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1 Background
2 Introduction
3 Policy context
4 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment
5 Gypsy and Traveller policy development
6 Proposed submission Wealden Local Plan
1 Background

1.1 This Background Paper provides information on how relevant policy, guidance and evidence has been used to inform the Wealden Local Plan’s objectives and policies in relation to provision for Gypsies and Travellers.

1.2 This Background Paper examines the issues and responsibilities relating to planning for the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. This includes, in particular, determining the appropriate number of Gypsy and Traveller pitches and sites for Travelling Showpeople and how we plan to meet this. This Background Paper also examines how we have identified appropriate sites to meet the identified need.

1.3 The format of this Background Paper is set out as follows;

- Section 3 sets out in detail the national and local context for providing accommodation for Gypsy and Traveller site provision, which includes the definitions of who constitutes a Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showperson;

- Section 4 sets out the results of the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment; and

- Section 5 sets out the background to the policy development for the Wealden Local Plan including the outcome of the Issues, Options and Recommendations consultation, the proposed policy and preferred locations for the provision for Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation in the Proposed Submission Wealden Local Plan.
Wealden Local Plan

Gypsy and Traveller Background Paper

1 Background
2 Introduction

2.1 The Council has a statutory duty to plan for the housing needs of all its residents within the District, which includes the Gypsy and Traveller community. In response to this requirement, the Council will make provisions to meet locally identified need in the plan making process.

2.2 The Council has prepared a new Local Plan which sets out the long term spatial vision for Wealden District and includes strategic policies to deliver that vision between 2013 and 2028.

2.3 In October 2015, the Council published the Wealden Local Plan Issues, Options and Recommendations Consultation paper which included options for policies relating to Gypsy and Travellers. This document was subject to a six week consultation period between October 2015 and December 2015.

2.4 A Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) was published in November 2016 to provide a robust revised assessment of current and future needs for permanent Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in Wealden for the period 2016-2038. This evidence together with the consultation responses from the Issues, Options and Recommendations consultation have been used to inform the Wealden Local Plan Proposed Submission document which will be published for representations under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
2 Introduction
3 Policy context

3.1 The Housing Act 2004(1) placed a duty on local authorities to produce assessments of accommodation need for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople (GTTS) and outlines how their needs can be met as part of the wider assessment of housing needs.

3.2 In March 2012, the Government published Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS)(2) which sets out the primary guidance and requirements for local planning authorities on how to plan for Gypsies and Travellers. It is stated that the PPTS is to be read in conjunction with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which was also published in March 2012. The PPTS policy document has since been updated in August 2015, and the Government's overarching aim is stated in Paragraph 3: “…to ensure fair and equal treatment for travellers, in a way that facilitates the traditional and nomadic way of life of travellers while respecting the interests of the settled community.”

3.3 To help achieve this, Paragraph 4 in the PPTS sets out a series of aims in respect of traveller sites:

- Local planning authorities should make their own assessment of need for the purposes of planning
- To ensure that local planning authorities, working collaboratively, develop fair and effective strategies to meet need through the identification of land for sites
- To encourage local planning authorities to plan for sites over a reasonable timescale.
- That plan-making and decision-taking should protect Green Belt from inappropriate development
- To promote more private Traveller site provision while recognising that there will always be those Travellers who cannot provide their own sites
- That plan-making and decision-taking should aim to reduce the number of unauthorised developments and encampments and make enforcement more effective
- For local planning authorities to ensure that their Local Plan includes fair, realistic and inclusive policies
- To increase the number of Traveller sites in appropriate locations with planning permission, to address under provision and maintain an appropriate level of supply
- To reduce tensions between settled and Traveller communities in plan-making and planning decisions
- To enable provision of suitable accommodation from which Travellers can access education, health, welfare and employment infrastructure
- For local planning authorities to have due regard to the protection of local amenity and local environment

