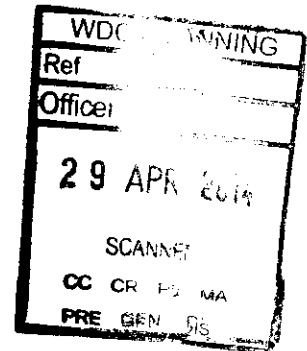


Development Policy Manager  
 Development Services  
 Warwick District Council  
 Riverside House, Milverton Hill  
 Leamington Spa  
 Warwickshire, CV32 5QH

25 April 2014

Reference: GT04 Land at Harbury Lane, Fosse Way



Dear Sirs

**Proposed Gypsy and Traveller Site GT04 - Land at Harbury Lane, Fosse Way**

I would like to know why Warwick District Council have not followed new national guidance regarding the numbers of Gypsy and Traveller pitches proposed on each of the preferred sites.

I have reviewed the Warwick District Council planning website regarding the Warwick District Council Report on the outcomes of Public Consultation Options 2013 and would like to raise the following questions from information attained from that report:

1. WDC stated '1.2. The outcomes from this consultation have been used to help shape the Council's 2013 Gypsy and Traveller Preferred Site Options document.'
  - a. Why was there a consultation if ultimately Warwick District Councils intention was to ignore all of the relevant objections and public opinion?
  - b. Should Warwick District Council continue to incur costs with GT04 knowing that a subsequent appeal would identify GT04 as unsuitable and not complying with the National Planning Policy Framework?
  - c. Should Warwick District Council incur costs in finding the amenable Leamington Football Club a new ground?
  
2. Planning guidelines require Gypsy and Traveller Sites to be a 5 to 10 minute walk to shops, school and GP's. Presumably Warwick District Council expects all Gypsy and Travellers to have access to vehicles considering proposed schools and GP's are over 2.5 miles away. The proposed schools and GP's will also have to use the Harbury Lane and Fosse Way junction that is extremely busy. Presumably Warwick District Council is aware of the increased numbers of accidents at this point? Warwick District Council should also be aware that there are no footpaths and presumably would not consider providing a footpath considering the limited number of people that may potentially use it, the limited width of Harbury Lane and speed of vehicles using it. We are also aware of the gas pipeline that stopped consideration of development along Harbury Lane so costly infrastructure is unlikely to be utilised by any new development.  
 Please advise how your plans for shops, schools and GP's satisfy the National Planning Policy for Gypsy and Traveller Sites?

3. I would like to know why preferred site GT04 remains in the process considering the numerous times it contravenes national guidance. Your own public consultation options 2013 report confirms that you are aware of gypsy and traveller site requirements so why have you blatantly provided correct answers to the public and then completely ignored those answers?

I would like to think that this is an oversight by Warwick District Council that will be rectified and that it is not standard procedure for Warwick District Council to lie to the public to attain their goals?

In the appendix you will find some of the public consultation questions and Warwick District Council answers that are relevant to my questions a. to q.

- a. Warwick District Council state on many occasions that national guidance has reduced the number of pitches per site to 5. One of your comments was 'Whilst a figure of between 5 and 15 pitches per site was suggested in the consultation paper, guidance now clearly indicates that sites should comprise no more than 5 pitches per site' Why has Warwick District Council not complied with national guidance?
- b. The cost of providing Leamington Football Club with a new bespoke ground and conversion of old ground into a Gypsy & Traveller site will be very expensive that no Gypsy, traveller or private landlord will even consider. There is also the high cost of infrastructure required for this project that would be minimised if situated near town so how can GT04 remain a preferred site?  
Are Leamington Football Club aware that they may have to fund the new ground, infrastructure, removal of old ground and building of bespoke Gypsy and Traveller Site?
- c. Please confirm that the cost of the Gypsy and Traveller sites will not be incurred by Warwick District Council funds?
- d. Warwick District Council acknowledged in the answers to the following 'Whilst there may be fewer problems if sites are away from existing residential areas, this also means that they are further from the amenities and services that the Government say must be convenient to them. For this reason, preferred sites are on the edge of towns or villages that have services'.  
Why is Warwick District Council not complying with the Government?  
Why is Warwick District Council suggesting there may be 'fewer problems' and what are they implying?
- e. Potential sites and assessments were carried out by a third party consultant that has little knowledge of our district. The report is flawed in many areas including the method by which numbers of pitches required was identified.  
Has Warwick District Council been made aware of the questions being raised in Parliament regarding the reports and the requirement to have a separate planning policy for gypsies and travellers?
- f. GT04 is relatively isolated and is the choice of the settled community to be isolated. Therefore what are our rights regarding having a large community being place on our doorstep? Presumably if we do not want to integrate into a larger settled community or a traveller community then that is our choice?

- g. GT04 could not be considered a respectful distance away from the existing settled community because it adjoins two sides of a back garden owned by a lady who lives on her own. How can Warwick District Council consider that as integration?
- h. We understand that Compulsory Purchase Orders should no longer be used as agreed by Government in September 2013. Presumably if Leamington Football Club decides to withdraw their offer of their ground then Warwick District Council will remove GT04 from the preferred site list?
- i. The size and makeup of a Gypsy and Traveller site appears very attractive. The Government have stated that anyone can be a traveller so if site GT04 goes ahead, what restrictions are there on me buying site GT04 for my family?
- j. Warwick District Council stated that 'There are restrictions on noise levels into and out of Gypsy and Traveller sites in the same way as for the settled community and environmental protection can be called in to look at any cases of pollution reported. There will be a restriction on the number of caravans per site set out in planning conditions attached to a planning permission and enforcement action can be taken if these are exceeded. Exactly the same regulations apply to all members of the community, but there are more stringent tests for caravans which are more vulnerable than bricks and mortar dwellings.'  
MP's are questioning the ethnic minority status afforded to Gypsies and Travellers and I therefore question whether you will have the legal right to restrict or control any part of an ethnic minority. Comments please?
- k. What was the response from Salford University regarding the suggestion that their work was flawed?
- l. How can Salford University provide an objective report when they have no knowledge of the area?
- m. How can Salford University know how many travellers sites are required? Their method was to send two interviewees to ask the Gypsies and Travellers how many pitches they would like. How can this be evidence for an objective and reliable report?
- n. Many of the settled community live in places that do not provide an ideal home. If Gypsies and Travellers have been provided homes then why should they be included in the total number of pitches required? This has also been questioned by Government and suggests only real travelling families should be considered for pitches.
- o. The Salford University leading consultant has been involved in many similar Gypsy and Traveller reports throughout the country. Other councils and MP's are now realising that their methods are flawed and questions are arising concerning methodology used. Will Warwick District Council review the report and accept additional evidence of flaws that we have or will Warwick District Council continue their quest to tick another planning box regardless of evidence available?

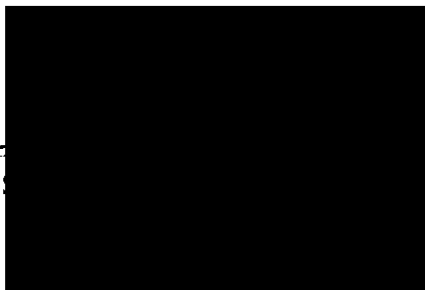
- p. How can a traveller be considered 'Persons of nomadic habit of life whatsoever their race or origin' if we are now going to provide them with a permanent site?  
What would Warwick District Council do if the whole of the settled community declared themselves Travellers (which they are entitled to do) and then requested a permanent site?
- q. Regarding house prices and difficulty to sell, Warwick District Council stated that 'during the consultation, one of the local residents association carried out their own survey on this topic and whilst it was found that at first there is a slight fall in existing property values, these quickly recover and have no lasting effects on overall values.'  
This will all depend on the price of the house because a £500,000 plus home is likely to fall considerably more than a less expensive home and will have a desirability factor that will be reduced if any type of planning is approved within its vicinity. Will Warwick District Council be giving assurances that if a home's value falls by more than say 10% are Warwick District Council prepared to make up the difference?

I would also like to raise the Warwick District Council awareness regarding Members of Parliament who are now questioning the relevance of ethnic minority status and the reasoning behind specific planning policy for Gypsies and Travellers. I believe that Warwick District Council have a duty of care to its settled community and should review this situation and consider whether a deferral of a final decision would be preferable. I can provide evidence of the debates and will continue to obtain updates on relevant decisions.

