

Local Plan (Part 2) Issues and Options Consultation 2017

Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Site Options Selection Methodology Background Paper

(November 2016)

Contents

<i>Section</i>	<i>Page</i>
Introduction	1
Background and Approach to site options identification	3
Further options and Next Steps	6
Key References	7
Appendix 1- Site Options to be assessed	

Introduction

This background paper has been prepared to set out how the initial identification process for potential Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople (GTTS) sites has been undertaken. The site options presented in this paper are to be taken forward for further assessment as part of the Local Plan (Part 2) which will be publicly consulted upon widely. This background paper does not set out the preferred sites or determine if the site options are 'deliverable' or 'developable'¹ at this stage; it provides an initial assessment of sites which have the potential to be considered further via the Local Plan (Part 2). Local Plan (Part 2) will therefore take this site identification process further by assessing the sites more fully and considering their appropriateness for allocation as a GTTS site.

The need for GTTS sites is set out in Local Plan (Part 1) Policy CP7 (extract below).

Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

Provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople will be made through the allocation of sites in Local Plan Part 2 to ensure a five year supply of suitable land is maintained for the plan period in accordance with the NPPF. The Cannock Chase Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2012 will be used as a basis for levels of provision within the District requiring 41 additional residential pitches and four Travelling Showpeople plots over the plan period and five transit pitches as follows:

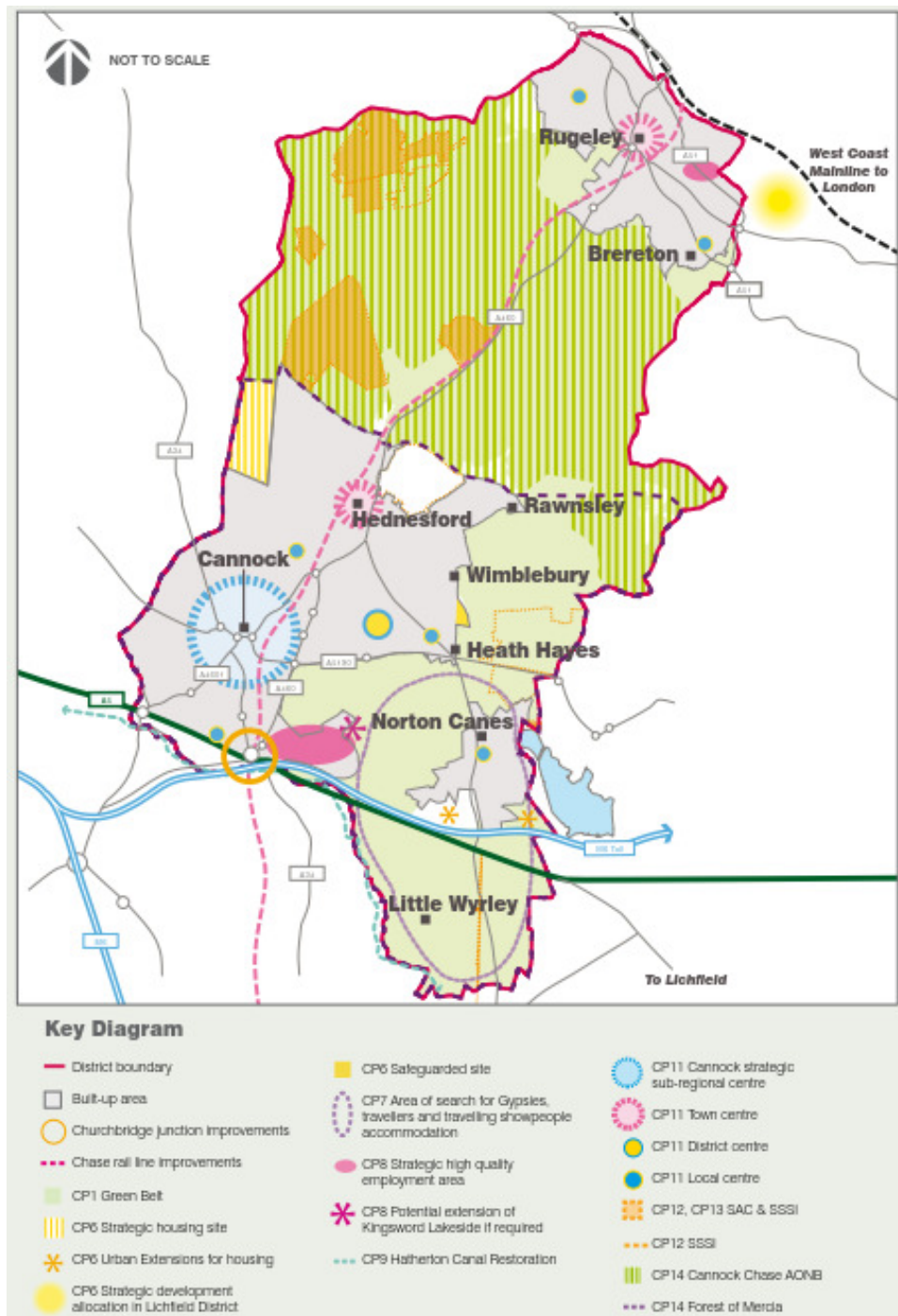
	Residential Pitches	Travelling Showpeople plots	Transit pitches
2012-18	22	3	
2018-23	10	1	
2023-28	9	0	
2012-28	41	4	5

