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HARROGATE BOROUGH COUNCIL TRAVELLER HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY



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Opinion Research Services The Strand, Swansea SA1 1AF
enquiries: 01792 535300 · info@ors.org.uk · ors.org.uk



Peter Brett Associates LLP, 10 Queen Square Bristol, BS1 4NT
enquiries: 0117 9281560 bristol@peterbrett.com

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1. Introduction

The Survey

- 1.1 Opinion Research Services (ORS) and Peter Brett Associates (PBA) were commissioned by Harrogate Borough Council to undertake a Traveller Housing Needs Study. The study was undertaken in parallel with one for Selby District Council, but all findings in this report relate only to Harrogate Borough Council.
- 1.2 The main objective of this study was to provide the Council with robust, defensible and up to date evidence about the accommodation needs of Gypsies & Travellers and Showpersons in Harrogate during the period until 2028 in five year sections covering 2013-2018, 2018-2023 and 2023-2028.
- 1.3 The study also had a number of other objectives, including;
 - To propose targets for future provision in Harrogate to address the identified need
 - To identify broad locations for that provision
 - To provide the Council with the means to explain this evidence, and these proposed targets clearly, simply and effectively to a range of audiences, including the local community.

Legislation and Guidance for Gypsies and Travellers

- 1.4 Decision making for policy concerning Gypsies & Travellers and Showpersons sits within a complex legislative and national policy framework and this study must be viewed in the context of this legislation and guidance. For example, the following pieces of legislation and guidance are relevant when constructing policies relating to Gypsies & Travellers and Showpersons:
 - Planning Policy for Traveller Sites 2012;
 - National Planning Policy Framework 2012;
 - Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments Guidance October 2007
 - Environmental Protection Act 1990 for statutory nuisance provisions;
 - The Human Rights Act 1998, when making decisions and welfare assessments;
 - The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as subsequently amended);
 - Homelessness Legislation and Allocation Policies;
 - Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 (sections 61, 62);
 - Anti-social behaviour Act 2003 (both as victims and perpetrators of anti-social behaviour);
 - Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004;
 - Housing Act 2004 which requires local housing authorities to assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies & Travellers and Showpersons as part of their housing needs assessments. This study complies with this element of government guidance ;
 - Housing Act 1996 in respect of homelessness.
- 1.5 The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 (Sections 61, 62) is particularly important with regard to the issue of planning for Gypsy and Traveller site provision. This repealed the duty of local authorities to

provide appropriate accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers. However, Circular 1/94 did support maintaining existing sites and stated that appropriate future site provision should be considered.

- 1.6 The previous Labour Government guidance focused on increasing site provision for Gypsies and Travellers and encouraging local authorities to have a more inclusive approach to Gypsies and Travellers within their housing needs plans. The Housing Act 2004 required local authorities to identify the need for Gypsy and Traveller sites, alongside the need for other types of housing, when conducting Housing Needs Surveys. Therefore all local authorities were required to undertake accommodation assessments for Gypsies and Travellers either as a separate study such as this one, or as part of their main Housing Needs Assessment.
- 1.7 Local authorities were encouraged rather than compelled to provide new Gypsy and Traveller sites by central government. Circular 1/06 'Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites', released by the DCLG in January 2006, replaced Circular 1/94 and suggested that the provision of authorised sites should be encouraged so that the number of unauthorised sites would be reduced.
- 1.8 The Coalition Government announced that the previous government's thinking contained in Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites (Circular 01/06) was to be repealed, along with the Regional Spatial Strategies which were used to allocate pitch provision to local authorities. This happened in 2012 with the publication of the CLG document 'Planning Policy for Traveller Sites' in March 2012.

Planning Policy for Traveller Sites

- 1.9 The document 'Planning Policy for Traveller Sites' sets out the direction of government policy. Among other objectives, the new policy's aims in respect of Traveller sites are (Planning Policy for Traveller Sites Page 1-2) :
 - that local planning authorities should make their own assessment of need for the purposes of planning
 - to ensure that local planning authorities, working collaboratively, develop fair and effective strategies to meet need through the identification of land for sites
 - to encourage local planning authorities to plan for sites over a reasonable timescale
 - that plan-making and decision-taking should protect Green Belt from inappropriate development
 - to promote more private traveller site provision while recognising that there will always be those travellers who cannot provide their own sites
 - that plan-making and decision-taking should aim to reduce the number of unauthorised developments and encampments and make enforcement more effective
 - for local planning authorities to ensure that their Local Plan includes 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
 - to reduce tensions between settled and traveller communities in plan-making and planning decisions
 - to enable provision of suitable accommodation from which travellers can access education, health, welfare and employment infrastructure
 - for local planning authorities to have due regard to the protection of local amenity and local environment.

1.10 In practice the document states that (Planning Policy for Traveller Sites Page 3):

‘Local planning authorities should set pitch targets for Gypsies and Travellers and plot targets for travelling Showpeople which address the likely permanent and transit site accommodation needs of Travellers in their area, working collaboratively with neighbouring local planning authorities.

Local planning authorities should, in producing their Local Plan:

- identify and update annually, a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years’ worth of sites against their locally set targets
- identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years six to ten and, where possible, for years eleven to fifteen
- consider production of joint development plans that set targets on a cross-authority basis, to provide more flexibility in identifying sites, particularly if a local planning authority has special or strict planning constraints across its area (local planning authorities have a duty to cooperate on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries)
- relate the number of pitches or plots to the circumstances of the specific size and location of the site and the surrounding population’s size and density
- protect local amenity and environment.

1.11 A key element to the new policies is a continuation of previous government policies. This is that, while local authorities now have a duty to ensure a 5 year land supply to meet the identified needs for Traveller sites, if no need is identified they should set criteria based policies to assess potential sites which may arise in the future. Planning Policy for Traveller Sites notes on Page 3-4 that:

Criteria should be set to guide land supply allocations where there is identified need. Where there is no identified need, criteria-based policies should be included to provide a basis for decisions in case applications nevertheless come forward. Criteria based policies should be fair and should facilitate the traditional and nomadic life of travellers while respecting the interests of the settled community.

1.12 Therefore, criteria based planning policies sit at the heart of the new guidance, irrespective of whether need is identified or not.

Tackling Inequalities for Gypsy and Traveller Communities

1.13 In April 2012 the government issued a further document relating to Gypsies and Travellers in the form of ‘Progress report by the ministerial working group on tackling inequalities experienced by Gypsies and Travellers (CLG April 2012)’.

1.14 This report contains 28 commitments to help improve the circumstances and outcomes for Gypsies and Travellers across a range of areas including (Page 6) :

- Identifying ways of raising educational aspirations and attainment of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children
- Identifying ways to improve health outcomes for Gypsies and Travellers within the proposed new structures of the NHS.
- Encouraging appropriate site provision; building on £60m Traveller Pitch Funding and New Homes Bonus incentives.

- Tackling hate crime against Gypsies and Travellers and improving their interaction with the criminal justice system.
- Improving knowledge of how Gypsies and Travellers engage with services that provide a gateway to work opportunities and working with the financial services industry to improve access to financial products and services.
- Sharing good practice in engagement between Gypsies and Travellers and public service providers.

