

Public Document Pack



County Hall
Rhadyr
Usk
NP15 1GA

Friday, 13 October 2023

Notice of meeting:

Special Meeting - Place Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 23rd October, 2023 at 4.00 pm
The Council Chamber, County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA with
remote attendance

**Please note that there will be a pre-meeting for the Scrutiny Committee
Members at 3.30pm.**

AGENDA

Item No	Item	Pages
1.	Apologies for Absence.	
2.	Declarations of Interest.	
3.	Public Open Forum. Scrutiny Committee Public Open Forum ~ Guidance Our Scrutiny Committee meetings are live streamed and a link to the live stream will be available on the meeting page of the Monmouthshire County Council website If you would like to share your thoughts on any proposals being discussed by Scrutiny Committees, you can submit your representation in advance via this form Please share your views by uploading a video or audio file (maximum of 4 minutes) or; Please submit a written representation (via Microsoft Word, maximum of 500 words) You will need to register for a My Monmouthshire account in order to submit the representation or use your log in, if you have registered previously.	

The deadline for submitting representations to the Council is 5pm three clear working days in advance of the meeting.

If representations received exceed 30 minutes, a selection of these based on theme will be shared at the Scrutiny Committee meeting. All representations received will be made available to councillors prior to the meeting.

If you would like to attend one of our meetings to speak under the Public Open Forum at the meeting, you will need to give three working days' notice by contacting Scrutiny@monmouthshire.gov.uk.

The amount of time afforded to each member of the public to speak is at the chair's discretion, but to enable us to accommodate multiple speakers, we ask that contributions be no longer than 3 minutes.

If you would like to suggest future topics for scrutiny by one of our Scrutiny Committees, please do so by emailing Scrutiny@monmouthshire.gov.uk

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|-----------|--|---------|
| 4. | Presentation of the Call-in of the decision by the special meeting of Cabinet on 4th October 2023 in relation to meeting Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Pitch Needs - Land Identification. | 1 - 90 |
| 5. | Response to the Call-in Decision | |
| 6. | Exclusion of Press and Public under the Local Government Act, Schedule 12A part 4. | 91 - 92 |

Any discussion during the Committee Meeting that relates to existing Gypsy, Roma and Traveller sites or any proposed private sites or any information relating to a particular individual or family or which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual or information relating to any consultation or negotiations which relate to the financial or business affairs of any particular person will be exempt in line with the Local Government Act, Schedule 12A part 4 and will require the Committee to move into a closed session and the press and public will be asked to leave the meeting.

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| 7. | Next Meeting: Thursday 9th November 2023 at 10.00am. | |
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Paul Matthews

Chief Executive

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CYNGOR SIR FYNWY

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEE IS AS FOLLOWS:

County Councillor Louise Brown	Shirenewton;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Emma Bryn	Wyesham;	Independent Group
County Councillor Tomos Dafydd Davies	Llanfoist & Govilon;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Lisa Dymock	Portskewett;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Jane Lucas	Osbaston;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Maria Stevens	Severn;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Jackie Strong	Caldicot Cross;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Laura Wright	Grofield;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Tudor Thomas	Park;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru

Public Information

Access to paper copies of agendas and reports

A copy of this agenda and relevant reports can be made available to members of the public attending a meeting by requesting a copy from Democratic Services on 01633 644219. Please note that we must receive 24 hours notice prior to the meeting in order to provide you with a hard copy of this agenda.

Welsh Language

The Council welcomes contributions from members of the public through the medium of Welsh or English. We respectfully ask that you provide us with adequate notice to accommodate your needs.

Aims and Values of Monmouthshire County Council

Our purpose

Building Sustainable and Resilient Communities

Objectives we are working towards

- Giving people the best possible start in life
- A thriving and connected county
- Maximise the Potential of the natural and built environment
- Lifelong well-being
- A future focused council

Our Values

Openness. We are open and honest. People have the chance to get involved in decisions that affect them, tell us what matters and do things for themselves/their communities. If we cannot do something to help, we'll say so; if it will take a while to get the answer we'll explain why; if we can't answer immediately we'll try to connect you to the people who can help – building trust and engagement is a key foundation.

