



# Rutland County Council

## Rutland Local Plan Examination

### Council response to the Inspector's Initial Observations regarding Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People

26<sup>th</sup> May 2021

**RUTLAND COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**GYPSIES, TRAVELLERS AND TRAVELLING SHOW PEOPLE**  
**RESPONSE TO INITIAL OBSERVATIONS**

**1. The Inspector's Initial Observations**

- 1.1 *The Government's Planning policy for traveller sites (PPTS) confirms that local planning authorities should, in producing their Local Plan, identify and update annually, a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient 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 to 10 and, where possible, for years 11-15.*
- 1.2 *I would be grateful if the Council could clarify the position regarding five year supply upon expected adoption of the Plan of suitable, available and deliverable sites for travellers meeting the PPTS definition and when and where the requisite number of pitches and plots would be expected to be delivered in the later years of the Plan period.*

**2. The Council's Response**

- 2.1 The Council commissioned, jointly with South Kesteven District Council, an assessment of the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in its area (Document HOU8, as included in the Local Plan Examination Library). The current provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in Rutland is set out in Appendix 1 to this response.
- 2.2 Table 8.9 from the Document HOU8 summarises the accommodation needs for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople for Rutland over the period 2016 to 2036 and is set out below. In Rutland, the main driver of need is from newly forming families on authorised sites, particularly from one extended family occupying a site included within Appendix 1.

## Rutland

Table 8.9: Summary of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accomm. needs 2016-36

| Period                 | Residential pitches | Travelling Showpeople plots | Bricks and mortar accommodation |
|------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Total 2016-19          | 8                   | 4                           | 2                               |
| Total 2019-24          | 1                   | 2                           | 1                               |
| Total 2024-29          | 2                   | 2                           | 1                               |
| Total 2029-36          | 2                   | 2                           | 1                               |
| <b>Total 2016-2036</b> | <b>13</b>           | <b>10</b>                   | <b>5</b>                        |

Source: South Kesteven & Rutland GTAA 2016

### Five year supply requirement for residential pitches

2.3 Document HOU8 identifies a need for 13 residential pitches for Gypsies and Travellers over the period 2016-2036. Since the production of this assessment, permission has been granted for the following developments:

- 4 pitches on the site of The Paddocks, Langham (2016/0435/FUL granted 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2016). The application was to vary Conditions 1 and 2 in relation to Planning Application APP/2013/0123 and enable an additional eight caravans to be sited permanently for an extended family to remain living together on the same site. There has been a slow take-up of this permission reflecting the circumstances of the extended family on this site. To date, only one pitch has been laid out and prepared for occupation.
- 1 pitch at The Acorns, Bisbrooke was granted consent on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2017 (Reference: 2017/0663/FUL). This consent has been implemented.

Currently, there are no further applications submitted to provide additional residential pitches for Gypsies and Travellers.

2.4 The 5 year requirement based on Document HOU8 has therefore been calculated on the following basis:

|  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| Pitches required within plan period (2016-2036)* | 13 pitches             |
| Annual pitch requirement (13 ÷ 20)               | 0.65 pitches per annum |
| Five year requirement (0.65 x 5)                 | 3.25 pitches per annum |
| 2016-2021 additional consents granted            | 5 pitches              |
| <u>Applying a "Liverpool approach"</u>           |                        |
| Remaining requirement 2021-36 (13-5 pitches)     | 8 pitches              |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Remaining requirement ÷ remaining years of plan period = 8 ÷ 15 | 0.533 pitches per annum                    |
| <b>Five year requirement 2021-26 (5 x 0.533)</b>                | <b>2.67 pitches (rounded to 3 pitches)</b> |
| <b>Longer term requirement 2026-2036 (10 x 0.533)</b>           | <b>5.33 pitches (rounded to 5 pitches)</b> |

2.5 This approach does not take account of the time periods identified in Document HOU8 for the provision of additional residential pitches for Gypsies and Travellers. This sets out that the time periods for providing for the outstanding need of an additional 8 residential pitches in the period to 2036 should be:

- 4 pitches required to be provided by 2024;
- 2 pitches in the period 2024 to 2029; and
- 2 pitches between 2029 and 2036.