Funding for New Sites

- 1.15 The new Coalition Government policies also involve financial incentives for new pitch provision in the form of the New Homes Bonus. Gypsy & Traveller and Showperson sites receive a New Homes Bonus of 6 times the Council Tax plus £1,800 per pitch provided. This is the equivalent of around £10,000-£15,000 per pitch.
- 1.16 Direct grant funding is also available for Gypsy and Traveller sites. The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) took over delivery of the Gypsy and Traveller Sites grant programme from CLG in April 2009. Since then they have invested £16.3m in 26 schemes across the country providing 88 new or additional pitches and 179 improved pitches.
- 1.17 HCA have now confirmed allocations for £47m of future funding which will support 71 projects around the country, for the provision of new Gypsy and Traveller sites and new pitches on existing sites, as well as the improvement of existing pitches. As of January 2012 a further £12.1m of funding was available for scheme outside of London and bidding will remain open until all the money is allocated.

Research Methodology

- 1.18 The research methodology for identifying the housing needs of Gypsies and Travellers in most assessments involves conducting face to face interviews with the population in the area. The initial plan for this study was to conduct a census of all households in Harrogate. However, the two main public sites in the area are managed by the Gypsy Council and their representatives declined to take part in the survey. Officers from Harrogate Borough Council, North Yorkshire County Council and staff from ORS all sought to persuade the Gypsy Council to grant access to the sites. However, permission was consistently denied.
- 1.19 The reasons given by the representative for the Gypsy Council for declining to take part were:
- The results of the survey would be ignored by Harrogate Borough Council and therefore the study was of no use to the Gypsy and Traveller community.
 - There are no unmet needs on the two public sites and therefore the survey would not identify any problems.
- 1.20 Planning Policy for Traveller Sites states that

In assembling the evidence base necessary to support their planning approach, local planning authorities should:

co-operate with travellers, their representative bodies and local support groups, other local authorities and relevant interest groups to prepare and maintain an up-to-date understanding of the likely permanent and transit accommodation needs of their areas

over the lifespan of their development plan working collaboratively with neighbouring local planning authorities.

- 1.21 ORS consider that we went to great lengths to work with the Gypsy Council in Harrogate for this study, but that they choose not to engage with the study. Other stakeholders noted the two sites are both well maintained and do not appear to be overcrowded. Therefore, we have chosen to accept the opinion of the Gypsy Council that there is no need on the two public sites in the area and that no further work is required in relation to these.
- 1.22 ORS also sought to undertake all other Gypsy and Traveller households in Harrogate in October 2012 and 4 interviews were achieved in total on-site.
- 1.23 This study also included extensive stakeholder engagement with council officers from Harrogate and neighbouring councils, members and other stakeholders. The aim of this engagement was to help understand the current situation in Harrogate, in particular to households not on known existing sites and also to discuss Duty to Cooperate issues with neighbouring councils. A separate email survey was also sent to all parish and town councils in Harrogate.
- 1.24 In parallel to this work, Peter Brett Associates undertook work to identify the broad locations for future Gypsy and Traveller sites. This took the form of a mapping exercise and stakeholder workshop to help identify suitable broad locations for future sites.

2. Gypsy and Traveller Sites and Population

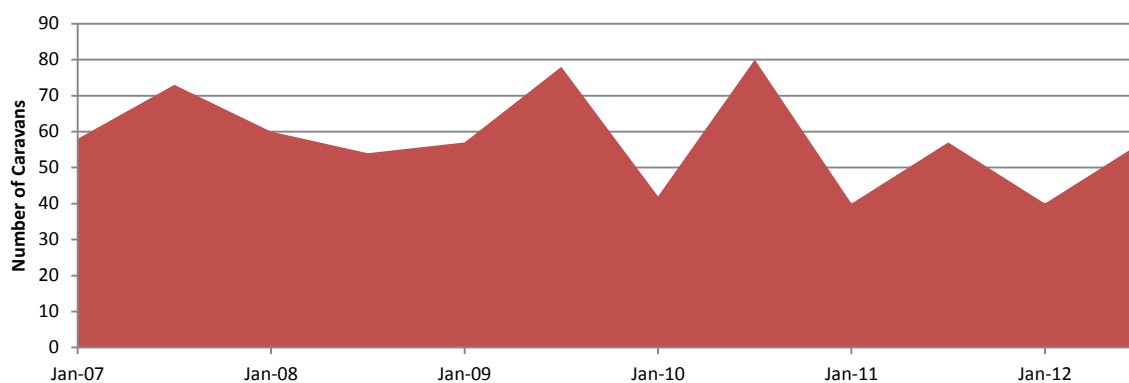
Sites in Harrogate

- 2.1 A mainstream Housing Needs Survey typically focuses upon the number of dwellings required in an area, and how many of these should each be provided by the public and private sector. The central aim of this study was to follow a similar format for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation requirements.
- 2.2 The main consideration of this study is the provision of pitches and sites for Gypsies and Travellers. A pitch is an area which is large enough for one household to occupy and typically contains enough space for one or two caravans, but can vary in size. A site is a collection of pitches which form a development exclusively for Gypsies & Travellers. Throughout this study the main focus is upon how many extra pitches are required in Harrogate.
- 2.3 The public and private provision of mainstream housing is also largely mirrored when considering Gypsy and Traveller accommodation. One common form of Gypsy and Traveller site is the publicly-provided residential site, which is provided by the local authority, or by a registered provider (usually a housing association). Places on public sites can be obtained through a waiting list, and the costs of running the sites are met from the rent paid by the licensees. Therefore, public sites are a direct equivalent of social housing among bricks and mortar tenants. There are currently two public sites in Harrogate, both managed by the Gypsy Council.
- 2.4 The alternative to public residential sites is private residential sites for Gypsies and Travellers. These result from individuals or families buying areas of land and then obtaining planning permission to live on them. Households can also rent pitches on existing private sites. Therefore, these two forms of accommodation are the equivalent to private ownership and renting for those who live in bricks and mortar housing.
- 2.5 The Gypsy and Traveller population also has other forms of sites due to its mobile nature. Transit sites tend to contain many of the same facilities as a residential site, except that there is a maximum period of residence which can vary from a few weeks to a period of months. An alternative is an emergency stopping place. This type of site also has restrictions on the length of time for which someone can stay on it, but has much more limited facilities. Both of these two types of site are designed to accommodate Gypsies and Travellers whilst they travel.
- 2.6 Further considerations in the Gypsy & Traveller population are unauthorised developments and encampments. Unauthorised developments occur on land which is owned by the Gypsies and Travellers, but for which they do not have planning permission to use for residential purposes. Unauthorised encampments occur on land which is not owned by the Gypsies and Travellers.

Caravan Count

- 2.7 The best quantitative information available on the Gypsy and Traveller communities derives from a bi-annual survey of Gypsy and Traveller caravans which is conducted by each local authority in England on a specific date in January and July of each year. This count is of caravans and not households which makes it more difficult to interpret for a study such as this. It must also be remembered that the count is conducted by the local authority on a specific day and that any unauthorised encampments which occur on other dates will not be recorded. The count also only features those caravans the local authority is aware of. Therefore, it may not reflect all of the Gypsy and Traveller caravans in the authority.
- 2.8 Harrogate has two authorised public sites with 40 pitches. It also contains 1 private site for one family with a temporary planning permission until 2017 and a small number of unauthorised sites. The area contains no authorised Showperson's yard.

Figure 1
Gypsy Caravan Count for Harrogate: Jan 2007 – July 2012 (Source: CLG Bi-annual Local Authority Caravan Count)



3. Consultation with Parish Councils

The Consultation

- 3.1 To supplement the findings of this study, a consultation was carried out with Parish Councillors in Harrogate during November and December 2012 which asked about the Councillors' experiences of and views they had in relation to Gypsies and Travellers in the area, as well as future site provision. A short open-ended questionnaire was sent to 89 Parish Councils (for whom we had contact details) in the area (66 via email and 23 by post) and 20 completed responses were received.