I reiterate the fact that Warwick District Council confirms that national guidance states that there should only be five pitches per site. I therefore put it to you that the demolition of the Leamington Football Ground, provision of a newer, larger and more bespoke ground plus the requirement to then build the infrastructure for the Gypsy and Traveller site for five pitches should be considered an expensive unviable proposition. Warwick District Council advised that a Housing Association, Private Landlord, Gypsy or Traveller will develop the site and I am confident that providing the directors of Leamington Football Club with a bespoke ground would not be on their agenda.

I look forward to your reply and would appreciate the opportunity discuss how we can lobby Government to make the National Planning Policy Framework fair for all UK residents.

Yours faithfully



**Appendix: Selection of Public Questions (Q) and Warwick District Council Answers (A) obtained from the Warwick District Council Public Consultation Options 2013 that are relevant to my questions.**

*Q. Many sites are huge and would accommodate far more than the total of the Council's requirement.*

*A. It is clearly stated within the document, that some are potential sites whilst others are large tracts of land known as 'areas of search'. This means that the boundary has been drawn widely and encompasses land within which a site may be found which is suitable. It has never been the intention of this Council to locate all of its requirement for pitches on one site and indeed this would go against national guidelines which, at the time of publication, suggested a maximum of 15 pitches per site. **This guidance has now reduced that number to 5 pitches per site.***

*Q. If there is a requirement for 25 pitches expanding to 31 why the need for so many proposed sites? Why are 15 proposed in the south of Warwick & Leamington? Bishops Tachbrook has 6 proposals. If all were approved there would be a huge Gypsy encampment in a small area and the village would be irrevocably changed.*

*A. This is the number of pitches required in total, not the number of sites. Sites of 5 pitches for example equates to 5 sites in the first five years and perhaps another site of six in the next ten years. **The Council has no intention of having large sites** and would certainly not expect to house all on one site, apart from the sheer size, it would not be manageable for the site owner, would be likely to cause friction and would not be popular with the Gypsy and Traveller community who prefer smaller sites for extended family. As previously stated, whilst there is a limited area outside the Green Belt for the Council to look for sites, it is not intended to put sites close together.*

*Q. The information is also not clear about which sites will be used to meet the need for 31 pitches. It appears to only show 19 sites and therefore does not make it clear where other sites will be.*

*A. There is a need for 31 pitches on sites within the district. These will be tested by site assessment. Each site could take up to 15 pitches, but since the consultation has taken place, **this number has now been reduced to a recommended 5 on each site.** Sites of 5 pitches for example equates to 5 sites in the first five years and perhaps another site of six in the next ten years.*

*Q. Need further clarification on the definition of a "pitch" and how this is to be utilised. i.e. single or multiple occupancy per pitch? Not clear what is meant by a pitch. Clear guidelines on the number of pitches per site and a preference for permanent as opposed to itinerant occupancy*

*A. A pitch is an area (usually hard standing) where there is space to park a permanent residential caravan/park home space for a travelling caravan, space for vehicles to park and a utility building for washing/showers and toilets etc. In addition a site must have space for children to play and washing to be hung out to dry. There may also be a need for some grazing land if families have their own horses and in some cases, space for storage etc. connected with a business. Services connected to the site should include a water and electricity supply and either mains sewerage or a suitable system where mains services are not available. **Whilst a figure of between 5 and 15 pitches per site was suggested in the consultation paper, guidance now clearly indicates that sites should comprise no more than 5 pitches per site.** The GTAA shows a need for both permanent pitches and transit sites, but the County Council wish to take on responsibility for the provision of transitory need for the whole of Warwickshire and they will find sites to do so. It is therefore for the district council to find sites for its permanent need, i.e. 31 pitches.*

*Q. Lack of information on pitch sizes, levels of occupancy or amount of land allocated makes it difficult to raise accurate objections and limits responses to general statements.*

*A. At this first stage of the work to identify sites, the consultation is looking to reduce the number of potential sites and bring forward any new suggestions. There is a lot more basic information within the 'Frequently Asked Questions' document accompanying the 'Sites for Gypsies and Travellers' paper. This was available online, at exhibitions and public meetings as well as at deposit points throughout the district. Questions on pitch size etc were raised during public meetings and at exhibitions and were answered at the time. Each pitch should have space for a permanent residential caravan/park home, space for a travelling*

caravan, space for vehicles to park and a utility building for washing/showers and toilets etc. The Government guidance on the size required therefore is 500sq m. At the time that the consultation was running, the advice was that a maximum of 15 pitches should be accommodated on a site. **Since this, it has been reduced to a maximum of 5 pitches.**

**Q.** Are these proposals or a done deal

**A.** The potential sites and areas of search were put out to **public consultation to gauge public response** as part of the ongoing work to identify suitable sites. As a result of the consultation, more sites have been suggested to us and now all of these sites will be assessed on a site by site basis against all the criteria to see which are the best ones to take forward into the next consultation.

**Q.** Better to site away from existing residential areas where less problems will occur.

**A.** **Whilst there may be fewer problems if sites are away from existing residential areas, this also means that they are further from the amenities and services that the Government say must be convenient to them. For this reason, preferred sites are on the edge of towns or villages that have services**

**Q.** Integration of sites into landscape can only take place through site management and this won't happen

**A.** This will be a matter which will be dealt with in detail through planning applications, however, **the landscape is one of the elements which will feature in the sites assessment report** which will be completed before the next Preferred Options consultation is undertaken in due course.

**Q.** Why are taxpayers being compelled to fund sites and services

**A.** Taxpayers are not being expected to fund sites and services. The Council is merely finding suitable sites which the Gypsy & Traveller community can purchase to set up and run themselves, or landowners can set up sites and rent pitches out to Gypsies and Travellers. **The Council will not have any involvement in the purchase of sites** or running sites at this point in time, other than if compulsory purchase is necessary in order to bring sites forward, in which case, the sites will be sold on.

**Q.** Should not be given sites for free

**A.** None of the sites will be given away. All sites will be made available for sale and either Gypsies and Travellers themselves, private landlords or housing associations will be able to purchase sites and rent out pitches.

**Q.** What are the likely costs of the provision of necessary infrastructure for these sites and how will this be funded.

**A.** It is difficult to generalise as each site will have different requirements. Some will already have services to the site whereas others may have to pay for new connections to existing services off site. **None of the costs will be borne by the Council.** It will be for the landowner to provide and fund .

**Q.** Isolation is not sustainable and does not lead to integration

**A.** There are few areas in Warwick district that can be described as truly isolated in geographic terms. Whilst there are those who wish to be integrated into their local community, there are those who do not and this applies to Gypsies and Travellers and to the settled community. **It is not suggested that Gypsy and Traveller sites should be set at great distances from the settled community, but at a respectful distance for both communities**

**Q.** Costs of compulsory purchase will be high and a risk

**A.** There will be an initial cost to the Council if sites have to be bought under compulsory purchase orders, however this cost will be offset when the sites are sold on to the Gypsy and Traveller community.

**Q.** Quarter of an acre per family is more than most families grow up with

**A.** The pitch size of 500 sq m is suggested in the guidance to provision of pitches for Gypsies and Travellers; some may be smaller than this, but given the amount of hard standing required for two caravans, parking and a utility building, most pitches need to be around this size.

**Q. Who is allowed to use the sites**

**A. In planning terms anyone who is defined as a Gypsy or Traveller as laid down in the 'Planning Policy for Traveller Sites' document which was published alongside the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in 2012: "Persons of nomadic habit of life whatsoever their race or origin, including such persons who on the grounds of their own or their families or dependants educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of Travelling Show People or Circus People travelling together as such" Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers are defined as minority ethnic groups under the Race Relations Act (1976)**

**Q. If the sites are operated by Gypsy and Travellers how can noise pollution, land pollution and overcrowding be controlled? What controls are there to prevent unauthorised Expansion.**

**A. In the same way that these issues are dealt with in any other situation. There are restrictions on noise levels into and out of Gypsy and Traveller sites in the same way as for the settled community and environmental protection can be called in to look at any cases of pollution reported. There will be a restriction on the number of caravans per site set out in planning conditions attached to a planning permission and enforcement action can be taken if these are exceeded. Exactly the same regulations apply to all members of the community, but there are more stringent tests for caravans which are more vulnerable than bricks and mortar dwellings.**

**Q. The methodology applied to the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) is flawed.**

**A. This respondent's points were put to the team at Salford University who carried out the GTAA on behalf of the Council and their responses relayed back to the respondent.**

**Q. Residents not been advised of the methods used by Salford University to obtain the data relied upon and over what dates. Please provide a full Copy**


**A. The numbers are justified through the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) which is referred to in our consultation document and has been online as part of our evidence base where anyone can consult it. It has also been taken to exhibitions and public meetings for interested parties to consult. For anyone unable to access the internet, hard copies can be made available on request.**

