

CUBBINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

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Mr. D. Barber,
Development Policy Manager,
Warwick District Council,
Riverside House,
Milverton Hill,
Royal Leamington Spa
CV32 5QH

1st May 2014

Dear Mr. Barber,

Sites for Gypsies and Travellers – Preferred Options

I refer to your letter of 17th March 2014.

The Parish Council have now had an opportunity to discuss the above proposals and wish to submit the following comments.

It is noted that areas of land off Leicester Lane, Cubbington (ref. GTalt07) and Welsh Road, Cubbington (ref. GTalt10) have been discounted but that the depot area off Leicester Lane, Cubbington to the west of Cubbington Heath Farm (ref. GT08) and land off Rugby Road, Cubbington (ref. GTalt02) have been classified as 'Amber' sites and shortlisted as they could be made suitable if major changes were made. It is understood that these two areas are not deemed to be Preferred Options which will be brought forward during the life of the Local Plan.

As was pointed out in my letter of 10th July 2013 to you, the depot site is owned by the Cubbington Freeholders charity. The Parish Council strongly support the concerns raised by the Freeholders who are anxious to ensure that the charity are able to continue with the extremely valuable financial support that they have been able to provide to local organisations over many years. Their work is invaluable to the well-being of the local community and the Parish Council are opposed to any action being taken which would be detrimental to the interests of the Freeholders and, through them, the community and our local organisations.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which sets out guidance on the government's aims in respect of sites for travellers, states that sites must enable occupants to access education, health, welfare and employment infrastructure and that local planning authorities must have due regard to the protection of local amenity and local environment. It is not clear what access to education, health and welfare would be available to the gypsy and traveller community in respect of the depot area. It is also questionable as to whether the site

is an appropriate location given the highway safety issues that may result from accessing and egressing this site on to the A445. The Parish Council believe that this site is not sustainable in terms of access to public transport and health facilities. Currently there is no bus service accessible from the site and the nearest doctors' surgery is in Lillington.

In addition, the Parish Council also believe that the use of this area of land for a gypsy and traveller site would potentially create noise and disturbance to the nearby residents. The use of the area for this purpose would also have a detrimental impact on the wildlife and would, therefore, be in contravention of the NPPF guidance.

There is a suggestion that, as a result of a previous use of the land, it could be heavily contaminated and there would be significant expense in making it safe for residential use. It would require treatment before it was suitable for occupation.

For these reasons, the Parish Council, continue to oppose strongly the suggestion that the land could become a site for travellers and gypsies.

With regards to the area off Rugby Road (ref. GTalt02), the Parish Council are concerned that the possible future use of this land would involve incorporating an area of North Cubbington Wood. This is ancient woodland which is already under severe threat as a result of the HS2 proposals. The Parish Council believe that the site is unsuitable taking into account the criteria that sites identified for use must not have an adverse impact on important features of the natural and historic environment. The site also does not have convenient access to a GP surgery and public transport which would be in contravention of the National Planning Policy Framework referred to above.

The Parish Council are aware that if any of the sites which have been deemed suitable for further public consultation and comment are then rejected, the sites currently classified as 'Amber' could well come under consideration. We are anxious, therefore, that our comments should be taken into consideration with a view to these two 'Amber' sites in Cubbington being discounted.

Allied to this issue, we would question why it is necessary to provide sites within the district when there is, we understand, a site in the Ryton area which is underused? An explanation regarding this point would be appreciated please.

Yours sincerely,