Dealings/Relationships with Gypsies and Travellers

- 3.2 Many of the Parish Councillors have no dealings or relationships with Gypsies and Travellers in either their parish or in the district, predominantly because there are no sites in their parish or nearby. While most do not have any permanent sites in their parish, several note that Gypsies and Travellers occasionally travel through their area, sometimes on their way to events such as Appleby Fair. They mostly seem to only spend a night or two within the Parish. A couple of parishes report traveller children in the village school or travellers seeking planning permission.

Gypsy and Traveller Sites in the Area

- 3.3 Most Parish Councillors do not have any Gypsy or Traveller sites in their parish and only experience Gypsies and Travellers passing through. However some parish councils report sites in adjoining villages or just outside their parish, including an authorised site with around 20 pitches just outside Knaresborough.
- 3.4 While most report that there is nothing that attracts Gypsies and Travellers to their parish or that they do not know, Parish Councillors suggest that traditional travelling routes, particularly to horse fairs and races; and the fact the area is close to other authorised sites may attract Gypsies and Travellers to the area.

Issues

- 3.5 Around two thirds of Parish Councillors have had no issues with Gypsies and Travellers in their Parish or district; however several had experienced particular issues. Issues mentioned include problems with litter, burning and disregarding old furniture, damage to land, parking issues, blocked access to farming land, and anti-social behaviour.
- 3.6 It was also mentioned that the Gypsy and Travellers community often find it difficult to find places to stay and there is a perception by some that Gypsies and Travellers resist inclusion and do not join in with the community or use local amenities.

Trends

- 3.7 The majority of Parish Councillors feel that there are no particular trends and that there have been no changes. However some report increases in the number of travellers passing through on the roads than before.
- 3.8 Most of the Councillors also feel that there aren't any seasonal fluctuations, although some identify spring and summer, which coincides with travelling around at the time of fairs, as a time when they see an increase in Gypsies and Travellers visiting the area.

Future Provision

- 3.9 Almost all of the Parish Councillors state that no pitches would be acceptable in the local area with a few qualifying this with the fact that there is no need/demand for any pitches in their parish. One Councillor feels that it would be subject to public consultation, with some others also feeling unqualified to answer.
- 3.10 A range of constraints locally on further provisions of sites are given. Some of the Parish Councillors feel that, in general, there are concerns and resistance from the local community but the most frequently mentioned constraint is the lack of suitable land/space, particularly as it is mostly privately owned, along with a lack of suitable amenities and infrastructure. A potential issue with planning is also mentioned as a possible constraint.

What Makes a Good Site?

- 3.11 In terms of general location it is considered by some that the edge of settlements, where they are still relatively close to local facilities and not spoiling the open countryside, is the most suitable place for sites to be located. However it is felt by a few that urban areas/brownfield sites where there is good access to services would be more appropriate, while a few feel that rural areas and sites away from other land uses would be the most appropriate.
- 3.12 Reasonable accessibility and proximity to community facilities such as primary schools, GP surgeries, local shops etc. are generally considered important/vital. However there is some concern that there are few (or no) local facilities in their area anyway. Access to public transport routes and employment opportunities are also considered important.
- 3.13 As with community facilities, on-site services such as water, sewerage, electricity, refuse collection and washing and toilet facilities are considered essential but again there is some concern that these wouldn't be readily available in their parish.

Other Comments

- 3.14 The general feeling is that of resistance to further sites. Some specifically state that there is no room to make provision for Gypsies and Travellers in their parish and if they already have sites, they are already well served.
- 3.15 Conversely, it was also noted that there is a gross under-provision of sites, particularly transit sites for Gypsies and Travellers passing through, and that this then leads to an increased use of un-authorized/illegal sites.

4. Stakeholder Consultation

Introduction

- 4.1 In order to set the context of the research and ensure the study is based on a sound understanding of the relevant issues, ORS conducted 20 semi-structured, in-depth telephone interviews during November 2012. Interviews were undertaken with officers from the planning and enforcement and housing departments and with Elected Members representing Selby District and Harrogate Borough. North Yorkshire County Council and neighbouring local authorities also contributed to the study¹.
- 4.2 This section also draws upon the findings of the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment which was conducted by ORS on behalf of Hambleton District Council between June and August 2012.
- 4.3 Interviews allowed interested parties to reflect and feedback on the general situation - as well as how matters relating to Gypsies, Travellers and Showpersons are currently handled and perceived within Selby District Council, Harrogate Borough Council and the surrounding areas. Qualitative research of this type attempts to gain a deeper understanding of the issues and is used to supplement the statistical information gathered through quantitative surveys of the Gypsy, Traveller and Showperson communities. In some cases, the information stakeholders share with interviewers will be factually incorrect or considered inappropriate; however, this section is based upon their perceptions rather than evidence corroborated by data sources.
- 4.4 The interviews also gave stakeholders the opportunity to share any information and contacts they had of Gypsies and Travellers and Showpersons who currently live in bricks and mortar accommodation but would prefer to live on a site.
- 4.5 The areas have been reported separately, so the information below relates only to Harrogate Borough Council. Due to issues surrounding data protection and in order to protect the confidentiality of those who took part, this Report represents a summary of the views expressed by interviewees.

¹ Both the Gypsy Council and Horton Housing declined the opportunity to take part in the stakeholder consultation.

Harrogate Borough Council

Council officers

Main Policy Tools and Background

- 4.6 Council officers referenced the Local Development Framework. The North Yorkshire Housing Strategy and the Gypsy and Traveller working group/action plan was considered to be the overarching strategy and was thought to be important in terms of pulling information together and achieving best practice.

Accommodation provision

- 4.7 Officers were aware of two public sites in Bickerton and Knaresborough. Both sites are owned by North Yorkshire County Council and are leased and managed by the Gypsy Council.
- 4.8 Officers reported that the Borough does not get involved with the day-to-day running of the two sites and does not receive any complaints about them from the community. There were no obvious issues that officers felt were worth discussing. Most had only viewed the site from the outside and noted that the site appears to be clean and tidy.
- 4.9 Officers referred to the case of a family in Knaresborough who, at the time of interview, have temporary planning permission. Officers claimed that the policy of the Borough and their neighbours within the settled community is to support them staying there. It was explained that at the time of the last planning application, letters supporting their application were submitted which officers considered to be quite unusual.
- 4.10 One officer raised the issue of a family at Starbeck who have been served with an enforcement notice. Efforts are reportedly being made to link the family up with Horton Housing to ensure their needs are met in the event that they are evicted from the land.
- 4.11 According to interviewees, roadside encampments occur infrequently but the majority happen during the summer months when travelling to and from Appleby. When dealing with unauthorised encampments the Council brings enforcement action as appropriate. Managing unauthorised encampments is said to be the responsibility of the Environmental Health department. If there was anyone on the site with particular needs, the Housing Needs team would undertake an assessment.
- 4.12 However, due to the low numbers and the fact that these encampments do not usually cause any issues, enforcement action is considered to be a rare occurrence:

They stay for a couple of days and then they are gone. If there are any issues environment and estates will get involved. This is the exception rather than the rule

On speaking to each encampment they have not presented any housing needs and are merely passing through our district...Over the past six or seven years we have only had about three cases.

- 4.13 When asked about future accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers it was generally recognised that the two sites in the area are full. However, it was felt that there is little obvious demand that the Borough are aware of and no one on housing waiting lists.
- 4.14 There are no official Showperson sites in Harrogate. Officers were of the opinion that they only travel through the area when conducting a fair and that their accommodation is privately arranged in advance with a landowner.

