



# **The Plan for Stafford Borough Part 2**

## **Examination Statement**

**– Issue 4 –**

## **Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation**

**June 2016**

## Issue 4: Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation

### **4.1. How does the Council intend to plan for the remaining unmet G&T accommodation needs, bearing in mind that national policy seeks a plan-led approach to meet G&T needs for accommodation?**

4.1.1 The adopted Plan for Stafford Borough (P2-C1) (herein referred to as the adopted Plan) sets out the plan-led approach for Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation through the application of Policy C6. Policy C6 in the adopted Plan supports the delivery of the Spatial Vision and Key Objectives of the Plan (P2-C1) through the future planning of traveller sites, setting out criteria for suitability and ensuring the protection of Green Belt land and the Cannock Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

4.1.2 Evidence of local gypsies and travellers needs has been established through the production of a Gypsies and Travellers Accommodation Needs Assessment (P2-E16). This document identifies a total pitch requirement of 43 additional permanent Gypsy and Traveller pitches for the period 2012/13 to 2026/27. The Plan for Stafford Borough Part 2 (P2-A1) (herein referred to as Part 2), provides an update at paragraph 5.1 on the need and supply of new pitches. Planning permission was granted for 36 new pitches at St Albans Road. This means that there are only 7 pitches required to meet the identified need up to 2027.

4.1.3 A representation has been received from The National Federation of Gypsy Liaison Group stating that the Policy C6 is 'non-compliant' with the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (P2- F3).

4.1.4 The Planning Policy for Traveller Sites 2015 (P2-F3) states that local planning authorities in producing their Local Plan should identify and update annually, a supply of specific deliverable sites to provide 5 years' worth of sites against their locally set targets; and identify a supply of specific, developable sites, or broad locations for growth, for years 6 -10 and, where possible, for years 11-15 (paragraph 10). Footnote 4, states that sites with planning permission should be considered deliverable until the planning permission expires, unless there is clear evidence that the

schemes will not be implemented within 5 years. The GTAA at paragraph 6.73 identifies over a period of 5 years, that a total of 19 pitches are required. The planning permission at St Albans Road for 36 new pitches means that the Council has more than met the 5 year supply and has in part met the 6-10 years requirement.

4.1.5 It is noted that since the Plan was adopted (P2-C1) the definition of a gypsy has been changed, as detailed in Annex 1 of the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites 2015, to remove the words "or permanently" from after the word "temporarily" in the following definition;

*"Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling show people or circus people travelling together as such."*

4.1.6 It is the intention of the Council to prepare an updated Strategic Housing Market Assessment through the Local Plan Review process, including gypsies and travellers, in order to meet requirements for the next Plan period.

4.1.7 There is market interest across the Borough and the Council is aware that there is land that can accommodate the remaining 7 pitches. An example is land at Woodfield, Hilderstone Road, Spot Acre which is subject to an appeal for six pitches. Temporary planning permission was granted at appeal limiting site occupation by gypsy caravans to five years for five pitches in 2009, and in October 2014 an application was submitted for the removal of the time limit condition and also sought the addition of a further pitch. The Inquiry into this appeal will take place in August 2016. If the appeal is dismissed then using the criteria established in Policy C6 further sites can be considered through the planning application process. However the Council is aware of other sites which may come forward, for example land at Wadden Lane, Amerton which is identified in the 2015 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.

4.1.8 Adopted Policy C6 (P2-C1), the NPPF (P2-F1) and Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (P2- F3) set out considerations for gypsies and traveller accommodation. The Council considers consequently that the Plan for Stafford Borough constitutes the necessary plan led approach, and enables sites to be consented in the Borough, providing they meet the criteria set out in the policy. Considering this policy and taking account of the recent planning permission at St. Albans Road, the Council does not consider it is necessary to specifically allocate land for gypsies and travellers in Part 2 (P2 A1).