

Havering response to Inspector letter November 12 2018

Gypsy and Traveller questions

Overview

(1). Following the Hearings into the Examination, I am concerned that the Local Plan does not currently meet the requirements of Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) to use a robust evidence base to establish Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs. Nor does it identify sufficient sites to meet that need.

1. Following the Examination hearings in October 2018, the Council commissioned Opinion Research Services (ORS) to undertake further work to the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment and this is submitted as the London Borough of Havering Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment Update Report March 2019. The responses to the questions below from the Inspector in her letter of November 12 2018 reflect fully the GTAA Update Report.

2. It should be noted that the numbering of Figures in the GTAA Update Report is amended to that in the Submission GTAA document. This is identified where necessary in the responses below.

3. Additionally, to respond to the Inspector and to the discussions at the Examination hearings in October 2018, the Council commissioned ORS to undertake a detailed Pitch Deliverability Assessment for each site in Havering where need was identified.

4. This additional evidence document assessed each site against a 'standard' deliverability template. The submission to the Inspector includes the Pitch Deliverability Assessment in the form of a comprehensive compendium document.

5. The information in the Pitch Deliverability Assessment supersedes and replaces the submission Gypsy and Traveller Position Statement (2018) included within the evidence base documents for the Havering Local Plan.

6. The Council has reflected the findings of the updated Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) and the Pitch Deliverability Assessment in a modified Policy 11 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation which is submitted in response to the questions from the Inspector.

7. The Council considers that the GTAA and the modified Policy 11 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation comply with the requirements of Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) 2015.

8. The responses below reflect the commentary above and are presented in the same order and with the headings set out in the letter from the Inspector dated November 12 2018.

(2). Further work is therefore required to the GTAA as set out below. This is likely to result in modifications being required to the Plan in order to set out revised pitch targets and to allocate additional sites.

9. The Inspector is referred to the response above to Question 1 and to the responses to the remaining questions.

Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA)

(3). Figure 7 of the GTAA requires updating to incorporate recent planning permissions and actual numbers of pitches on site. Updated need arising from these sites should be reflected in Figure 9.

10. Figure 7 of the submitted GTAA has been updated. It is now Figure 6 in the GTAA Update Report March 2019:

Figure 1 - Sites and yards visited in Havering

Planning Status	Pitches/Plots	Interviews	Reasons for not completing interviews
Public Sites			
None	-	-	-
Private Sites			
Haunted House Wood	3	4	1 x doubled-up
Laburnham Stables	1	2	1 x doubled-up
Railway Sidings	2	2	-
The Old Forge	1	3	Multiple households permitted
The View, Hornchurch	3	3	-
Willow Tree Lodge	11	11	-
Temporary Sites			
Laburnham Stables	2	3	1 x doubled-up
Railway Sidings	3	3	-
Tyas Stud Farm	2	2	2 on 1 pitch, 1 x no contact
Tolerated Sites			
Crow Lane (r/o 21)	1	1	-
Crow Lane (r/o 24)	4	0	4 x refusals
Unauthorised Sites			
Lower Bedfords Road	3	3	-
Ashleigh View	5	5	-
Blossom Hill View, Church Road	1	1	-
Cherry Blossom View, Church Road	1	1	-
Cherry Tree View, Church Road	1	1	-
Dunromin, Church Road	1	1	-
Fairhill Rise	4	4	-
Gravel Pit Coppice, Benskins Lane	6	6	-
Hogbar Farm	11	11	-
Hogbar Farm East	8	8	-
Hogbar Farm West	7	7	-
Laburnham Stables	1	1	-
Land east of Rosewood Cottage	1	1	-
Land west of Benskins Lane	6	0	6 x non-Travellers
Meadow Rise, Church Road	4	4	-
Meadow View, Church Road	3	3	-
Paddock View, Church Road	2	2	-