A broad area of search for such sites, matching travel patterns and based along the A5 road corridor, is identified in the Key Diagram. The Council will seek to locate sites and determine planning applications in accordance with the NPPF, including within reasonable proximity of existing settlements and with access to shops, schools and other community facilities. Sites should provide adequate space for vehicles and appropriate highway access. Transit sites for gypsies and travellers will be provided in appropriate locations related to the current working patterns of the travelling community. In accordance with CP1, development proposals will be considered in line with other relevant Local Plan policies. If the monitoring of supply against targets identifies a shortfall and/or additional demand comes forward, the Council will work positively with the Gypsy, Traveller, Travelling Showpeople communities and landowners within the broad area of search to bring forward additional pitches/plots. If necessary, a formal review of requirements and site allocations will be undertaken no later than 2021.

This policy is based upon the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) 2012 which identified a need for pitches and plots that was mainly locally arising from existing families within the District. The preference for additional provision was either via extensions to existing sites, or in close proximity within the District given close family ties amongst the existing community to the locality. As a result an 'Area of Search' identified for additional provision was identified within Local Plan (Part 1). This covers the 'A5 corridor' area- where existing families

¹ To be considered deliverable, site should be available (willing landowner) now, offer a suitable location for development, and be achievable (viable for development) with a realistic prospect that development will be delivered on the site within five years. To be considered developable, sites should be in a suitable location for traveller site development and there should be a reasonable prospect that the site is available and be viably developed at the point envisaged.

largely reside and also along the key A5 traveller route (broadly land to the south of A5190 Lichfield Road/Cannock Road extending to the southern District boundary with Walsall Council- see Key Diagram below).



The Council has prepared this background paper in order to help identify potential site options to meet this need. This is in light of the limited response to Call for Sites exercises with only one site being submitted by a willing landowner for travelling showpeople provision. The paper provides an overview of the approach taken by the Council to identify additional site options for further assessment. It provides a short list of sites to be considered further via Local Plan (Part 2).