3.4 In practice, Paragraph 9 in the PPTS states that:

“Local planning authorities should set pitch targets for Gypsies and Travellers…and plot targets for Travelling Showpeople…which address the likely permanent and
transit site accommodation needs of travellers in their area, working collaboratively with neighbouring local planning authorities”

3.5 In addition, Paragraph 10 in the PPTS goes on to state that in producing their Local Plan, local planning authorities should:

- Identify and update annually, a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years’ worth of sites against their locally set targets
- Identify a supply of specific, developable sites, or broad locations for growth, for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15
- Consider production of joint development plans that set targets on a cross-authority basis, to provide more flexibility in identifying sites, particularly if a local planning authority has special or strict planning constraints across its area (local planning authorities have a duty to cooperate on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries)
- Relate the number of pitches or plots to the circumstances of the specific size and location of the site and the surrounding population’s size and density
- Protect local amenity and environment

3.6 However, where there is no identified need for Gypsy and Traveller sites, Paragraph 11 in the PPTS notes that: “criteria-based policies should be included to provide a basis for decisions in case applications nevertheless come forward. Criteria-based policies should be fair and should facilitate the traditional and nomadic life of Travellers, while respecting the interests of the settled community”

3.7 The current ‘planning’ definition for a Gypsy and Traveller is set out in Annex 1 of the PPTS and the Council has therefore used these definitions for the purposes of this document.

‘Gypsy and Traveller’ means: Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family’s or dependants’ educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.

In determining whether persons are “Gypsies and Travellers” for the purposes of this planning policy, consideration should be given to the following issues amongst other relevant matters:

a. whether they previously led a nomadic habit of life
b. the reasons for ceasing their nomadic habit of life
c. whether there is an intention of living a nomadic habit of life in the future, and if so, how soon and in what circumstances.

‘Travelling showpeople’ means: Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family’s or dependants’ more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old
age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined above.
3 Policy context
4 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment

4.1 To assist with the statutory duty outlined in Section 2 of this Background Paper, the Council procured consultants to undertake a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA). This report was published in November 2016 and provides an assessment of the current and future needs for permanent Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in Wealden for the period 2016-2038. The study focuses on the number of additional pitches required between 2016 and 2038 to ensure the pitch demand for the District is met. A summary of the results of this assessment are outlined below.

Current Pitch Provision

4.2 With regard to permanent Gypsy and Traveller sites in Wealden, the GTAA identified there are currently 3 public sites with a total of 25 pitches as set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Existing Pitch Provision in Wealden District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Sites/ Yards</th>
<th>Pitches/Plots</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Sites (Council)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Sites (with permanent planning permission)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Sites (with temporary planning permission)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unauthorised Sites (without planning permission)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Sites (Council)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridge Caravan Park - Uckfield</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polly Arch Caravan Site - Polegate</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swan Barn Caravan Site - Hailsham</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Sites (with permanent planning permission)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fir Tree View - Halland</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five Badgers - Hadlow Down</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenhedges - Mark Cross</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little Arce - Mark Cross</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little Oaks - Mayfield</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milton Field - Polegate</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Plot - Five Ashes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Stables - Frant 1
The Triangle - Crowborough 1
Water Treatment Works - Buxted 1
Whitegates - Hailsham 1

Private Sites (with temporary planning permission)
Leelands - Wadhurst 1
Little Rose - Cross in Hand 1

Unauthorised Sites (without planning permission)
Land Adjacent to Five Badgers 1
The Chalet - Cowden 1

Current Need

4.3 As part of the assessment, household surveys were undertaken to ascertain the current pitch demand in the District using the Gypsy and Traveller definition as revised in the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) in 2015. Surveys were undertaken with Gypsies and Travellers living on public, private, temporary and unauthorised sites in addition to those residing in bricks and mortar (3). In total, 35 site based households were contactable during the survey period and 6 out of 99 households living in bricks and mortar were available. From this, it was concluded that 15 existing households living on site meet the revised PPTS definition of a Gypsy and Traveller household, whilst only 4 living in bricks and mortar meet the revised definition, giving a total of 19 known Gypsy and Traveller households in the District.