Bricks and Mortar

- 4.15 Officers were asked if they were aware of any Gypsies and Travellers who are currently living in bricks and mortar but would prefer to live on a site. In general, officers assumed that this could be the case but were not able to produce any data sources to confirm this assumption. One officer, who has had direct experience of this group, explained:

We do have a number of families who have been rehoused in bricks and mortar of their choice. As far we know they are happy with that. We have not had any feedback to say they are unhappy and that in hindsight that they have regretted their decision... For Harrogate it is not a particular issue in comparison to some of our neighbouring authorities across North Yorkshire.

- 4.16 On this basis the officer felt that it would be of no use to this study to contact these individuals.

Trends, Favoured Locations and Stopping Points

- 4.17 An officer with experience of mapping Traveller movement argued that there was no discernible pattern in the area and, in the main, it was just random households passing through. It was claimed that the main reason Gypsy and Travellers move through the area is en route to Appleby. It was thought that they do not travel through en route to Seamer, as in other areas across North Yorkshire.

Community Relations

- 4.18 As aforementioned, officers claimed that no complaints are received about the two sites in Bickerton and Knaresborough and another site has received letters of support from neighbours to support them staying. It is the view of officers that this shows that there are no community tensions in the area.
- 4.19 The issue of Gypsies and Travellers is said to be very low down on the local political agenda and it is only when there is a problem encampment that it does become an issue. In summing up the views of Elected Members in Harrogate, one officer claimed that *members are neither anti nor pro Gypsies and Travellers. It doesn't register.*

The Future

- 4.20 When asked about what they envisage could happen over the next fifteen years, officers feel that demand may increase.

Elected Members

Background

- 4.21 Elected Members corroborated the view held by officers that the issue is very low down on the local political agenda.
- 4.22 Most Elected Members felt there were few issues relating to Gypsies and Travellers and Showpeople. For this reason, two Elected Members declined the opportunity to contribute to the stakeholder consultation.

Accommodation Provision

- 4.23 Elected Members referenced the two public sites at Bickerton and Knaresborough. In general those interviewed felt these sites are stable and well established. One member referred to the Thistle Hill site as an ideal site. This was attributed to it being near the town but away from the settled community and well screened.
- 4.24 When asked about Showpeople, one Elected Member felt that the accommodation needs of the group should not be combined with the needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community as the needs of both groups are distinct.

Trends, Favoured Locations and Stopping Points

- 4.25 According to interviewees, roadside encampments occur when Gypsies and Travellers are en route to the Appleby and Darlington horse fairs:

There are those that are just looking for a stopping place while they move north or south when it has finished

- 4.26 The majority of Elected Members interviewed were of the opinion that unauthorised encampments have decreased over recent years due to the precautionary measures undertaken by landowners in the area. There is a car park in Knaresborough which is said to be well-used by the travelling community.
- 4.27 One member representing the Ribston Ward reported a more frequent number of unauthorised encampments at various times of the year and attributed this to the presence of large greens in the area. One favoured area was said to be the Wetherby Road at the Follifoot turnoff where, it was claimed, encampments occur up to six times per year.

Community Relations

- 4.28 Elected Members reported no community tensions or any other issues regarding the settled community.
- 4.29 However, one Elected Member argued that the behaviour associated with roadside encampments is a cause of public tension and referred to the mess and misuse of public spaces.

- 4.30 The way Gypsies and Travellers treat the planning process particularly, when they put in a retrospective planning application, was thought to be a cause of community tensions. One Elected Member felt that this is unfair to those who have to *go through the proper channels and apply for planning permission*.

The Future

- 4.31 Overall, Elected Members felt there are no pressing issues to consider.
- 4.32 One Elected Member felt that the Council was handling the situation effectively and North Yorkshire *clear up any mess left by travellers fairly quickly*. However, the Member was in favour of employing preventative measures, such as providing refuse sacks to roadside encampments when they arrive.

Cross-Boundary Issues

- 4.33 Interviews were achieved with officers representing North Yorkshire County Council and surrounding authorities which include:

Craven

Hambleton

Leeds

Richmondshire

Ryedale.

- 4.34 In general, interviewees representing North Yorkshire could not identify any clear cross-boundary issues that they felt were in need of consideration. Considering the needs of the settled Traveller population, it was argued that there are different circumstances and varying levels of need within the area:

There are a number of unauthorised encampments across the County and some districts have more than others. York, Selby and Hambleton, they are the areas with the larger Gypsy population and then Harrogate and Ryedale have their population with Craven, Scarborough and Richmondshire with less.

- 4.35 When considering the transient Traveller population movement, a few interviewees raised the issue of one family which travels across the North Yorkshire districts on a continual basis. One interviewee argued that deciding who has responsibility for the family is a complicated issue which can prompt some cross-border discussion.
- 4.36 In general, movement is thought to be influenced by historic ties; movement to and from the horse fairs in Appleby, Darlington and Scarborough; holidays and traditional stopping points. When asked to describe the aforementioned travelling patterns, interviewees stressed that they don't have that level of information and could not make informed assessments on the extent to which this does happen. On this basis there were calls to improve the exchange of information across the areas and interviewees argued that the North Yorkshire Steering Group has been set-up to address this issue and to improve cross - border working.
- 4.37 The Steering Group is currently working on developing a single protocol for managing unauthorised encampments across the area. District Councils have different policies and approaches to moving families on, which is thought to create conflict and inconsistency. One interviewee thought it would be beneficial if

there was cross - border clarity – this would allow support workers to be clearer when giving support and advice:

The districts don't actively try to move them over to another district and we are working to try to get to a point where we've got one consistent policy on unauthorised encampments across the county and City of York.

4.38 The North Yorkshire Steering Group is said to be currently working towards establishing data on the stopping patterns across the area.

4.39 Despite efforts to improve cross-border working one interviewee argued that there needs to be more information shared about the status of available accommodation across the area:

It could be that other local authorities have vacant pitches where we could redirect people. This may already be occurring through Horton Housing. If there are vacant pitches or redevelopment in other authorities we may be able to direct some people on our waiting lists to them – rather than them being on our waiting list.

4.40 According to one officer, cross–border working beyond North Yorkshire is limited and communication with other neighbouring areas would be beneficial:

We have not talked to Durham, Teesside or York regarding those issues – we may have been a bit insular in what we have been doing. The main part would be the communication on the unauthorised side of encampments – there are travelling routes from the south up to the north through to Appleby fair. By talking to Durham who have a lot of provision during the fair, they open up various sites for temporary usage. If we worked closer to Durham and we had people stopping on our highways and they were in reasonable distance to Durham and it was open we could redirect them to there.

4.41 An officer within West Yorkshire also shared this view. The Local Authorities making up West Yorkshire (Leeds, Bradford, Wakefield, Kirklees and Calderdale) meet on a quarterly basis. Issues discussed at the meetings include site issues (three of the LAs have sites), any commonalities, unauthorised encampments, movement, trends and sharing best practice. When dealing with traveller related issues it was argued that it would be sensible if there was contact between West and North Yorkshire, as traveller related issues are difficult to understand within a vacuum:

Because I don't have contact with any officers in those authorities I don't know what is happening there...I would assume they have a number of unauthorised encampments and have similar issues to us – for instance a need for additional pitches – the same as in other areas. I think it would make sense for cross-border working to happen.

