

Agenda Item No. 4(f)

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**MEETING OF CABINET MEMBER – HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND
INFRASTRUCTURE**

8 September 2015

Report of the Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

**DERBY, DERBYSHIRE, PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
AND EAST STAFFORDSHIRE GYPSY AND TRAVELLER
ACCOMMODATION ASSESSMENT 2014**

(1) **Purpose of Report** To report the completion and publication of the Derby, Derbyshire, Peak District National Park Authority and East Staffordshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) 2014.

(2) **Information and Analysis**

Background

Government policy on the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) requires local planning authorities (LPAs) to carry out assessments of the future accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers, known as GTAAs. They may be used to inform the preparation of planning policy and site allocations for gypsies and travellers at housing market area (HMA) or local plan level as appropriate.

In accordance with the NPPF, PPTS and the duty to cooperate set out in the Localism Act 2011, a GTAA covering the administrative areas of Derby City, all Derbyshire and East Staffordshire borough and district councils, and the Peak District National Park Authority was jointly commissioned in August 2013 to update the previously published Derbyshire GTAA 2008 and East Staffordshire GTAA 2013 by the following partners:

- Derbyshire County, Derby City and eight district and borough councils;
- Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA);
- East Staffordshire Borough Council (ESBC); and
- Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group (DGLG).

Need for a New GTAA

The Derbyshire GTAA 2008 needed to be updated because it was based on previous national planning policy guidance and no longer provided up-to-date

evidence on which to base policies and pitch requirements for gypsies and travellers in local plans.

Consequently in 2013, all Derbyshire LPAs asked Derbyshire County Council to lead on preparing an update of the GTAA managed through the Derbyshire Traveller Issues Working Group (TIWG) made up of all relevant partners. ESBC asked to be part of the study, given the close relationship of its area with neighbouring South Derbyshire District for gypsy and traveller movements.

Derbyshire County Council's Involvement

County Council involvement has been required due to:

- the strategic nature of the GTAA covering 12 local authority areas under the duty to co-operate;
- its role in co-ordinating evidence-based work;
- the use of evidence for strategic service provision, particularly on education, social care and promotion of health and wellbeing;
- its legal enforcement role against unauthorised encampments on County Council owned and highway land; and
- its ability to take an overview in relation to future provision.

GTAA Methodology

The methodology applied in the updated GTAA 2014 is based on the approach recommended in PPTS and other best practice. It uses a 15 stage assessment process which takes into account:

- existing site provision and vacancies or overcrowding;
- movements of gypsies and travellers into and out of the area;
- the need generated from unauthorised encampments and sites with temporary planning permissions; and
- new family formations expected to arise from within existing family units.

The report draws on primary and secondary data sources including:

- **Primary data:** face-to-face surveys with gypsies, travellers and travelling show people;
- **Secondary information:** including a literature review and secondary data analysis, for example, analysis of the Department for Communities and Local Government's Bi-Annual Traveller Caravan Count; and
- **Stakeholder consultation:** with local organisations involved with gypsies, travellers and travelling show people.

The GTAA 2014 quantifies the accommodation and housing-related support needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling show people in the study area for the period 2014-15 - 2034-35 in terms of residential and transit/emergency sites and bricks and mortar accommodation. Importantly, the GTAA 2014 does not identify specific sites to accommodate future pitch and plot

requirements in the study area. This will be the responsibility of the individual City, District and Borough LPAs, and the PDNPA through the preparation and review of their local plans.

The GTAA 2014 Final Report

RRR Consultancy Limited was commissioned to undertake the GTAA on behalf of the 13 partners in August 2013. A first draft report was published in April 2014. Comments from partners included concerns about the methodology, findings and overall robustness of the draft report. To address these concerns, the consultants produced a second draft report in October 2014. At the request of some partners, they were given 6 weeks until December 2014 to comment.

In light of comments received on the second draft, the consultants produced a 'Final Report' on 2 February 2015, together with a 'Response Sheet' indicating their response to each comment they had received from partners. At a meeting of partners, held on 24 February 2015, to discuss the 'Final Report' and partners' outstanding concerns, it was agreed to ask the consultants for further information on a number of matters. Over the course of the following months, the consultants provided the required additional information and clarification on partners' outstanding issues and concerns. This included the production of two new papers explaining the approach in the GTAA to:

- unauthorised encampments and recommendations for transit site/emergency stopping place provision; and
- temporary planning permissions and how this translated into permanent pitch need.