Background and Approach to site options identification

Background

As outlined in the Introduction, following a number of Call for Sites exercises requesting site options for all uses and GTTS sites specifically, only one site was forthcoming. The Council undertakes a Call for Sites exercise each year as part of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and Employment Land Availability Assessment (ELAA) - in the 2016 Call for Sites exercise the Council specifically identified its interest in receiving site submissions for GTTS provision to take forward in Local Plan (Part 2). Prior to this, in 2013 the Council undertook a more tailored Call for Sites exercise with the major landowners in the Area of Search specifically for GTTS provision. However, the only site forthcoming from all of these exercises was Albutts Road, Commonside submitted by Wyrley Estates for relocation of the existing travelling showpeople family currently residing at Grove Colliery, with the potential for additional provision to meet the Local Plan requirements (Site Ref. GT1).

As a result the Council undertook a series of steps in order to identify additional site options to be considered as part of the Local Plan (Part 2).

Approach to Site Options Identification

It was considered necessary to consider the potential for site options from a large range of potential sources. As a result an initial 'long list' of all potential options was initially compiled in order to ensure a thorough process as possible. This initial list of sites was compiled from the following sources:

- Existing gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople sites (potential for expansion/intensification)
- Proposed gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople sites (new sites via Call for Sites)
- Sites within Cannock Chase District Council (CCDC)/Staffordshire County Council (SCC) ownership (public ownership may enhance deliverability)
- Sites proposed for development within the SHLAA/ELAA (may be available for other uses). In addition, discussions were undertaken with major landowners to ascertain if there were any other site opportunities not previously submitted to the SHLAA/ELAA.

Sites less than 0.2ha in size were not included in the assessment process from the outset. This is based on the assumption that a gypsy and traveller site should be able to accommodate a minimum of 3-4 pitches to enable at least an extended family to reside together (drawing upon previous national guidance). Based upon previous national guidance, local Design SPD guidance, other local authority examples and the existing sites within CCDC, the assessment assumed that an average good-sized gypsy and traveller pitch required 500m². It is also assumed that a small sized

travelling show people site to accommodate one extended family requires a minimum of 0.2ha (to accommodate circa 3 caravan plots and storage/maintenance areas) based upon guidance. Guidance also suggests that site densities shouldn't exceed 20 caravans per hectare (0.05ha per plot); given the District need for 4 additional plots this would also equate to 0.2ha as a minimum. Areas of land in public ownership which effectively formed 'tracks' along former railway lines etc. were also not included given the obvious physical constraints to appropriate development.

Sites identified as deliverable/developable within the SHLAA and/or as available within the ELAA were not included in the assessment process from the outset. Whilst it is recognised that deliverable/developable/ and available sites within the SHLAA/ELAA could potentially come forward for an alternative use (particularly those without planning permission at present) it was considered that these sites had already been identified as required for the supply for housing and employment. In addition, the majority of the SHLAA/ELAA sites within the Area of Search already benefit from planning consent/are under construction/are the subject of a current planning application, so it is even less likely they will become available for GTTS provision. Only one major site without permission or a current application at Cherry Brook/Walsall Road (SHLAA Site Ref. N25) within the Area of Search is discounted as a result of this approach.

It was also generally assumed that sites currently identified within the 'Green Belt/AONB/Restricted and Excluded' section of the SHLAA and the 'Not Available' section of the ELAA would not be available as the landowners had previously indicated a preference for residential and employment uses and had not submitted their sites in response to the specific GTTS call for sites. However, the Council has undertaken discussions with major landowners covering the Area of Search (who have generally submitted the largest sites to the SHLAA/ELAA previously) and those who own land in proximity to existing GTTS sites to identify if there are any options for GTTS provision not previously considered. In order to ascertain the likely availability from these landowners individual contact was made and a number of meetings and correspondence via telephone/email were undertaken over the course of June-July 2016 with:

- Holford Estates (major landowner and SHLAA/ELAA site submissions in Area of Search)
- KGL Estates/Mr and Mrs Bower (major landowner, SHLAA/ELAA site submissions in Area of Search and land in proximity to existing GTTS site)
- St Modwen (ELAA site submission in Area of Search and land in proximity to existing GTTS site)
- Staffordshire County Council (major landowner, SHLAA/ELAA site submissions in Area of Search and land in proximity to existing GTTS site)

- Wyrley Estates (major landowner, SHLAA/ELAA site submissions in Area of Search, land in proximity to existing GTTS site and GTTS site submission)

This process identified a number of potential sites to include within the list of options.