Plot 3, Church Road	1	1	-
Plot 13, Church Road	1	1	-
Plot 16, Church Road	1	1	-
Springfield, Church Road	2	2	-
The Caravan Park, Putwell Bridge	4	4	-
The Grove, Prospect Road	5	5	-
The Oak View, Church Road	1	1	-
The Oak, Church Road	1	1	-
The Schoolhouse, Church Road	1	1	-
Vinegar Hill	9	9	-
White House, Benskins Lane	4	0	4 x non-Travellers
Willoughby Drive (Adj No 1)	1	1	-
Willow View, Church Road	1	1	-
Bricks and Mortar			
1 Willoughby Drive	1	1	-
Travelling Showpeople Yards			
Fairoaks, St Mary's Lane, Upminster	5	5	-
TOTAL	136	127	

11. Figure 9 of the submitted GTAA has been updated. It is now Figure 8 in the GTAA Update Report March 2019:

Figure 2 – Additional need for Gypsy and Traveller households in Havering that met the Planning Definition (2016-31)

Gypsies and Travellers - Meeting Planning Definition	Pitches
Supply of Pitches	
Additional supply from vacant public and private pitches	0
Additional supply from pitches on new sites	0
Pitches vacated by households moving to bricks and mortar	0
Pitches vacated by households moving away from the study area	0
Total Supply	0
Current Need	
Households on unauthorised developments	66
Households on unauthorised encampments	0
Concealed households/Doubling-up/Over-crowding	23
Movement from bricks and mortar	0
Households on waiting lists for public sites	0
Total Current Need	89
Future Need	
5 year need from teenage children	40
Households on sites with temporary planning permission	5
In-migration	1
New household formation	39
<i>(Base number of households 146 and formation rate 2.00%)</i>	
Total Future Needs	85
Net Pitch Need = (Current and Future Need – Total Supply)	174

(4).The survey which informed the GTAA was carried out in June and September. Traditionally, these periods encompass times that Gypsies and Travellers are away travelling. As a result, the survey work only had a success rate of 40%. The Council's advisors confirmed at the Hearing that this is a low percentage. However, they were satisfied that the proxy interviews undertaken give a robust indication of the likely number of Gypsies and Travellers living on sites where no interview took place. Nevertheless, the Council has taken the decision in the Plan not to include the need identified from proxy interviews. Neither has it sought to carry out further survey work in order to obtain actual responses.

12. Paragraph 3.20 of the GTAA Update Report sets out when the fieldwork underpinning the Submission GTAA was completed.

13. To address issues raised by the Inspector and during discussions at the Examination about the outcomes from the survey work, a final round of fieldwork was completed by ORS between December 2018 and February 2019. This is fully reflected in the GTAA Update Report.

14. Paragraph 6.3 of the GTAA Update Report notes that a total of 81 interviews and 41 proxy interviews were completed with Gypsies and Travellers. This was on a total of 120 pitches and 1 bricks and mortar property occupied by Gypsies and Travellers.

15. The report notes that this represents a response rate of 96% with just 4 refusals and 1 non-contact. There were also 2 sites (10 pitches) where it was established that pitches were not occupied by Gypsies or Travellers.

16. The conclusions in the GTAA Update Report reflect the information above.

(5).The need arising from these sites is not unknown in the sense that these households are residing on existing sites in the Borough. What is unknown about them is whether those living on the sites meet the planning definition of a Gypsy or Traveller or not.

17. Figure 8 of the Submission GTAA has now been updated. It is now Figure 7 of the GTAA Update Report. It identifies how many of the households in Havering meet the planning definition of a Traveller:

Figure 3 – Planning status of households in Havering

Planning Status	Meet Planning Definition	Undetermined¹	Do Not Meet Planning Definition
Gypsies and Travellers			
Private Sites	17	5	3
Temporary Sites	7	1	1
Tolerated Sites	1	4	0
Unauthorised Sites	66	0	21
Bricks and Mortar	1	0	0
Sub-Total	92	10	25
Travelling Showpeople			

¹ 5 households where a proxy interview was completed are included as undetermined as there was insufficient information to assess them against the planning definition.

Private Yards	5	0	0
Sub-Total	5	0	0
TOTAL	97	10	25

18. Paragraph 7.17 and Figure 8 of the Submission GTAA identified that 33 households met the planning definition in PPTS (comprised of 32 Gypsies and Travellers households and 1 Travelling Showpeople household).