4.42 It was argued that joint working between the two areas would be beneficial. Cross-border movement occurs when travellers move Northwards through the UK en route to the various fairs at Appleby, Scarborough and Darlington. Therefore, there are opportunities to manage these encampments on a larger, more strategic level. One officer claimed that a favoured stopping point in Leeds is in Ledsham, which is in close proximity to the Selby border. Potentially, the Great North Road on the border of Leeds and Selby was seen as an area where cross-border movement could occur in the future.

- 4.43 It was the view of the officer that these issues and possible solutions, such as transit provision provided jointly by Selby and Leeds, could be explored if there was communication between the two areas. Sharing best practice and new ideas was also seen as helpful; for instance, Leeds have developed a new approach to reducing the amount of unauthorised encampments through creating a tolerated site with basic facilities for the families that it knows travel around the area. It was argued that this approach has worked well.
- 4.44 Two officers (one from North Yorkshire and one from West Yorkshire) referred to a family who are residing in Selby but access most of their services from Leeds. They reflected positively on the joint working which is taking place between the two areas.

5. Future Site Provision

Site Provision

- 5.1 This section focuses on the extra site provision which is required in Harrogate currently and over the next 15 years by 5 year segments. This time period allows for robust forecasts of the requirements for extra provision based upon the evidence contained within this survey.
- 5.2 The March 2012, the CLG document ‘Planning Policy for Traveller Sites’, requires an assessment for future pitch requirements, but does not provide a suggested methodology for undertaking this calculation. However, as with any housing assessment, the underlying calculation can be broken down into a relatively small number of factors. In this case, the key issue for residential pitches is to compare the supply of pitches available for occupation with the current and future needs of the households. The key factors in each of these elements are set out below:

Supply of pitches

- 5.3 Pitches which are available for use can come from a variety of sources. These include:
- » Currently vacant pitches;
 - » Any pitches currently programmed to be developed within the study period;
 - » Pitches vacated by people moving to housing;
 - » Pitches vacated by people moving out of the study area – this will be identified as set out above;
 - » Pitches vacated due to the dissolution of households (normally through the death of a single person household).

Current Need

- 5.4 There are four key components of current need. Total current need (which is not necessarily need for additional pitches) is simply:
- » Households on unauthorised developments for which planning permission is not expected;
 - » Concealed households;
 - » Households in brick and mortar wishing to move to sites; and
 - » Households on waiting lists for public sites.

Future Need

- 5.5 There are three key components of future need. Total future need is simply the sum of the following:
- » Households living on sites with temporary planning permissions;

- » New household formation expected during the study period; and
 - » Migration to sites from outside the study area.
- 5.6 We will firstly provide the model as set out above for Gypsies and Travellers. We will then separately analyse the possible need for additional transit provision in the study area before repeating the calculation for Travelling Showpeople.

Current Gypsy and Traveller Site Provision

- 5.7 Outside of the two public sites managed by the Gypsy Council, there is currently one pitch with temporary planning permission in Harrogate and four households on unauthorised developments. The temporary permission expires in 2017. Therefore, there is no vacant space on existing sites and no space will become vacant at any point.

Additional Site Provision: Current Need

- 5.8 The next stage of the process is to assess how many households are currently seeking pitches in the area. Groups of people who are likely to be seeking pitches will include those:
- » Households on unauthorised developments for which planning permission is not expected;
 - » Concealed households;
 - » Households in brick and mortar wishing to move to sites; and
 - » Households on waiting lists for public sites.

Current Unauthorised Developments

- 5.9 At the time of the household survey in October 2012, there were four households living on unauthorised sites in the area. All of these wish to remain in the area and hence have been counted as a need for a new pitch on a private site.

Concealed Households

- 5.10 A concealed household occurs when two households occupy one pitch when ideally they should be occupying two pitches. This is not simply overcrowding, but is a sharing of a space by households who should and would wish to be living on their own pitches, but cannot do so due to a lack of space. There is no evidence from the household survey of any concealed households.

Bricks and Mortar

- 5.11 Identifying households in bricks and mortar has been frequently highlighted as an issue with Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments. We would note that households who are seeking to move from housing to public sites can express a desire to do so through registering on the waiting list for public and therefore will have been counted elsewhere in this calculation. Meanwhile those seeking to live on a private sites could seek to do so on their own or pursue a privately rented pitch on an existing private site.

- 5.12 We would also note that for a number of recent studies undertaken by ORS we have worked with national Gypsy and Traveller representatives to identify households in brick and mortar. For a number of recent studies the representatives reported over 100 known households in housing and they encouraged them to come forward to take part in the survey. The actual number who eventually took part in the surveys ranged from zero to six household per area, and not all wished to move back to sites. Therefore, while there is anecdotal evidence of many Gypsies and Travellers in housing, most appear to be content to remain there and when provided with the opportunity by national representatives to register an interest in returning to sites few choose to do so.
- 5.13 For this study all stakeholders connected to the study area were asked if they knew of any households in bricks and mortar who would wish to take part in the survey. However, none were able to identify any households and none were identified from a supplementary question on the on-site household survey. The 2011 Census identified a total of 107 Gypsy and Traveller persons living in Harrogate. Given that the pitches on-site will account for most of this population, this would indicate that the population in bricks and mortar is comparatively low.
- 5.14 It is also the case that with most face to face surveys undertaken on-site by OR, a small number of households are seeking to move to bricks and mortar. However, in this case no household did wish to move from on-site to bricks and mortar.
- 5.15 Several potential sources of information on need arising from bricks and mortar have been interrogated in the study area as set out above. However there is no primary evidence of need arising from bricks and mortar. In the experience of ORS, deriving a need from this source based on assumptions derived from data elsewhere would be neither reliable nor appropriate, given the very low need found from this source in other studies by ORS. Therefore, the need arising from movement from bricks and mortar to sites is assessed as zero.

Waiting Lists for Public Sites

- 5.16 There is no open waiting list for public sites in Harrogate.

Additional Site Provision: Future Need

- 5.17 The next stage of the process is to assess how many households are likely to be seeking pitches in the area in the future. The number of households seeking pitches will include those:
- » Households living on sites with temporary planning permissions;
 - » New household formation expected during the study period; and
 - » Migration to sites from outside the study area.

Temporary Planning Permissions

- 5.18 Harrogate currently has one site with temporary planning permission for one pitch. The permissions will expire inside of the next 5 years, so they have been counted as need within this assessment, but not as supply of pitches.

New Household Formation

- 5.19 It is recognised that an important group for future pitch provision will be older children who form their own households. Many studies of Gypsy and Traveller populations assume a net growth in the population of around 3% per annum. Long-term trends indicate that the number of Gypsy and Traveller caravans on site has grown by 134% nationally in the past 34 years, which equates to a net growth of around 2.5% per annum. On the basis that the age profile for the Gypsy and Traveller population in the study area is not exceptional, it is this figure of 2.5% that is used in this study for the calculation of future household formation.
- 5.20 When including the impact of compound growth, a 2.5% growth per annum provides for 45% growth over 15 years. This gives a total growth net growth from household formation of 2 households. This figure already includes any household dissolution through death.

