1921.

[redacted]

Development Policy Manager,
Development Services,
Warwick District Council

28th July 2013

Dear Sir,

SITES FOR GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS

While recognising WDC's obligation to identify a certain number of Permanent Sites I formally object to the 7 sites in or adjacent to the Parish of Bishops Tachbrook – that is GT 03,04,05,06,09,10 and 15. All of these are located close to main roads with fast moving traffic – roads which will become even busier as new housing is built in our area as per the RDS. These locations will be unhealthy for site residents and, at the access points, will present new hazards to motorists.

I have not examined the other 13 possible sites but suspect that many of them suffer from similar drawbacks.

I now wish to address the methodology which has been used to identify sites:this has had the unfortunate effect of stirring up unnecessary apprehension and anger amongst residents across the District.

1.The 20 possible sites identified are too large. Para 9.2 clearly refers to "large tracts of land". This induces the fear that each of them, if eventually selected, could, over the duration of the Plan, become a large settlement. Thus, even if the site is initially for 2 or 3 pitches, expansion over time could see the number of pitches rise to 10 or more.

2. The booklet contains photographs which are clearly NOT gypsy and traveller sites – this significant error has been acknowledged by officers. This adds to the impression that WDC is conning the public and discredits the process.

3. The distribution across the District is so heavily weighted to the South that I am forced to the conclusion that Councillors from Kenilworth and the rural areas to the west and east of the District have succeeded in applying the same "nimby" attitudes which are so evident in the allocation of land for new housing.This infers that the criteria for locating gypsy and traveller sites in terms of amenities and sustainability (para 7.3) cannot be met other than in the south. Clearly this cannot be the case.

4. Finally it is not made clear why the gypsy and traveller sites have to be decided at this stage. It would surely make sense to settle the major issues raised by the New

Local Plan – requiring thousands of houses and substantial infrastructure – and only then consider the best location for 25 homeless families.

These four points discredit the process adopted by WDC in regard to the gypsy and traveller sites and mean that the public in general has little confidence in this consultation.

For the reasons set out above WDC should gracefully withdraw these proposals and start again when the New Local Plan is completed. The key guidelines for planners at that time should be as follows:

A. Sites should be distributed evenly across the District.

B. Sites should be specified as being for 2 or 3 pitches and no more under any circumstances; there should be NO provision for future expansion.

C. The total number of pitches across all sites should be limited to 25. It would be wise to see what take up there is over 5 to 10 years. It is surely not Government or WDC policy to encourage an increase in the number of travelling families.

The importance of limiting each site to 2 or 3 pitches is that the local community may be less likely to feel intimidated, that good relations and ultimately mutual respect and possibly some integration may be achieved. Para 7.4 alludes to this objective. This approach is in line with the stated objective that gypsies and travellers are enabled achieve more settled living conditions on Permanent Sites with concomitant benefits to health and education.

Yours Sincerely

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