4.4 Table 2 shows the number of Gypsies and Travellers in the District who meet and do not meet the revised definition of a Gypsy and Traveller by site type. The unknown column refers to Gypsies and Travellers who were not contactable during the survey period and as a result, it could not be ascertained whether these households meet the definition of Gypsies and Travellers. Therefore they could not be included in the future provision calculations as it was not felt appropriate to make assumptions on their accommodation needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Type</th>
<th>Meets New Definition</th>
<th>Does Not Meet New Definition</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Sites</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(3) Bricks and mortar is defined in this assessment as mainstream housing
Table 3 identifies the total current supply and need in the District.

**Table 3 Total current supply and need of Gypsy and Traveller pitches**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supply of pitches</th>
<th>Pitches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Available vacant public and private pitches</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unimplemented pitches on new sites</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacated by households moving to bricks and mortar</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out-migration</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Current Supply</strong></td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Need</th>
<th>Pitches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Households on unauthorised developments</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households on unauthorised encampments</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concealed households/doubling up/over crowding</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five year need from older teenage children</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement from bricks and mortar</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households on waiting list for public sites</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Current Needs</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5 The total current need in the District is 10 Gypsy and Traveller pitches and the total current supply is 1 pitch. Therefore the **total current net need** for Gypsy and Traveller pitches in the District is **9 pitches**.

**Net New Household Formation**

4.6 The GTAA subsequently looked to forecast the total future pitch need. To do this the assessment used a household base number of 24 pitches, made up of:

- 15 occupied pitches (public, private, temporary and unauthorised);
• 3 households preferring to move from bricks and mortar to a pitch;
• 2 ‘doubled-up’ households; and
• 4 teenage children in need of a pitch of their own in the next five years.

4.8 The assessment then looked to use a growth rate, or new household formation rate, which was 3% per annum nationally (based on earlier guidance) to extrapolate the pitch base number. However, this was assessed to be an unrealistic growth rate when compared to the growth rate of the settled community and when the age structure of the Gypsy and Traveller community was analysed. Taking this into account, the assessment concluded that a growth rate, or new household formation rate, of 1.75% was a more realistic figure to use.

Future Need

4.9 Extrapolation of the household base number of 24 pitches, using a growth rate of 1.75% per annum concluded that 11 new pitches would be needed over the GTAA period (2016-2038). Table 4 identifies the future need for Gypsy and Traveller pitches in the Wealden District.

Table 4 Total additional future pitches needed 2016-2038

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Future Need</th>
<th>Pitches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Currently on sites with temporary planning permission</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-migration</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net new household formation</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total future need</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.10 The total future need for Gypsy and Traveller pitches in the District is 12 new pitches, made up of 11 pitches due to net new household formation and 1 pitch which is currently on a site with temporary planning permission.

4.11 Consequently, adding the total current net need (9 pitches) to the total future need (12 pitches) gives a demand of 21 additional pitches over the GTAA period (2016-2038). Table 5 below demonstrates how the additional pitch need for Gypsies and Travellers will be demanded over the GTAA period and is based upon the growth rate used for the extrapolation to assess the future pitch need.

Table 5 Additional need for 'travelling' households in Wealden District by five year periods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>0-5</th>
<th>6-10</th>
<th>11-15</th>
<th>16-20</th>
<th>21-22</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2016 - 2021</td>
<td>2021 - 2026</td>
<td>2026 - 2031</td>
<td>2031 - 2036</td>
<td>2036 - 2038</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment identified the need for an additional 21 pitches within the Wealden District between 2016 and 2038. The assessment was based on those from the Gypsy and Traveller community who were contactable at the time of this study. The 21 additional pitches are required on permanent pitches and this figure has been used to inform the Proposed Submission Wealden Local Plan and specifically Policy WLP2 (Gypsy and Traveller Provision).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of pitches</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>21</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

