



# South Wiltshire Core Strategy

## Matter 8

Provision of Pitches for Gypsies and Travellers

Ref: SH/SWCS/M8

January 2010



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**8.1. Strategic Allocations.** *The CS identifies nine Strategic Allocations which between them will account for bulk of the housing to be found in south Wiltshire in the short term. Given that there is an identified short term need for gypsy and traveller pitches would provision for these be made at the Strategic Allocations?*

- 1.0 The council had not planned to make provision for gypsies and travellers at the strategic allocations, as a Gypsy and Travellers Site Allocations Development Plan Document designed to identify specific sites for this purpose has been timetabled in to the Local Development Scheme (January 2009). The LDS will be reviewed in early 2010, but the delivery of the Gypsy and Traveller DPD remains a key priority for the council, with adoption of the document anticipated for autumn 2011. The Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD), through assessment and consultation, will make provision for sufficient additional pitches as identified in Table 4.3 of the South West Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS).
- 1.2 The council considers that Core Policy 4 provides an appropriate and proportionate level of guidance in terms of presenting a strategic spatial steer for the subsequent Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocations DPD. It also provides appropriate guidance for the determination of any proposals for such use in the short term absence of the site allocations document. The identification of sites to meet Gypsy and Traveller needs will include an appraisal of current sites and an investigation and consultation exercise about new sites. This will form a spatial plan formally identifying new sites and sites that will be expanded to meet the Gypsy and Traveller community's needs.
- 1.3 The key objectives and principles of the DPD will need to adhere to national and regional policy. The spatial vision will take into account the different needs of groups within the Gypsy and Traveller community and propose a number of sustainable sites that are to either be improved or developed to contribute to the overall success of Wiltshire. Gypsy and Traveller pitch allocations will also form part of the affordable housing provision in Wiltshire.

**Question 8.2. Intended Occupants.** *The first bullet point of Core Policy 4 seeks to control the intended occupants of any pitches. Would these always be known when an allocation or application was made? Could this matter be dealt with by planning condition?*

- 2.0 Yes this matter can be dealt with by planning condition. The Planning Inspectorate has model conditions to cover this area and in particular one on occupation, a version of which is used in planning decisions in Wiltshire.

#### **GYPSY: OCCUPATION**

*The site shall not be occupied by any persons other than gypsies and travellers as defined in paragraph 15 of ODPM Circular 01/2006.*

Source [http://www.planning-inspectorate.gov.uk/pins/appeals/model\\_conditions.html#gypsy](http://www.planning-inspectorate.gov.uk/pins/appeals/model_conditions.html#gypsy)

**Question 8.3. In or Close to a Settlement.** *The second bullet point of Core Policy 4 states that sites should be in or close to a settlement. What are the prospects of finding deliverable sites which meet this criterion?*

- 3.0 The site selection paper (TOP/19B) has identified potential areas for development around Salisbury, and this could include sites for Gypsies and Travellers. The SHLAA has also identified potentially deliverable land within and close to settlements across south Wiltshire. As discussed in 8.1 there is to be a site allocation DPD, which will allocate sites for Gypsies and Travellers. Consultation on the site search methodology and a call for sites for Gypsy and Traveller sites is due to be approved by Cabinet in February and will take place during Spring 2010.

**Question 8.4. Protecting Sites.** *Given that there is a shortage of Gypsy and Traveller sites should existing such sites be protected from loss to other uses?*

- 4.0 There is no evidence that these pitches are at risk from alternative uses. Of the 13 authorised sites in south Wiltshire supplying 93 pitches, 4 are in the control of the council and have 72 pitches. The remaining 9 sites are small sites in private usage (most have 2 pitches), with 21 pitches in total. (Tables 2.2 and 2.3 of the Wiltshire and Swindon Gypsy and traveller Study, Core Document STU/05). Therefore the majority of sites are controlled by the council, and are not under threat for alternative uses.
- 4.1 As for the remaining pitches, many of these are as a result of individual families needs, and if the need ceased for the individuals then there should be the flexibility to allow these sites to return to their previous use, as the location may not be in a sustainable location. However, if there were an application to change the use of a pitch to another use, and the most up to date evidence from the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment evidenced the need for the pitch, then its loss would be resisted. It is therefore felt that there is adequate evidence to protect sites and therefore no changes to this policy are proposed.