



10 April 2014

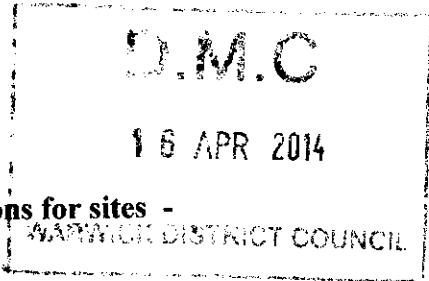
Policy Manager, Development Services

Warwick District Council

Riverside House, Milverton Hill

Royal Leamington Spa, CV32 5QH

Dear Sir/Madam,



Response in respect of Sites for Gypsies and Travellers Preferred Options for sites - Site GTalt03 Henley Road/Hampton Road

1 I am writing to register my **very strong objection** to the inclusion of the above site GTalt03 as a potential alternative site for 15 gypsy/traveller pitches.

Green Belt

2 In the absence of any “very special circumstances” any development in the Green Belt would be contrary to Government guidelines and Warwick District Council policy.

3 Recent Government guidelines indicate that unmet need, whether for traveller sites or for conventional housing, is unlikely to outweigh harm to the Green Belt and other harm to constitute the “very special circumstances” justifying inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

4 An application in 2009 (W09/0157) by the present landowner for putting just one mobile home on the site was refused by WDC and subsequently dismissed by the Inspector on Appeal, principally on the ground that the special circumstances put forward by the applicant did not outweigh the potential considerable harm to the Green Belt.

5 In the light of this and the subsequent Injunction Order taken out by WDC to prevent any unauthorised occupation/development of the site, it seems incredible that WDC should now be considering this site for a much larger development.

Visual Impact

6 The site is in a particularly sensitive, elevated location near to the junction of Hampton Road and Henley Road, which provide a “Gateway” to the small, long established and pretty village of Hampton on the Hill.

7 There would be clear views of any proposed development from these roads and the adjoining footpaths and from the adjoining allotments. Any development of the site or screening would have a significant adverse impact on the open rural aspect of the countryside.

Access to the Site

8 I understand that access to the site would be from the Henley Road not Hampton Road as stated in the Consultation documentation. The proposed access would be onto a busy main road, where the topography of the land would restrict significantly the visibility for users of the intended access and frequent fast moving vehicles approaching the access along the Henley Road.

9 The usage of such access would be substantially increased if any development were to take place, with consequent much greater traffic risks, particularly when slow moving vehicles towing caravans, trailers or horse boxes were involved.

Access to the Site (continued)

10 In dismissing the Appeal by the present landowner in 2009 in respect of application W09/157 for the development of just one mobile home, the Planning Inspector concluded that the potential increased access onto the major road was a major concern and must be regarded as a significant objection to development.

Sustainability

11 Since Hampton on the Hill is not identified as a sustainable location for any new housing development within either the adopted Warwick District Local Plan 2006 or the draft Village Housing Options consultation, it should not be considered as sustainable for a gypsy/traveller site.

Access to GP Surgery and School

12 Both the GP Surgery and Budbrooke School in Hampton Magna are presently stretched and may not have the capacity to cope with the needs of potential users of the site, without undue impairment of services to existing patients and school children. The services are facing potential substantial increased demand from the intention to build 100 additional homes in Hampton Magna under Warwick District Council's recent Village Options proposals.

Noise and health issues

13 A high voltage power line crosses the site, any development of which may be constrained by the prohibitive expense of any diversion of the power line or need to severely restrict the number and siting of pitches away from the power line.

14 The site assessment carried out on Warwick District Council's behalf identified that occupants of the site may be subjected to high levels of traffic noise and poor air quality from the close proximity of Henley Road and Hampton Road. This would be exacerbated by the constant noise, clearly and constantly audible throughout each day and night from the nearby A46 Birmingham/Stratford Road, the M40 motorway and the access to/from these routes at the very busy Longbridge Island.

Surface water flooding

15 The site assessment also identified a further negative as to the suitability of the site in relation to surface water flooding along the edge of the site and along Hampton Road, which would expose caravans to the risk of flooding to which they are considered to be particularly sensitive.

Availability and deliverability

16 The inclusion of site GTalt03 as a potential Alternative Site appears to rely heavily on the keenness of the land owner to promote the site for this use. Such "keenness to develop" could not possibly be regarded as a "very special circumstance" which could outweigh the overriding substantial harm which any inappropriate development would cause to the Green Belt. If it were to make an exception on this basis, Warwick District Council would be creating an uncontrollable precedent in respect of future applications for development in the Green Belt.

Conclusion

17 As set out above, there are compelling reasons why the site should not be regarded as suitable for further consideration as a potential site for development of traveller/gypsy pitches. **In the absence of any "very special circumstances", the site should be classified as a "RED" site, unsuitable for further consideration as a possible option.**

Yours faithfully