Fairness. We provide fair chances, to help people and communities thrive. If something does not seem fair, we will listen and help explain why. We will always try to treat everyone fairly and consistently. We cannot always make everyone happy, but will commit to listening and explaining why we did what we did.

Flexibility. We will continue to change and be flexible to enable delivery of the most effective and efficient services. This means a genuine commitment to working with everyone to embrace new ways of working.

Teamwork. We will work with you and our partners to support and inspire everyone to get involved so we can achieve great things together. We don't see ourselves as the 'fixers' or problem-solvers, but we will make the best of the ideas, assets and resources available to make sure we do the things that most positively impact our people and places.

Kindness: We will show kindness to all those we work with putting the importance of relationships and the connections we have with one another at the heart of all interactions.

Monmouthshire Scrutiny Question Guide

Role of the Pre-meeting	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why is the Committee scrutinising this? (background, key issues) 2. What is the Committee's role and what outcome do Members want to achieve? 3. Is there sufficient information to achieve this? If not, who could provide this? <p>- Agree the order of questioning and which Members will lead - Agree questions for officers and questions for the Cabinet Member</p>	
Questions for the Meeting	
<p><u>Scrutinising Performance</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How does performance compare with previous years? Is it better/worse? Why? 2. How does performance compare with other councils/other service providers? Is it better/worse? Why? 3. How does performance compare with set targets? Is it better/worse? Why? 4. How were performance targets set? Are they challenging enough/realistic? 5. How do service users/the public/partners view the performance of the service? 6. Have there been any recent audit and inspections? What were the findings? 7. How does the service contribute to the achievement of corporate objectives? 8. Is improvement/decline in performance linked to an increase/reduction in resource? What capacity is there to improve? 	<p><u>Scrutinising Policy</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who does the policy affect ~ directly and indirectly? Who will benefit most/least? 2. What is the view of service users/stakeholders? What consultation has been undertaken? Did the consultation process comply with the Gunning Principles? Do stakeholders believe it will achieve the desired outcome? 3. What is the view of the community as a whole - the 'taxpayer' perspective? 4. What methods were used to consult with stakeholders? Did the process enable all those with a stake to have their say? 5. What practice and options have been considered in developing/reviewing this policy? What evidence is there to inform what works? Does the policy relate to an area where there is a lack of published research or other evidence? 6. Does the policy relate to an area where there are known inequalities? 7. Does this policy align to our corporate objectives, as defined in our corporate plan? Does it adhere to our Welsh Language Standards?

8. Have all relevant sustainable development, equalities and safeguarding implications
9. been taken into consideration? For example, what are the procedures that need to be in place to protect children?
- 10.
11. How much will this cost to implement and what funding source has been identified?
- 12.
13. How will performance of the policy be measured and the impact evaluated

General Questions:

Empowering Communities

- How are we involving local communities and empowering them to design and deliver services to suit local need?
- Do we have regular discussions with communities about service priorities and what level of service the council can afford to provide in the future?
- Is the service working with citizens to explain the role of different partners in delivering the service, and managing expectations?
- Is there a framework and proportionate process in place for collective performance assessment, including from a citizen's perspective, and do you have accountability arrangements to support this?
- Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out? If so, can the Leader and Cabinet/Senior Officers provide members with copies and a detailed explanation of the EQIA conducted in respect of these proposals?
- Can the Leader and Cabinet/Senior Officers assure members that these proposals comply with Equality and Human Rights legislation? Do the proposals comply with the Local Authority's Strategic Equality Plan?

Service Demands

- How will policy and legislative change affect how the council operates?
- Have we considered the demographics of our council and how this will impact on service delivery and funding in the future?
- Have you identified and considered the long-term trends that might affect your service area, what impact these trends could have on your service/your service could have on these trends, and what is being done in response?