**Q. Given Council's own survey in "Evidence of Local Need and Historic Demand or Gypsy & Traveller sites in Warwick District" (April 2011) the need for the number of sites currently proposed and the resources being expended must be questioned**

**A. This document was prepared in the light of the Planning Inspector at a planning appeal calling into question the results of a previous South Housing Market Area GTAA (2008) that was prepared on behalf of a number of local authorities. It was felt that the work had not been comprehensively carried out and that the figures were in doubt, therefore the Council prepared its own document, but again this was called into question by the Inspector as it was not independent and may not have gathered all the details of Gypsies and Travellers passing through the area. For this reason and in order to provide a sound evidence base for this Plan, a new GTAA just for Warwick District was commissioned and the University of Salford, a leading consultant in this field, carried out and published the report in November 2012. This GTAA now supersedes all previous reports.**

**Q. The majority have a house elsewhere.**

**A. It is not for the Council to check whether this is the case or not. The GTAA interviews have asked questions about property owned elsewhere and this information has been taken into account in the final figures.**



Development Policy Manager  
Development Services  
Warwick District Council  
Riverside House, Milverton Hill  
Leamington Spa  
Warwickshire, CV32 5QH

30 April 2014

Reference: GT04 Land at Harbury Lane, Fosse Way

Dear Sirs

**Proposed Gypsy and Traveller Site GT04 - Land at Harbury Lane, Fosse Way**

I wish to object to the proposed Gypsy and Traveller Site GT04 – Land at Harbury Lane, Fosse Way. I reiterate my initial objections raised on the enclosed letter dated 26 July 2013 and can now provide additional reasons and points in support of my objection.

Warwick District Council confirmed GT04 as a preferred site and made the following comments for the reasons why it remained in the consultation process:

*'The site is not in the Green Belt and is currently the home ground of Leamington Football Club. The Football Club could be amenable to the sale of the land for a Gypsy and Traveller site if they are able to relocate as part of a wider scheme through the Local Plan. It is unlikely that the site could connect to a public foul mains sewer, but could drain away from the south or be served by a non-mains solution. Access could be taken off Harbury Lane provided that any new access is not opposite an existing access and visibility splays can be achieved. The nearest school with places is likely to be Bishops Itchington Primary School although new schools built through new housing developments allocated in the Local Plan could also provide school places to children in this area. GP surgeries are located at Bishops Tachbrook (2.7 miles), Whitnash or Harbury (2.6 miles) and bus services are 77 bus service (2060m), 64 bus service passes site, 498 bus service (irregular).'*

The only reason GT04 remains a preferred site is that Leamington Football Club said they were amenable to the sale of the land for a Gypsy and Traveller site. We understand that the majority of Leamington Football Club shareholders do not want to sell the ground and with compulsory purchase no longer a viable option, GT04 should be withdrawn from consultation. The other points and reasons for keeping GT04 in the process do not comply with the National Planning Policy Framework or new national guidance and in my opinion will fail the planning appeal process.

It would also appear that the Warwick District Councils amended map of GT04 includes substantially more land than is owned by Leamington Football Club and this additional land is not for sale.



I wish to emphasise the fact that the aim of the Communities & Local Government's 'Planning Policy for Travellers Sites' (March 2012) is to "ensure fair and equal treatment for travellers". The guidance clearly states that the objective is to increase the number of traveller sites in appropriate locations" and it remains my position that Site GT04 is in a wholly inappropriate location for residential occupation, for all the reasons set out in my objection below. Accordingly, it is my view that permitting the permanent siting of pitches in GT04 would not deliver a fair or equal treatment to Gypsies and Travellers residing at this site.

Site GT04 is in direct conflict with Paragraphs 3.3 and 3.6 to 3.12 of guidance contained within the Government's good practice guide: 'Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites' on selecting appropriate locations for sites. Paragraph 3.6 expressly states that "sites should not be identified for Gypsy and Traveller use in locations that are inappropriate for ordinary residential dwellings, unless exceptional circumstances apply. These circumstances would be where the location is unsuitable for housing, for practical and technical reasons which would not adversely affect the health and safety of Gypsy and Traveller residents or the sustainability of the site." It is clear that the definition of 'exceptional circumstances' does not apply in this case.

### **Road Safety**

1. Harbury Lane is a busy road with a 50mph speed limit as vehicles travel to the M40, Leamington Spa, Warwick and Jaguar Land Rover at Gaydon. The Fosse Way has a 60mph speed limit with a continual stream of traffic throughout the day. The stretch of road between the A425 and the B4100 is an accident black spot with a high casualty rate. The junction with Harbury Lane is particularly dangerous owing to the speed and volume of traffic using this crossroads. The latest statistics obtained from the WCC Road Safety Intelligence Unit bear this out as follows:  
Fosse Way from A425 to B4100 – 41 reported accidents in last 5 years to 31 December 2013 with 68 casualties.  
The Harbury Lane / Fosse Way Crossroads have had 6 accidents in the last 3 years to 31 December 2013 with 8 casualties. A further 2 accidents with casualties in the last couple of months have not yet been recorded on the statistics.  
An increase in vans, lorries, trailers and caravans as Travellers enter and exit the site will only exacerbate the problem. The potential risk to travellers and the local population makes this site unsuitable.
2. Warwick District Council should be aware that there are no footpaths and presumably would not consider providing a footpath considering the limited number of people that may potentially use it, the limited width of Harbury Lane and speed of vehicles using it. There is also a gas pipeline that stopped consideration of development along Harbury Lane so costly infrastructure is unlikely to be utilised by any new development.  
GT04 does not satisfy the National Planning Policy for Gypsy and Traveller Sites with regard to your plans for shops, schools, GP's, road safety and the ability to safely walk anywhere.
3. Children cannot be allowed to stand on a busy road to wait for transport to school.

GT04 Road safety does not comply with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

### **Education**

1. The consultation documents states that the nearest school with places is likely to be Bishops Itchington Primary School. This does not take into consideration the 115 houses which have already been granted planning permission in Bishops Itchington or the 200 proposed houses to the former cement works site between Bishops Itchington and Harbury. It is therefore unlikely that there will be any spare capacity at either of Harbury or Bishops Itchington schools. As a consequence, any school age children from GT04 would have to travel into Leamington Spa to attend school.

GT04 Education does not comply with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

### **Health Care**

1. The consultation document states that 'GP surgeries are located at Bishops Tachbrook (2.7 miles), Whitnash or Harbury (2.6 miles)'. The nearest and most convenient medical facility to this site is at Harbury and the surgery is already struggling to cope with demand as it has more than 6000 registered patients.

GT04 Health Care does not comply with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

### **Integration**

In the Warwick District Council public consultation report the public raised the question '*Isolation is not sustainable and does not lead to integration*'.

The Warwick District Council answer was '*There are few areas in Warwick district that can be described as truly isolated in geographic terms. Whilst there are those who wish to be integrated into their local community, there are those who do not and this applies to Gypsies and Travellers and to the settled community. It is not suggested that Gypsy and Traveller sites should be set at great distances from the settled community, but at a respectful distance for both communities*'.

1. GT04 is relatively isolated and is the choice of the small settled community to be isolated. It should be our right to decide whether we want to live close to and integrate into a larger settled community or a traveller community and the consensus of opinion is that we do not want to integrate into a larger community.
2. GT04 could not be considered a respectful distance away from the existing settled community because it adjoins two sides of a back garden owned by a lady who lives on her own. This does not comply with new national guidance or the National Planning Policy Framework.
3. Warwick District Council has not written to or spoken to Mrs M Williams of Fosse Paddocks, Fosse Way Chesterton regarding the potential Gypsy and Traveller site GT04 that could border two sides of her back garden. Warwick District Council has shown a complete lack of duty of care and respect for the local community in their blinkered quest to finalise the local plan.
4. No direct consultation with any of the local community directly affected.
5. The National Planning Policy Framework states that integration into the settled community is required. There are approximately 20 adults and children that would be considered the settled community. Travellers could number over 100 and this cannot be considered integration.
6. Land is predominantly used for sheep. The potential for stray dogs may cause conflict with local farmers.