19. Paragraph 7.19 of the GTAA Update Report notes that Figure 7 shows that for Gypsies and Travellers, 92 households and for Travelling Showpeople, 5 households met the planning definition of a traveller in that they were able to provide information demonstrating that they travel for work purposes and stay away from their usual place of residence or have ceased to travel temporarily.

20. The report notes in paragraph 7.19 that a total of 25 households did not meet the definition as they were not able to demonstrate that they travel away from their usual place of residence for the purpose of work, or that they have ceased to travel temporarily due to children in education, ill health or old age. Some did travel for cultural reasons, to visit relatives or friends, and others had ceased to travel permanently – these households did not meet the planning definition

(6). In order for the Plan to be considered sound, either the Council needs to accept the advice of its advisors that the proxy interviews are robust and include these figures in their need, or further survey work is required to ensure a significantly higher percentage of the Gypsy and Traveller population is reached.

21. As identified above in the response to Question 4, following comments from the Inspector and others at the Examination in October 2018, the Council commissioned ORS to undertake further fieldwork to ensure that the GTAA is robust.

22. The Council has taken on board the findings of the GTAA Update Report in its proposed modified Policy 11 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation.

(7). Allied to the above, I have concerns regarding the Council's approach to applying the planning definition to 'unknown' households. The GTAA states at paragraph 7.28 that a suggested national average figure of 10% of households meeting the planning definition could be used. However, based on locally derived figures, this could be as high as 91%. At the Hearing a figure of 75% was suggested by the Council's advisors but no justification for this figure was presented. Further work is required to determine and fully justify the percentage of households not surveyed who are likely to fall within the planning definition.

23. The GTAA Update Report reflects the further household interviews that have been completed and this is reflected in the revised figures for households meeting the definition, undetermined households and those not meeting the planning definition.

24. This is summarised in Figures 1 and 2 of the GTAA Update Report:

Figure 4 – Additional need for Gypsy and Traveller households in Havering (2016-2031)

Status	Total
Meet Planning Definition	174
Undetermined	0-6 (25% = 2)
Do not meet Planning Definition	39

Figure 5 – Additional need for Gypsy and Traveller households in Havering by 5-year periods

Years	0-5	6-10	11-15	
	2016-21	2021-26	2026-31	Total
Meet Planning Definition	135	18	21	174
Undetermined	3	1	2	6
Do not meet Planning Definition	29	5	5	39
TOTAL	167	24	28	219

25. At the time of the submission GTAA data from ORS suggested that nationally 10% of households met the planning definition of a Traveller. This figure was applied to the need from unknown (now referred to as ‘undetermined’) households to provide the Council with an evidence-based guide to how much of the unknown need could be expected to meet the planning definition. Based on significantly more interviews having been completed nationally by ORS this figure now stands at approximately 25%. This figure has been used in the GTAA Update Report, along with the locally derived figure of 79% - see Paragraph 1.15 of the GTAA Update Report. Both figures are only included as a guide and given the much-reduced levels of need from undetermined households in the GTAA Update Report it is felt that all of the need can be determined against the criteria in Policy 11.

(8).The GTAA states that the demand from ‘unknown’ households could be up to 102 pitches or 93 pitches if the locally derived proportion of households meeting the planning definition is applied. These are potentially substantial figures which the Plan currently does not include within the need.

26. As set out above in the responses to Questions 6 and 7, the GTAA Update Report now identifies a need for just 6 pitches for undetermined households in Havering – significantly less than the 102 pitches that were identified in the Submission GTAA (Figure 2).

27. As set out in the response to Question 7 it is proposed that this need is addressed through the criteria set out in Policy 11.

(9). A 1.5% household formation rate is applied to these figures compared to the 2% for the interviewed households. Further justification is needed for this approach.

