



Report to: Cabinet Meeting - 7 June 2022

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Rhona Holloway, Economic Growth & Visitor Economy

Director Leads: Matt Lamb, Director - Planning & Growth
Suzanne Shead, Director - Housing, Health & Wellbeing.

Lead Officers: Matthew Norton, Business Manager - Planning Policy & Infrastructure
Mark Eyre, Business Manager - Corporate Property

Report Summary	
Type of report	Open Report Key Decision
Report Title	Local Development Framework Update - Progression of the Allocations & Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) including Strategy for delivering Gypsy & Traveller sites.
Purpose of Report	To update Cabinet on progress toward the publication of the Allocations & Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DPD), in particular work on the Pitch Delivery Strategy. Seek approval to purchase sites.
Recommendations	<p>That the proposed approach to the Allocations and Development Management Policies and meeting future Gypsy and Traveller need, subject to presentation of a Draft Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD to the July Cabinet in order to allow presentation to Full Council in July and public consultation throughout the summer be supported.</p> <p>That the funding submissions to Government which seeks to secure the costs of land purchase and any necessary works to physically implement a Gypsy & Traveller site or sites be endorsed.</p> <p>That the continued progress on possible land purchase and GRT development proposals, as detailed in the Exempt Agenda, with a view to further updates presented to the July Cabinet alongside the Final Consultation Draft of the Allocations and Development Management DPD be noted and supported.</p>

1.0 Background

1.1 The Council continues to progress its Plan Review following the completion and adoption of the Amended Core Strategy in 2019. The second element the Allocations &

Development Management DPD is currently being reviewed. As previously been rehearsed with the Economic Development Committee and LDF Task Groups the DPD does not propose any additional housing or employment and allocations given the continued success of the District in meeting such needs in terms of site allocations coming forward for development. That is not the case for all housing need, with the DPD being required to set a clear strategy to deliver sufficient site allocation and pitches to meet the future identified needs of our Gypsy Roma Traveller (GRT) communities.

- 1.2 Proposals for the review have undertaken a number of stages, as reported throughout to the Council’s Economic Development Committee under the previous governance arrangements. At its meeting on the 23 March 2022 the Committee agreed a number elements of the Plan Review and a new timetable:

Amended Allocations & Development Management DPD
Consideration of GRT Pitch Provision Approach <i>Cabinet 7 June</i>
Consideration of the Draft DPD <i>Cabinet 13 July Full Council 19 July</i>
Publication of Draft DPD (and final Integrated Impact Assessment) for period of Public Representation (July/August/September 2022)
Consideration of representations and any potential amendments
Submission of DPD to Secretary of State (December 2022) <i>Full Council 13 December</i>
Examination by Inspector (June 2023)
Consultation on Main Modifications (September/October 2023)
Receipt of Inspector's Report (December 2023)
Adoption and Publication (February 2024)

- 1.3 As previously reported one of the main challenges of the Plan Review has been the ability of the Council to identify sufficient sites to meet the future identified needs of the GRT community. A lack of available sites, as a result of market failure, has let the Council to conclude that only a comprehensive Pitch Delivery Strategy which includes intervention from the Council to facilitate additional sites will result in the accommodation requirements for our GRT communities being met.
- 1.4 These pitch requirements have been established through the [Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment](#). District-wide they equate to 169 pitches (full need-including undetermined households and non-planning definition Travellers¹), of which 118 are required to meet the needs of those households who meet the planning definition of a Traveller, provided in Annex 1 of the [Planning Policy for Traveller Sites](#) (PPTS).
- 1.5 The minimum requirements that the Development Plan would need to address are set out at paragraph 10 of the PPTS. This requires Local Planning Authorities in producing their Local Plan to identify and update annually; a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years’ worth of sites against their locally set targets (these targets constitute the planning definition pitch requirement), a supply of specific, developable sites, or broad locations for growth for years 6-10 and where possible years 11-15. To be considered deliverable, sites should be available, offer a suitable location for

¹ See the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment for definitions

development, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that development will be delivered on the site within five years. Whilst to be developable, sites should be in a suitable location for traveller site development, and there should be a reasonable prospect that the site is available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged.