Financial Planning

- Do we have robust medium and long-term financial plans in place?
- Are we linking budgets to plans and outcomes and reporting effectively on these?

Making savings and generating income

- Do we have the right structures in place to ensure that our efficiency, improvement and

transformational approaches are working together to maximise savings?

- How are we maximising income?
- Have we compared other council's policies to maximise income and fully considered the implications on service users?
- Do we have a workforce plan that takes into account capacity, costs, and skills of the actual versus desired workforce?

Questions to ask within a year of the decision:

- Were the intended outcomes of the proposal achieved or were there other results?
- Were the impacts confined to the group you initially thought would be affected i.e. older people, or were others affected e.g. people with disabilities, parents with young children?
- Is the decision still the right decision or do adjustments need to be made?

Questions for the Committee to conclude...

Do we have the necessary information to form conclusions/make recommendations to the executive, council, other partners? If not, do we need to:

- (i) Investigate the issue in more detail?
- (ii) Obtain further information from other witnesses – Executive Member, independent expert, members of the local community, service users, regulatory bodies...

Agree further actions to be undertaken within a timescale/future monitoring report...



CALL-IN REQUEST

1. SUBJECT:

MEETING GYPSY, ROMA AND TRAVELLER PITCH NEEDS – LAND IDENTIFICATION

2. DATE OF CABINET MEETING:

04/10/2023

3. CABINET DECISION:

Following a review of Council owned 'Candidate sites', to put forward two sites of up to 6 pitches each at the Caldicot East strategic site identified within the Replacement Local Development Plan Preferred Strategy. The commencement of a public consultation exercise on the following Council owned sites (site summary profiles provided in Appendix 1), for the potential provision of up to six Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pitches each:

- Bradbury Farm, Crick, Caldicot
- Oak Grove Farm, Crick, Caldicot
- Langley Close, Magor

4. REASON(S) FOR CALL- IN:

1, The process is flawed and there remain multiple concerns about the integrity of the process, perceived inconsistencies, and erroneous information. 2, Feedback about process and site-specific feedback from residents does not seem to have been considered sufficiently - Cabinet did not take on scrutiny's recommendation to return completely to the drawing board, however, in a further show of the unsound nature of the process cabinet agreed to the site at Dancing Hill. Although previous reports advise that Langley Close in particular but any site must be tested for the effects of potential contamination, air and noise pollution or other suitability/viability issues. No detail has been provided about the cost of this work. Indeed during the cabinet meeting the cabinet member stated that there would be no assessments until the point of a planning application. We believe the decision is unsound, is based on a poor and flawed process and could lead to significant cost to the authority. Further work could be extremely costly. This is out of kilter with the LDP process. This seems irresponsible and ill advised, particularly in the current financial climate.

5. DATE RECEIVED:

12th October 2023

6. MEMBERS CALLING-IN:

(The Chairman of a Scrutiny Committee or any three non-executive members)

Name	Ward
Frances Taylor	Magor West
Simon Howarth	Lanelly Hill
David Jones	Crucorney

Please identify which Scrutiny Committee should hear the call-in, based on the request:

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SUBJECT:	MEETING GYPSY, ROMA AND TRAVELLER PITCH NEEDS - LAND IDENTIFICATION
MEETING:	CABINET
DATE:	4TH OCTOBER 2023
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:	ALL

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 Cabinet to consider opening a public consultation to meet its statutory obligation in addressing the identified need for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pitches, whilst facilitating the provision of homes for local families.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Cabinet Member for 'A Sustainable Economy' recommends:

- 2.1 Ratification of the proposal to remove the following sites from the site identification process as per the statement made to Cabinet on the 26th of July 2023 by the then Cabinet Member for Inclusive Communities:
- Manson Heights, Monmouth
 - Garrow Road, Mitchel Troy
 - Rocklea, Mitchel Troy
- 2.2 Following further consideration of feedback from the Place Scrutiny Committee on the 19th of July 2023 and the wider Magor and Undy community, ratification of the proposal to remove Dancing Hill West, Magor from the list of potential sites, as per the reasons stated in paragraph 3.9 below.
- 2.3 Following a review of Council owned 'Candidate sites', to put forward two sites of up to 6 pitches each at the Caldicot East strategic site identified within the Replacement Local Development Plan Preferred Strategy.
- 2.4 The commencement of a public consultation exercise on the following Council owned sites (site summary profiles provided in **Appendix 1**), for the potential provision of up to six Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pitches each:
- Bradbury Farm, Crick, Caldicot
 - Oak Grove Farm, Crick, Caldicot
 - Langley Close, Magor
- 2.5 Inclusion in the public consultation, any suitable sites brought forward through the public call for sites, that the owner is willing to sell or lease long term to the Council.
- 2.6 Further exploration of the 19th July Place Scrutiny Committee's request to support households wishing to self-serve on existing sites which, subject to the necessary permissions, would reduce the number of new pitches needed.

- 2.7 To approve the attached FAQs (**Appendix 2**), an iterative document which will be displayed and regularly updated on the Council's website.

3. KEY ISSUES:

The Council's Statutory Obligations

3.1 Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Assessment

All Councils in Wales have a duty under Part 3, Housing (Wales) Act 2014 to undertake a Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Assessment every five years. Where unmet need for mobile home pitches is identified, the necessary pitch provision needs to be facilitated. The last [Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Assessment](#) was adopted by Cabinet on 6th January 2021. The summary conclusions identify a need for 13 pitches for families already living within Monmouthshire. This need is broken down as follows:

- An unmet need of nine pitches under the assessment period 2020 to 2025;
- Beyond 2025, a further unmet need of four pitches over the remaining length of the Replacement Local Development Plan (2026-33) to accommodate family growth as children become adults and require their own pitch;
- There is no need identified for an allocation for travelling show people or circus people;
- The Gypsy, Roma and Traveller assessment did not identify a need to provide a transit site and given the cross-border movement associated with families passing through Local Authorities, this topic is best addressed via the regional Strategic Development Plan.

3.2 Replacement Local Development Plan

The Council is required to produce a Local Development Plan which sets out the Council's vision for the development and use of land in the County. The current plan was adopted in 2014 and to ensure the Plan is kept up to date, the Council has commenced preparation of the [Replacement Local Development Plan 2018 – 2033](#) (the RLDP). The RLDP must allocate land to meet its housing needs, including the identified need for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pitches.

Process to Date

- 3.3 The Council has implemented a process to evaluate all Council owned land i.e., 1500 assets, to meet the identified pitch need and provide suitable homes in a sustainable location to identified local Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families, that require a home within the county. Its vision is for:
- Small sites, ideally occupied by one Monmouthshire family/household;
 - Typically, no more than 5 or 6 pitches on each site;
 - Well designed and landscaped;
 - Sensitive to existing communities.
- 3.4 An overview of the site identification process undertaken, and criteria used is provided in **Appendix 3**, which included engagement with elected members through a series of member workshops and Scrutiny Committees, in order to share requirements, obtain views/comments about the process and evaluation criteria and update on progress.

3.5 The RAG Evaluation

The Council's site identification process has reviewed and evaluated all of the Council's 1500 assets. The core of the site identification process was a broad five staged exercise to sift out/remove unsuitable land using site evaluation criteria, the aim being to identify a short-list of land with potential suitability for development as Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pitch provision, which would then be consulted upon.

- 3.6 This staged exercise to sift out unsuitable assets has been recorded and evidenced in a document, referred to as the RAG document (a spreadsheet that utilises a traffic-light system of red, amber and green to colour code evaluation findings and provide a more visual indication/overview). The RAG document is an iterative document that is continually updated as and when new information is identified. See **Appendix 4**. This staged process and the RAG document informed the original proposal scrutinised by People Scrutiny Committee held on the 19th of July and the report on the Cabinet agenda on 26th July 2023.