28. The only differential factors when looking at new household formation are the number of children in any given population, and the ages of these children - all the other components are known i.e. birth rate, death rate, fertility rate, household dissolution rate etc. The outcome of this is that the rate of new household formation is driven solely by the number of and age of children. Examples are set out below:

- » For households that meet the planning definition, most are found to be families where the men travel for work and the women stay at home to look after the children. In these households there are often several children. Therefore, with high numbers of children there is a likelihood that there will be high numbers of new households forming and therefore a higher rate of new household formation should be applied.
- » For households that do not meet the planning definition most are found to have ceased to travel permanently due to ill health or old age and are retired. There are usually few if any children living in these households, so therefore there is a likelihood that there will be low number of new households forming and therefore a lower rate of new household formation should be applied.
- » For those households that were unable to be interviewed there is no demographic information to use to identify the numbers and ages of children. Therefore, the ORS

national rate of 1.50% is used to provide some indication on the likely number of household formations.

29. As such it can be clearly seen that this it is appropriate to apply different rates of formation to different groups of the population based on an in-depth understanding of demographic modelling and population forecasting.

(10). In summary, the Plan should identify the need for Gypsy and Traveller pitches arising from known households and also estimate the need arising from 'unknown' households i.e. those not surveyed. The estimated need should be fully justifiable.

30. The responses to Questions 6-8 (inclusive) set out the estimated need for 'undetermined' households.

31. In summary, from Figures 1 and 2 in the GTAA Update Report, it can be seen that the need for 'undetermined' households is expected to be 6 pitches over the Plan Period comprising 3 pitches (2016-2021), 1 pitch (2021-2026) and 2 pitches (2026-2031).

Need from households who do not meet the planning definition

(11). The GTAA identifies the need for a further 2 pitches for those interviewed households who do not meet the planning definition. This figure is likely to change as a result of further consideration of the 'unknown' households as set out above. The GTAA should be updated accordingly.

32. The response to Question 7 (above) indicates that the GTAA Update Report has assessed the need for households who do not meet the PPTS planning definition.

33. Paragraph 7.34 of the GTAA Update Report identifies that 25 households living on sites did not meet the PPTS definition of a Traveller. The report identifies (paragraph 7.25) that these households will give rise to a need for 39 pitches (and this is reflected in Figures 1 and 2 of the GTAA Update Report).

34. This is also reflected in the proposed modifications to Policy 11 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation.

(12). The Plan currently does not seek to meet the need for those not meeting the planning definition. The Council therefore needs to explain how it intends to meet the requirements of Section 124 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 to "*consider the needs of people residing in or resorting to their district with respect to the provision of sites on which caravans can be stationed*". How will the needs arising from this group be met?

35. The proposed modifications to Policy 11 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation sets out that the Council will seek to meet the need for the first 5 years of the Local Plan Period (2016-21) for 29 pitches from those households not meeting the planning definition in PPTS by formalising and allocating additional pitches on one existing private site with temporary planning permission (providing a total of 2 pitches) and formalising and allocating additional pitches on six existing unauthorised sites (providing a total of 27 pitches). The sites will be shown on the Proposals Map and listed in Appendix X.

Transit requirements

(13). At the Hearing the Council acknowledged that there has been an increase in unauthorised encampments in recent months. Furthermore, the GTAA states that transit accommodation should be reassessed three years after PPTS was amended in 2015. Accordingly, the Council accepted that the approach to not providing transit sites should be reassessed as part of the further work to the GTAA.

36. Paragraphs 7.44 - 7.46 have been added to the Submission GTAA to evidence the approach to transit sites and to provide firm evidence on the number of unauthorised encampments in Havering over the past few years.

37. Paragraph 7.44 notes that in Havering the position with regard to unauthorised encampments has been: 11 encampments (2015), 34 encampments (2016), 4 encampments (2017) and 22 encampments (2018).

38. The report notes in paragraph 7.44 that in all cases it was reported that the Travellers were not traveling around Havering but were visiting for between a few days and 2 weeks. The reasons provided for stopping included: attending an event (funeral / wedding), looking for work, visiting relatives, passing through on the way to somewhere else and being on holiday.