2.6 An alternative approach to calculating the 5 year supply to take account of the phasing of assessed needs for residential pitches set out in the GTAA would be to assume a need to provide the outstanding 4 pitches required up to period 2024 together with 40% (2 years supply) of the requirement for the second 5 year period (2024 and 2029) which is for 2 pitches. This equates to a total supply required between 2021 and 2026 of **4.8 pitches (rounded to 5 pitches)**.

Meeting the requirement for residential pitches

2.7 In line with Policy A of the national guidance, and in order to take a pro-active response to meeting the needs identified in the Document HOU8, the Council is working with their specialist advisers - the Leicestershire, Leicester City and Rutland Multi Agency Travellers Unit (MATU) - in order to maintain a good understanding of the local community. In addition, the consultants commissioned to produce Document HOU8 were able to establish a good working relationship with the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople community in Rutland resulting in a high level of response to their requests for information. The MATU seeks to provide a one stop point of access for the public, business, agencies and Travellers. Among its aims are minimising conflict, enhancing quality of life, and providing access to health and education services, through the consistent application of best practice, legislation and guidance. It has a good working relationship and trust with the Gypsy, Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople families residing in the County.

- 2.8 Evidence within HOU8 and from the MATU demonstrate that the main driver of need in Rutland is from newly forming families on authorised sites. Paragraph 9.31 of the Document HOU8 notes that there are families within the study area who would like to increase the number of pitches and plots and/or number of caravans allowed per pitch or plot on existing site/yards and considers that the expansion of sites with adequate space would contribute towards meeting existing need. Evidence from the MATU and their liaison with residents suggests that much of the current need for pitches in Rutland arises from the need to accommodate existing families and is better met through extension to existing sites or on new sites of sufficient size to accommodate the whole family. As such, it is expected that the short term accommodation needs for Gypsies and Travellers in Rutland will be met through planning applications compliant to national and local planning policies rather than through allocations.
- 2.9 Given this evidence, the small scale of need for the five year supply (whichever of the two approaches above is adopted in assessing this), and the desire to address the specific local needs arising from established families, the submitted Local Plan proposes to address the short term needs of the existing community through the application of criteria based policy. Policy H11 recognises that a key element in meeting the requirement is the potential provision that could come forward through the extension of existing sites. Longer term provision is made for six Gypsy and Traveller pitches (2026-2036) through a policy requirement (Policy H3a)v) at the St Georges' Garden Community allocation.
- 2.10 Appendix 1 shows that Rutland has a good track record of policy compliant applications gaining permission since the production of the Document HOU8 and there is no reason that this approach will not continue to deliver small scale pitch provision where the need arises in the short term. This approach has been supported by the MATU.
- 2.11 The extension of existing sites together with any suitable policy compliant applications on "windfall" sites are therefore considered the most appropriate means of meeting short term needs. The Council will work with stakeholders and our specialist advisors, the MATU, to help to ensure that this need is met.
- 2.12 In taking this approach of seeking to meet the 5 year supply through policy compliant applications coming forward, the Council is mindful that there is scope for a further expansion of The Paddocks site in Langham. Here, there is additional land in the ownership of the resident Gypsy and Traveller family which has the capacity to provide an additional 4 pitches. In addition, there is considered to be capacity within the site at The Acorns in Bisbrooke to provide an additional pitch by 2026 to contribute to the 5 year supply.

- 2.13 The Council is confident that this approach is appropriate in Rutland and that sufficient provision will come forward to enable the 5 Year supply to be made through extensions to existing sites compliant with the criteria set out in Policy H11 of the submitted Local Plan.
- 2.14 There is evidence from the work undertaken by both RRR consultancy in producing Document HOU8 and of the MATU that this approach is gathering momentum, although it is recognised that there needs to be a sustained effort to ensure sufficient permitted pitches, compliant with the Local Plan and national policies, are in place to meet the needs identified in Document HOU8 and provide a 5 year supply.
- 2.15 Beyond 2026, the submitted Local Plan Policy H11 (and Policy H3) sets out future provision of 6 serviced pitches as part of the new garden community proposed at St. George's Barracks. This provision will address the outstanding need identified. In addition to the allocation, supply will be maintained and delivered by safeguarding authorised sites and continuing to extend existing sites if the need arises.
- 2.16 This approach provide for contingency if any policy compliant applications do not come forward in the short term between 2021 and 2026, as well as potentially allow for provision to meet needs arising beyond 2036 on the site of St. George's Barracks.

