

Gypsy and Travellers Site Options Response to Site GT02

Land abutting the Fosse Way at its junction with the A425

For Official Use Only

Ref:

Rep. Ref.

10128

Title **MR**

First name/initials **DAVID**

Surname **CRAVEN**

Criteria by which Gypsy and Traveller's sites will be judged for suitability and sustainability by Warwick District Council:

- Convenient access to a GP surgery, school and public transport;
- Avoiding areas with a high risk of flooding;
- Safe access to the road network and provision for parking, turning and servicing on site;
- Provision of utilities (running water, toilet facilities waste disposal etc);
- Avoiding areas where there could be an adverse impact on important features of the natural and historic environment; and,
- Sites which can be integrated into the landscape without harming the character of the area.
- Promotes peaceful and integrated co-existence between the site and the local community;
- Avoids placing undue pressure on local infrastructure and services;
- Reflects the extent to which traditional lifestyles (whereby some travellers live and work from the same location thereby omitting many travel to work journeys) can contribute to sustainability.

IT IS IMPORTANT to comment/object adhering to the above criteria and the council provided form follows that process. It is implied that you should use the WDC form or the response form available online. YOU ARE HOWEVER STILL PERMITTED to respond by writing to the Council's Development Policy Manager or you could choose to use this site specific form prepared for GT 02

I OBJECT

~~I APPROVE~~

(Please delete as required.)

Please set out full details of your objection or representation of support with reference to the criteria as outlined by the council.

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED

WDC PLANNING
Ref
Officer
12 JUL 2013
SCANNED
CC CR PD MA
PRE GEN DIS

Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary

12/13

Warwick District Council will judge proposed sites against the nationally accepted criteria. The purpose of the criteria is to seek to meet the requirements of the Gypsy and Travellers community not necessarily local residents, businesses and employment.

Areas of concern could include:

- Agriculture • Animal Welfare • Co-existence • Crime • Ecology and Habitat • Education/Schools • Healthcare/Surgeries
- Highways and Safety • Local Economy • Rural Landscape • Services and Utilities • Tourism • Traffic Density/Flow • Urbanisation.

I OBJECT

I APPROVE

(Please delete as required.)

to the proposals on the following grounds –

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED

Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary

Do you have any other suggestions for land within Warwick District that you think would be suitable for use as a Gypsy and Traveller site, bearing in mind the criteria for site identification?. If so, please give the location and the landowners details below:

Guidance on Making Representations

- You may withdraw your objection at any time by writing to Warwick District Council, address below. It is important that you include your name and address as anonymous forms cannot be accepted. If your address details change, please inform WDC in writing.
- All forms should be received by **5.15 p.m. on Monday, 29 July 2013**
- Copies of all the objections and supporting representations will be made available for others to see at the council's offices at Riverside House and online via the council's e-consultation system. Please note that all comments are in the public domain and the Council cannot accept confidential objections. The information will be held on a database and used to assist with the preparation of the new plan for Gypsy and Traveller sites and with consideration of planning applications in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

To return this form please drop off at either Riverside House, Leamington Town Hall or your local library or post to **Development Policy Manager, Development Services, Warwick District Council, Riverside House, Milverton Hill, Leamington Spa CV32 5QH** or email to: newlocalplan@warwickdc.gov.uk

I write to object to the proposed gypsy and travellers' site at GT02. My objections are offered to the consultation process in the context of being a parent of two young children and a small land-owner.

Dealing with the criteria by which Gypsy and Traveller's sites will be judged for suitability and sustainability, I provide my responses as follows:-

- Convenient access to a GP surgery, school and public transport;

According to the WDC Final Interim SA report conducted by Enfusion, the nearest GP surgery to GT02 is 1.5 miles away. This was obviously a significant point in the scoring of GT02, given that the Gypsies and Traveller's experience the worst health of any disadvantaged group in England. Life expectancy is, for example, 12 years less for women and 10 years less for men than among the settled community.

In fact, the nearest GP surgery is almost 3 miles from the proposed site. However, the Practice Manager of the Croft Medical Centre in Sydenham confirmed to us that new patients cannot be accepted without 'an uplift in infrastructure and staff'. If that surgery has no capacity for new patients without a major expansion of the surgery, then the nearest available GP's surgery is in Cubbington which is almost 5 miles away, with no direct bus link.

In reality, there are no amenities within reach of the proposed site, the land is not proximate to healthcare support services such as GPs and dentists, and most importantly, there is no pedestrian access to anywhere.

While it is possible to take a bus into Leamington or to neighbouring villages, the bus stop is located on an overgrown grass verge, and with all the inherent road dangers, could hardly be described as 'convenient'.

Specifically on public transport, the area is poorly served. There is no cycle path, no rail link, no footway links. In reality, residents in the area are dependent on private vehicle use.

Importantly, the LDF rejected land to the south of Radford for development of new homes towards the Fosse Way as being ***too distant from amenities***.