39. Paragraph 7.45 notes that since 2016 there has been an increase in the number of encampments on industrial land that have involved the criminal dumping of waste. The report notes that there is a view that this may be as a result of neighbouring boroughs now having High Court injunctions in place to prevent unauthorised encampments.

40. Paragraph 7.46 concludes that the Council do not consider that transit provision would address any issues related to the illegal dumping of waste and that the current levels of other encampments were too low to justify any formal transit provision in Havering.

41. The GTAA Update Report concluded in Paragraph 7.48 that whilst there is some evidence of a number of unauthorised encampments in Havering in recent years, it is recommended that there is currently no need to provide any new transit pitches or emergency stopping places.

Site allocations

(14). PPTS requires that Local Plans should identify a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years' worth of sites against locally set targets and to identify a supply of developable sites, or broad locations for growth for years 6 to 10 and, where possible, for years 11 to 15.

42. In line with the GTAA Update Report, the proposed modifications to Policy 11 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation sets out that the GTAA Update Report identifies a 15 year need for 174 pitches for Gypsy and Traveller households who met the planning definition of a Traveller as set out in the PPTS.

43. Of the 174 pitches, 135 pitches are needed within the first 5-year period of the Plan (2016-2021) to meet current need and the remaining 39 pitches in the latter part of the Local Plan period (2021-2031) to meet future need through new household formation.

44. The proposed modifications to the Policy note that no specific additional need has been identified for plots for Travelling Showpeople over the 15-year plan period (2016-2031). The policy notes that the households living on the yard stated that they are looking to expand the

yard on to adjacent land that they own, and that this will meet all of their current and future needs.

45. The Council has undertaken a comprehensive Pitch Deliverability Assessment to support the updated GTAA and the Local Plan. This concludes that 128 pitches of the 135 pitches needed in the first five years of the Plan Period could be accommodated within existing site boundaries.

46. It is not currently possible to meet the need for 7 pitches for households on 2 unauthorised sites within the current site boundaries due to land ownership issues. The Council will explore alternative provision to meet this need on other sites in the borough including through the use of other land at existing sites in the ownership of members of the Travelling Community.

47. The sites where an allocation has been made are identified on the Proposals Map and listed in Appendix X of Policy 11. These allocations include any existing temporary or unauthorised pitches.

48. Appendix X includes the following table:

Sites identified to meet the need for pitches for gypsies and travellers who meet the definition in Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2015)

Site	Planning Status	GTAA 5-Year Need
Laburnham Stables	Permanent	4
Railway Sidings	Permanent	1
The Old Forge	Permanent	2
Willow Tree Lodge	Permanent	6
Laburnham Stables	Temporary	5
Railway Sidings	Temporary	10
Tyas Stud Farm	Temporary	5
Crow Lane (r/o 21)	Tolerated	2
Ashleigh View	Unauthorised	5
Blossom Hill View, Church Road	Unauthorised	1
Cherry Blossom View, Church Road	Unauthorised	2
Cherry Tree View, Church Road	Unauthorised	3
Dunromin, Church Road	Unauthorised	1
Fairhill Rise	Unauthorised	3
Gravel Pit Coppice	Unauthorised	14
Hogbar Farm	Unauthorised	8
Hogbar Farm East	Unauthorised	10
Hogbar Farm West	Unauthorised	1
Laburnham Stables	Unauthorised	1
Meadow Rise, Church Road	Unauthorised	4
Meadow View, Church Road	Unauthorised	3
Paddock View, Church Road	Unauthorised	2
Plot 3, Church Road	Unauthorised	1
Plot 13, Church Road	Unauthorised	1
Plot 14, Church Road	Unauthorised	1
Springfield, Church Road	Unauthorised	2
Putwell Bridge Caravan Park	Unauthorised	3
The Grove	Unauthorised	5

The Oak View, Church Road	Unauthorised	1
The Oak, Church Road	Unauthorised	1
The Schoolhouse, Church Road	Unauthorised	1
Vinegar Hill	Unauthorised	18
Willow View, Church Road	Unauthorised	1
TOTAL		128

(15). Therefore, in addition to updating the assessment of need as set out above, the Council should identify further sites to meet that need.

