable.
- 4.5 If no sites are taken forward then this will affect the Housing and Employment Land Allocations DPD, as it will be subject to an examination in public. One of the tests will be whether it is founded on robust and credible evidence. Data from GTAAs are fundamental in providing such an evidence base therefore by providing no sites for Gypsies and Travellers will mean the document will be found to be unsound. This would affect future housing and employment sites also and the Local development Scheme timetable will not be met.

## 5. **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)**

### 5.1. Staffing

A steering group has been set up from existing staff to lead on the delivery of the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment and work connected to this.

### 5.2. Financial

The Department of Communities and Local Government have made funding available for new site provision and for the refurbishment of existing sites. This will need to be further explored in order to fully meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers.

### 5.3 Statutory

Councils are expected to monitor all housing needs in their area, this includes Gypsy and Traveller needs, and intervene where necessary to improve conditions or supply.

## 6. **OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 - CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)**

- 6.1 Gypsies and Irish Travellers are recognised racial groups whose needs have generally been neglected. This is reflected in the national and local indicators. The GTAA and the recommendations to come from the GTAA suggest seeking to address their accommodation needs.

## 7. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 To take the following sites forward to the next stage of consultation as part of the preparation of the Local Development Framework (LDF) Housing and Employment DPD:

- Site Reference GT7-3- Caistor Road, Barton Upon Humber
- Site Reference GT36-1 Normanby Road, Scunthorpe

- 7.2 Following the representations received for the other five potential Sites, these are not suitable to be taken forward.
- 7.3 The council puts in place robust management arrangements before any site for travellers is opened.
- 7.4 The outcomes of petitions hearings on the sites are fed into the consultation on traveller sites as part of the LDF process.

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#### **Background Papers used in the preparation of this report**

North and North East Lincolnshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2007.  
ODPM Circular 01/2006 Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites.  
Survey of Gypsies and Travellers views on the additional Issues and Options for Gypsy and Traveller sites Autumn 2008.  
Limehouse Online Consultation System  
Lincolnshire Gypsy Liaison group Consultation feedback