#### Meeting the needs of Travelling Showpeople

- 2.17 The need for 10 plots for Travelling Showpeople for the period up to 2036 as set out in the Document HOU8 does not take account of 4 plots granted consent since then, attached to the existing Five Counties yard at Greetham (Reference: 2016/1231/FUL, granted 8<sup>th</sup> June 2017).
- 2.18 This reduces the accommodation requirement for Travelling Showpeople down to 6 plots over the plan period: 2 required by 2024; a further 2 between 2024 and 2029; and the remaining 2 between 2029 and 2036. Evidence from the MATU's liaison with local Travelling Showpeople suggests that much of the current need for plots in Rutland arises from the need to accommodate existing families and may be better met through extension to existing sites – although it has been more challenging to track this recently due to the impact of Covid-19 on the livelihoods of Travelling Showpeople. This approach is in line with paragraph 9.31 of the Document HOU8 which notes that there are families within the study area who would like to increase the number of pitches and plots and/or number of caravans allowed per pitch or plot on existing site/yards and considers that the expansion of sites with adequate space would contribute towards meeting existing need.

- 2.19 Given that the future need in Rutland arises from the growth of existing families that are already resident in the County, the Council's approach will be to respond to those needs where they arise. The Council's approach seeks to meet the identified assessed needs where possible through the extension of existing sites together with any suitable policy compliant application before considering the allocation of new sites. The Council will work with stakeholders and our specialist advisors MATU to ensure that this need is met.
- 2.20 Again, given that the requirement for Travelling Showpeople is relatively small taking into consideration the permissions granted since the assessment and that this relates in the main to the specific requirements of one family, it is considered that the short term requirement for 2 plots can be accommodated by an extension to the existing Five Counties site at Greetham. This will be dependent on an application being compliant to national and local planning policies coming forward.
- 2.21 Beyond 2026, the submitted Local Plan Policy H11 sets out future provision will be delivered through: safeguarding authorised sites; extending existing sites; and as part of the new garden community. Policy H3 proposes that provision will be made for a minimum of 10 serviced plots for Traveling Showpeople in line with Policy H11 at St George's Barracks as part of the proposal to develop a new garden community. This will address the identified requirement from 2026 to 2036.
- 2.22 These policies identify a supply of specific, developable sites which will ensure the delivery of the requirement for the period between 2026 and 2036, as required under Policy B of the Government's Planning policy for traveller sites (PPTS). This approach will also provide for contingency if any policy compliant applications do not come forward 2021-26, as well as potentially allow for provision to cater for needs arising beyond 2036 on the site of St. George's Barracks.

## **Appendix 1: Current Provision of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation in Rutland**

### **Gypsy and Traveller sites**

#### The Paddocks, Langham

Original permanent consent: APP/2013/0123 granted 4/6/13 for 8 caravans (4 additional pitches). Previously granted temporary consent FUL/2011/030 on 23/8/11 and FUL/2007/0175 on 8/1/08.

Reference 2016/0435/FUL consent for 8 caravans (4 additional pitches) granted 2/9/16.

It is understood that the extended family on this site own the adjacent field, which would have the capacity to provide land for an additional 4 pitches, although no application has been submitted to date.

#### Travellers Rest, Langham

This consists of a single pitch and there is no need for further accommodation or space. Permanent consent 2013/1112/FUL granted 2/4/14. (Previously granted temporary consent APP/2010/1266 on 15/11/11.)

#### Acorns, Baulk Road, Bisbrooke

This consists of a single pitch through 2017/0663/FUL granted 4/9/17. It is considered that there is capacity on this site for a second pitch, although no application has been submitted to date.

### **Travelling Showpeople sites**

#### The Elms, land north of Greetham Inn Lane, Greetham

2013/1020/FUL granted 14/1/14. Approx. 1 plot.

#### Five Counties, Stretton Road/ Greetham Inn Lane, Greetham

FUL/2004/0782 granted 28/2/05. Approx. 9 plots.

Southern extension to main site: 4 plots consented 8/6/17 under 2016/1231/FUL.

It is considered that there is capacity within or adjacent to this sites for an additional two pitches, although no application has been submitted to date.

#### Pinders Circus depot, The Inhams, Bisbrooke

Original consent in 1980s: 2 plots, single plot until extra plot granted consent 2015/0441/FUL