4.12 The Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment identified the need for an additional 21 pitches within the Wealden District between 2016 and 2038. The assessment was based on those from the Gypsy and Traveller community who were contactable at the time of this study. The 21 additional pitches are required on permanent pitches and this figure has been used to inform the Proposed Submission Wealden Local Plan and specifically Policy WLP2 (Gypsy and Traveller Provision).
5 Gypsy and Traveller policy development

Wealden Local Plan Issues, Options and Recommendations consultation document – October 2015

5.1 The Wealden Local Plan Issues, Options and Recommendations consultation document was published for consultation for a period of six weeks between October 2015 and December 2015. This was the first stage of the preparation of the new Wealden Local Plan.

5.2 Section 10 of the document related to Gypsy and Traveller accommodation provision within the District. The section outlines the identified need within the District which was set at an additional 53 pitches between 2013/14 and 2032/33. The Issues, Options and Recommendations document was published in October 2015, prior to the 2016 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment taking place. Therefore the figures in the Issues, Options and Recommendations document are based upon a previous Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (published January 2015) that did not incorporate the changes made to the PPTS in August 2015, particularly regarding the definitions of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

5.3 The Issues, Options and Recommendations document outlined two possible options with regard to the provision of Gypsy and Traveller housing which are set out below.

5.4 Option 11 – Gypsy and Traveller Housing Provision Options

1. Seek to exceed the permanent pitch requirements for Gypsy and Travellers (i.e. allocate land which will be suitable for more than 53 pitches).

2. Seek to meet the permanent pitch requirements for Gypsy and Travellers (i.e. allocate land which will be suitable for 53 pitches).

3. Seek to locate a transit site within Wealden District.

4. Seek to locate an emergency stopping place within Wealden District.

5.5 Option 11 is concerned with the type of pitch allocated and discusses the possibility of allocating each type of site. Points 1 and 2 both refer to permanent pitches. Point 1 seeks to exceed the allocation requirements whereas point 2 seeks to exactly meet the allocation requirements. Points 3 and 4 seek to allocate a transit site and an emergency stopping place within the District, respectively. However, it is noted that the GTAA did not identify a requirement for either of the site types outlined in points 3 and 4.

5.6 Option 12 – Gypsy and Traveller Housing Location Options

1. To retain the criteria contained within the Core Strategy.

2. To change the criteria within the Core Strategy.
3. To use the criteria within the Core Strategy to assess the suitability of sites.

4. To vary the criteria in the Core Strategy for transit or emergency stopping places, to allow flexibility regarding possibly removing the need to be within close proximity to settlements/public transport.

5. To consider a requirement for sites to be provided for in future strategic development sites over a certain size.

6. To consider the impacts of allowing sites with temporary planning permission to be made permanent, allowing existing sites which currently don’t have consent or extending existing sites.”

5.7 Option 12 relates to both the criteria contained within the Core Strategy\((^4)\), as well as the site size and the status of the planning consent. Points 1-4 refer to the criteria contained within the Core Strategy and offer options to retain or change the criteria or use the criteria to make informed decisions. The criteria relating to Gypsies and Travellers within the 2013 Core Strategy reflects the National Gypsy and Traveller policies with regards to the positioning of sites close to local services, facilities and infrastructure and respecting the neighbouring settled community. Point 5 considers the option to require future strategic development sites over a certain size to include provisions for Gypsy and Traveller sites and point 6 puts forward the idea of making permanent the permission of sites with temporary planning permission or using existing sites through either extension or granting of consent.

5.8 The two options explore a number of pathways available and from these the Preferred Option for Testing was created. The Preferred Option for Testing contains a mixture of both Options 11 and 12. In addition, some options have been combined where appropriate.

5.9 Preferred Option for Testing 7 relates to Gypsy and Traveller housing provision and states:

1. “To seek to meet at least the pitch provision requirement and consider any opportunities to exceed.

