



WYCOMBE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Planning & Sustainability

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Dear Graham

EXTRACT OF THE HPOC DELIVERY DPD 21 JAN – DRAFT POLICY DH5

Thank you for your email of 13 January highlighting the latest stage of the Chiltern Delivery DPD and the request for information regarding traveller sites in Wycombe District.

Wycombe District Council (WDC) wishes to express its strong objection to draft policy DH5 of the draft document. As you will recall, we made representations to the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Site Options Public Participation stage in October 2013, where we flagged up the fact that there was little evidence presented in the draft document about the deliverability of the sites being highlighted. However, there was no indication in this document that CDC was intending to progress a policy based on prioritising sites outside the District for meeting the need generated in Chiltern District. There have been no detailed discussions between the Councils on this specific proposed approach prior to you making it public, which appears wholly at odds with the Duty to Co-operate.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is clear that each local planning authority should meet its objectively-assessed need unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits (Para 14). Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, meanwhile, enables the plan-making process to make an exceptional limited alteration to the Green Belt boundary (which might be to accommodate a site inset within the Green Belt) to meet a specific, identified need for a traveller site (para 15).

There appears to be no evidence presented in draft policy DH5 which indicates that providing Chiltern's comparatively modest requirement for additional traveller accommodation (as identified in the Bucks GTAA, published in August 2013) would have impacts that would "significantly and demonstrably" outweigh the benefits. Moreover, there is no evidence that the traveller population in Chiltern would take up a site in Wycombe District or any other district outside Chiltern even were such sites allocated. In any case, as you know, Wycombe District is also characterised by significant constraints, with the vast



majority of the District covered by Green Belt and/or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty designations.

It is clear, therefore, that Chiltern should allocate pitches/plots to meet this need within Chiltern District - including by way of exceptional limited alterations to its Green Belt boundary, if necessary.

I will endeavour to provide the information you seek regarding traveller sites within the timescale you stipulate. However, please note that we have just commenced our Local Plan Options Consultation, so I am currently very preoccupied with the document preparation for this.

In the meantime, I would be grateful if you could draw this letter, together with the letter sent by Cllr Neil Marshall, WDC's Cabinet Member for Planning & Sustainability, to the attention of your Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development prior to the Cabinet meeting of 11th February referred to above.

Yours sincerely

David Dewar

David Dewar
Planning Policy Officer