

Gypsy and Traveller Site Assessment 2021

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council

Final Report
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1. Context

- 1.1 The Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment undertaken earlier this year in May 2021 identified the need to provide a minimum of 16 pitches to address the housing requirements for existing Gypsy and Traveller families over the next 5 years. The 2015 Planning Policy for Traveller Site (PPTS) expressly empowers Local Authorities to,
- ‘Ensure that their local plan includes a fair, realistic and inclusive policies to increase the number of traveller sites in appropriate locations with planning permission, to address under provision and maintain an appropriate level of supply’**
- 1.2 The assessment specifies that the primary cause of this needed increase in supply is net-migration within the existing gypsy communities and the expansion of existing families. Potential capacity for additional provision had identified three existing sites which potentially could provide between 11-13 additional pitches.
- Sunrise Cottage, Mile Tree Lane, CV2 1NT- potential for 3 to 5 additional pitches through site intensification
 - Fellas Acre, Mile Tree Lane, CV2 1NT - potential for 2 additional pitches through site expansion
 - Winter Oak, Watling Street, CV11 6BQ – potential for 6 additional pitches through site intensification
- 1.3 The accommodation assessment recognizes that one of the key challenges faced when considering pitch requirements is the actual nature of pitches and how this relates to the number of households that they can realistically support. Previously, DCLG 2008 set out the broad parameters that should be considered in the design of accommodation for gypsies specifying the amount of land per household which is suitable for a mobile home, touring caravan, and a utility building, together with space for parking. These parameters were never to be intended to be used necessarily as fixed criteria that must be adhered to at all costs in the re-development of sites but rather provide a framework that both, land owners and planning authorities could reference in considering the appropriateness of any specific site for gypsies and travelers.
- 1.4 The overarching key element to be considered is ultimately, whether the design of the site takes into account the needs and demographics of the families intended to be the future residents. Ideally, sites that provide for more than 4 pitches should have the capacity for a shared amenity building, play area, possible small garden, drying area for clothes, bicycle storage shed, plus two vehicle spaces per pitch. However, where you have an existing site(s) in operation such as the three identified above, where possibly such design measures have not necessarily been incorporated, the assessment of their suitability for intensification or expansion requires a further judgment based on the needs of the existing residents/community, and whether any such expansion if implemented would detract from their own peaceful and quiet enjoyment of their immediate surrounding area. In addition, we also need to consider how best any new residents can be incorporated into the

existing scheme to provide them with the opportunity to successfully blend into an already established community which in some instances has an established hierarchy of self-management. In some instances, if the new residents are an extension of the existing family this can be a straight forward process.

2. Sunrise Cottage, Mile Tree Lane, CV2 1NT

- 2.1 This is a private site owned by Mr. John Gaskin [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. At the time of the initial needs assessment in May 2021, the information provided by the owner was that he had 3 pitches occupied on site plus an existing chalet, with the capacity to provide for a further 3-5 pitches.



- 2.2 The site itself has a solid concrete base throughout with a number of utility service portals set against the perimeter fencing. There is child play provision on site and plenty of space for touring vehicles to turn around without compromising the safety of children or other residents walking outside. There are a couple of disused out buildings to the rear of the site that the owner intends to demolish which potentially could increase its capacity however, given the settled nature of the existing tenants the owner feels comfortable in providing for a further 3 pitches which he believes would not detract from the privacy of the current residents. Clearly, if we assume the need for touring vehicles or static homes to be at least 6m apart as consistent with DCLG 2008 good practice, then this space provision for each pitch can easily be provided for within the current site configuration. The site is fully enclosed within secure 2.0m high fencing around the full perimeter and is accessed through an electronic gate. The immediate locality is primarily rural save and except for the other 4 static home parks adjacent to the site. Nearest village is

Bulkington (less than 2 miles) which has the typical range of local shops, schools, and health care facilities provided.