49. The proposed modifications to Policy 11 make clear that the Council has not been able to identify any sites in the built up areas of Havering.

50. The allocated sites (as defined on the Proposals Map and identified in Appendix X) are all currently in the Green Belt. Policy 11 Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation removes the site from the Green Belt and insets them within it. The policy makes clear that the Council is removing these sites from the Green Belt and insetting them within it so that planning applications for Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Show people accommodation on these sites do not need to demonstrate very special circumstances to be approved. The policy makes it clear that these alterations to the Green Belt boundary are limited and exceptional in order to meet the specific identified needs for Traveller sites. Although the sites are removed from the Green Belt, the Council emphasises that the only acceptable use of these sites will be for accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. The Council will regard the sites as remaining within the Green Belt and subject to Green Belt policies in the event of other proposals being submitted for them.

51. The proposed modifications to Policy 11 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation set out that the Council is committed to an early review of the Havering Local Plan and this will provide the opportunity to review the GTAA to ensure that the need for gypsy and traveller accommodation is understood.

52. The Council has been unable to allocate sites for the period beyond 5 years and for this reason has included criteria in the policy against which any proposals for further sites will be assessed.

(16). The Gypsy and Traveller Position Statement (GTPS) sets out the criteria applied to the allocated sites. It appears that not all sites which would have the potential to meet the need have been assessed.

53. The GTAA Update Report and the Pitch Deliverability Assessment document have taken account of all the existing sites in Havering.

54. The Pitch Deliverability Assessment has considered all the sites against 'standard' criteria and these are set out in the Assessment to ensure a consistency of approach.

55. The Assessments have concluded that in the vast majority of cases there is sufficient land within the boundaries of existing sites to meet the need identified for the first 5 years of the Local Plan Period (2016-21). Work is to be progressed by the Council to meet the residual 5-year need for 7 pitches either on existing sites or on other land owned locally by members of the Travelling Community.

(17). The GTPS states that the allocated sites have been identified based on whether the occupants meet the planning definition of a Traveller. Having regard to my

concerns set out above, this approach does not appear to be robust; there are likely to be Gypsies and Travellers living on existing sites which have not been allocated simply because the occupants did not respond to the survey.

56. Following the completion of the GTAA Update Report and Pitch Deliverability Assessment the proposed modifications to Policy are now seeking to allocate pitches to meet the vast majority of need identified for the first 5 years of the Local Plan Period (2016-21); work is to be progressed by the Council to meet the residual 5-year need for 7 pitches either on existing sites or on other land owned locally by members of the Travelling Community; and clear criteria are set out in Policy 11 to address the small levels of need identified from undetermined households.

57. Work to address future need for 52 additional pitches in the later periods of the Local Plan (2021-31) will be progressed through an early review of the Plan and through the criteria set out in Policy 11. It is envisaged that the majority of this need can also be met on existing sites through ongoing supply as a result of death and dissolution, and through additional land that is available on sites.

(18). All sites with the potential to meet the need (allocated sites and other sites which could meet the likely increased level of need) should be assessed against consistent criteria. The evidence needs to clearly justify why some sites have been chosen over others.

58. The Pitch Deliverability Assessment undertaken to support the GTAA Update Report and the proposed modifications to Policy 11 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation include a 'standard' template against which all the sites (including existing and those proposed to be allocated) were assessed.

59. The Assessment was completed for all sites where current or future need were identified irrespective of whether households met the planning definition. This identified that the vast majority of 5-year need can be accommodated on existing sites and also identified some sites where provision over and above the identified need could be delivered.

(19). The number of pitch allocations is the same as the currently identified level of need. Concerns have been expressed by representors that some potential sites may not come forward. The Plan needs to contain flexible arrangements in order to ensure sufficient sites are available to meet the identified need. This could involve providing a review mechanism in the Plan in relation to Gypsy and Traveller pitch numbers, allocating further sites and / or providing flexibility in the policy wording.