The LDF Evidence Base, Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Main Report in May 2012 concluded: 'This area is not adjacent to the existing built up area and would not be considered to be a suitable location for development in terms of access to schools, services, shops, and employment.'

I accept the council has a responsibility to provide viable sites but if this land could not fulfil the criteria for housing needs, how could it be feasible for a Gypsy and Traveller's site? Indeed in the Communities and Local Government Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites, ***Good Practice Guide***, it reads:

'As with any other form of housing, poorly located sites, with no easy access to major roads or public transport services, will have a detrimental effect on the ability of residents to:

- Seek or retain employment

I wish to object to the proposed gypsy site at G103. My objections are
effort to the consultation process in the event of being a parent of two young children
and a small land-owner.

Given that the criteria by which Gypsy and Traveller sites will be judged for suitability
and suitability, I provide my responses as follows:

- easy access to a GP surgery, school and public transport;

According to the WDC Final Interim 2011 report, located by Fusion, the nearest GP
surgery to G103 is 1.5 miles away. This would be a significant point in the scoring of
G103, given that the Gypsies and Travellers experience the worst health of any
disadvantaged group in England. Life expectancy is, for example, 13 years less for women
and 10 years less for men than among the white community.

In fact, the nearest GP surgery is almost a mile from the proposed site. However, the
Practice Manager of the Croft Medical Centre in Systonham confirmed to us that new
patients cannot be accepted without an audit in infrastructure and staff. If that surgery has
no capacity for new patients without a major expansion of the surgery, then the nearest
available GP's surgery is in Cupdington which is almost 2 miles away, with no direct bus link.

In reality, there are no amenities within reach of the proposed site, the land is not
proximate to healthcare support services such as GPs and dentists, and most importantly,
there is no pedestrian access to any of these services.

While it is possible to take a bus into Epping and on to neighbouring villages, the bus stop is
located on an overgrown grass verge, and with all the inherent road dangers, could hardly
be described as 'convenient'.

Specifically on public transport, the site is poorly served. There is no cycle path, no rail link,
no footway links, in reality, residents in the area are dependent on private vehicle use.

Importantly, the LDF rejected land to the south of Radford for development of new houses
towards the Fosse Ways being too distant from amenities.

The LDF Strategic Housing and Viability Assessment Main Report in May
2013 concludes: 'This area is not suitable for residential built up areas and would not be
considered to be a suitable location for development in terms of access to schools, services,
shops, and employment.'

The Council has a responsibility to provide a suitable site, but if this land could not still
be the one for housing needs, how could it be suitable for a Gypsy and Traveller site?
Indeed in the Communities and Local Government Planning Gypsy and Traveller Sites,
Good Practice Guide, it reads:

'As with any other form of housing, poorly located sites, with no easy access to major roads
or public transport services, will have a detrimental effect on the ability of residents to
seek or retain employment

- Attend school, further education or training
- Obtain access to health services and shopping facilities.'

– **Avoiding areas with a high risk of flooding**

Our own land abuts the land at the proposed Site GT02. In 2012, we experienced major flooding after significant rainwater collected on the fields above. This 'overflow' occurred on several occasions with images shown below.



This volume of water caused extensive pooling of surface water in our four paddocks (situated above the GT02 site).

As a consequence of this and persistent heavy rain in the winter, the poor drainage qualities of the local soil led to the long-term ponding of water. This created ideal conditions for the fluke parasite to flourish which led to an outbreak of the potentially fatal Liver Fluke condition in our three sports horses turned out in those paddocks. (The horses survived only after intensive treatment from an equine vet.)

In general, the drainage in the soil is poor. In fact, we have recently had to re-fit the sewage and main drain soak-away as a result of waste water ponding – even on elevated land!

If concrete, hard-standing areas were developed on land below this, then that would certainly cause the back-up and ponding of excess rainwater, as the natural draining process would be disrupted and could result in more ill-health in livestock in the immediate vicinity.

– **Safe access to the road network and provision for parking, turning and servicing on site;**

Following the WDC announcement of the consultation process for development of the land at GT02, we were given the benefit of a site visit from Peter Garrison from WCC Highways Department who provided a *prima facie* assessment on the viability of the GT02 site for use by the gypsy and traveller community.

Aside from access concerns to GT02 from the Southam Road, his immediate thoughts were that the site was not 'sustainable' and would not have the highway department's support. If the access to GT02 was provided on to the Fosse Way, Mr Garrison added that pedestrian access from a Fosse Way entrance to the bus stops on the Southam Road is 'problematic' with young children commuting to school, being required to cross one of the county's busiest rural arteries on or next to one of the busiest roundabouts in the area.

- * Obtain access to health services and medical facilities
- * Obtain school / further education or training

- Avoiding areas with a high risk of flooding

Our own flood audit of the land at the proposed site in 2013, we experienced major flooding after significant rainwater runoff from the fields above. This 'overflow' occurred on several occasions with images shown below.



This volume of water caused extensive damage to the water in our four paddocks (situated above the GTO2 site).