2. To retain the criteria contained within the Core Strategy.

3. To use the criteria within the Core Strategy to assess sites, but also consider opportunities to require provision on strategic development sites.

4. Consider the impacts of allowing sites with temporary planning permission to be made permanent, allowing existing sites which currently don’t have consent or extending existing sites.”

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\(^4\) Core Strategy Local Plan, Wealden District Council, adopted February 2013, page 63
5.10 The use of the criteria within the Core Strategy is also referred to in point 3 of Preferred Option for Testing 7. This looks to assess sites using the criteria within the Core Strategy in addition to seeking development opportunities on strategic development sites. Unlike point 5 of Option 12, Preferred Option for Testing 7 does not give a minimum size for the strategic site and it also does not enforce the provision requirement, rather it suggests it. Finally, Preferred Option for Testing 7 seeks to allow existing Gypsy and Traveller sites with temporary planning permission to be granted permanent planning permission. In addition, it seeks to use existing sites as a basis by either granting consent to those that do not currently have it or extending existing sites. It should be noted, however, that Preferred Option for Testing 7 only considers implementing these options, rather than enforces them.

Consultation

5.11 Consultation on the Wealden District Council Issues, Options and Recommendations document began on 19th October 2015 and ran until 14th December 2015. Question six was in relation to the Gypsy and Traveller housing provision. It stated:

“Do you agree or disagree with the preferred option for testing for Gypsy and Traveller housing provision?”

5.12 23 responses were received in relation to this question. Figure 1 shows the proportion of people who gave each response type.

Figure 1: Graph representing the percentage of respondents who agree, agree with reservations or disagree with the consultation proposals

5.13 Of the responses, 11 (48%) agreed with Preferred Option for Testing 7, 4 (17%) agreed with reservations and 8 (35%) disagreed with it. Overall, 65% of respondents agreed, wholly or partially, with Preferred Option for Testing 7.
5.14 The responses to the consultation came from a variety of people including: District residents, Parish Councillors and company representatives. These respondents have been split into three categories and Figure 2 shows the number of responses received from each category.
Of the responses, 9 (39%) came from Parish Councillors, 2 (9%) came from organisations and 12 (52%) came from others, including those who reside in the District.

Summary of Consultation Comments

The majority of comments received from the consultation were in relation to the four proposed strategies contained within Preferred Option for Testing 7.

The main concern raised regarding the first point in Preferred Option for Testing 7 was the lack of evidence for the additional pitch requirement. The first point seeks to at least meet the pitch provision requirement, which is set in Issue 8 of the Issues, Options and Recommendations at 53 additional pitches, but respondents felt that the evidence for this additional requirement was not made clear.

Some concerns were raised in relation to the second proposed strategy contained within Preferred Option for Testing 7. One respondent who disagreed with the proposals felt that they did not articulate how development for Gypsies and Travellers would have a positive impact on the area. Other respondents were concerned about the impact on the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the location of development in relation to flooding and infrastructure. All of these are referred to in the criteria regarding Gypsies and Travellers contained within the Core Strategy Local Plan.

Three concerns were raised in connection with the third proposed strategy in Preferred Option for Testing 7. All were in relation to the possibility of Gypsy and Traveller sites being located on strategic sites. Respondents felt that this would not be welcomed by housing developers due to cost issues and that new Gypsy and Traveller development on strategic sites would be in close proximity to residents not from the Gypsy and Traveller...
They suggested that this may be an issue due to the Gypsy and Traveller community having different needs to the settled community.

5.20 The fourth proposal in Preferred Option for Testing 7 had the most concerns raised against it. Four respondents felt that allowing temporary planning permission to be made permanent was unfair as this would not be allowed for other developments and that if the temporary site was suitable for permanent occupation, permanent planning permission would have been granted initially.
6 Proposed submission Wealden Local Plan

6.1 The Proposed Submission Wealden Local Plan outlines the growth and change that will take place within Wealden District between 2013 and 2028, providing both Strategic and Local policies for development and change.