GT04 Integration does not comply with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

### **Integration into the Landscape**

In the Warwick District Council public consultation report the public raised the question *'Integration of sites into landscape can only take place through site management and this won't happen'*

The Warwick District Council answer was *'This will be a matter which will be dealt with in detail through planning applications, however, the landscape is one of the elements which will feature in the sites assessment report which will be completed before the next Preferred Options consultation is undertaken in due course.'*

1. Leamington football ground is on a low flood plain overlooked by the village of Harbury and Chesterton Windmill. The ground itself has been elevated and cannot be amenable to integration into the landscape.
2. The majority of the site as confirmed by Enfusion is a flood zone. Any raised site such as Leamington Football pitch would not be integrated into the landscape without harming the visual appearance and character of the area.
3. Lack of Integration into the landscape would spoil the views from Chesterton Windmill, a 17th-century Grade I listed building and a striking landmark in South-East Warwickshire. The Warwick District Council website states *'Chesterton Windmill is a conspicuous landmark in South-East Warwickshire. Chesterton Windmill is a famous feature of the Warwickshire landscape and can be seen from several miles away. It stands on a hilltop overlooking the Roman Fosse Way about five miles south-east of Warwick. The mill was built in the years 1632-1633 and remained in use until about 1910 when its machinery ceased to work. It was restored from 1965- 1971 by Warwickshire County Council in collaboration with the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings and the Ministry of Public Building and Works.'*  
This Warwick District Council website identifies two historic sites, Chesterton Windmill and the Roman Fosse Way that the Enfusion report neglected to mention. They must be taken into consideration when the decisions are made.

GT04 Integration into the landscape does not comply with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

### **Flooding / drainage**

1. The area is prone to flooding and is effectively a flood plain.
2. Fields are often under water and livestock and ponies moved accordingly.
3. Harbury Lane is often flooded and impassable.
4. Planning & Building regulations cannot be complied with because site GT04 is unable to use soak away or runoff since the soil is clay based

GT04 Flooding and drainage does not comply with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

## Infrastructure

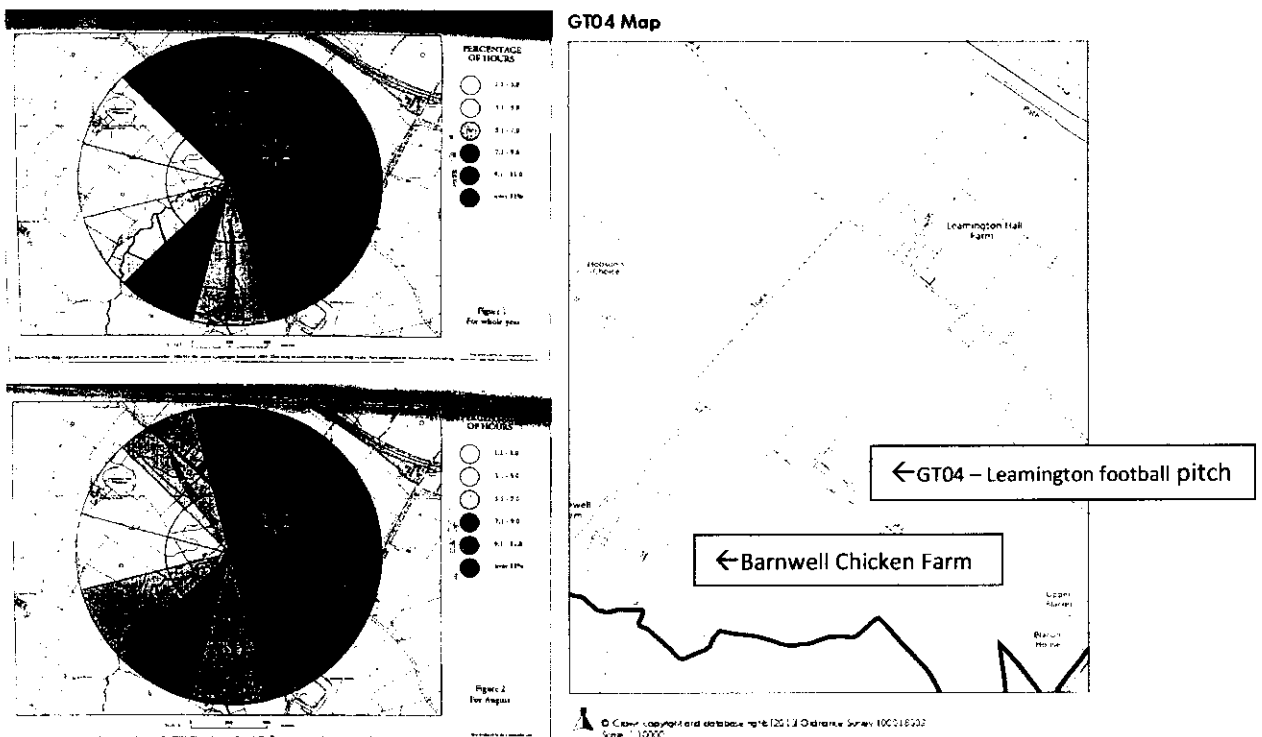
1. The infrastructure at GT04 is very poor and would require considerable investments to make it of reasonable standard.
2. GT04 is located at a point where there is no mains gas, mains sewerage or drainage and these facilities will need to be provided, thus adding to the cost of development. It is also possible that the electricity supply will be a problem as it is a rural system supplying a limited number of consumers, therefore a new or upgraded supply line may be needed.
3. GT04 is considered by British Telecom to be too far from the Whitnash Telephone Exchange to provide an adequate telephone or internet service (They term it as a long line). They will not upgrade the system resulting in poor telephone connections and intermittent (<1mbs) internet service.
4. GT04 does not have a reliable mobile phone service. There are no mobile phone networks that provide more than a mediocre service.

GT04 Infrastructure does not comply with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

## GT04 is within the aroma emissions zone of the Barnwell Chicken Farm

GT04 is very close to Barnwell Chicken Farm who operates an intensive poultry unit that often create an unbearable odour.

We have information from the air quality assessment submitted as part of the 1996 application examining the impact of odour emissions from the poultry units on the air quality and the diagram below indicates the odour plume and downwind directional dispersal from the centre of the site for the whole year, as well as for August (when the potential for odour complaints are highest). The broad location of site GT04 is marked with a star for context and ease of reference and I have included a map showing how close Barnwell Farm and GT04 are situated.



The diagrams clearly illustrate that prevailing winds in the locality blow from the south/southwest, dispersing odour emissions from the poultry farm in the north/north easterly direction towards and across site GT04, thereby generating undesirable conditions for residential occupation in that location. It is also worth highlighting that the southern boundary of site GT04 is less than 200 metres from the nearest poultry unit at Barnwell Farm, therefore impacts upon residential amenity and potential odour complaints from the site is greatly increased.

With reference to the Planning Practice Guidance Suite which came into effect on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2014, the third bullet point of Paragraph 5 in the 'Air Quality' guidance clearly states that Local Planning Authorities should consider whether the development would "expose people to existing air pollutants. This could be by building new homes, workplaces or other development in places with poor air quality." As the 1996 air quality assessment demonstrates, the odour emissions generated by the existing poultry units affects the air quality of the areas surrounding the site, with considerable effects upon the areas to the north-east of Barnwell Farm where Site GT04 is proposed. Accordingly, it is considered that GT04 is not suitable for residential occupation.

#### **Compulsory Purchase / Planning Policy**

Warwick District Council must realise that there is clear guidance from the Department of Communities and Local Government stating that land should not be compulsorily purchased to provide permanent pitches for Gypsies and Travellers. Current planning guidance substantially waters down legislation introduced in 2006. Compulsory purchase orders are also considered bad practice and should not be used.

The Under Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government Brandon Lewis made the following statement on 25 April 2013:

*'We have taken a series of steps to increase planning protection of the green belt and open green spaces:*

*We have revoked the last Administration's Office of the Deputy Prime Minister Circular 01/06 on traveller sites. Our new planning guidance on traveller sites, published in March 2012, strengthens protection of the green belt and open countryside. It clearly states that "plan-making and decision-taking should protect Green Belt from inappropriate development"; "traveller sites (temporary or permanent) in the Green Belt are inappropriate development" and "local planning authorities should strictly limit new traveller site development in open countryside" (DCLG, Planning policy for traveller sites, paragraphs 4, 14, 23).*

*This is complemented by the strong protection for the green belt in the National Planning Policy Framework (e.g. paragraph 14, footnote 9, paragraph 17 and section 9). For the avoidance of doubt, unmet need does not in itself constitute the "very special circumstances" necessary to permit inappropriate development in the green belt.*

*The last Administration's guidance, which pressured councils to compulsory purchase land for traveller sites, has been deleted (Circular 01/06, paragraph 35).*

*Stronger consideration is now given to the protection of local amenity and the local environment amenity (Planning policy for traveller sites, paragraphs 4, 9). Text disregarding local landscape and nature conservation designations has been removed (Circular 01/06, paragraph 53).*

*In conjunction with measures in the Localism Act, we have abolished top-down regional targets, scrapped the unelected regional planning quangos and are revoking the last Administration's Regional Strategies. Councils can now plan for traveller site provision in a locally-led way.*

*Our planning guidance will help councils in planning enforcement cases against unauthorised development. Guidance restricting the ability to use enforcement action has been removed (Circular 01/06, paragraphs 12, 63).*

*The Localism Act gives councils new powers to tackle the intentional abuse of retrospective planning permission (whilst still allowing for the correction of innocent mistakes by householders). We are also giving councils more freedom to use Temporary Stop Notice powers to enable local authorities to take immediate action against unauthorised caravans; the Town and Country Planning (Temporary Stop Notice) (England) (Revocation) Regulations 2013 come into force on 4 May.'*

Warwick District Council need to start listening to the Government policy makers and should not proceed with provision of Gypsy and Traveller sites until they are fully aware of new guidance and regulation.