(View to the north from the middle of the site towards the entrance gate onto Mile Tree Lane)



(Rear of the site illustrating the concrete hard standing provision for 2 pitches. A further pitch can be accommodated opposite)

3. Fella's Acre, Mile Tree Lane, CV2 1NT

- 3.1 This site lies within 30m along the lane from Sunrise Cottages and is owned by Terry Lee [REDACTED]. The owner lives on site with other members of his family, and has capacity for additional pitches but has no desire to expand his provision on site as he believes with 5 pitches that it is at a sufficiently manageable level for the existing residents/families.



- 3.2 However, the owner had mentioned at the time of the initial needs assessment that he owned other land in the immediate locality and was interested in exploring the potential of redeveloping the land for providing static accommodation for his expanding family as well as possibly stop over or long- term secure accommodation for other gypsies and travelers. The site is less than ½ mile away from their existing home and was previously a wholesale nursery growing and selling vegetables. With an existing 6 bedroom detached house as well as old dilapidated horse stables and a farm shop the site has potential for redevelopment for both a transit or more permanent site.

4. The Old Nursery. Mile Tree Lane

- 4.1 Presently the site is abandoned although the owner has installed secure, electronic gates and is undertaking upgrading works to the existing detached house. Set with 1.4 acres of land the site has good access off Mile Tree Lane, has a care home adjacent to it on one side with fields on the other as well as to the rear. Opposite lies another static home site. We understand that the site may sit within the green belt but given the presence of existing buildings and the government's relaxation of planning restrictions on green belt sites for the provision of affordable housing, this should not present any concern from a planning perspective. The site benefits from water and power connections and there is an aerated sewage system to the rear that could be connected to.



(View from Mile Tree Lane showing adjacent property)



(Secure entrance and detached house)

- 4.2 The Site actually benefits from two secure entrances and already has an existing drive through with plenty of space for a turning head for emergency vehicles if needed as well as cars with trailers or static caravans.



Note existing drive way, and static home that has been there for over 20 years. Along the perimeter fencing are power portals



Plenty of open space to allow for children's play area or other amenity provision depending on the planning consent sought.



- 4.3 Depending on negotiations with the owner the site could possibly be designed in accordance within the principles and good practice previously set out in DCLG 2008. The owner is keen to take this forward and is not looking to over develop the land, indicating he would be happy to provide as little of up to 5-6 pitches if necessary.



- 4.4 Given the rural location, low level of permanent housing and with the site in ownership of the owner this has great potential to bring forward as a viable opportunity for either transit or new settled provision.

5. Winter Oak, Watling Street, CV11 6BQ

- 5.1 This site sits on the border of two authorities with part of the site in the adjoining Hinkley and Bosworth Council border. The owner of the site that fronts onto the main road, lives within one of the chalets and it is clear that this is a very popular location for travellers. At the time I counted over 12 tourers compared to the 8 that were identified at the time of needs assessment. The vehicles all have plenty of space and whilst there is a lack of amenity provision for residents, the site is well secured and children would be able to play safely without accidentally escaping the site perimeter. There is plenty of available space to increase the supply of both static homes and touring vehicles. I estimated the site has capacity for at least a further 6 pitches
- 5.2 The location of the site is ideal in so far as its close to both the M42 and M6 toll motorways. There is some housing along Watling Street but in the main this is a rural location with a well- hidden access providing ample privacy for the tenants as well as minimizing noise and potential visitor nuisance.
- 5.3 Given its popularity with the travelling community, and the fact that it is a well-established community with the owner living on site, there is no reason why the site cannot be intensified to provide more accommodation.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 Two of the three sites have the potential to expand the number of pitches without appearing to either over develop the site or compromise safe access and egress for vehicles with trailers and visitors. Both these sites are set within rural locations on a good access to local facilities and the motorway network.
- 6.2 The other opportunity is an undeveloped site owned by a traveller, who has an appetite for seeking a planning consent to develop the site either for temporary stopover or more permanent accommodation. This site has potential for more pitches than the owner feels he needs at the moment and may be one that might lead itself to further intensification once a new community is established.
- 6.3 Collectively these three sites could possibly meet the 16- pitch shortfall identified within the needs assessment.