6.2 In order to identify potential sites for allocation for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision, the Council as part of its work on the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) undertook a Call for Sites exercise in 2015. This included the option for sites to be submitted for Gypsy and Traveller use. No sites were submitted as part of this process.

6.3 In developing the Local Plan, consideration was made to allocating Gypsy and Traveller site provision as part of larger housing and mixed use allocations within the Local Plan. As discussed, previously comments received during consultation indicated that in doing so, sites would become unviable and therefore undeliverable as a whole.

6.4 The Council also examined its own land holdings as part of this process and two possible sites were identified; Land at Station Road, Hailsham and Land at Lynholm Road, Polegate.

6.5 Paragraph 13 of the PPTS states that local planning authorities should ensure that sites should be sustainable economically, socially and environmentally. Policies should;

a. promote peaceful and integrated co-existence between the site and the local community;

b. promote, in collaboration with commissioners of health services, access to appropriate health services;

c. ensure that children can attend school on a regular basis;

d. provide a settled base that reduces both the need for long-distance travelling and possible environmental damage caused by unauthorised encampment;

e. provide for proper consideration of the effect of local environmental quality (such as noise and air quality) on the health and well-being of any travellers that may locate there or on others as a result of new development;

f. avoid placing undue pressure on local infrastructure and services;

g. do not locate sites in areas at high risk of flooding, including functional floodplains, given the particular vulnerability of caravans; and

h. reflect 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.
6.6 In addition when assessing the suitability of sites in rural or semi rural settings, paragraph 14 of the PPTS states that the scale of such sites does not dominate the nearest settled community.

6.7 Both identified sites were assessed against the criteria set out in paragraphs 13 and 14 of the PPTS which is set out in Table 6 and 7 below.

Table 6 Land at Station Road, Hailsham

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Map</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The site is located to the north of Station Road on the edge of residential development on the south eastern edge of Hailsham. The site is approximately 1.06 ha and consists of a small area of woodland and scrub.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site location and size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The site is bordered by Station Road to the south and the housing of Butts Field to the west. A small waterway lined with mature trees (mostly oaks) runs along the north boundary of the site, beyond which is a similar area of shrub and woodland. To the east of the site the landscape has a more open character.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neighbouring Uses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hailsham is classified as a 'Town' in the settlement hierarchy which is a district centre for the purposes of retail with good local facilities to meet the day to day needs of residents. It is therefore classed as a sustainable location. The site is approximately 1km from the centre of the Hailsham.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proximity to services and facilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A new vehicular access would be required from Station Road. Station Road in this location changes from a 30mph speed limit to 60mph. Therefore, consideration would be required of the potential to extend the reduced speed limit or other traffic calming measures to enable a safe access to be created to the site. Pedestrian access to the site would also be required to be extended along Station Road as it currently ends at the south western edge of the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental considerations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance with para 13 and 14 of the PPTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Table 7 Land at Lynholm Road, Polegate**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Map</th>
<th>Site location and size</th>
<th>Neighbouring Uses</th>
<th>Proximity to services and facilities</th>
<th>Access</th>
<th>Environmental considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Site Map" /></td>
<td>The site is located to the rear of residential properties along Lynholm Road on the south eastern edge of Polegate. The site is approximately 0.18 ha and consists of a small area of scrubland.</td>
<td>The site borders residential development to the south-east of Polegate and is enclosed on three sides by high hedgerows and trees. An elevated railway track runs just south of the site. Adjacent residential development to the north is screened from view by a wooded edge, whilst the eastern edge of the site opens out into an area of open hardstanding that is used as a scrapyard. An existing Gypsy and Traveller site is located to the east of the site.</td>
<td>Polegate is a town in the District which has good local facilities to meet the day to day needs of residents. It also has good transport links to the A22 and A27 and has a train station connecting the settlement to Eastbourne. It is therefore classed as a sustainable location. The site is approximately 2km from the centre of the Polegate and Polegate train station.</td>
<td>There is an existing vehicular access from Lynholm Road under the railway bridge to the now disused water treatment works. Access would be required from this access road to the site.</td>
<td>The site is small and located adjacent to the existing development edge. If development came forward on this site it would be unlikely to result in significant landscape or visual effects, subject to it being of a suitable scale and design with appropriate landscape measures. Views are restricted in all directions by tall shrubs and tree scrubs, except towards the east where residential development is clearly visible, along with a restricted view of the wider landscape beyond. The area is secluded and has an urban-fringe character.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Compliance with para 13 and 14 of the PPTS