In-migration from Other Sources

- 5.21 The most complicated area for a survey such as this is to estimate how many households will require accommodation from outside the area. Potentially Gypsies and Travellers could move to Harrogate from anywhere in the country. The number of household seeking to move to Harrogate is likely to be heavily dependent upon pitch provision elsewhere. It has been noted that a weakness of many Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments conducted across the country has been that they either allowed for out-migration without in-migration which led to under-counting of need, or they over-counted need by assuming every household visiting the area required a pitch.
- 5.22 Overall the level of in-migration to Harrogate is a very difficult issue to predict. We have allowed for a balanced level of migration on to existing sites. The advantage of allowing for net migration to sum to zero is that it avoids the problems seen with other Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments where the modelling of migration clearly identified too low or high a level of total pitch provision. An assumption of net nil migration implies that the net pitch requirement is driven by locally identifiable need.
- 5.23 Beyond this number, rather than assess in-migrant households seeking to develop new sites in the area, we would propose that each case is assessed as a desire to live in the area and that site criteria rules are followed for each new site. It is important for Harrogate to have clear criteria based planning policies in place for any new potential sites which do arise.

Overall Needs

- 5.24 The estimated extra site provision that is required now and in the near future for Harrogate will be 7pitches to address the needs of all identifiable households. This includes the existing households on temporary or unauthorised sites, and growth in household numbers due to household formation. We again wish to stress that we have allowed for no further needs arising on the public sites of Harrogate on the advice of the Gypsy Council.

Figure 2
Extra Pitches which are Required in Harrogate from 2013-2028

Reason for Requirement/Vacancy	Gross Requirement	Supply	Net Requirement
Supply of Pitches			
Additional supply from empty pitches	-	0	
Additional supply new sites	-	0	
Movement to bricks and mortar	-	0	
Total Supply		0	
Current Need			
Current unauthorised developments or encampments and seeking to stay in the area	4	-	
Concealed households	0	-	
Movement from bricks and mortar	0	-	
Waiting list for public sites	0	-	
Total Current Need	4		
Future Needs			
Currently on sites with temporary planning permission	1	-	
Net migration	0	-	
Net new household formation	2	-	
Total Future Needs	3		
Total	7	0	7

Split Public/Private Sites to 2028

- 5.25 To split the need by time period, we have taken any backlog of need and loss of sites with temporary permission as occurring in the first five years. Meanwhile, household formations have been assumed to occur evenly over the time period so beyond the next 5 years the level of growth in the population is even. In summary, Figure 3 sets out the net requirement for new pitch provision in 5 year period until 2028.

Figure 3
Extra Pitch Provision in Harrogate by Public and Private Sites

	2013-2017	2018-2022	2023-2028
Total	5	1	1

Transit/Emergency Stopping Site Provision

- 5.26 There is currently no transit site in the study area. The low level of unauthorised encampment would appear to indicate no clear need for a transit site in Harrogate. Stakeholders indicate Leeds and Selby are looking at joint transit site provision which may be able to provide for a wider area of North and West Yorkshire.

Showpersons

- ^{5.27} There is currently no authorised Showperson’s yard in Harrogate. There is also no evidence that one is required, no provision is identified as being required. Again, it is important for Harrogate to have clear criteria based planning policies in place for any new potential Showperson’s yards which do arise.

6. Broad Locations

Introduction

- 6.1 The study has investigated the potential for the identification of broad locations which will be a guide for the subsequent identification of specific sites.
- 6.2 Criteria for defining broad locations have been developed taking account of national policy, guidance, the results of the needs assessment and identified physical constraints. Broad locations have then been defined taking account of these key criteria.
- 6.3 The work has been informed by stakeholder interviews set out in section 4 above and a stakeholder workshop held on 16 January 2013. Stakeholders included Council representatives, Gypsy and Traveller support services, planning agents and representatives from the travelling communities from the Selby and Harrogate area.

Policy background for determining locational criteria

National policy

- 6.4 National planning policy for Gypsies and Travellers is contained within Planning policy for traveller sites² (PPTS). This identifies three key criteria for identifying appropriate sites for delivery through the planning system. To be deliverable within five years or developable within years 6-15, sites should:
- Be available - the site should be available now or there should be a reasonable prospect that the site is available at the point envisaged;
 - Be suitable – the site should be in a suitable location for development
 - Be achievable – there is a realistic or reasonable prospect that housing could be viably developed at the point envisaged.
- 6.5 Local planning authorities should identify sufficient deliverable sites to provide five years' worth of sites against their locally set targets. For years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15, they should identify a supply of specific developable sites or broad locations for growth.
- 6.6 National policy recommends that criteria should be developed to guide land allocations if there is identified need and if there is no identified need, to develop criteria-based policies to provide a basis for determining planning applications which may nevertheless come forward.
- 6.7 Criteria "should be fair and should facilitate the traditional and nomadic life of travelers while respecting the interests of the settled community" (PPTS, para. 10). Many previous studies and local plan criteria based policies across the country have used very restrictive criteria which have prevented many reasonable sites from coming forward. This is one of the principal reasons why the Government is

² Planning policy for traveller sites, Communities and Local Government, March 2012

no longer relying simply upon criteria based policies to bring forward suitable sites for Gypsies and Travellers.

- 6.8 PPTS identifies a series of issues for criteria to address to ensure that Traveller sites are sustainable economically, socially and environmentally. Specific policies set out the national approach towards sites in rural areas and the countryside (Policy C), rural exception sites (Policy D), sites in Green Belt (Policy E), mixed planning use sites (Policy F), major development projects (Policy G) and determining planning applications (Policy H).

Local policy

- 6.9 The Harrogate Core Strategy was adopted in February 2009. Policy C2 is a criteria policy for the purposes of identifying additional Gypsy and Traveller sites in a Site Allocations DPD and/or for considering planning applications responding to unexpected need.
- 6.10 Work done as part of the preparation of the Sites and Policies DPD, included a consultation event with the local Gypsy community, which highlighted that extending the existing sites is not an option due to size and unwillingness of the existing site residents. The Council has not identified a suitable site allocation for inclusion in the Sites and Policies DPD.

Other policy and guidance

- 6.11 Other relevant considerations which should be taken into account include:
- National policy set out within the National Planning Policy Framework,
 - Communities and Local Government (CLG) Best Practice Guidance: Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites (2008); and
 - The views of the travelling and the settled communities.
- 6.12 These policies and guidance have been taken into consideration when developing criteria for identifying broad locations within Harrogate Borough.

Criteria for identifying broad locations

- 6.13 At the stakeholder workshop, detailed discussion centred around the following themes:
- Fit with spatial strategies
 - Settlement hierarchy and the relationship of sites to sustainable settlements
 - Access to the road network and major public transport corridors
 - Accessibility to key services
 - Impact on local infrastructure
 - Fit with identified needs
 - Location of current site provision

- Pattern of movements through the district
- Projected future needs
- Needs of different travelling communities
- Reducing the need for long distance travelling
- Avoiding physical constraints and protected areas
- Nature conservation designations
- National Park and landscape considerations
- Historic built environment designations
- Floodplain and areas of high flood risk
- Relationship with other land uses
- Co-existence with local communities
- Residential amenity
- Scale of sites relative to settled community
- Mixed planning use sites
- Noise and air quality

^{6.14} Having regard to the national and local policy context, engagement with both the travelling and settled communities and following discussions at the stakeholder workshop, the following site criteria for determining broad locations and for considering sites have been identified:

Figure 4
Criteria for Identifying Broad Locations

<i>Fit with spatial strategy</i>	<p>Gypsy and Traveller residential sites and Travelling Showpeople sites should, where possible, be located close to sustainable settlements with a range of local services.</p> <p>Gypsy and Traveller transit sites or temporary stopping places should be very close to main transport routes.</p> <p>Local infrastructure should be capable of accommodating development.</p>
<i>Fit with identified needs</i>	<p>Gypsy and Traveller residential sites and Travelling Showpeople sites should have good access to local services.</p> <p>New Gypsy and Traveller residential sites should reflect the patterns of emerging needs to avoid the need for long distance travelling and extensions to existing sites may be appropriate to accommodate future immediate family needs.</p> <p>Gypsy and Traveller transit sites or temporary stopping places should be located along historic transit routes.</p>
<i>Avoiding physical constraints and protected areas</i>	<p>Sites should not be located within an international, national or local nature conservation designation or in a location where it will have a significant effect upon any designation.</p> <p>Sites should not be located within Green Belt except in very special circumstances.</p> <p>Sites should not be located within areas at high risk of flooding which cannot be mitigated.</p> <p>Sites should not be located within historic parks and gardens or scheduled ancient monuments.</p> <p>Sites within Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are acceptable in principle but conserving landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations.</p>
<i>Relationship with other land uses</i>	<p>Sites, or a combination of sites, should respect the scale of the nearest settlement.</p> <p>The location of sites should avoid adversely impacting upon neighbouring residential amenity.</p> <p>Residential sites should not be located immediately adjacent to major transport corridors unless noise, safety and air quality impacts can be mitigated.</p> <p>Sites with mixed residential and business uses can contribute to sustainability.</p> <p>Sites should, where possible, make effective use of previously developed or derelict land.</p> <p>Sites should not be located on unstable land or on contaminated land which cannot be mitigated.</p>

Identifying broad locations

Fit with spatial strategies

- 6.15 Policy C2 of the Core Strategy seeks to make appropriate provision for Gypsies and Travellers by examining opportunities that may exist for the extension of existing sites, and if this is not possible or appropriate, to identify additional sites that are well related to Category A and B settlements. Proposals for sites elsewhere will not normally be acceptable.
- 6.1 At the stakeholder workshop, it was agreed that public residential Gypsy and Traveller sites should be located with good access to services and facilities. In relation to private sites, views were expressed that due to high property and land prices and the expectations of current landowners in those locations for residential development, it was unrealistic to expect private residential Gypsy sites to come forward within or immediately adjacent to settlements and that a more flexible approach should be taken. It was pointed out that national policy does not preclude development within the countryside.
- 6.2 Whilst access to local employment is one of the considerations for travelling communities in Harrogate, it is noted that many travellers are self employed and sites are effectively live-work units. Therefore, councils should consider being flexible when defining sustainable locations for sites. Within this context, national policy states that Travellers working and living from the same location could contribute to sustainability (para. 11).
- 6.3 There are no definitions contained within local policy of what “well related” to Category A and B settlements means when deciding where sites should be located. Category A and B settlements are those which have a reasonable range of services and facilities and are served by public transport. Category A settlements include the main urban areas of Harrogate and Knaresborough, (including Scriven) and the city of Ripon. Group B settlements are identified as local rural centres providing the focus for new housing in the rural areas of the Borough.
- 6.4 For the purposes of defining broad locations, it is recommended that the priority should be to identify sites within approximately 1 mile of key facilities within settlements. This figure represents a reasonable maximum walking distance for site residents to be able to access those facilities without reliance on the use of the private car.
- 6.5 National policy identifies health services, schools, welfare services and employment as key local services which local authorities should promote access to. Workshop attendees identified GP services, education, community centres and access to regular bus services as the key facilities. Large public sites should also have a community building.
- 6.6 Policy C2 of the Core Strategy states that sites should not be located where there would be a detrimental impact on highway safety or the flow of traffic. It was recognized at the workshop that this is a particular requirement for transit sites or temporary stopping places, if required, where the aim should be to discourage unauthorised roadside encampments as Travellers move through the area. Such sites should therefore be very close to main transport routes.
- 6.7 At the stakeholder workshop, a view was expressed that although some local authorities are looking to incorporate sites for the travelling communities within planned urban extensions, none of the proposed extensions are likely to be acceptable locations for Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople.

Landowners and developers are fundamentally opposed to the principle of providing for Gypsies and Travellers on housing sites.

Fit with identified needs

- 6.8 Harrogate has two authorised public sites with 40 pitches in Wetherby and Knaresborough. Harrogate also contains 1 private site for one family with a temporary planning permission until 2017 and a small number of unauthorised sites.
- 6.9 The evidence from the interviews with Gypsies and Travellers suggests that the existing spatial pattern reflects a long period of residence for the Gypsy and Traveller communities, with the main reasons given for their current location including being near family and because they have lived in the area for a long time. The area contains no authorised Showperson's yard.
- 6.10 The estimated extra site provision that is required now and in the near future for Harrogate will be 6 pitches to address the needs of all identifiable households. This includes the existing households on temporary or unauthorised sites, those in bricks and mortar and growth in household numbers due to household formation. ORS have allowed for no further needs arising on the public sites of Harrogate on the advice of the Gypsy Council.
- 6.11 At the workshop it was noted that existing sites are located around Knaresborough and near Wetherby.
- 6.12 Gypsies on private sites want to be able to accommodate existing and future immediate family needs and would generally object to having other families on site.
- 6.13 Stakeholders stated that the existing public sites were well managed. Whilst any future need arising from existing public sites has not been identified through the needs assessment, the size of the existing sites makes the extension of these sites inappropriate in any case.
- 6.14 A meeting between residents of the Knaresborough public site facilitated by Yorkshire Plannig Aid in 2011 identified the preferred broad area of search for a future public site to be the Harrogate/Knaresborough/Goldsborough area, although other locations mentioned included north of Wetherby, Boroughbridge and Ripon.
- 6.15 There is currently no transit site in the study area. The low level of unauthorised encampment would appear to indicate no clear need for a transit site in Harrogate.
- 6.16 Travellers have traditionally travelled through the area to visit horse fairs in Appleby, Darlington and Scarborough, holidays etc. but now tend to travel through adjoining districts which are more sympathetic to Traveller needs. Other Traveller destinations in the area mentioned at the workshop included Seamer, Whitby and Barnard Castle.
- 6.17 If future provision were to be made, stakeholders stated that transit sites should be kept away from residential sites and that different groups of Gypsies and Travellers would not want to be on the same site or on sites next to each other. One view expressed was that tolerated temporary stopping places may be more appropriate than a permanent transit site.

- 6.18 The Traveller Housing Needs Study has not identified a new for further Travelling Showpeople plots. However, it is important for Harrogate to have clear criteria based planning policies in place for any new potential Showperson's yards which do arise.

Avoiding physical constraints and protected areas

- 6.19 The National Planning Policy Framework and Circular 06/2005 identify the protection that should be given to international, national and locally designated biodiversity and geological conservation sites. Heritage assets of the highest significance, such as scheduled monuments, battlefields and historic parks and gardens should also be protected and development at these locations wholly exceptional.
- 6.20 Sites for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople constitute inappropriate development in terms of national Green Belt policy and should not be approved on Green Belt land except in very special circumstances. However, Green Belt boundaries can be reviewed through the local plan process.
- 6.21 PPTS identifies areas at high risk of flooding including functional floodplains should be avoided given the particular vulnerability of caravans.
- 6.22 In discussing these issues, the stakeholder group agreed that there are a number of constraints that are absolute due to national policy which identifies such locations as generally inappropriate for built development.
- 6.23 For the purposes of defining broad locations, these areas are:
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Local Nature Reserves and other sites of importance for nature conservation and within buffer zones where a significant effect is determined
 - Ancient woodland
 - Areas at high risk of flooding
 - Historic battlefields
 - Historic parks and gardens
 - Scheduled ancient monuments
- 6.24 Whilst some stakeholders at the workshop stated that existing brownfield sites within Green Belt should be considered appropriate locations to meet existing needs, it was acknowledged that national policy does not consider such locations to be appropriate unless land is taken out of the Green Belt through the local plan process.
- 6.25 Other designations, such as listed buildings, conservation area, etc. whilst being a major constraint on development are not absolute constraints, as the acceptability or otherwise of development depends upon a site assessment of impact.
- 6.26 A representative from the Environment Agency commented at the workshop that groundwater source protection zones are vulnerable to non-mains sewerage systems and therefore the location of future sites should take this into consideration.