When Leamington Football Club withdraw their offer of the football ground, Warwick District Council should immediately remove Site GT04 from the preferred site list.

### **Preferred Option Report**

In the initial consultation Site GT03 and GT04 had similar relevant objections that resulted in GT03 being withdrawn from the process and Site GT04 objections and public opinion being completely ignored by Warwick District Council. The two sites should be considered the same because the width of Harbury Lane cannot create such a significant difference to make GT04 a viable proposition. Neither site satisfies national planning guidance.

### **Leamington Football Club**

1. You confirm that national planning guidance states that there should only be 5 pitches per site. I therefore put it to you that even with ten pitches the demolition of the Leamington Football Ground, provision of a newer, larger and more bespoke ground plus the requirement to then build the infrastructure for the Gypsy and Traveller site should be considered an expensive unviable proposition. Warwick District Council have advised that a Housing Association / Private Landlord, Gypsy or Traveller will develop the site and I am confident that providing the directors of Leamington Football Club with a bespoke football ground would not be on their agenda
2. Leamington Football Club shareholders do not want to move from the New Windmill Ground and compulsory purchase should no longer be considered an option
3. Warwick District Council should consider how they are spending the local settled community funds before agreeing to provide the costly infrastructure required to make GT04 viable for a Gypsy and Traveller site.
4. It is irrelevant whether Leamington Football Club want to move to a new football ground. Warwick District Council should realise Site GT04 is unsuitable as a Gypsy and Traveller site and should stop incurring further costs because ultimately the Secretary of State will review the relevant objections resulting in the decision that the selection process and site failed the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

### **Underutilisation of nearby Gypsy & Traveller Sites**

1. There is a Gypsy and Traveller site at Ryton that is underutilised.
2. We have been advised by Warwick District Council that some Gypsies and Travellers can afford to buy pitches so it is reasonable and fair to suggest that they buy land and follow planning regulations like the settled community. The travellers should not have council support and funding to attain planning as this would be discriminatory and unfair to the settled communities that could not get similar help or funding.

### **Suggested sites**

1. Kenilworth has set a precedent in that it accepts the legal encampment of gypsies and travellers for its Horse fair. This site should be considered as a permanent pitch.

### **House Prices**

Regarding house prices and difficulty to sell, Warwick District Council stated that 'during the consultation, one of the local residents association carried out their own survey on this topic and whilst it was found that at first there is a slight fall in existing property values, these quickly recover and have no lasting effects on overall values.'

This will all depend on the price of the house because the desirability factor of a house worth over £500,000 is likely to fall considerably more than a less expensive home if any type of planning is approved within its vicinity. Warwick District Council has made comments in the public consultation that are not relevant to the value of homes near site GT04. If Warwick District Council force site GT04 through, then a compensation package should be included.

### **Money Laundering Regulations**

Warwick District Council should be aware of current Money Laundering Regulations and must ensure their policies comply with current guidance.

### **Salford University Report and other points**

1. My opinion is that Salford University have not provided an objective report when they have no knowledge of the area and have relied upon interviews with a few local Gypsy and Traveller families to calculate the need and number of pitches required. This does not constitute an objective reliable report.
2. I have reviewed Gypsy & Traveller websites and they confirm that there are not enough travellers in the whole of the UK to fill the number of sites being provided. Presumably that is the reason why there are so many vacant sites at the Ryton Traveller site.
3. I have reviewed Government opinion and MP's have questioned Salford University GTAA reports. An example was from MP Gavin Williamson (South Staffordshire) (Con) who on 4 February 2014 said *'Does my hon. Friend share my concern about how supply is determined? Salford University undertook a study, including in my own constituency that basically asked the Gypsy and Traveller populations how many pitches they thought they would require during the next 15 to 20 years. Unsurprisingly, the number was very substantial: the Gypsies and Travellers deemed that they needed a 60% increase in the supply of pitches in quite a short period.'*  
Warwick District Council should also be concerned that their Salford University report contains many flaws that will result in overprovision of pitches and the wasting of Council funds on pointless infrastructure.
4. Many of the settled community live in places that they would not consider an ideal home. If Gypsies and Travellers have been provided Council houses then they should be satisfied and not be included in the total number of pitches required. This point of view is shared by MP's who have suggested that only real travelling families should be considered for pitches.
5. The Salford University leading consultant has been involved in many similar Gypsy and Traveller reports throughout the country. Other councils and MP's are now realising that their methods are flawed and questions are arising concerning methodology used. Warwick District Council should review the report and defer any decisions until a full investigation is complete.
6. The GTAA does not consider existing capacity in current Gypsy and Traveller sites.
7. Warwick District Councils report 2011 identified far less pitch requirements so should be evidence as to the flaws in the Salford University findings.
8. The Salford University GTAA report states that of the interviewees living in houses, only one wanted to move to a pitch.
9. The Salford University and Warwick District Council did not interview Warwick District residents, landowners or small businesses for their opinions.
10. The Salford University report contains serious flaws in the number of sites required. Travellers own reports confirm there are only 50,000 travellers in UK so the GTAA report is incorrect.



11. There is a prima facie requirement for the council to demonstrate 'need' – this can only be done by proving demand and this has to be done by analysing the number and frequency of illegal encampments, the Council have not done this. The Salford University report is flawed and cannot be relied upon.
12. The Salford University report is flawed in many ways which I highlighted in my original objection dated 27 July 2013.
13. The Salford University report says that only seven traveller families are in caravans so that should be the maximum number of pitches required.
14. There are no illegal sites in the Warwick district, therefore no sites required.

### **New National Planning Guidance and Warwick District Council Public Consultation Options 2013**

1. Warwick District Council has not followed new national guidance regarding the numbers of Gypsy and Traveller pitches proposed on each of the preferred sites. Warwick District Council are aware of this as stated numerous times in their public consultation report that guidance states there should be a maximum of five pitches per site.  
In the public consultation report Warwick District Council state on many occasions that national guidance has reduced the number of pitches per site to 5. One of your comments was *'Whist a figure of between 5 and 15 pitches per site was suggested in the consultation paper, guidance now clearly indicates that sites should comprise no more than 5 pitches per site'*.  
Warwick District Council should abide by national guidance.
2. Warwick District Council stated that 'The outcomes from this consultation have been used to help shape the Council's 2013 Gypsy and Traveller Preferred Site Options document' however ultimately all relevant objections and public opinion would appear to have been ignored. GT03 has been correctly excluded from further consultation and GT04 has similar issues that should also result in its removal from further consultation.
3. Planning guidelines require Gypsy and Traveller Sites to be a 5 to 10 minute walk to shops, schools and GP's. Warwick District Council cannot expect all Gypsy and Travellers to have access to vehicles considering proposed schools and GP's are over 2.5 miles away.  
The proposed schools and GP's will also require the Gypsies and Travellers to use the Harbury Lane and Fosse Way junction that is extremely busy and Warwick District Council should be aware of the increased numbers of accidents at this point.  
Warwick District Council should also be aware that there are no footpaths and presumably would not consider providing a footpath considering the limited number of people that may potentially use it, the limited width of Harbury Lane and speed of vehicles using it. There is also a gas pipeline that stopped consideration of development along Harbury Lane so costly infrastructure is unlikely to be utilised by any new development.  
GT04 does not satisfy the National Planning Policy for Gypsy and Traveller Sites with regard to your plans for shops, schools, GP's, road safety and the ability to safely walk anywhere.