A desktop based exercise was then undertaken whereby sites were discounted from the initial list where they were wholly affected by one or more of the following absolute constraints:

- Flood Zone 2 or 3
- Covered by a natural environment designation e.g. SAC/SSSI, Ancient Woodland
- Contain listed buildings or Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- Other prohibitive site specific constraints e.g. no access, topography
- Landowner not willing to consider making site available for GTTS provision i.e. in active alternative use/being promoted for alternative use/not being promoted for development

The Green Belt was not considered a constraint at this stage given the Area of Search covers mostly Green Belt land (outside the urban area of Norton Canes).

As a result of this process a 'short list' of sites has been established which will be taken forward for more detailed assessment and consultation as part of Local Plan (Part 2). Appendix 1 outlines the 'short list' of sites with accompanying commentary. It should be noted that in terms of availability there is still no firm commitment from the landowners of many of the shortlisted sites options that they will be available for GTTS provision.

In relation to existing GTTS sites, a number of these within the District are restricted from further expansion by virtue of adjoining land uses i.e. there is no room to physically expand. However existing sites at Lime Lane and Cannock Wood Road are considered to have some potential for expansion in physical terms (into adjoining land for the Lime Lane site and on-site for the Cannock Wood Road site) so the relevant potential extensions are taken forward for further more detailed assessment.

In terms of sites within public ownership across the search area, a significant proportion of the publicly owned land is in active use as Poplars Landfill and Kingswood Lakeside Business Park. Of the remaining sites, around half are also in active alternative use as recreation spaces and/or school sites. The residual sites are largely restricted for other specific reasons e.g. SSSI designations; inaccessibility; and sites being promoted for alternative uses such as a new cemetery and employment land provision. However, a relatively large site within public ownership has been taken forward for assessment- GT3- Former Golf Course, Lichfield Road, Cannock.

In terms of SHLAA/ELAA sites, the short list reflects the outcomes of discussions with the relevant landowners as detailed above. In specific relation to SHLAA Site Reference C116 (a) and (b), the landowners indicated that they may be willing to consider GTTS provision as part of the wider proposed residential scheme. Therefore, this site has not been appraised separately as a standalone GTTS potential site option (particularly given its large size of circa 100ha) - instead the potential for some GTTS provision has been addressed in the assessment of the site for residential use.

Appendix 1 identifies the indicative capacity for each site. Apart from Site GT1, this is not based upon submissions from the landowners/site promoters. This is an estimate only based upon the indicative pitch/plot sizes outlined above as well as previous national guidance on the recommended number of pitches for an individual site, which suggested that sites of around 15 pitches are generally more successful in terms of site management and layout. In the case of the larger sites on the list, it has been assumed that two separate sites of 15 pitches could theoretically be accommodated. In relation to the plots, the Local Plan requirement for 4 plots has been used as the benchmark for capacity. However, it is recognised that the need is actually more likely to be for 13 plots in order to accommodate the relocation of the existing travelling showpeople family within the District from their current site.

Further options and Next Steps

The sites set out in Appendix 1 will be assessed via the Local Plan (Part 2) and publicly consulted upon. Following the feedback from this assessment and consultation it will be apparent if there are sufficient sites capable of meeting the need for GTTS pitches/plots identified in Local Plan (Part 1).

If a shortfall in provision is apparent then further options may need to be considered. This could include reassessing all SHLAA/ELAA options originally discounted within the Area of Search. The most common initial reason for discounting these sites is their availability i.e. the willingness of the landowner to consider GTTS provision on site, so further work would be needed on how the land could be made available if these sites were to be reconsidered. Another option could be identifying any opportunities outside the Area of Search for new sites, including SHLAA/ELAA sites as set out above. Cross boundary provision could be considered but this is unlikely to be feasible unless the Council has exhausted all options within its own District in the first instance, particularly given the existing families desire to remain within the District in close proximity to their existing sites. Similar issues with regards to land availability are also likely to remain an issue with cross boundary provision.

