

AMBER VALLEY LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC

STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

MATTER 8: Gypsy and Traveller Provision

- i Does the Council's approach in relation to traveller sites generally conform with the expectations of the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (August 2015)? If not, why not?*
- ii. The Derby, Derbyshire, Peak District NPA and East Staffordshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (2014) identifies a need for a total of 10 additional pitches in the Borough between 2014 and 2034. The Plan does not seek to provide any pitches within the Borough. How does the Council intend to ensure that the 10 additional pitches required within the Borough will be provided?*

- 1.1 This statement has been drafted on behalf of Derbyshire County Council's Officers to support their views that the policy approach to Gypsy and Traveller pitch provision in the Amber Valley Local Plan Submission is sound and based on up-to-date, comprehensive and robust evidence; and that in the absence of the identification of a specific site (s) in the Local Plan, a criteria based policy and the Borough Council's proposals to produce a separate Development Plan Document (DPD) is an appropriate means of taking this issue forward. The statement also sets out details of ongoing joint working the County Council's Officers are currently undertaking with the Borough Council's Officers in seeking to identify sites within the County Council's ownership that might have potential to accommodate Gypsy and Traveller accommodation.

The Pitch Requirement

Derby, Derbyshire, Peak District National Park Authority and East Staffordshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment

- 1.2 Under the requirements of the Duty to Cooperate set out in the Localism Act and in accordance with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) (2012), the Derby, Derbyshire, Peak District National Park Authority and East Staffordshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) was jointly commissioned in August 2013 by the following partners to update the previous GTAAs published in 2008 for Derbyshire and 2013 for East Staffordshire:

- Amber Valley Borough Council
- Bolsover District Council
- Chesterfield Borough Council
- Derby City Council
- Derbyshire County Council

- Derbyshire Dales District Council
 - Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group
 - East Staffordshire Borough Council
 - Erewash Borough Council
 - High Peak Borough Council
 - North East Derbyshire District Council
 - Peak District National Park Authority
 - South Derbyshire District Council.
- 1.3 Derbyshire County Council was the lead authority for overseeing the commissioning and project management of the GTAA. RRR Consultancy Limited was commissioned to undertake the assessment in August 2013, following which extensive consultation and liaison took place between RRR and the partners over the course of the commission. RRR completed the final version of the GTAA on 26 June 2015.
- 1.4 The methodology applied in the GTAA is based on the approach recommended in PPTS and other best practice, and uses a fifteen stage assessment process. The GTAA draws on primary and secondary data sources including:
- Primary data: face-to-face surveys with Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show people;
 - Secondary information: including a literature review and secondary data analysis, for example, analysis of the Department for Communities and Local Government's Bi-Annual Traveller Caravan Count; and
 - Stakeholder consultation with local organisations involved with Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show people.
- 1.5 The GTAA has a base date of 2014 and provides a snapshot in time based largely on survey evidence collected between October 2013 and February 2014. The GTAA sets out recommendations for the accommodation needs across the study area as a whole and for each local authority area for the period 2014 to 2034, showing need for the number of:
- Permanent Gypsy and Traveller pitches;
 - Travelling Show people plots;
 - Transit sites / emergency stopping places (study area only);
 - Bricks and mortar accommodation units.
- 1.6 The GTAA does not identify specific sites to accommodate future pitch and plot requirements in the study area. The Assessment makes it clear that this will be the responsibility of the individual city, district and borough local planning authorities (LPAs) through the preparation and review of their local plans.
- 1.7 The final GTAA report was agreed by all Derbyshire partners, including Amber Valley Borough Council for publication on Derbyshire County Council's website in August 2015. Since its publication, the GTAA has been used by all the partner authorities in Derbyshire to inform policies for the pitch and plot requirements set out in their emerging Local Plans.