- 1.6 District-wide these minimum requirements would equate to 77 specific deliverable pitches for years 0-5, and broad locations for 20 pitches to address years 6-10. Whilst these are the minimum requirements the plan will need to address, the approach the Authority is taking is to seek to exceed this, and formulate a strategy which comes as close as possible to catering at the point of Adoption for the full need. This is to ensure that the full range of housing need within District’s Gypsy and Traveller communities is being planned for, and to seek to lessen windfall proposals in what would otherwise normally be considered inappropriate locations.
- 1.7 The [Amended Core Strategy](#), adopted in March 2019, provides direction for this site identification through Core Policy 4. This details that the District Council will, with partners, address future Gypsy and Travellers pitch provision for the District which is consistent with the most up to date Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) through all necessary means. This includes allocation of new sites through the Development Plan, granting of permission (where appropriate) for new sites and appropriate intensification of existing sites, purchase of land by the District Council for additional pitches, compulsory purchase of existing sites to bring them back into use and provision of flood resilience measures to enable the safe expansion of existing sites in partnership with the Environment Agency. The policy also provides a spatial framework for this allocation to take place within; in stating that future pitch provision will be provided in line with the Council’s Spatial Strategy with the focus of the Council’s efforts being to seek to secure additional provision in and around the Newark Urban Area.
- 1.8 Economic Development Committee recognised that the delivery of a comprehensive pitch strategy was a whole Council activity and a project group of officers has been assembled to develop pitch delivery strategy and wider works.

2.0 Pitch Delivery Strategy: The Work so Far

2.1 Overall Pitch Delivery Strategy:

Pitch Delivery Strategy		
Meeting the overall need by the following actions:		
<p>1</p> <p>Contribution from Existing Sites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current sites with existing • sites with additional 	<p>2</p> <p>Allocating new sites in private ownership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two sites in locations around Newark offer 	<p>3</p> <p>New sites facilitated by Council Action</p>

<p>capacity to contribute circa 85 pitches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sites with potential to accommodate need have been identified. 	<p>the potential for additional pitch provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed sites on Tolney Lane can be brought out of flood risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase site or sites to deliver on our own or with partners • Work with private sector operators to bring sites back into GRT use.
<p>Cross Cutting Action: Delivery of a flood safe access to Tolney Lane and associated mitigation work</p>		

Contribution from Existing Sites

- 2.2 The ability of existing sites to contribute to the identified GRT needs comprises currently unauthorised or temporary accommodation and the ability to increase site densities elsewhere. Many existing sites are constrained by reason of flood risk. As Members will be aware works continue to explore the ability to mitigate such risk, taking some sites out of their current flood zone and/or making them resilient and safer in the event of a flood. Details on the current position will be presented to the July Cabinet.

Contribution from New Sites

- 2.3 Exploring this potential has required the Council to carry out a number of activities:
- Investigating potential sites for new provision
 - Negotiating with landowners
 - Scoping out how the council would design such sites
 - Scoping out how the council would manage such schemes
 - Understanding the financial and housing impacts on the Council
 - Lobbying Government and preparing a bid to the governments new scheme
- 2.4 As has been previously reported to the Economic Development Committee a number of sites have been promoted and/or identified which remain potentially suitable and available for meeting future GRT needs. These were identified in the [Options Report](#) consulted upon last summer and the site references below refer to this.