4. GT04 should not remain in the consultation process considering the numerous times it contravenes national guidance. The Warwick District Council public consultation options 2013 report confirms that you are aware of gypsy and traveller site requirements. This report would suggest that Warwick District Council have provided correct answers to the public and then blatantly ignored those answers.  
I would like to think that this is an oversight by Warwick District Council that will be rectified and that it is not standard procedure for Warwick District Council to provide incorrect answers in a public consultation.
5. The cost of providing Leamington Football Club with a new bespoke football ground and conversion of old ground into a Gypsy & Traveller site will be very expensive in that no Gypsy, traveller or private landlord will ever consider a viable option. There is also the high cost of infrastructure required for this project that would be minimised if situated near town.
6. I am alarmed to read the Warwick District Council answer to the public question '*Better to site away from existing residential areas where less problems will occur?*'  
Warwick District Council said '*Whilst there may be fewer problems if sites are away from existing residential areas, this also means that they are further from the amenities and services that the Government say must be convenient to them. For this reason, preferred sites are on the edge of towns or villages that have services.*'

Warwick District Council should comply with the Government policy and Warwick District Council should not force the 'fewer problems' on a very small community.

7. Warwick District Council stated that '*There are restrictions on noise levels into and out of Gypsy and Traveller sites in the same way as for the settled community and environmental protection can be called in to look at any cases of pollution reported. There will be a restriction on the number of caravans per site set out in planning conditions attached to a planning permission and enforcement action can be taken if these are exceeded. Exactly the same regulations apply to all members of the community, but there are more stringent tests for caravans which are more vulnerable than bricks and mortar dwellings.*'  
  
I suggest that Warwick District Council make it clear who will be monitoring and enforcing regulations because the ethnic minority status afforded to Gypsies and Travellers may make enforcement difficult. Maintaining the local settled communities basic human rights should also be a priority.

8. The Green belt argument fails as gypsy camp can be put / planned for a tiny bit of greenbelt.

## **Reasons why Warwick District Council should not comply with Gypsy & Traveller Planning policy**

I would like to raise the Warwick District Council awareness regarding MP's who are now questioning the relevance of ethnic minority status and the reasoning behind specific planning policy for Gypsies and Travellers. Questions are also being raised regarding the actual numbers of Gypsies and Travellers that require a pitch and the unsatisfactory way the GTAA is prepared. The Under Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government is questioning whether Gypsies and Travellers that have ceased to travel should be included in the overall pitch requirement.

Brandon Lewis, The Under Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government said ***"We want to ensure fairness in the system, and I stress that we announced our intention to consult later this year on whether the planning definition of Travellers should refer only to those who actually travel and have a mobile or transitory lifestyle. If someone has ceased to travel, it is right to ask whether they should be treated as a Traveller for planning purposes, and we will be seeking answers to that question."***

Eric Pickles, The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government said ***"We have deleted the guidance which pressured councils towards the compulsory purchase of land for traveller sites"***

I believe that Warwick District Council owe a duty of care to its settled community and should review this situation and consider whether a deferral of a final decision would be preferable. The Warwick District community all need the Gypsy and Traveller Planning Policy to be reconsidered by Parliament and as you can see from the comments made below, there is support from MP's at the highest level. Warwick District Council has been elected by the local settled community and should not make hasty unpopular planning decisions if there could be other options. I am sure that the overwhelming majority of Warwick District residents would join and support Warwick District Council in objecting to the Government and forcing change to their discriminative and unfair planning policies.

The following is a report from a debate on 4 February 2014 followed by the comments made by Mr A Selous MP and various other MP's:

### ***Tory MPs call for revision of Traveller and Gypsy planning legislation***

***6 February 2014 | By Laurna Robertson***

***Conservative MPs this week called for 'special planning provisions' for Travellers and Gypsies to be removed.***

***At the debate organised by Andrew Selous in Westminster Hall on Tuesday, the Conservative MP for South West Bedfordshire told Brandon Lewis, under-secretary of state for Communities and Local Government, that the current 'twin-track' planning system 'greatly threatens and undermines community cohesion and causes significant fear, distrust and upset to both Travellers and settled residents'.***

***He asked the minister to 'introduce primary legislation to deal with the situation in the forthcoming Queen's speech and, in the interim, immediately to lower the 3 per cent net household formation annual growth requirement for Gypsies and Travellers to around 1.5 per cent, as I do not believe that the evidence supports the 3 per cent figure and it is causing huge difficulty to local authorities and our constituents'.***

***Mr Lewis said in response that he wants 'fair play in the planning system'.***

***He added: 'I am keen to hear views on how planning policy for Travellers could be further refined to ensure that the green belt and other areas that we value are given proper protection. This debate has provided a welcome opportunity to pursue that discussion, but I hope that it will develop in due course.'***

He concluded his speech by summarising three things the government's planning reforms seek to achieve: an adequate supply of authorised sites to meet Traveller needs; a level playing field for all; and the protection of our natural heritage and open spaces.

In the same debate, Philip Hollobone, Conservative Party MP for Kettering, spoke about a private member's bill that he wanted to name 'Gypsies and Travellers (the Same Planning Rules as Everyone Else) Bill', which he said he was told by 'parliamentary authorities that was not allowed'. He said the bill would 'do what we have all been asking for, which is to remove all special provisions for Gypsies and Travellers in the planning system so that everyone is on exactly the same level playing field when they make a planning application.

'Why should there be any special provisions for those calling themselves Gypsies and Travellers, especially when we have learned today that three quarters of those people live in houses like everyone else? I am not convinced that there are as many Gypsies and Travellers as everyone says there are.'

#### **Quotes from the 4 February 2014 debate - Hansard Report**

**Andrew Selous:** A separate planning system for Gypsies and Travellers has been developed in this country.

The Human Rights Act 1998 and section 225 of the Housing Act 2004 recreated a parallel planning system for Gypsies and Travellers. I have no doubt that that was done with the best of intentions, but it is no longer appropriate for the settled or Traveller communities. Many local councillors share that view.

We know from the 2011 census that 76%—more than three quarters—of Gypsies and Travellers live in houses, bungalows or flats, while only 24%—less than a quarter—live in caravans or mobile homes. Thus, the existing separate planning law for Gypsies and Travellers applies only to less than a quarter of their population in the United Kingdom. I cannot think of any other group in the UK, whether vulnerable or not, that we seek to ghettoise in such a way. We must look at whether such separation in the planning system has worked for the benefit of Gypsies and Travellers; I think that the evidence suggests that it has not.

When I look at Polish residents in my constituency, I note that they have an active social centre and, indeed, their own Polish Catholic church, both of which are close to my constituency office. We do not have a separate planning system for Poles, allowing them to live together with planning rights not available to the rest of the population, but they have managed to maintain their identity and cultural heritage by meeting together regularly.

I see no reason why there should be any loss of Gypsy or Traveller identity from what I am proposing. To achieve what I am proposing, I am calling on the Minister to introduce primary legislation in the forthcoming Queen's Speech to amend section 225 of the Housing Act 2004, which requires a separate housing needs assessment for Travellers and Gypsies. I am also calling for the Human Rights Act 1998 to be similarly amended as well as, if necessary, those sections of the Equality Act 2010 that apply to Gypsies and Travellers.

**Andrew Selous:** The current twin-track, separated planning system—one for Gypsies and Travellers and one for settled residents—greatly threatens and undermines community cohesion and causes significant fear, distrust and upset to both Travellers and settled residents. If someone can demonstrate, or simply declare, that they are a Gypsy or Traveller, they acquire highly lucrative planning rights not available to the rest of the population.

**Andrew Selous:** The reality is that anyone can self-declare as a Traveller. I very much welcomed the written ministerial statement made by the Minister on 17 January in which he committed to looking at that issue.

The current separate planning system for Gypsies and Travellers often takes no account of the proper provision of facilities in rural locations, specifically those for sewerage and sanitation. Harm

is often caused to the local environment by hedgerows being illegally pulled out, pollution of the local water courses and farmland, and sometimes encroachment on others' land.

Many villages in my constituency, such as Billington, Stanbridge, Tilsworth, and Heath and Reach, feel very threatened by the large number of Travellers and Gypsies being sited in their communities to comply with current Government requirements.

I do not believe the current situation is tenable, because central Government are forcing local authorities to take many extremely unpalatable decisions that are causing a great deal of anxiety and anger in rural and urban communities. As I said, that does not aid community cohesion. I believe strongly that we are all equal under the law. That is an important principle, but many of my constituents in the settled community do not believe that equality under the law exists at the moment and feel highly discriminated against.

I repeat my request to the Minister to introduce primary legislation to deal with the situation in the forthcoming Queen's Speech and, in the interim, immediately to lower the 3% net household formation annual growth requirement for Gypsies and Travellers to around 1.5%, as I do not believe that the evidence supports the 3% figure and it is causing huge difficulty to local authorities and our constituents.