As a consequence of this and persistent problems in the winter, the poor drainage qualities of the local soil led to the long-term ponding of water. This created ideal conditions for the uptake of pathogens to flourish which led to an outbreak of the potentially fatal liver fluke condition in our three sports horses (and not in the paddocks). The horses survived only after intensive treatment from an equine vet.

In general, the damage in the soil is poor. In fact, we have recently had to fit the sewage and main drain soak-away as a result of water entering ponding - even on elevated land!

If concrete hard-standing areas were installed on land below this then that would certainly cause the back-up and ponding of water to occur, as the natural drainage process would be blocked and could result in water being held in a livestock in the immediate vicinity.

- Safe access to the road network and services for parking, turning and servicing on site.

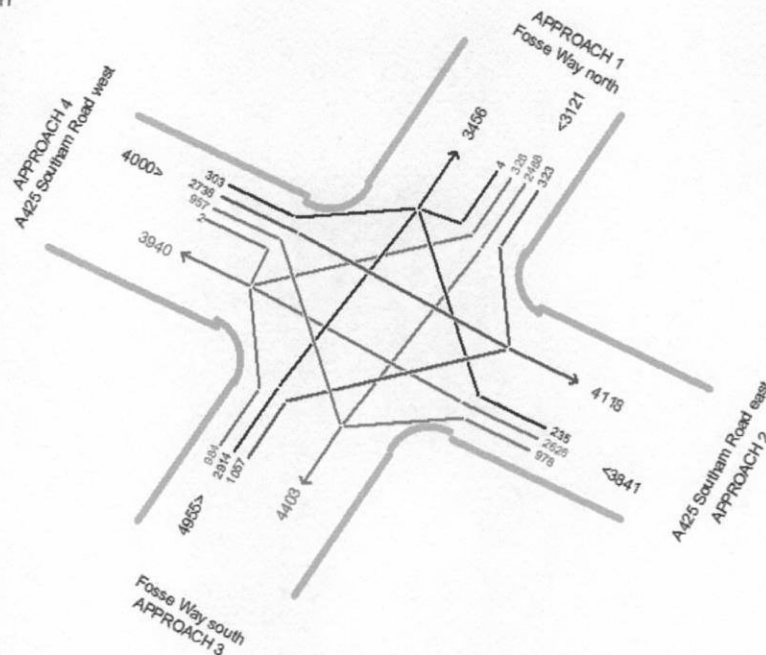
Following the WDC announcement of the planning process for development of the land at GTO2, we were given the benefit of the doubt from Peter Garrison from WCC Highways Department who provided a grant for a signpost on the visibility of the GTO2 site for use by the gypsy and traveller community.

Aside from access concerns to GTO2 from the road, Mr. Kead, his immediate thoughts were that the site was not 'sustainable' and he would not have the highway department's support. The access to GTO2 was provided on to the Fosse Way. Mr. Garrison added that pedestrian access from a Fosse Way entrance to the site on the southern Road is 'problematic' with young children coming to school being required to cross one of the county's busiest roundabouts on or next to one of the busiest roundabouts in the area.

On access from the Southam Road, Mr Garrison said the site would not pass a fundamental test of highway safety without significant work on line of site and the 'visibility splay'. However, Mr Garrison went on to say that the site was not sustainable when assessing it on bus links, cycle paths, footway links and general amenities. He said the site 'would need to have a pavement built all the way to Radford, and that would have to be lit and maintained and would also introduce urbanisation into the countryside, which isn't viable'.

Shown below is a turning movement diagram, provided by Roger Harding, Principal Technical Advisor, Transport & Highways, Warwickshire County Council, showing the movements at the Fosse Way and Southam Road roundabout. This is a 12 hour survey (0700 – 1900).

Siteno A425031050
For Vehicle Class MTRVEH
From 0700 to 1900



There is a speed camera positioned on the Fosse Way directly opposite the proposed site, there are also signs advising road-users of it being a 'High Risk Crash Route', '12 Casualties over 2 miles in 3 years', 'Think Bike'. These underline the fact that both the Fosse Way (60 mph Speed Limit) and Southam Road (50 mph Speed Limit) are both busy, dangerous road.

As a consequence of Peter Garrison's observations, information from Roger Harding and my own experience, I suggest that the two bus stops are not suitable for regular use and they would require a lit path and pavement structure from the roundabout, on both sides of the road, to the village, to make this area safe for regular use by pedestrians. Peter Garrison advised that the verge area was simply too narrow in a number of areas.

I am acutely conscious of the dangers of fast-moving traffic on the Southam Road. I often tow a laden horse box with a 4x4 and can only turn left southwards, and even that has to be achieved with considerable care and patience.

In order for the southern Road, which would not pass a fundamental test of highway safety without significant improvement of site and the 'visibility' of site. However, Mr Garrison went on to say that it is not sustainable when assessing it on bus links, cycle paths, footway links and other amenities. He said the site would need to have a pavement built all the way to the kerb, and that would have to be fit and maintained and would also introduce urbanisation into the countryside, which isn't visible.