- 6.27 The NPPF also states that local planning authorities should give great weight to conserving landscape and scenic beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. However, this designation is not an absolute constraint.

Relationship with other land uses

- 6.28 PPTS states that local planning authorities should have due regard to the protection of local amenity, for example by ensuring that the scale of sites in rural locations does not dominate the nearest settled community.
- 6.29 In addition, local authorities should give proper consideration to the effect of local environmental quality (such as noise and air quality) on the health and well-being of occupants of sites.
- 6.30 Generally speaking, these issues are site specific and it is difficult to identify any general implications for the identification of broad locations.

Recommended broad locations

- 6.31 Taking into consideration the themes and criteria outlined above, broad locations have been identified for the purposes of the subsequent identification of specific sites by Harrogate Borough Council and for use in development management decision making.

Residential sites

- 6.32 The broad locations for future residential Gypsy and Traveller sites reflect the existing pattern of sites and the nearest most sustainable settlements, include land within 1 mile of the edge of the main urban areas of Harrogate and Knaresborough, (including Scriven) and the adjoining settlement of Wetherby within the City of Leeds metropolitan borough.
- 6.33 Within each broad location, the following absolute constraints should be avoided:
- Green Belt
 - Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Local Nature Reserves and other sites of importance for nature conservation
 - Ancient Woodland
 - Areas at high risk of flooding
 - Historic battlefields
 - Historic parks and gardens
 - Scheduled ancient monuments
- 6.34 Within each broad location, proximity to settlements should be a key consideration. An assessment of sites should take into consideration the distance from each site to health, education, welfare services and employment opportunities and if opportunities exist for residents to access public transport services.

- 6.35 The recommended broad locations, together with physical constraints and protected areas, identified settlements and existing Gypsy and Traveller site locations, are identified in Appendix 1.
- 6.36 The identification of further Gypsy and Traveller residential sites should focus on the broad locations and should take into account where the need arises and the capacity of local infrastructure to determine the most appropriate broad location to commence the site search.
- 6.37 If suitable sites cannot be identified within the most appropriate broad location, other broad locations should be investigated before sites outside broad locations are considered.
- 6.38 ORS have allowed for no further needs arising on the public sites of Harrogate on the advice of the Gypsy Council. However, if future needs are identified, the Council should investigate public site provision within these broad locations, in locations where there is good access to main facilities and services such as local hospitals.
- 6.39 The Council should be reasonably flexible about the location of small private sites and should consider sites outside but close to the broad locations.

Transit sites or temporary stopping places

- 6.40 There are no broad locations for transit sites or temporary stopping places, as the low level of unauthorised encampment would appear to indicate no clear need for a transit site in Harrogate.
- 6.41 However, the Council should consider allowing one or two pitches within or adjacent to existing private residential pitches to accommodate the needs of seasonal visitors to existing families.

Other considerations

- 6.42 This study has identified appropriate broad locations for the further identification and allocation of sites if required and for use in development management decision making. However, there will be other site specific considerations which should be taken into consideration when assessing the suitability of future sites.
- 6.43 These site specific considerations are set out in national and local policy, but include, in particular, the relationship of the site to other land uses, as set out in the criteria above.

7. Conclusions

Introduction

- 7.1 This chapter brings together the evidence presented earlier in the report to provide some key policy conclusions for Harrogate. It focuses upon the key issues of future site provision for Gypsies and Travellers and also Showpersons.

Gypsy and Traveller Future Pitch Provision

- 7.2 Based upon the evidence presented in Chapter 5, the estimated extra pitch provision that is required for Gypsies and Travellers in the next 15 years in Harrogate is 7 pitches. This represents 5 pitches in the period 2013-2017 and 1 pitches each in the periods 2018-2022 and 2023-2028.

Travelling Showperson Requirements

- 7.3 There are currently no sources of need for the provision of Travelling Showperson yards in Selby. Nonetheless, Selby should ensure that criteria based policies are in place in order that any applications for sites received from Travelling Showpeople in the future can be evaluated effectively.

A Supply of Deliverable and Developable Sites

Safeguarding existing sites

- 7.4 In developing their local plans, “Planning Policy for Traveller Sites” requires local planning authorities to identify and keep up-to-date a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years’ worth of sites against those locally set targets and a supply of specific developable sites or broad locations to meet needs, where possible, for up to 15 years.
- 7.5 We would suggest that an initial starting point would be for the Council to consider safeguarding existing authorised Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites, to ensure that existing needs continue to be met in perpetuity. If sites are lost from these uses, then new replacement sites may need to be found to maintain an adequate supply to meet needs in accordance with the identified pitch and plot targets.

Broad Geographical Locations

- 7.6 Where specific deliverable or developable sites for further Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople provision cannot be identified, the Council should consider including broad geographical locations within their Local Plans.
- 7.7 This document recommends that the identification of further Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople residential sites should focus on the broad geographical locations and should take into account where the need arises and the capacity of local infrastructure to determine the most appropriate broad location to commence the site search.

- 7.8 If suitable sites cannot be identified within the most appropriate broad location, other broad locations should be investigated before sites outside broad locations are considered.
- 7.9 The Council should investigate public sites within the most sustainable broad locations, particularly in locations where there is good access to main facilities and services such as local hospitals.
- 7.10 The Council should be reasonably flexible about the location of small private sites and should consider sites outside but close to the broad locations.

Sites with Potential to Meet Future Needs

- 7.11 The Council should investigate the potential from existing sites to achieve additional pitches/plots either through increasing the capacity within existing boundaries or through site extension onto adjoining land.
- 7.12 To provide a medium and long term supply, the Council should consider allocating sites through their Local Plans. This can either be through a Core Strategy, Local Plan or a Site Allocations DPD, depending upon the nature of the development plan within each area.

Delivery

- 7.13 As with other forms of development, the release of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites should be managed to ensure a good fit with identified need.
- 7.14 However, there is no direct correlation between existing and future needs and sites which may have potential to meet those needs. For example, a family may need further pitches in the future to meet the future needs from existing children, but their current site may not have capacity, whilst an existing family may not require pitches in the future but they may have a site where there is potential for future provision.
- 7.15 It is important to note that the future availability of existing private sites to accommodate needs is entirely dependent on existing site owners being prepared to accommodate future needs on these sites.
- 7.16 It is also important to note that Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers have separate traditions and patterns of movement and may not be prepared to share sites. Similarly, Travelling Showpeople families operate separate commercial businesses and are unlikely to share sites.
- 7.17 There is therefore a strong likelihood that more than the bare minimum of sites will need to be identified and brought forward to provide a flexible and sufficient pool of sites to meet identified existing and future needs.
- 7.18 We would suggest that it would be prudent for the Council to identify a potential reserve supply from the identified sites or other sites which could be brought forward in the future if required to ensure a continuous supply of deliverable and developable sites.

Phasing, Monitoring and Review

- 7.19 Any release of land to meet future needs would require active monitoring of supply against need, at least on an annual basis. It would also require the Council to undertake periodic reviews of the needs evidence base.

Appendix 1: Broad Locations for Gypsy and Traveller Sites