On 26 June 2015, the consultants completed a final version of the GTAA 2014, together with the two papers referred to above. These were circulated by Derbyshire County Council's officers to all partners, who were requested to indicate whether their respective authorities would sign off the final report as a finished piece of evidence for subsequent publication. A Position Statement (PS) on the GTAA 2014 was drafted by Derbyshire County Council's officers and circulated to partners to indicate it:

- has a base date of 2014;
- provides a snapshot in time based largely on survey evidence collected between October 2013 and February 2014;
- represents a piece of evidence, which provides a starting point for considering pitch and plot requirements for gypsies, travellers and travelling show people in the study area for the period 2014-15 to 2034-35. This is a similar approach to the assessment of future needs for market and affordable housing, set out in the NPPF and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG); and

- may be used by local authority partners to guide pitch and plot requirements in their local plans or as the basis for further bespoke studies of their own, supplemented by other local survey and monitoring evidence in order to provide a more locally specific indication of need.

Following circulation of the above, 12 of the 13 partners signed off the final report as a finished piece of evidence and agreed to its publication. ESBC, however, maintained its concerns relating to the GTAA's recommendations for transit pitch need on grounds that the consultant's additional work had not fully justified the need for transit site provision in its area. Notwithstanding the above, ESBC accepted that the GTAA 2014 should be published but on the basis that its concerns were reflected in the PS. The PS was amended accordingly.

The GTAA 2014 Final Report has been subject to extensive and ongoing consultation with partners, as summarised below. The report sets out the geographical context for the study area, including details of existing public and private traveller sites and analysis of existing traveller patterns; a review of a range of education, health and employment issues affecting gypsies and travellers; analysis of the existing national and local planning policy context; assessment of trends in population and household formation levels for travellers; and details of feedback from extensive stakeholder consultation, including surveys with all the traveller families in the study area. Taking all of the above into account, the GTAA recommends that there is a need for an additional 134 permanent traveller pitches, 13 travelling show people plots, 4 transit / emergency stopping place sites and 66 bricks and mortar accommodation units across the study area as a whole over the next 20 years. These accommodation needs are also set out for each of the individual local authorities in the study area. A key recommendation of the report is that groups of local authorities work together in gypsy and traveller HMAs to make provision for the accommodation needs in their areas.

There has recently become a pressing need for the GTAA 2014 to be published, not least because a number of local plan Inspectors have requested the final report to inform discussions about gypsy and traveller matters at reconvened local plan hearing sessions scheduled in the next few months. Derbyshire County Council had also received a number of Freedom of Information Act (FOI) requests from the public seeking a copy of the GTAA 2014. At the time, these requests were declined because the GTAA was confidential as it had not been finalised. In light of the partners' agreement or conditional agreement, the GTAA 2014 Final Report and PS was published on Derbyshire County Council's website on 7 August 2015, which can be viewed at: http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/environment/land_premises/traveller_sites/gypsies_travellers_law/default.asp

The summary table below shows the gypsy, traveller and travelling show people accommodation needs recommended for the study area as a whole between 2014 and 2034.

Summary of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Show people Needs 2014-34 for Study Area				
Period	Residential pitches	Travelling Show people plots	Transit sites/emergency stopping places	Bricks and mortar accommodation
Total 2014-19	70	8	4	7
Total 2019-24	19	1	0	18
Total 2024-29	22	2	0	19
Total 2029-34	23	2	0	22
Total 2014-2034	134	13	4	66

These requirements show the number of:

- permanent gypsy and traveller pitches;
- travelling show people plots;
- transit sites / emergency stopping places; and
- bricks and mortar accommodation units.

Full details of the recommended individual local authority accommodation needs for each of the above are given in the GTAA 2014 Final Report.

A key suggestion of the final report is that local authorities should work together to assess and make provision for the future accommodation needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling show people in their areas based on three Gypsy and Traveller HMAs (GTHMA):

- South GTHMA - Amber Valley, Derby City, Erewash, South Derbyshire and East Staffordshire;
- North GTHMA - Bolsover, Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire; and
- Central GTHMA - Derbyshire Dales, High Peak and PDNPA.

(3) **Financial Considerations** There are no financial considerations associated with this report.

(4) **Legal Considerations** The recommendation in this report is made in the context of the County Council's responsibilities and services under the provisions of the Housing Act 2004, Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Equalities Act 2010 and Localism Act 2011.

Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

(5) **Key Decision** No.

(6) **Call-In** Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.

(7) **Background Papers** Held on file within the Economy, Transport and Environment Department. Officer contact details – Steve Buffery, extension 39808.

(8) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS** That the Cabinet Member:

8.1 Notes the findings and recommendations of the Derby, Derbyshire, Peak District National Park Authority and East Staffordshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2014.

8.2 Agrees that its findings are taken into account by the County Council in its service provision and promotion of health and wellbeing.

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Mike Ashworth
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