Shown below is a turning movement diagram prepared by Roger Harding, Principal Technical Advisor, Transport & Highways, for the White County Council, showing the movements at the Fosse Way and Southern Road roundabout. This is a 15 hour survey (0700 - 1900).

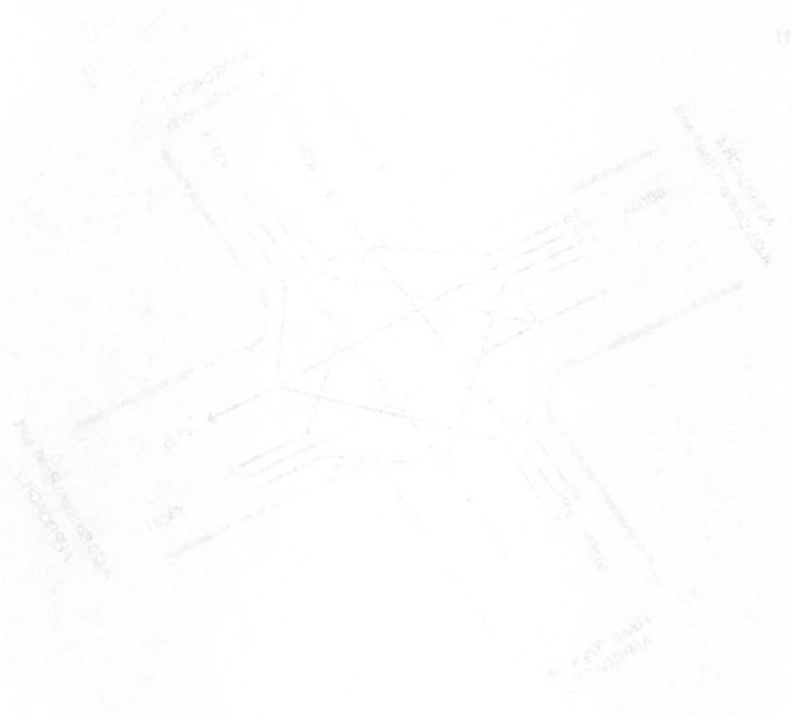


Diagram showing the layout of the roads at the Fosse Way and Southern Road roundabout. This is a 15 hour survey (0700 - 1900).

There is a speed camera positioned on the road which is directly opposite the proposed site. There are also signs advising road users of a 'High Risk Crash Route'. It is estimated that over 1 mile in 3 years, 'Think Bike', 'Think Pedestrian' the fact that both the Fosse Way (A10) and Southern Road (A10) are both busy, dangerous roads.

As a consequence of Peter Garrison's observations, information from Roger Harding and my own experience, I suggest that the two roads are not suitable for regular use and they would require a lift path and pavement to be laid on the roundabout, on both sides of the road, to make the area safe for pedestrian use by pedestrians. Peter Garrison advised that the verge area was simply too narrow in a number of areas.

I am acutely conscious of the danger of increasing traffic on the Southern Road. I often tow a lawnmower with a 4x4 and can only turn left, southwards, and even that has to be achieved with considerable care and patience.

We have two children aged 16 and 12, one of whom is registered disabled and have never permitted either of them to walk along the overgrown, narrow verge to use these bus stops in the 2 ½ years we have lived here. Indeed, I had perimeter fencing fitted alongside our land as it abuts the Southam Road soon after moving to the house to ensure the children and their friends would not go near the road.

I have also not allowed them to walk the 1.5 miles into Radford Semele as there is no pathway, just overgrown hedgerows, and no street lighting. I have always regarded the road as highly dangerous and I was recently reminded of this with a very serious RTA recently on the neighbouring Fosse Way.

– Avoiding areas where there is the potential for noise and other disturbance;

This is a rural area. What is being proposed is essentially a proxy for a small housing development with light industrial capacity attached. As we know, the process to identify sites for the potential development of new homes around Radford suggested this area was not suitable because it wasn't proximate to amenities.

It is an agricultural area with a peppering of light industrial activity. What is being proposed is an urbanisation of the rural landscape with visual pollution, noise pollution detrimentally affecting living conditions at my property and impacting the wellbeing of my family.

One of the main reasons for moving to an area of relative quiet and seclusion was to enable my children - who were both born with profound deafness – to develop listening and learning skills in a peaceful environment.

The development of GT02 would mean the influx of a large housing and working community abutting our property. The disturbance in building the site let alone its day to day operation would not be conducive to peaceful co-existence.

– Provision of utilities (running water, toilet facilities, waste disposal, etc;

There is no capacity to provide mains gas to the proposed site without significant investment and infrastructure work. So the cheapest, most efficient energy source will be denied to the Gypsy and Traveller Community at GT02 in times of spiralling living costs caused by high domestic energy bills. Our property can only utilise oil or LPG gas which are either inconvenient, expensive and in the case of LPG, hazardous particularly in an industrial work location.

On sewage management, the surrounding properties are serviced by individual septic tanks. There is no mains sewage system.