It may be the case that additional sites options are forthcoming as a result of the Local Plan (Part 2) consultation. In this event any further options will be assessed accordingly.

Key References

Cannock Chase District Council Local Plan (Part 1) 2014

Cannock Chase District Council Design Supplementary Planning Document (2016)

Cannock Chase District Council Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessments (2016)

Planning Policy for traveller sites (DCLG, 2015)

Designing Gypsy and Traveller sites (DCLG, 2008- now revoked)

Travelling Show peoples Sites- A Planning Focus- Model Standard Package (The Showmen's Guild of Great Britain, 2007)

Appendix 1: Site Options to be assessed

Site ID	Location	Site Area (Ha)	Easting	Northing	Indicative Capacity	Notes	Potential Constraints	Status	Brownfield/ Greenfield	Green Belt
Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Site Options Within Area of Search										
GT1	Land at Albutts Road, Commonside, Norton Canes	1.7	402,640	307,171	4-13 plots	Site submitted by landowner to accommodate relocation of traveller family currently residing at Grove Colliery. Landowner willing to sell/lease site.	Narrow access road.	No planning permission	Greenfield	Yes
GT2	Land to the rear of Woodlands Caravan Park, Lime Lane, Little Wyrley	3.6	402296	304978	5-10 pitches	Land lies to the rear of an existing, well established gypsy and traveller site which is owned and operated by on site tenant (Woodlands Caravan Park). Land would accommodate an extension to this park. Site is currently in third party ownership but may be willing to sell. Operator of Woodlands Caravan Park envisages accommodating a modest increase on existing provision to ensure the site remains manageable.		No planning permission	Greenfield	Yes
GT3	Land at former Golf Driving Range, Lichfield Road, Cannock	4.8	399868	309756	15-30 pitches/4 13 plots	Land formerly utilised for a golf driving range- no longer in operation. Landowner may be willing to sell. Lies in close proximity to two existing gypsy and traveller sites along the Lichfield Road. Site could potentially accommodate two separate sites of up to 15 pitches and/or up to 13 plots. Area includes fishing pond which reduces potential developable area.		No planning permission	Greenfield	Yes

GT4	Turf Field, Watling Street/Walsall Road, Norton Canes	2.11	401806	307094	15-30 pitches/4 13 plots	Landowners have promoted the site for employment development and this remains their first preference- but willing to allow assessment of the site for GTTS provision alongside potential employment use. Land lies to the rear of an existing public house. In close proximity to the A5. Site could potentially accommodate two separate sites of up to 15 pitches and/or up to 13 plots.		No planning permission	Greenfield	Yes
GT5	Jubilee Field, Lime Lane/Watling Street, Norton Canes	5.2	402122	306698	15-30 pitches/4 13 plots	Landowners have promoted the site for employment development and this remains their first preference- but willing to allow assessment of the site for GTTS provision alongside potential employment use. In close proximity to the A5. Site could potentially accommodate two separate sites of up to 15 pitches and/or up to 13 plots.	Adjacent to Cannock Chase Extension Canal SAC. Access would be off trunk road.	No planning permission	Greenfield	Yes

Gypsy and Traveller Site Options Outside Area of Search

GT6	Land at Cannock Wood Road, Rawsley	0.4	402860	312060	5 pitches	Site adjacent to existitng gypsy pitches and land owned by site tenants. Existing site recently developed with modern amenity facilities.	Site slightly constrained as narrows to a point- reduced indicative capacity as a result.	No planning permission	Brownfield/ Greenfield	Yes
-----	------------------------------------	-----	--------	--------	-----------	---	---	------------------------	---------------------------	-----