



Sanctuary
 HOMES NOT HOUSES
 (Gypsy Traveller Housing Group)
 School of Law
 University of Warwick
 Coventry
 CV4 7AL

Development Policy Manager
 Development Services,
 Warwick District Council
 Riverside House,
 Milverton Hill,
 Leamington Spa,
 CV32 SQH

Monday 10th February 2014

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you on behalf of my team at Sanctuary, we are a small group of law students from the University of Warwick; who have been working towards the implementation of a human rights project within Warwickshire. We have focused on the absence of Gypsy and Traveller (GAT) sites and the web of inequalities, which result from this.

Over the last four months we have conducted extensive research in considering the twenty proposed GAT sites and have found four to be fundamentally inadequate. We welcome the Council's commitment to identifying a potential home for the GAT community however the sites in question do little to provide anything above brick and mortar; failing to meet the criteria specified in the Government's Good Practice Guide.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/11439/designinggypsites.pdf

Thus far campaigns against the development of these sites have surfaced from fundamentally from local residents who are concerned with historical heritage and property prices rather than the protection of the housing rights of a group in society who are at current deprived.

Sanctuary has been in contact with your colleagues at the Council itself along with Charities and Organisations, Site Managers at local sites, Gypsies and

GUIDANCE TO LOCAL RESIDENTS
 Reference: Warwick Council's plans for a Gypsy / Traveller site at the Warwickshire Exhibition Centre.

Key Information on why the site is inappropriate:

- 1) Economy**
 - Would inevitably result in the loss of Warwickshire Exhibition Centre
 - The Warwickshire Exhibition Centre has lost prospective business already
 - During Exhibition Periods, up to 40 jobs are provided for the local community
 - An economic impact assessment projects that the exhibition centre contributes more than £2m to the local economy.
- 2) Travel**
 - High Risk Travel route. More than 12 accidents in last 3 years
 - Road State has no assessment. It is dangerous
 - No facility to walk in to Radford Semele. Cycling also dangerous
- 3) Access to Local Amenities**
 - Distance to primary school
 - Distance to secondary school
 - Distance to shopping centre
 - Distance to local doctors surgery (one of which is full)
- 4) Historic Environment**
 - Sits on the Archaeological Register with Warwick District Council.
 - Ancient Pattern has been found in the adjoining fields
 - Historic Toll site from medieval times
- 5) Poor Facilities**
 - No Gas or Mains Drains
 - Road Power supply already at maximum capacity

If you believe that the Gypsy / Traveller site should not occupy the land at the Warwickshire Exhibition Centre,

YOU MUST ACT NOW.

Please fill in a Response Form or Write a letter to the council.

Your Local Community

<http://tinyurl.com/FesseWayRAID>
 This site will be updated regularly in the coming weeks, and will be used as a focus point for community activity and effectively with the local community.

Example of a local campaign against the development of a site: Site GT02 received much media coverage which focused on injustices to the local community

Travellers who currently reside in Warwickshire, Human Rights Specialists and the local media.

Our group has a far-reaching twitter following which ranges from academics such as Lisa Scullion who has undertaken research for the European Human Rights Commission, Human Rights Barrister Marc Willers from Garden Court Chambers, who identifies himself as ‘fighting for the rights of Gypsies, Travellers and Roma’, the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) and GAT throughout the United Kingdom. These twitter connections led to phone interviews in which we discussed experiences of planning issues facing minority communities. We believe that these connections puts our team at Sanctuary in a unique position in assessing the adequacy of the proposed sites alongside the specific needs of the GAT community and the Government’s Good Practice Guide.

[South West Law @PlanningSWL](#)
Specialists in Planning Law, committed to ensuring fair treatment for Gypsies and Travellers



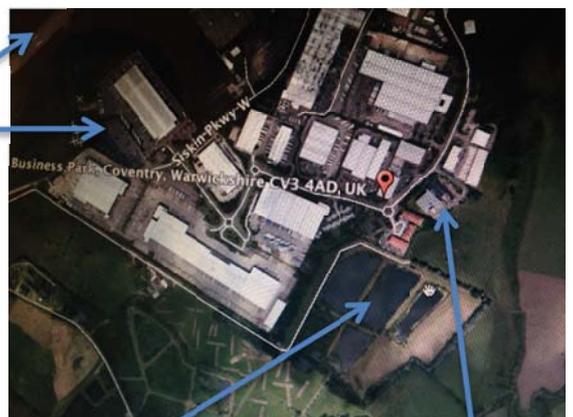
An example of direct communication with experts in this field

Please see below for a summary of our findings. We are aware that the proposed sites are currently under review and alternatives have been identified, it is hoped that these representation are of assistance to the Council and persuasive in informing the next stages of the Warwick Local Plan.