A large septic tank - notoriously problematic - while an obvious solution would cause ponding of effluent, given the principals of septic tank operation is such that fluids theoretically drain into surrounding land while solid waste collects to be either anaerobically broken down or removed from the site by a waste disposal contractor. The ponding of

We have two children aged 16 and 11, one of whom is registered disabled and have never
permitted either of them to walk along the overgrown narrow verge to use these bus stops
in the 10 years we have lived here. In fact I had perimeter fencing fitted alongside our
land at the time the Southern Road was built to ensure the house to ensure 2 children
and their friends would not go near the road.

I have also not allowed them to walk the 1/2 mile into Fildford 2 miles as this is a
hazardous but overgrown hedge-row and the street lighting I have always regarded the road
as a high dangerous and I was recently reminded of this with a very serious RTA casualty on
the neighbouring Fosse Way.

-- Avoiding areas where there is the potential for noise and other disturbance:

This is a rural area. What is being proposed is a noisy, busy, fully a proxy for a small housing
development with light industrial capacity attached. As we know, the process to identify
sites for the potential development of new homes around Radford suggested this area was
not suitable because it wasn't proximate to amenities.

It is an agricultural area with a reputation of light industrial activity. What is being proposed
is an intensification of the rural landscape with visual pollution, noise pollution, vibration
affecting living conditions at my property and impacting the wellbeing of my family.

One of the main reasons for moving to an area of relative quiet and seclusion was to enable
my children - who were both born with profound deafness - to develop listening and
learning skills in a peaceful environment.

The development of G102 would mean the influx of a large housing and working community
adjacent to my property. The disturbance in building the site let alone its day to day operation
would not be conducive to peaceful co-existence.

- Provision of utilities (running water, toilet facilities, waste disposal, etc):

There is no capacity to provide mains gas to the proposed site without significant
investment and infrastructure work. In the cheapest, most efficient energy source will be
derived from the city and Traveler Community at G12 in times of spalling living costs
caused by high domestic energy bills. The property can only utilize oil or LPG gas which are
either an expensive, expensive and in the case of LPG, hazardous particularly in an industrial
workload on.

On sewage management, the surrounding properties are serviced by individual septic tanks.
There is no mains sewage system.

A large septic tank - notoriously problematic - within an obvious solution would cause
backlog of effluent given the proposed septic tank operation is such that fluids
theoretically drain into surrounding land while solid waste collects to be either anaerobically
broken down or removed from the site by a waste disposal contractor. The ponding of

effluent from either one large septic tank or a series of smaller ones would present health concerns to both residents on that immediate site, livestock and nearby population. Additionally, the mains power supply would need to be upgraded because it apparently has no further capacity and certainly cannot cope with what would be an additional 30 properties.

– Avoiding areas where there could be adverse impact on important features of the natural and historic environment;

The proposed GT02 site is adjacent to an historic wood, owned and managed by ourselves. This covers 14 acres of land and in January this year, an independent census and survey was carried out by Richard Finch, a Contractor for the Forest Commission (Site Survey 42856 – Parlour Spinney) to collect data for the National Forestry Inventory.

Mr Finch informed us of a badger set in the wood, along with the presence of bats and a honey buzzard nest, with a breeding pair located there (nest pictured below). There are also owls, sparrow hawks, woodpeckers and a variety of deer naturalised in the wood. Mr Finch advised me that the badgers were protected and that it was unlawful to develop 30m from their set. He also informed me that by placing any additional lighting on the land below the wood would affect the commuting route of the bats as they fly from the Warwickshire Exhibition Centre site to the wood. Bats are on the European Protected Species list.



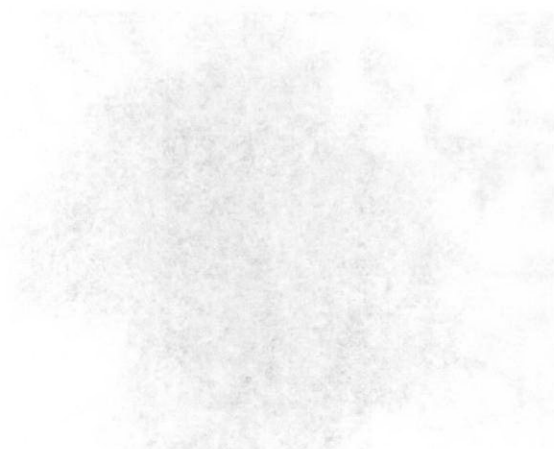
There are also two natural pond areas, one on the lower edge of the wood and one on the road edge, adjacent to proposed site. These contain various reptiles including adders, grass snakes, frogs, toads, aquatic insects and newts. Most of these species are protected also.

Effluent from either one large septoid tank or a series of smaller ones would present health
concerns for residents on the north side of the brook and nearby population.
Additionally, the main power supply would need to be upgraded because it apparently has
no spare capacity and certainly cannot take a load that would be an additional 30
kW.