**Tim Loughton:** Everyone should be treated the same in housing assessment, and we overestimate the real need. A recent census found that more than two thirds of Travellers have brick and mortar homes in other parts of the country. We must look at the vulnerability of these communities to very poor education, qualification, health and employment outcomes, and a long-term policy that addresses that is needed. Just treating them differently in the planning system is not the solution.

**Mr Hollobone:** This perversion of the planning system is reiterating itself through these absurd extra provisions that are bolted on. People in my constituency are being brought to tears worrying about the planning regulations on Gypsies and Travellers. It is not unfair to say that some parts of the rural and farming community are being terrorised by the threat of theft, crime, rubbish and antisocial behaviour from local Gypsy and Traveller groups.

Through my private Member's Bill, I argue that that requirement should be abolished. There should not be pressure on local authorities to come up with a designated number of sites, and abolishing that requirement would allay a lot of fears in my community.

**The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (Brandon Lewis):** Gypsies and Travellers are as much members of our communities as anyone else and deserve the same protection and the same rights. The key word is "same". It has been suggested that there may be one law for settled communities and a separate law for Travellers, but we need to ensure that everybody is treated equally.

We want fair play in the planning system. We are committed to encouraging sustainable development, and it is important that local authorities plan for the needs of all in their communities, including Travellers. We should not, however, tolerate any abuse of the planning system. We have introduced a broad package of measures to ensure a fair deal for both Travellers and the settled community.

In addition, we have reminded council leaders of the strong powers already available to them to deal swiftly with illegal and unauthorised encampments.

We want to ensure fairness in the system, and I stress that we announced our intention to consult later this year on whether the planning definition of Travellers should refer only to those who actually travel and have a mobile or transitory lifestyle. If someone has ceased to travel, it is right to ask whether they should be treated as a Traveller for planning purposes, and we will be seeking answers to that question.

**The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (Brandon Lewis):** *In conclusion, I stress that our planning reforms seek to achieve three things: an adequate supply of authorised sites to meet Traveller needs; a level playing field for all; and the protection of our natural heritage and open spaces. We are determined to ensure that everyone has the ability and aspiration to prosper and that we break down the barriers to social mobility through a planning system that is fair and equal to all.*

**The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government – Eric Pickles**

On 5 August 2013 Eric Pickles said 'I understand concerns regarding the impact that unauthorised and inappropriately-placed traveller sites can have on the countryside and open. This Government inherited a system wrought with ineffective and environmentally harmful rules for traveller sites; we have undertaken a series of comprehensive reforms to tackle the embedded sense of unfairness in the planning system and better empower local authorities to deal with illegal sites.

Planning rules from my Department now make clear whether permanent or temporary, traveller sites should be considered inappropriate development in the Green Belt, providing local planning authorities with a clearly defined position upon which local planning decisions can be made.

In March, we also strengthened the "Temporary Stop Notice system", thus improving the enforcement powers of councils, backed up with large fines. By allowing councils greater freedom to use these notices, breaches can be stopped quickly and effectively. Previously, notices could be used to stop the levelling of a site, but could not stop the imposition of a caravan on it. The changes will remove this constraint and ensure that rules and protections are applied fairly to all so that the rights of travellers, and the settled community, continue to be protected.

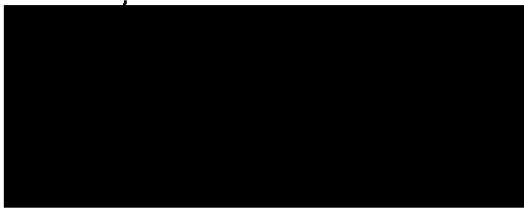
There has been a perception that the traveller community receive preferential treatment in the planning system under the Labour Government. Unfortunately, under the previously flawed system, tensions between the traveller and settled communities were far too prevalent.

We have therefore revoked John Prescott's outdated and exceedingly lengthy document Diversity and Equality in Planning in an effort to restore fairness and improve community cohesion. This includes getting rid of rules that encourage the monitoring of the private lives of individuals and promote the overuse of expensive and bureaucratic Equality Impact Assessments.

The planning system should be fair and take into account the needs of all law-abiding sections of society; independent of age, occupation or lifestyle. We have deleted the guidance which pressured councils towards the compulsory purchase of land for traveller sites and the abolition of the top-down targets, derived from Labour's ineffective Regional Spatial Strategies. These targets prevented councils from adapting their planning policies for travellers to meet the needs of, and deal with the relevant problems in their area. The public wants to see fair play in the planning system; and I am determined we deliver on that.'

I maintain my opinion that Site GT04 Land at Harbury Lane, Fosse Way is a wholly inappropriate location for a Gypsy and Traveller site, with regard to the numerous reasons provided. Further it is my contention that the development of the site for residential occupation runs contrary national policy and guidance and should, therefore, not be permitted. For these reasons, I would respectfully submit that Warwick District Council should consider Site GT04 as entirely unsuitable, inappropriate and unsustainable location for the Gypsy and Traveller site.

Yours faithfully



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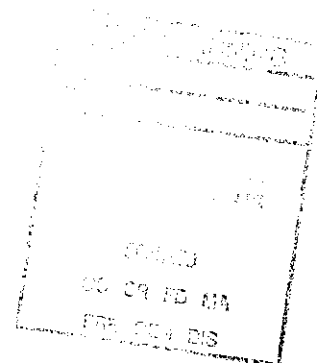
## Mr S D J Megeney

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26 July 2013

Reference: GT04 Land at Harbury Lane, Fosse Way



Dear Sirs

### **Proposed Gypsy and Traveller Site GT04 Land at Harbury Lane, Fosse Way**

I am aware that the Warwick District Council Gypsy and Traveller Site Options for consultation puts my home and land and my mother in laws home and land in the middle of your proposed site at GT04 Land at Harbury Lane, Fosse Way. I wish to draw your attention to the fact that all land and homes within the proposed site are principal private residences and not for sale.

I wish to lodge an objection against the proposed site at GT04 Land at Harbury Lane, Fosse Way.

My objections are based on the reasons why site GT04 does not comply with the criteria by which Gypsy and Traveller sites will be judged for suitability and sustainability by Warwick District Council; reasons why the independent report by Enfusion is flawed; and reasons why the Gypsies and Travellers would not be satisfied with this site.

I understand the Warwick District Council criteria for judging suitability and sustainability is as follows:

1. Convenient access to the GP surgery, schools and public transport.
2. Avoiding areas with a high risk of flooding.
3. Safe access to the road network and provision for parking, turning and servicing on site.
4. Provision of utilities including running water, toilet facilities, waste disposal, etc.
5. Avoiding areas where there could be an adverse impact on the important features of the natural and historic environment.
6. Sites that can be integrated into the landscape without harming the character of the area.
7. Promotes peace and integrated coexistence between the site and local community.
8. Avoids placing undue pressure on local infrastructure and services.
9. Reflects 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.



The following points clearly identify objective reasons why the proposed Gypsy and Traveller site GT04 does not satisfy the Warwick District Council criteria.

**1. Access to Local Amenities**

- a. The site has no convenient access to the GP surgery, schools or public transport and the site should be considered dangerous as highlighted by the number of accidents and the requirement of a speed camera.
- b. The use of a vehicle or public transport is a necessity and considering the lack of public or school transport site GT04 is not eco-friendly.
- c. The nearest doctor's surgery has no capacity for an influx of new patients. It already takes a week to get an appointment.
- d. The nearest primary, junior and senior schools are already at capacity.

Access to local amenities does not comply with the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (Page 2, point 4).

**2. Flooding**

- a. The area is prone to flooding. Fields are often under water and livestock and ponies moved accordingly. The area is effectively a flood plain as confirmed by the Enfusion Report.
- b. The Middle Road/ Fosse Way junction is often flooded.
- c. Harbury Lane is often flooded and impassable.

The Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (Page 4, point 11g) states 'do not locate sites in areas at risk of flooding'.

**3. Highways and Safety**

- a. GT04 is located on the Fosse Way and Harbury Lane that are high risk travel routes with more than 12 serious accidents in the past 3 years. Numerous accidents occur at their junction, and access to either road is poor added to by the additional traffic created by Jaguar Land Rover. Speed cameras and warning signs are required and prove our concerns. Both roads remain dangerous and difficult to join.
- b. No bus stop is available on the Fosse Way and providing one would be unsafe for road users.
- c. No path or pavement is available to walk anywhere and cycling is dangerous on busy commuter routes.
- d. Children are at risk if allowed to stand on a busy road to wait for transport to school.
- e. GT04 is located near the railway line with poor security fencing which could be a risk for children and young adults.

