



**Maldon District Council
Maldon District Local Development Plan**

Inspector's Matters (April 2016)

Provision for Travellers

Statement made on behalf of the Local Planning Authority

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STATEMENT

MATTER: PROVISION FOR TRAVELLERS

Inspector's Matter

It is clear from his letter dated 6 March 2016 that the Secretary of State regards Policy H6 to be not consistent with national policy. That letter also refers to the agreement of the Council's Planning and Licensing Committee to use the Essex Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment of 2014 [EB007b] (the new GTAA) to inform future plan-making.

I note that the new GTAA concludes that there is a need for 17 new pitches between 2013 and 2018, and for 32 between 2013 and 2028. Does the Council propose that these figures should be included within Policy H6 as a clear plan requirement? If not, how would the Council suggest that the inconsistency of Policy H6 with national policy should be remedied? I would be grateful for concise and unambiguous confirmation of the Council's position on this issue.

In addition, I understand that the Council has undertaken a 'call for sites' exercise inviting people to nominate land to provide Gypsy and Traveller accommodation. Does the Council aim to include any sites identified through this process in the Local Development Plan presently under examination? Please provide an update on this, along with an explanation of the Council's intentions for delivering Gypsy and Traveller sites.

Maldon District Council response

Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA 2014)

1. Following the completion of the Essex Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (Opinion Research Services, July 2014) [EB007b]¹ the Council commissioned an independent review of the assessment. The Review of the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment Evidence (Sustainable Housing & Urban Studies Unit, University of Salford, July 2015) [EB104]² concluded that, on balance, the GTAA 2014 is considered to be sufficiently robust, and the Council should make provision for 32 additional traveller pitches by 2028.

¹ Available to view at:
<http://www.maldon.gov.uk/LDP/pre-submission/4%20Housing/EB007b%20Gypsy%20%20Traveller%20Accommodation%20Assessment%202014.pdf>

² Available to view at:
[http://www.maldon.gov.uk/LDP/pre-submission/4%20Housing/EB104%20Review%20of%20Gypsy%20and%20Traveller%20Accommodation%20Assessment%20\(July%202015\).pdf](http://www.maldon.gov.uk/LDP/pre-submission/4%20Housing/EB104%20Review%20of%20Gypsy%20and%20Traveller%20Accommodation%20Assessment%20(July%202015).pdf)

2. The Council is therefore using this review, together with the GTAA 2014, to inform plan making through allocations in the Site Allocations DPD (see below). This was reported to the Council's Planning and Licensing Committee on 1 October 2015.³

Site Allocations Development Plan Document

3. The Council is addressing the need for traveller provision through the development of a Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) which will allocate sites to provide traveller pitches and also allocate sites for rural housing and rural employment to 2029.
4. The Site Allocations DPD is seeking to provide for:
 - 420 dwellings to meet the housing needs of rural areas
 - employment land for the rural area
 - 32 traveller pitches
5. A general five stage methodology has been developed for the work, incorporating:
 - Stage 1: Settlement sifting
 - Stage 2: Long list of sites
 - Stage 3: Short list of sites (quantitative assessment)
 - Stage 4: Short list of sites (qualitative assessment)
 - Stage 5: Recommendations for allocation
6. A 'call for sites' consultation and Town and Parish consultation was undertaken from 14 September to 31 October 2015 to identify potential sites for rural housing, rural employment and traveller pitches.
7. Stages 1 and 2 were completed in December 2015. Stage 3 was completed in January 2016 and Stage 4 in February/March 2016. The Council is currently working on Stage 5, the final assessment in the process, which will identify recommendations for the allocation of rural housing, rural employment and travellers sites across the district, prior to undertaking public consultation.
8. Progress reports on the Site Allocations DPD have been taken to the Council's Planning and Licensing Committee in October 2015, March 2016 and April 2016.⁴

³ See Agenda Item 8 – Planning Policy Update, paragraph 2.3.4:
http://www.maldon.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/810/planning_and_licensing_committee

⁴ See Item 8 – Planning Policy Update:

Maldon District Local Development Plan Proposed Modifications (December 2015)

9. The Council proposed modifications to the Local Development Plan (LDP) in December 2015. These included modifications to Local Development Plan (LDP) Policy H6: Provision for Travellers to highlight that the target for permanent traveller pitches between 2013 and 2028 is 32 (Maldon District Local Development Plan Incorporating modifications proposed through Examination-in-Public, 14 December 2015, Policy H6: Provision for Travellers, footnote 3).⁵ It is also stated that the Council will incorporate the new travellers target into the DPD currently in preparation.

Conclusion

10. The Council has independently assessed the GTAA 2014 and considers that it is sufficiently robust to inform future plan-making. The Council has continued to progress with the preparation of a Site Allocations DPD to address the need for traveller pitches, rural housing and rural employment since holding a call for sites in September/October 2015. Modifications are proposed to LDP Policy H6 to identify the new traveller pitch target and to highlight the role of the Site Allocations DPD in allocating sites to meet the new requirement.

http://www.maldon.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/810/planning_and_licensing_committee

See Item 12 – Planning Policy Update:

http://www.maldon.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/855/planning_and_licensing_committee

See Item 13 – Planning Policy Update:

http://www.maldon.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/869/planning_and_licensing_committee

⁵ Available to view at:

http://www.maldon.gov.uk/downloads/file/2890/submission_ldp_with_modifications_december_2015