— Existing areas where there could be adverse impact on important features of the natural and
historic environment.

The proposed T02 site is adjacent to a wood which is well wooded and managed by outcrops.
The nature of land and in particular the wood, was an independent census and survey was
conducted by Richard Finch, a Consultant of the Forest Commission (Site Survey 4225 -
1999) to collect data for the National Inventory.

It should be noted that a badger set was found along with the presence of pine and a
badger set (nest) with a breeding pair (see nest pictured below). There are also
two species of hawks, woodpecker and a woodpecker identified in the wood. Mr Finch
advised that the badgers were protected and that it was unlawful to develop 30m from
them. He also informed me that by installing additional lighting on the land below the
wood would affect the commuting route of the badgers as they fly from the Warwickshire
Exclusion Zone side to the wood. See also the European Protected Species list.



The wood has two natural pond areas on the south side of the wood and one on the
north side. The ponds are important to proposed sites. The ponds are important for aquatic insects, grass
and other invertebrates, aquatic insects and other species in the protected area.



The wood itself is not fenced and children from the Gypsy and Traveller community may naturally want to explore in the wood. However, as can be seen from an on the ground site-visit, the wood - whose wood stock is ageing – holds dangers for the curious youngster including precariously 'hung' trees which often collapse in even light winds.

On the matter of land being of historic significance, the Fosse Way, at this junction is the site of a Toll Station and is also a significant Roman Road. Roman pottery has been found on the site and the record of this is below.

<http://timetrail.warwickshire.gov.uk/detail.aspx?monuid=WA1916>

Information for record number 1916

Summary

Findspot - a pottery sherd dating to the Roman period was found 200m south east of Parlour Spinney.

Period: Romano-British (43 AD - 409 AD)

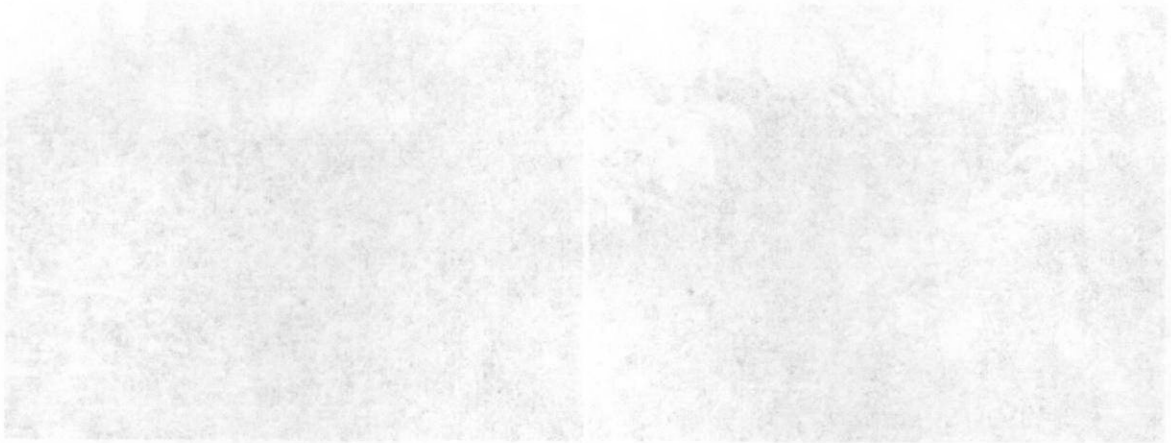
<http://timetrail.warwickshire.gov.uk/detail.aspx?monuid=WA1908>

Information for record number 1908

Summary

The site of a toll house, where tolls were collected from travellers using the toll road. The toll house is marked on the Tithe Award Map of 1843. It was situated at the junction of Southam Road and Fosse Way, Radford Semele.

Period: Imperial (1751 AD - 1913 AD)



The wood itself is not fenced and children from the City and Traveller community may regularly want to explore in the wood. However, it can be seen from an on the ground site visit, the wood whose wood stock is an eye-holocaust for the curious youngsters including occasionally being trees which have collapsed in even light winds.

On the matter of land being of historic importance, the Horse Way at this junction is the site of a Toll Station and is also a significant Roman road. Roman pottery has been found on the site and the record of this is below.

<http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/heritage/roman-roads/WA1916>

Information for record number 1916

Summary: Roman - a Roman road dating to the Roman period was found 300m south east of Radford Spiney.

Period: Romano-British (43 AD - 457 AD)

<http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/heritage/roman-roads/WA1908>

Information for record number 1908

Summary: The site of a Roman road was identified from aerial photography using the 1843 Tithe Map. The site is marked on the Tithe Award Map of 1843. It was located at the junction of Southern Road and Horse Way, Radford Spiney.

Period: Roman (1751 AD - 457 AD)

– Sites which can be integrated into the landscape without harming the character of the area.

The GT02 site is located in a valley which stretches from Radford Hill to Ufton. It is the southern gateway to Leamington and is a spectacular landscape and, a magnificent rural vista at the periphery of the major historic town of Royal Leamington Spa.