Chesnut Lodge, Barnby site (Ref 19_0018)

- 2.5 Within private ownership the landowner is promoting that they would bring forward and deliver GRT provision, subject to the principle being supported by the Council. The site is acceptable in planning terms for GRT provision and it is recommended that its allocation is supported.
- Trent Lane (Ref 19_0017)*

- 2.6 The landowner continues to be willing to discuss the sites ability to meet future GRT needs. This would only be on the basis of the Council purchasing to do so. The landowner has received advice informing their opinion of a potential capital receipt for the land. It is the opinion of the Council's Business Manager, Corporate Property that the landowners purchase expectations, as detailed in the Exempt Report, far exceed a reasonable price this Council can pay, given also the need to be cognisant of abnormal costs, the presence of an existing building on-site, and the capital works required to bring

the site forward for GRT use. Unless the landowner is willing to meet the Council's expectations on land values it is recommended that this site is discounted.

Former Belvoir Iron Works (Ref 19_004)

- 2.7 The proposed site remains acceptable in principle for GRA provision. Landowner negotiations have continued, with Officers remaining hopeful that the Council's independent valuation can be agreed with the landowner. Further details will be provided at the July Cabinet.

Cross Cutting Action

- 2.8 Delivery of a flood safe access to Tolney Lane and associated mitigation work underpins the delivery of the strategy and detailed feasibility work is currently underway including detailed design and costings. Further details will be provided at the July Cabinet.

3.0 Deliverability

- 3.1 Demonstrating a sound and deliverable DPD will require a blended approach of allowing the market to deliver appropriate site allocations, maximising where appropriate the contribution from existing sites (including the associated flood alleviation works), and securing new land for new GRT site allocations. This will include, subject to agreement on land values, the Council entering the arena of developing and delivering GRT sites, not unlike many other authorities across the Country.
- 3.2 As part of our research, a number of authorities who run/have GRT sites have been contacted to help the Council understand what works well, and suggestions and guidance on how to design, develop and allocate sites. There are options to manage the GRT provision in house or via a third party with experience in this sector. In particular there was some useful guidance around the optimum size and design of sites to help them be sustainable and places where people want stay.
- 3.3 Importantly, these sites can be financially sustainable and there is a plethora of support agencies and colleagues across the housing and local authority sector to seek counsel on the design and develop of new sites plus access to best practice around allocations and tenancy agreements.
- 3.4 We know from talking to our existing communities that smaller scale, well run sites are culturally suitable and these can be combined with modern, energy efficient facilities that also create opportunities to improve access to key public services and other support services. Combined with local police engagement (not enforcement) alongside positive intensive site and tenancy management, these sites can flourish and create safe long term placements for travellers. These proposals give sites across the District to help give options and choice to our GRT community.

Funding Support

- 3.5 Members will be aware of the live competitive [funding programme](#) for new site provision. The fund allows for applications from local authorities for new permanent or transit provision (including enhancing capacity on existing sites) in order to meet identified needs and to address issues of unauthorised stopping and encampments. The fund requires formal bid submissions by 13 June 2022 which can be for a maximum of £1m per site. Officers continue to work through the detail on the costs associated with bringing a site(s) forward and further updates will be presented on or before the meeting.

4.0 Implications

Financial Implications (FIN22-23/4108)

- 4.1 Valuations have recently been received in respect of the identified sites for delivery, officers are working through the implications of these. These valuations will inform the market valuation of the sites, and will therefore assist with negotiation with the land owners regarding the purchase of the sites should it be their appetite to sell.
- 4.2 Members will be aware of the funding available of £1m per site, as described at paragraph 3.5 above, that subject to a successful application process, can assist with the purchase of identified sites, albeit this would not contribute to the practical delivery of the site. Conversations with the land owners will still need to take place to understand the cost of purchase, which at the time of writing this report is not available.
- 4.3 Quantity surveyors have been commissioned to assist with costing of delivery on the identified sites, which would fall to the district Council to fund. This is likely to be a significant cost for the Council to bear. As at the time of writing this report this is not available, albeit this is expected to be available for the date of the meeting.
- 4.4 Officers have liaised with other local authorities who currently run GRT sites elsewhere within the Country. Officers are still reviewing the implications of this in respect of the ongoing management and maintenance of the site, in order to understand the preferred option for the management of any site.

Background Papers and Published Documents

None