60. The proposed modifications to Policy 11 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation brings forward a significantly revised number of allocated pitches.

61. Policy 11 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation in the Submission Local Plan brought forward allocations for 70 pitches across 11 sites.

62. The proposed modifications to Policy 11 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation brings forward allocations for 128 pitches across 30 sites for households that met the planning definition. The 128 pitches represents a very significant proportion of the 135 pitches identified in the GTAA Update Report as required to meet the needs of Gypsy and Traveller households who meet the planning definition in PPTS.

63. Additionally, the proposed modifications to the policy brings forward allocations for 29 pitches to meet the need from those households who did not meet the planning definition in PPTS.

64. Because the Council has undertaken a detailed Pitch Deliverability Assessment to support the GTAA Update Report and the proposed modifications to Policy 11, it is confident that the required number of pitches can be secured on the allocated sites. The Assessment is based on detailed discussions with the households on the existing sites to ensure that there is a good understanding of the circumstances of each household and the implications of this for each site to accommodate further pitches.

65. The Council's consultants are also seeking to engage with planning agents representing some of the Gypsy and Traveller households in Havering in coming weeks to secure verification of the approach underpinning the GTAA Update Report and the proposed modifications to Policy 11 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation.

66. Notwithstanding this, in order to ensure that the Local Plan includes an appropriate degree of flexibility, the proposed modifications to Policy 11 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation includes criteria for the determination of planning applications that may be submitted for pitches for gypsy and traveller households outside of the proposed allocations.

67. The proposed modifications to the policy make clear the Council's commitment to bringing forward an early review of the Havering Local Plan and undertaking further household interviews to support this.

(20). I am concerned that the allocated sites remain in the Green Belt. Planning applications which come forward on these sites would therefore be required to demonstrate very special circumstances in order to be approved. PPTS states that, subject to the best interests of the child, personal circumstances and unmet need are unlikely to clearly outweigh harm to the Green Belt and any other harm so as to establish very special circumstances. As such, it is likely to be very difficult for applicants to gain planning permission on the allocated sites and this raises a significant question over whether the sites would be deliverable. Paragraph 17 of PPTS advises that planning authorities may wish to consider making an exceptional, limited alteration to the defined Green Belt boundary to meet a specific identified need for a traveller site. The Council should set out how it intends to ensure that the allocated sites would be deliverable having regard to this advice in PPTS.

68. In line with paragraph 17 of PPTS, the proposed modifications to Policy 11 Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation make clear that the Council intends to remove these sites from the Green Belt and inset them within it. This is to address concerns about the 'deliverability' of the sites in particular the challenges that applicants would encounter in demonstrating 'very special circumstances' to secure planning permission.

69. The proposed modifications to Policy 11 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation make clear that in removing these sites and 'insetting' them within it, the Council will wish to ensure that the sites are only used for gypsy and traveller accommodation. Furthermore, any proposals for uses other than accommodation for Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation will be considered as if land was still in the Green Belt and planning policies for the Green Belt will apply to any such proposals being submitted. This is to address concerns that by removing these sites from the Green Belt and 'insetting' them within it, they may have development potential that would conflict with their wider Green Belt setting.

Policy wording

(21). At a more detailed level, a number of modifications to the wording of Policy 11 will be required as follows:

- **Reference to ‘maximum’ in the policy and site allocations should be removed;**
- **Criterion iii – this should relate to the layout to accommodate the number of pitches;**
- **Criterion iv – insert the words “or are capable of being provided with” or similar;**
- **Criterion v – Landscaping and boundary treatment should be in accordance with policy 27;**
- **Criterion vi – remove and place in explanatory text;**
- **Criteria vii-ix – these should reflect PPTS paras 11, 13, 24 and 26: Parking and convenient access to the highway and public transport are not matters mentioned in PPTS and should not therefore be criteria in the policy.**
- **Criterion x – this should include the site occupants;**
- **Criterion xii – not necessary.**

70. The proposed modifications to Policy 11 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation address the matters above. The proposed modified policy includes amendments to the several criteria.

Martyn Thomas
March 25 2019