It is difficult to imagine a visually more intrusive development than a 15 pitch Gypsy and Traveller site with amenity buildings, hard-standing, lighting, work and light industrial areas.



Pictured above are the views of the GT02 site from the land adjacent to the proposed site. It shows that it will be clearly visible from Ufton, the Southam Road and the Fosse Way. No amount of natural screening will disguise the site.

I recall from the recent planning process I undertook with WDC for the change of use from paddock area to an equestrian arena at Frankley Fields, great care was taken to insure there was no visibility impact seen from either the Fosse Way or indeed the Southam Road. We worked closely with the architect and planners to manage the issue given the visual importance of the area, the natural landscape around the Fosse Way and the exposure of the land to all sides of the valley.

It is unreasonable if not discriminatory to enforce planning restrictions and best practice to protect the environment from unsightly development in the existing community which is then disregarded for the Gypsy and Traveller's Community.

My own opinion is that it would be simply impossible to screen the proposed site at GT02 from the vista across the valley, day or night.

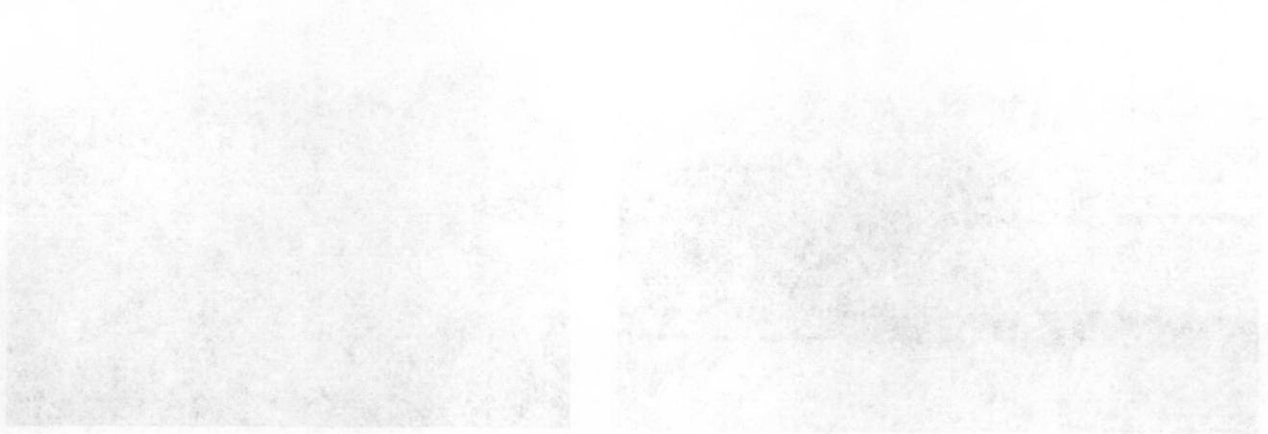
– Promotes peaceful and integrated co-existence between the site and the local community;

I accept the responsibility the council has for the provision for these sites and indeed respect the rights of the Gypsy and Traveller's community. And I acknowledge the council's responsibilities for making adequate provision for Gypsies and Traveller's. However this proposed site will only isolate the Gypsies and Traveller's community rather than promote co-existence.

– Sites which can be integrated into the landscape without harming the character of the area.

The site is located in a valley which is bounded by Radford Hill to the north and a gateway to Leamington and its surrounding landscape and a magnificent rural vista at the gateway of the major arterial road to Leamington Spa.

It is difficult to imagine a visually more sensitive development than a 15 pitch gypsy and traveller site with amenity buildings, landscaping, lighting, work and light industrial areas.



Pictured above are the views of the site from the land adjacent to the proposed site. It shows that it will be clearly visible from the main road and the Fosse Way. No amount of natural screening will disguise the site.

I recall from the recent planning process that work with WDC for the change of use from paddock area to an education centre. Particular care was taken to ensure there was no visibility impact seen from either the Fosse Way or indeed the Southern Road. We worked closely with the architect and planners to manage the issue given the visual importance of the area, the natural barrier was around the Fosse Way and the extent of the land to all sides of the valley.

It is not possible to not discriminate in the way planning restrictions and best practice to protect the environment from unsightly development in the existing community which is then designated for the Gypsy and Traveller community.

My own opinion is that it would be sensible to require to screen the proposed site at G103 from the vista across the valley down to the site.

– Promotes peaceful and integrated co-existence between the site and the local community.

In fact the responsibility the council has for the provision for these sites and indeed respect the rights of the Gypsy and Traveller community. And I acknowledge the council's responsibilities for making adequate provision for Gypsies and Travellers. How we promote proposed sites will only isolate the Gypsy and Traveller community rather than promote co-existence.

The proposed site GT02 is situated in an isolated, rural location, with a small hamlet of properties nearby. The addition of a site housing 15 pitches would increase the population by more than 100%.

