

CLIFTON PARISH COUNCIL'S WRITTEN STATEMENT TO THE HEARING OF DERBYSHIRE DALES LOCAL PLAN - 2017

Clifton Parish Council are defined as a 'Representor' to Derbyshire Dales Local Plan 2017. Our Parish Boundary is only approximately 100 yards from the proposed Traveller's site.

We wish to make a written submission under Matter 6 – Gypsy and Traveller Provision of the Summary of Matters and Issues for Examination, as identified by the Inspector, Mark Dakeyne (B.A.(Hons) MRTP.

Issue 2 – The Allocation (Watery Lane, Ashbourne)

We have questions as to whether the Watery Lane site is suitable or deliverable after reading the “ Designing Gypsy and Traveller Good Practice Guide” issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government, we have the following comments:-

- The proposed site is adjacent to a Council recycling centre and close to a sewerage plant. This could cause health issues to any person who resides close to them. The Good Practice Guide states that sites should not be located close to either of these due to health concerns so why has this site been chosen?
- The recycling site and sewerage plant have not been tested for odours. These could cause serious health risks.
- The Government National Planning Policy Framework states “good design and high quality new housing equally applies to gypsy and traveller sites.” If this site were being assessed for residential housing, in our opinion it would be considered totally unsuitable. Consideration should also be given to how close it is to the main Ashbourne cemetery (approximately 100 yards). The concerns of local residents who have family or friends buried here is totally understandable.
- The proposed site is approximately 150 yards down a single track with no obvious turning or passing points. This could cause road safety issues for both caravans and emergency vehicles.
- Has the cost of installing services been considered taking into consideration the distance the site is from the main road and who would be able to fund the services and any off site re-inforcements required?
- Due to the past use of the site as a Community rubbish tip, has the possibility of ground contamination been considered? or testing been completed? Again the Good Practice Guide recommends that sites are flat. Due to its previous use as a tip the levels are very uneven and has poor, soft ground conditions.
- Has a flood risk assessment been completed for the site considering its close proximity to the River Henmore.
- In our opinion this site been picked based on a need to satisfy the Local Plan. Or has it been chosen by the District Council with a genuine belief that it is suitable as a Traveller's Site ?
- Ashbourne is in great need of the completion of its bypass, especially in the light of recent housing and industrial development and also the further increase in both as part of the Local Plan. HGV traffic has increased substantially in the last 2 years and causes many difficulties in the town centre

and immediate surroundings. This proposed site is on the preferred route of the bypass, meaning if a proposed traveller site goes ahead the bypass may never be constructed.

- If this proposed Traveller site is included in the approved version of the Local Plan the District Council will become the landlord. Who will fund the on-going servicing and maintenance costs of the site ? Will the Travellers pay Council Tax and Rent?

Issue 3 – Allocations to meet the pitch requirement

We have questions as to whether the Watery Lane site is of a sufficient size after reading the Good Practice Guide ,to meet the 9 pitch target. We have the following comments:

- Consideration needs to be given to the size of each pitch which need to be 6 metres apart with parking space of a suitable size. The pitch also requires space for a caravan, garden and utility building. Will this site provide this?
- The site also needs (recommended by the Good Practice Guide) to have a security office and play area; can the site provide these? The site will also require internal access roads to reach each pitch; can this be accommodated? No evidence has been provided to satisfy these recommendations.
- As mentioned in Issue 2, the site has poor levels and ground conditions. Can these be made good so that the whole site is useable? Caravans normally require good flat ground with a hard surface. Again can this be achieved over the whole site? Otherwise the provision of 9 pitches is not sustainable.

CLIFTON PARISH COUNCIL

APRIL 2017