

Stages in Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document Work

Relevant Consultation Warwickshire Council and the Duty to Co-operate

Warwick District Council's GTAA was undertaken on its behalf by Salford Housing & Urban Studies Unit, College of Science & Technology, The University of Salford and published in November 2012.

This showed a need in Warwick District for a total of 31 permanent and a transit site for 6-8 pitches over a 15 year period. The bulk of the permanent pitches would be to address historic under provision, hence the need to provide these within the first five years.

No need was identified for sites for Travelling Show People as the District already has a long standing site for 5 pitches which meets current and forecast needs.

The work on the DPD is at an advanced stage. We have already carried out a call for sites, Issues and Options consultation, Preferred Options consultation and an additional Preferred Options consultation for a potential site (Stratford Road), not previously identified through the earlier stages. Details of these stages and consultations are given in the table below.

The next stage is to move to a Draft DPD which will be consulted upon under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, prior to submission to the Secretary of State for examination.

The Gypsy and Traveller community has also been involved closely, offering advice on the suitability of sites for their use and a number of families are currently working with the Council to ensure that allocated sites will be utilised

Table : Key Stages in Identifying Sites for Gypsy and Traveller Pitches

Stage	Dates of consultation	Extent of consultation
Call for Sites	16 January 2013 – 13 February 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual letters to all landowners with land in potentially suitable locations Individual letters to all landowners/agents with sites suggested through the SHLAA process as suitable for residential use Press notices locally and also in the 'Travellers Times' to reach the Gypsy and Traveller population
Landowners Forum	14 May 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evening event for local landowners to hear more about the call for sites, what the Council's responsibility is in the provision of such sites and how they could participate/assist. A question and answer session followed a presentation by the district and county councils working together.
Issues and Options	14 June – 29 July 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Details published on the Council's website Press notices in local press Letters/emails to statutory consultees, including all neighbouring authorities, all those on the Council's

		<p>database expressing an interest in this topic or with an interest in all planning policy documents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A series of public consultation exhibitions at a range of venues throughout the district • Public meeting attendance where invited • Publication of FAQ document specifically about G&T • All documents located at 'drop off points'
Preferred Options	7 March 2014 – 5 May 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details published on the Council's website • Press notices in local press • Letters/emails to statutory consultees, , including all neighbouring authorities, all those on the Council's database expressing an interest in this topic, all those expressing an interest in an area where a site is located or with an interest in all policy documents • A series of public consultation exhibitions at a range of venues throughout the district and one in an adjoining district where a potential site is near the border • Individual letters to landowners where their land was carried forward • Individual letters to landowners where their land was not carried forward • All documents located at 'drop off points' • Publication of revised FAQ document
Preferred Options – Focused Changes (Stratford Road)	31 October 2014 – 12 December 2014	<p><i>Consultation specific to one particular potential site not previously considered</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details published on the Council's website • Press notices in local press • Letters/emails to statutory consultees, including all neighbouring authorities, all those on the Council's database expressing an interest in this topic or with an interest in all policy documents/this area • Consultation 'drop in' sessions held in the local community centre to this site, on two occasions • All documents located at 'drop off points' • Additionally, a local residents association took it upon themselves to leaflet every home on the local housing estate

Duty to Co-operate

The production of the Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) involved liaison with adjoining local authorities including Warwickshire County Council, with regard to both the numbers of Travellers and the nature of their accommodation need. This involved the research team interviewing representatives from each authority to ascertain their own position and potential to fulfil their own need and possibly share sites. Warwick District Council is however, ahead of most of the adjoining authorities with this work. The different stages of progress have made it more difficult to agree on a combined approach.

Work on the GTAA has resulted in a deeper understanding of the problems locally, with Warwick District currently having no provision for Gypsies and

Travellers and being constrained by a large area of the District being within the Green Belt. There is pressure on other districts to provide a large number of pitches within their area and with limited ability for those needs to be met this has impacted on the success of possible cross border sharing of sites.

On 18 January 2013 a formal letter was sent to Rugby, Stratford on Avon, Coventry City, Warwickshire County and Solihull Councils requesting that they discuss with us any spare capacity within existing sites which could contribute to Warwick District's requirements, the details of any sites close to our border that could help to contribute to the requirements of both authorities and the scope to share sites together with a suggestion that jointly addressing the needs would benefit all communities. This letter resulted in negative responses in terms of site sharing or capacity within existing sites or sites/potential sites close to our borders.

Warwick District has been an integral part of a two specific groups meeting regularly to discuss the provision of Gypsy and Traveller sites and services throughout the County. This included a County-wide 'Special Interest Group' which met every 3-4 months and was chaired by the Gypsy Liaison Officer at Warwickshire County Council. It brought together planning and housing officers from the district councils, with representatives for education, health and the police.

In April 2014 a group of district housing officers started meeting on a regular basis with planning officers as a 'Site Enabling Group'. This group specifically discussed the provision of suitable sites/additional pitches, land availability and the potential to share emergency stopping places provided by WCC. The group met on a 3 monthly cycle and again, was led by the Gypsy Liaison Officer from Warwickshire County Council.

The County Council has been trying to assist districts to identify sites through their own land ownership. This has been partially successful, but all districts find themselves with demand for pitches that they cannot meet in terms of land supply.

Co-operation has continued on an ad hoc basis and through formal stages of consultation. Both formal and informal meetings take place between officers dealing with the provision of sites within their district. For examples a working relationship has been formed in particular with Rugby Borough Council and Stratford on Avon District Council, which resulted in a joint consultation event on the edge of Stratford District for residents who could be affected by the provision of a potential site within Warwick District.

The District Council is also meeting with police and legal representatives to discuss the unauthorised encampment issues. This group has met on three occasions on a three monthly basis; the most recent being 11 May 2015. The group is working on a protocol to disseminate amongst all Warwickshire districts to deal with such encampments and enforcement issues, together with potential toleration of such sites in the absence of available authorised pitches.