**4. Services and utilities**

- a. GT04 is located at a point where there is no mains gas, mains sewerage or drainage and these facilities will need to be provided, thus adding to the cost of development. It is also possible that the electricity supply will be a problem as it is a rural system supplying a limited number of consumers, therefore a new or upgraded supply line may be needed.
- b. GT04 is considered by British Telecom to be too far from the Whitnash Telephone Exchange to provide an adequate telephone or internet service (They term it as a long line). They will not upgrade the system resulting in poor telephone connections and intermittent (<1mbs) internet service.
- c. GT04 does not have a reliable mobile phone service. There are no mobile phone networks that provide more than a mediocre service.
- d. The infrastructure at GT04 is very poor. Considerable investment would be required to make it of reasonable standard.

## **5. Natural Environment / Agriculture**

- a. GT04 proposed site is an area of good quality farmland fully utilised for livestock and arable farming.
- b. I understand that consideration has been given to using Leamington Football pitch however this is subject to flooding and could not be integrated into the landscape without harming the visual appearance and character of the area. I also presume Leamington Football Club will continue to use the site as their training ground.

## **6. Integration into the landscape**

- a. The majority of the site as confirmed by Enfusion is a flood zone. Any raised site such as Leamington Football pitch would not be integrated into the landscape without harming the visual appearance and character of the area.

Lack of Integration into the landscape would spoil the views from Chesterton Windmill, a 17th-century Grade I listed building and a striking landmark in South-East Warwickshire. The Warwick District Council website states 'Chesterton Windmill is a conspicuous landmark in South-East Warwickshire. Chesterton Windmill is a famous feature of the Warwickshire landscape and can be seen from several miles away. It stands on a hilltop overlooking the Roman Fosse Way about five miles south-east of Warwick. The mill was built in the years 1632-1633 and remained in use until about 1910 when its machinery ceased to work. It was restored from 1965- 1971 by Warwickshire County Council in collaboration with the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings and the Ministry of Public Building and Works.'

This Warwick District Council website identifies two historic sites, Chesterton Windmill and the Roman Fosse Way that the Enfusion report neglected to mention. They must be taken into consideration when the decisions are made.

## **7. Co- existence**

- a. The criteria by which Warwick District Council will assess coexistence, seeks to promote peaceful and integrated coexistence between the site and the local community. GT04 is located in a rural location with limited numbers of houses. Fifteen pitches plus friends and family would suggest well over 120 residents compared to less than 25 local resident and this cannot be considered a good basis for integration. The Warwick District Council criteria would therefore suggest that only 3 pitches should be considered and would therefore definitely not be a cost effective option.
- b. Land is predominantly used for sheep. The potential for stray dogs may cause conflict with local farmers.

Co-existence does not comply with the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (Page 3, Point 9d & e) or Policy C: Sites in rural areas and the countryside (Page 12, Point 12) stating 'When assessing the suitability of sites in rural or semi-rural settings, local planning authorities should ensure that the scale of such sites does not dominate the nearest settled community'.

## **8. Local Infrastructure**

- a. The nearest doctor's surgery has no capacity for an influx of new patients. It already takes a week to get an appointment.
- b. The nearest primary, junior and senior schools are already at capacity.
- c. The infrastructure at GT04 is very poor. Considerable investment would be required to make it of reasonable standard.

The local infrastructure is unsatisfactory and will not reduce the need for long distance travel to schools, shops and doctors reducing environmental damage. This does not comply with the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (Page 4, Point 11d).

## **9. Traditional Lifestyles & Local Economy**

- a. There are many businesses that operate from sites GT04 that could potentially suffer for many reasons if the proposed site goes ahead. A selection is as follows:
1. Will Russell – Farm land being fully utilised for sheep
  2. Bob Wright – land being used for arable farming
  3. Fosse Garage
  4. Rollason Fencing
  5. Barnwell Chicken Farm
  6. MH Polo Ltd – teaching people to ride ponies
  7. Fosse Paddocks Ltd – farming and ponies
  8. Warwick Reclamation
  9. Mallory Court Hotel
  10. Harbury Lane Breakers Yard
  11. There are many others.

## **Report By Enfusion**

I believe that the Enfusion Report has been prepared by people with no knowledge of Warwickshire and will highlight flaws within its analysis and content as follows:

1. **Economy** – Enfusion Report ‘Uncertain’  
I have listed many businesses that could potentially suffer because of the lack of integration into the landscape and co-existence.  
In my opinion Economy should be reclassified ‘Minor Negative’
2. **Sustainable Transport** – Enfusion Report ‘Minor Positive’  
My comments regarding Highways and Safety are real.  
The Enfusion Report provides the caveat ‘However, at this stage, little detail is known about existing traffic and transport issues and how the allocation will affect them’.  
How can they report a ‘Minor Positive’ when they don’t actually know.  
In my opinion Sustainable Transport should be ‘Major Negative’ or at least ‘Uncertain’ because Enfusion cannot make an opinion on something they are uncertain about.
3. **Reduce need to travel** – Enfusion Report ‘Minor Positive’  
I live two miles from Harbury and three miles from Whitnash with shops, doctor’s surgery and schools even further away. The Enfusion Report states within 1.5 miles and is incorrect. This does not reduce the need to travel and in my opinion should be reclassified ‘Major Negative’.
4. **Prudent use of land and natural resources** – Enfusion Report ‘Minor Negative’  
All land is fully utilised by the local businesses. In my opinion prudent use of land and resources should be reclassified as ‘Major Negative’.
5. **Natural Environment and Landscape** – Enfusion Report ‘Minor Negative’  
My comments regarding flooding have been confirmed by the Enfusion report however Enfusion do not highlight the scale of the problem. Raised areas to avoid flooding will not provide integration into the landscape.  
In my opinion Natural Environment and Landscape should be reclassified as ‘Major Negative’.
6. **Historic Environment** – Enfusion Report ‘Uncertain’  
Both Chesterton Windmill and the Roman Fosse Way are of historic importance. In my opinion Historic Environment should be reclassified as ‘Major Negative’.
7. **Climate Change adaption – flood risk** – Enfusion Report ‘Minor Negative’  
My comments regarding flooding are real and Climate Change Adaption – Flood Risk in my opinion should be reclassified ‘Major Negative’.
8. **Housing Needs** – Enfusion Report ‘Major Positive’  
I understand the need for housing however this site has many negatives and should not remain an option.
9. **Local Services and Community Facilities** – Enfusion Report ‘Neutral Effect’  
My comments regarding access to local amenities, highways and safety, services and utilities and local infrastructure highlight many problems within this proposed site.  
In my opinion Local Services and Community Facilities should be reclassified ‘Major Negative’.

10. Health & Well Being – Enfusion Report ‘Minor Positive’  
Site GT04 is too remote to offer health and well-being to the Gypsy and Traveller Community. In my opinion the site should be reclassified ‘Minor Negative’.
11. Poverty and Social Exclusion – Enfusion Report ‘Minor Positive’  
Site GT04 is too remote to help with the effect of poverty and social exclusion for the Gypsy and Traveller Community. This site would actually promote social exclusion by placing the Gypsy and Traveller community miles from built up areas. I believe that the Warwick District Council report in May 2012 suggested sites should be adjacent to an existing built up area in terms of access to schools, shops and employment, this site does not comply. In my opinion the site should be reclassified ‘Minor Negative’.

**Reasons Why The Gypsies and Travellers would not want to settle at sites GT04**

1. The smells that permeate from Barnwell chicken farm are awful and consideration should also be given to Avian Influenza Virus (Bird Flu) that may be a potential risk.
2. The noise from the railway would be unacceptable to a person living in a caravan.
3. The railway line fencing is inadequate and would be a constant worry to parents.
4. The road network is too dangerous for provision and use of public transport.
5. There are no pavements or paths for adults or children so safely walk anywhere.
6. The roads are too dangerous for the use of bicycles by children or young adults.
7. The area is of serious flood risk.
8. There are no local amenities (doctors, dentists, schools or shops).
9. There is limited telephone, mobile or internet access.
10. Potential dog owners would have the worry that they are surrounded by sheep and livestock and may come into conflict with local farmers.

**Other Relevant Points**

1. The Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (Page 6, Point 22) highlights decision-taking in planning applications for Traveller Sites. I would point out that there are other local Gypsy and Traveller sites within Warwickshire that are not being fully utilised and therefore suggest that local provision for sites is adequate.
2. The Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (Page 6, Point 24a-d) advises that local planning authorities should attach weight to the effective use of previously developed, untidy or derelict land providing benefits as listed in point 24 b-d).

I have clearly identified many reasons why site GT04 does not meet the criteria set out by Warwick District Council. I hope that this will be sufficient for Warwick District Council to concentrate their efforts to secure a more suitable site.

Yours faithfully



S D J Megeney