

28.7.2003

Dear Sir,

It was with horror that I read upon my return from holiday, of the details of the proposed sites for gypsies and travellers. As a Bishop's Tachbrook villager it seems to me to be utterly unfair and reprehensible that it should have been allocated as many as 6 sites out of the 25 required.

Each designated site has its own drawbacks. Sites 3 and 6 are remote from major centres and amenities; Sites 9 and 5 both open on to a very busy road and have no pedestrian access. In addition both sites have listed buildings on them - not ideal places for gypsy settlements. And finally, the two remaining proposed sites are 10 which is situated very close to the C. wide Dogs Assoc. H.Q. and has the danger of affecting the National Breeding Programme with the proximity of the gypsy/travellers' dogs; and Site 15 is on Europa Way. This last site is located on the banks of the Tachbrook which will be exposed to possible contamination from this being used as a work site, or indeed, from questionable standards of general hygiene.

As an ex-chairman of the village school governors, I view with dismay the possibility of an influx of traveller children into what is only a one form entry and popular school. No doubt the odd child could be assimilated, though I am not conversant with the admission numbers nowadays, but too many would result in neither the gypsy nor the local children having the high standard of education which both groups deserve. This aspect must be considered in terms of small human beings and not as mere statistics which inevitably mask the real impact of decisions made by committees (or Salford University Students).

2.

Having read about, and informed myself about the various requirements for each gypsy/traveller family, it seems to me that they, the minority, are given more consideration, and a better standard of accommodation space than that given to the vast majority of tax and rate paying members of local communities. Is this fair, or real equality of citizenship in our country?

Yours faithfully



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