The site is located on the edge of the existing residential area of Polegate and this will therefore promote an integrated co-existence between the site and the local community. There are health and education facilities within Polegate which will provide access to appropriate health services and enables regular school attendance (primary and secondary). The site can be accessed from Lynholm Road which connects to Pevensey Road which runs through Polegate from east to west connecting to the A27. Allocating this site would not cause additional pressure on local infrastructure and services as this has been accounted for in the overall housing figures for Polegate in the Local Plan through the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. The site is not located within the floodplain and development would not affect local environmental quality. The site, although small, would provide a small number of pitches close to an existing Gypsy and Traveller site which would provide a settled base for residents, reducing the need for long distance travelling and possible environmental damage caused by unauthorised encampments. The site would enable residents to live and work from the same location which reflects traditional lifestyles and the site is not of such a scale which would dominate the nearest settlement (Polegate), even when considered in combination with the existing authorised site in this location.

Recommendation

Subject to satisfactory vehicular access being identified the site is considered suitable for up to 3 pitches.

6.8 The GTAA identified the need for an additional 21 pitches within the District between 2016 and 2038. The Proposed Submission Wealden Local Plan identifies a plan period of 2013 to 2028. On an annualised basis the plan period requires only 18 pitches. Policy WLP2 in the Proposed Submission Wealden Local Plan seeks to meet the identified need for Gypsies and Travellers within the District by the provision of up to 21 permanent pitches which provides the flexibility to ensure that the requirement within the Plan period is met and delivered. The provision will be met through allocating both sites identified in Tables 6 and 7 above. The allocation policies within the Wealden Local Plan are outlined below.

Policy SWGA24 – Allocation Hailsham South East 3C, Land at Station Road, Hailsham is allocated for the development of up to 18 Gypsy and Traveller pitches.

Policy SWGA37 – Allocation Polegate 2, Land at Lynholm Road, Polegate is allocated for development of up to 3 Gypsy and Traveller pitches.

6.9 In addition Policy HG6 (The Travelling Community – Provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople) sets out criteria for determining applications relating to new permanent sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople that nevertheless come forward:
Policy HG6 The Travelling Community- Provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

Proposals for new permanent sites for Gypsies, Travellers and for Travelling Showpeople will be supported where all of the following criteria are met:

a. The need for provision within the District can be established;

b. The site is well related to existing settlements identified within the settlement hierarchy. Sites should either be within or close to such settlements or close to major roads and/or public transport affording good access to local services;

c. Safe and convenient vehicular access is demonstrated, be suitable in terms of landscape impact and be in a location where the necessary infrastructure already exists or can reasonably be provided;

d. Achieve a reasonable level of visual and acoustic privacy;

e. Will provide an acceptable level of amenity for the proposed residents and will not have an unacceptable level of impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring dwellings; and

f. Avoids locations that are adjacent to incompatible uses such as a refuse tip, sewage treatment works or significantly contaminated land.

In the case of sites for Travelling Showpeople site suitability assessment will also take account of the nature and scale of the Showpeople’s business in terms of the land required for storage and/or the exercising of animals. Proposals for extensions to existing sites will generally be supported subject to compliance with environmental and highway safety policies in this plan,