- 1.8 For Amber Valley Borough, based on the 15 stage assessment methodology, the GTAA recommends that there is a requirement for a total of 10 additional pitches over the period 2014 to 2034, with 7 additional pitches required in the period 2014 – 2019, and 1 additional pitch required in each of the subsequent five year periods from 2019 to 2024, 2024 to 2029 and 2029 to 2034.
- 1.9 Section 10.61 and 10.62 of the GTAA also sets out recommendations for the site size of new pitches noting that as a general guide, an average family pitch must be capable of accommodating at least an amenity building, a large trailer and touring caravan, drying space for clothes, a lockable shed, parking space for two vehicles and a small garden area.
- 1.10 Section 10.62 indicates that a pitch of approximately 325 square metres would take into account all minimum separation distance requirements between caravans and pitch boundaries as stipulated in guidance and regulations for caravan development. A pitch size of at least 500 square metres would accommodate the following on-pitch facilities:
- Hard standing for 1 touring / mobile caravan and 1 static caravan;
 - 2 car parking spaces;
 - 1 amenity block;
 - Hard standing for storage shed and drying space;
 - Garden / amenity area.
- 1.11 Derbyshire County Council's Officers consider that the GTAA is a comprehensive, thorough, robust and up-to-date piece of evidence to inform the pitch and plot requirements that are being identified in emerging district and borough Local Plans across Derbyshire, particularly the pitch and plot requirements over the period 2014 to 2019.
- 1.12 The Derbyshire Traveller Issues Working Group (TIWG) comprises officers from all the local authorities in Derbyshire, including officers from the emergency services and health organisations, who have responsibility for Gypsy and Traveller matters. The TIWG has been monitoring the recommendations, implications and requirements of the GTAA, since it was published in August 2015. There are no proposals at the current time by the TIWG to commission a refresh or update of the GTAA. However, it is likely that there may be a need to commission such an update after 2019, once the first five year pitch requirement period in the GTAA has expired.

Derbyshire County Council's Representations on the Emerging Amber Valley Local Plan

- 1.13 Derbyshire County Council's Officers submitted extensive comments on the Amber Valley Borough Draft Local Plan (AVBDLP) on 25 April 2017. On Gypsy and Traveller matters, the comments indicated that:

The Policy approach in Section 8.8 and Policy H8 for Gypsies and Travellers is supported. It is welcomed that paragraph 8.8.1 makes appropriate reference to the Derby, Derbyshire, Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA) and East Staffordshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) (2014), which was commissioned by DCC on behalf of the nine city, district and borough councils in Derbyshire, the PDNPA, East Staffordshire District Council and the Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group.

- 1.14 *The GTAA recommended that there was a requirement for 10 additional pitches in Amber Valley Borough between 2014 and 2034, of which 7 pitches would be required between 2014 – 2019, with 1 additional pitch required in each five year period thereafter up to 2034.*
- 1.15 *It is noted that paragraph 8.8.1 indicates that the process for identifying suitable sites will be taken forward by the Borough Council in a separate Development Plan Document, which is considered to be an appropriate way forward. In the meantime, it is considered that Policy H8 includes an appropriate range of locational and environmental criteria for assessing any sites which are proposed for Gypsy and Traveller provision through the planning application process.*
- 1.16 Derbyshire County Council's Officers submitted extensive comments on the Amber Valley Borough Pre-Submission Local Plan (AVBPSLP) on 14 December 2017. On Gypsy and Traveller matters, the comments made on the AVBDLP above were reaffirmed.

Ongoing Joint Working

- 1.17 In terms of identifying specific sites for Traveller provision, Derbyshire County Council's Officers are aware that the Borough Council carried out a 'Call for Sites' in 2016 but that the consultation did not result in any potential sites being identified to meet the specific needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
- 1.18 On 11 April 2018, Derbyshire County Council was contacted by Amber Valley Borough Council asking it to consider whether it could assist the Borough Council in identifying land in the County Council's ownership that might be suitable for use as Gypsy and Traveller accommodation provision. Derbyshire County Council's Officers have since undertaken a review of a number of sites in its ownership and are (at the time of writing) carrying out assessments of these sites for their suitability for Traveller sites based on a range of assessment criteria, particularly proximity to local shops and services and if there are any potential constraints that may need to be overcome, particularly the provision of safe and suitable access, tenancy agreements and environmental protection policies.
- 1.19 Two potential sites have been identified as the basis for further discussion with the Borough Council.

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