GT01 (Land adjacent to Cobalt Centre, Siskin Drive)

We are fundamentally concerned with site GT01, which is poorly located and highly hazardous to the health and well being of potential residents.

This site is placed within close proximity to Coventry Airport Runway Airfields, Coventry Airport not baring any consideration for the ‘greater noise transference through the walls of trailers and caravans than through the walls of conventional housing’. (Good Practice Guide at 3.18)

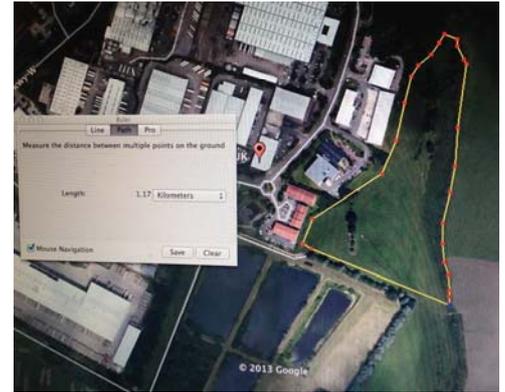


What is more GT01 is placed next to an industrial estate and sewage treatment centre, which is recognised as ‘unpopular for the settled community’

Sewage Treatment Centre Industrial Estate

resulting in further ‘*isolation*’ and creating safety fears for the ‘*high density of children likely to be on the site*’. (Good Practice Guide at 3.10)

Our team used social media to help us further investigate the inadequacies of the proposed site. Out of the 45 twitter followers we contacted, 27 responded with views on the site proposals. Some of our findings are summarized below:



- 5 respondents said that they regarded any site to be better than no site
- The 22 other responses all agreed that the site was “inadequate” and provided “unsuitable living conditions”
- 9 of the responses came from people who identified themselves as Roma Gypsy or Irish Traveller and all 9 said that they would not be satisfied with the allocation of site GT01 as a plot for them to live on.
- 4 respondents are currently looking over our project proposal in greater detail and will be getting back to us with more advice and recommendations on how to proceed with the project.

We have further been directly in contact with Woodside Caravan Park and its GAT residents who share our express concern with the development of this traveller site. The unpleasant features of the site, many of which are not child friendly do little in regards to instilling within the Gypsy/ Traveller community a sense of inclusion into society and hope to enjoy inherent rights (such as the right to health and education) which they currently lack.

GT10 (Land at the Guide Dogs National Breeding Centre and Tollgate House at Bishops Tachbrook)

After our team personally visited the Centre, we determined that it would be wholly unsuitable as a gypsy and traveller site. The land is situated in between the M40 and B4100 road. Again these roads are high-traffic routes with fast cars, and poor pavement and lighting provision. The area is also very isolated.



After a meeting with the site manager it became apparent that there has been a lack of communication between the Council and the landowners. Through direct communications with the staff at the Guide Dogs National Breeding Centre we learnt that the centre houses a large number of puppies with low immunity, which could be endangered if mixed with pets of GAT community, which are often kept outside. Although this is not directly relevant to the human rights issues of implementing this site, we believe it to be highly persuasive for your considerations.



Sanctuary's concern is that, a community should not be housed so close to an animal-breeding center, for obvious reasons. The large number of dogs poses serious threats of contamination and could be dangerous for children. Noise pollution is also a serious concern, with the center housing as many as 70 dogs, at one time.

GT17 (Service area west of A46 Old Budbrooke Way) and GT18 (Service area east of A46 Old Budbrooke Way)

Finally our team has found the parallel sites GT17 and GT18 to be immensely inappropriate for development as a GAT site. We were fundamentally concerned with the location of these sites when we embarked on our investigation. Satellite images show the sites to be located on a dual carriageway, which is in very close proximity to a petrol station. However having personally visited the sites we can say that our concerns have significantly increased and with confidence we assert that these sites clearly do not meet an acceptable standard of 'adequate housing'.



The sites are located next to the A46 motorway, which is a high-risk route with a history of accidents and high traffic flows. Our team has produced some video footage of the sites, which shows how fast the cars on the motorway were travelling and has high levels of noise and air pollution. Clearly, this would not be a safe place for a community to live, with road accidents likely if children were to run onto the



Please see this sound clip from the site



motorway. In fact our team were shocked that Warwickshire Council had even identified these locations as a possibility, with the lack of pavement provision or lighting.

The Council should also have considered the health hazards associated with living in such close proximity to petrol stations. The proposed sites are less than 100m away from the petrol stations. Research shows that air in the immediate vicinity of petrol stations is often polluted with airborne particles from evaporated fuel and therefore harmful.



A small shed on the site containing high voltage electricity and power, connected to overhead

We hope you are mindful of our findings in when considering the adequacies of these sites in upcoming consultations. If the Council requires any further assistance or information please contact the undersigned.

Yours faithfully,

Sanctuary (Gypsy Traveller Housing Group)