This is not so much integrating with the existing community, as the existing community integrating with the 'new' community. Given that the only route to developing GT02 would be by exercising powers to acquire land by compulsory purchase order; the immediate land-owners would clearly be disenfranchised and it's difficult to imagine harmonious co-existence between the existing and new communities. Equally, if the Warwickshire Exhibition Centre were to close, as looks likely, again the local community will naturally be antagonistic towards the new Gypsy and Traveller's community.

– Avoids placing undue pressure on local infrastructure and services;

We have already seen from feedback at the Croft GP surgery in Sydenham that, without an investment in infrastructure and staff, the surgery does not have the capacity to cope. In reality, like several patients I know, I cannot get a '7-day notice' appointment at The Croft and this influx, even if there was an upgrade in infrastructure to cater for the capacity.

I understand that the development of a Gypsy and Traveller's site at GT02 has already impacted business prospects at the Warwickshire Exhibition Centre. It is apparently the perception among clients at the exhibition centre that the location of the Gypsy and Traveller's site on or abutting that land will have a negative impact on attendance and the success therefore of events and exhibitions.

If the GT02 site was developed, then local services such as petrol stations, pubs, restaurants etc may be impacted and could even be lost in these challenging economic times.

This could deny the residents of important services.

– Reflects the extent to which traditional lifestyles (whereby some travellers live and work from the same location thereby omitting many travel to work journeys) can contribute to sustainability.

It is unsound reasoning to attempt to promote sustainable existence for the Gypsy and Traveller's community at GT02, if its mere development has impacted the sustainability of the indigenous population.

– Impact on Local Economy

The land proposed for GT02 is adjacent/opposite the Warwickshire Exhibition Centre. The centre proprietors have commissioned an Economic Impact Study to outline the affects the proposed development will have on this particular business. This has stated that extensive business will be lost and the inevitable closure of the business will follow within a few years.

At this time of economic hardship, the loss of this major local business and subsequent job losses – up to 80 direct and associated jobs lost if the centre closes - is an unacceptable consequence of such a development. Given the business owner's already stated businesses

The proposed site GT02 is situated in a rural location with a small hamlet of properties nearby. The addition of a new residential development would increase the population by more than 100%.

This is not so much integrating with the existing community as the existing community integrating with the new community. It is the only route to developing GT02 would be by exercising powers to acquire land by compulsory purchase order; the immediate land owners would likely be disinclined to do this. It is difficult to imagine harmonious co-existence between the existing and new communities. Equally, if the Warwickshire Exhibition Centre were to close, as local authorities the local community will naturally be antagonistic towards the new Gypsy and Traveller community.

- Avoid placing undue pressure on local infrastructure and services;

We have already seen from feedback at the 'Fit for Strategy' in Symbianham that without an investment in infrastructure and staff, the capacity does not have the capacity to cope. In reality, in several patients I know, I cannot get a 15-day notice appointment at The Croft and this influx, even if there was an upgrade in infrastructure to cater for the capacity.

I understand that the development of a new site at GT02 has already impacted business prospects at the Warwickshire Exhibition Centre. It is apparent that protection among clients at the exhibition centre that the location of the Gypsy and Traveller site on or adjacent that land will have a negative impact on attendance and the success thereof of events and exhibitions.

If the GT02 site was developed, then local services such as petrol stations, pubs, restaurants etc may be impacted and could even be closed during challenging economic times.

This could deny the residents of important services.

- Reflect the extent to which traditional Gypsy and Traveller communities live and work from the same location thereby omitting many rural or short journeys) can contribute to sustainability.

It is unclear reasoning to attempt to prove a sustainable existence for the Gypsy and Traveller community at GT02. If its development has impacted the sustainability of the regional population.

- Impact on Local Economy

The plan proposed for GT02 is adjacent to the Warwickshire Exhibition Centre. The centre proprietors have commissioned an economic impact study to outline the effect the proposed development will have on the local business. This has stated that extensive business will be lost and the inevitable closure of the business will follow within a few years.

At this time of economic hardship, the loss of this major local business and subsequent job losses - up to 80 direct and associated jobs that the centre closes - is an unacceptable consequence of such a development. Given the business owners already set up businesses

loss; it can never be argued at some future juncture that was an unintended consequence of the development and go ahead for GT02.

The study recognised, for instance, that the exhibition centre provides revenues to the local economy in excess of £2m per year. Living opposite the centre, I am aware that there are many thousands of visitors to the centre each year. These people quite obviously bring significant knock-on benefits to the local businesses including revenue to B&Bs, restaurants, petrol stations, shops etc, contributing revenue to the local economy. A total of nearly 40,000 people visit the exhibition centre each year, all with discretionary leisure pounds to spend in the area.

Should this centre be lost, the land could be a target for unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller caravans. At the very least, the local economy would suffer with potential knock on business closures, making the area less attractive for residential occupation, thus causing a general downturn in the area.

I am happy to discuss any points raised by your team on any related issues but respectfully submit, for the stated reasons, that GT02 is not an appropriate location for a Gypsy and Traveller site.

Yours Sincerely

David Cr