



Hartlepool Local Planning Framework Emerging Local Plan

Matter 16

Gypsies and Travellers



September 2017



Issue 1 – The soundness of gypsy and traveller provision in the Plan

See also correspondence exchange in the Inspector's initial observations (EX/INS/3) and the Council's response (EX/HBC/2) including commentary on this matter.

- Q1. Is the 2014 Gypsy & Travellers Accommodation Assessment up-to-date and does it provide a robust and justified evidence base? Does it remain up-to-date in light of the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (August 2015) including the aims at paragraph 4 and the change in the policy definition of "gypsies and travellers" at Annex 1?**

The 2014 Gypsy & Travellers Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) was undertaken by Renaissance Research. In August 2015 the Government updated the guidance in Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) effectively amending the definition of who should be regarded as a Gypsy or Traveller for planning purposes. In order to take account of this revised definition, Hartlepool Borough Council appointed Renaissance Research to carry out a revision of the 2014 GTAA. The study was finalised in September 2017.

- Q2. Is there any evidence that the Plan should make provision for pitches or short stay stopping sites (transit sites) in line with Planning Policy for Traveller Sites?**

The table on page 24 of the GTAA 2014 (2017 Revision) provides details of unauthorised encampments in the borough. Paragraph 6.19 of the GTAA 2014 (2017 Revision) states *'The Enforcement officer reports that these encampments were temporary; sometimes associated with a family event in the area or with travelling to a fair or horse event. There is no indication that they represent an unmet need for a permanent or transit site in the Borough.'*

- Q3. Are the criteria in Policy HSG13 appropriate, justified and consistent with national policy? (is criterion 4 justified?)**

The criteria for Policy HSG13 can be summarised as seeking to ensure that proposals for gypsy and traveller provision are positive in the context of the impact on the amenity of the local settled community, the environmental conditions for the potential occupiers of the site and their access to services and facilities. This is considered to be appropriate, justified and consistent with national policy. The purpose of criterion 4 is to ensure that any development is well integrated with its surroundings including a high standard of landscaping. It is fully justified.

- Q4. Should Policy HSG13 include any locational specificity when assessing an application for 'windfall' provision?**

The GTAA 2014 (2017 Revision) identified zero need for pitches. HBC officers therefore consider that if an application were submitted then it is likely to be of a very small scale and that locational specificity would be unduly prescriptive.

- Q5. Is the Plan compliant with the public sector equality duty in relation to gypsies, travellers and travelling show-people?**

The plan seeks to provide the local planning authority with the flexibility to respond positively and appropriately to any planning application for gypsy and traveller or travelling show-people provision. This approach is consistent with the public sector equality duty in relation to gypsies, travellers and travelling

show-people. An Equality Impact Assessment (EX/HBC/21) has been prepared to accompany the Local Plan and considers how the plan has been fully inclusive in its preparation.