3.7 Cabinet – 26th July 2023

The report put to [Cabinet 26th July 2023](#) recommended *'the commencement of a consultation exercise to look at the following Council owned sites for the potential development of Gypsy and Traveller pitch provision namely:*

- *Manson Heights, Monmouth*
- *Rocklea, Mitchel Troy*
- *Garthi Close, Mitchel Troy.*
- *Langley Close, Magor*

Agree that further evaluation is undertaken on an additional piece of Council owned land, to further inform possible suitability and if applicable, (subject to findings) future consultation.

- *Dancing Hill, Undy (west of Dancing Hill)*

Agree to a 'call' for landowners who may wish to suggest parcels of land to come forward for consideration and further consultation.

The decision taken by Cabinet on 26th July 2023 was to 'Defer consideration of the report to allow officers to undertake further work.' The then Cabinet Member also advised that three sites be removed from the site identification process due to unsuitability namely Manson Heights, Monmouth; Rocklea, Mitchel Troy Common and Garthi Close, Mitchel Troy Common – further detail of the suggested reasons for their exclusion can be found in **Appendix 4**.

- 3.8 In addition, officers were tasked with the following:

- Review site evaluation work and the RAG document;
- Incorporate and review Council owned candidate sites put forward for potential allocation in the RLDP for development [nine areas of land]. These were previously sifted out on the basis of the potential future development considerations;
- Invite the public to put potential land forward for consideration; and,
- Continue to seek to address need wherever possible on existing private Gypsy, Roma and Traveller sites subject to the necessary permissions.

Officer Findings

3.9 Further to the Cabinet meeting of the 26th July 2023, the following activities have taken place :

- a) The site identification RAG document has been reviewed by officers to ensure comments and RAG ratings are robust and consistent. The most recent version of the RAG document is attached in **Appendix 4**. Given a combination of the known historic land contamination, possible noise issues, access issues and location immediately adjacent to a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), officers recommend that *Dancing Hill West* is removed from the process as alternatives are available.
- b) Officers have further reviewed Council owned 'Candidate sites' put forward for potential inclusion in the RLDP. These nine sites are now included in the most recent version of the RAG document (**See Appendix 4, Stage 6**).
- c) Following the 'Candidate' site review, two sites at the RLDP strategic Caldicot East site have been identified for up to 6 pitches each; one at Bradbury Farm and one at Oak Grove Farm (**Appendices 1 and 4**). It is recommended that these are put forward for public consultation, along with Langley Close, Magor as per previous recommendations.
- d) The 'public call' for sites was a positive exercise which resulted in 17 pieces of land being suggested for use. The Council wishes to thank those who responded to the request. These sites have been assessed against the RAG criteria, this concluded:
 - One site was discounted as being located outside of Monmouthshire;
 - Nine sites were discounted as being contrary to flood risk policy, following the same approach as the sifting of MCC land;
 - One site was discounted due to its location within a Conservation Area, following the same approach as the sifting of MCC land;
 - Inadequate information was provided to identify the location of two sites;
 - One site was discounted as being too small to meet the identified need;
 - Three suitable pieces of land have been assessed using the RAG. The Council has written to the owners of the three suitable sites to determine if there is any interest in selling or leasing this land to the Council. If landowners of suitable sites are in agreement to potentially sell or lease for this purpose, these sites will be included in the public consultation.

Please note this information is exempt from disclosure because the Council does not have permission from the land owners.

- e) Discussions are ongoing with existing Monmouthshire households wishing to self-serve on existing sites, in respect of meeting their own need subject to the necessary permissions. These discussions are on-going and there is no material update available for this report.
- 3.10 Of the thirteen pitches needed as identified by the 2020-2025 Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Assessment, two pitches have been granted planning permission. This reduces the pitch requirement to eleven. Discussions are ongoing with two households about the possibility of obtaining planning permission on private sites which could significantly reduce the overall pitch requirement.

Public Consultation

- 3.11 It is proposed that a specialist and independent community engagement agency is appointed to undertake the public consultation on behalf of the Council. The Council has invited a number of companies to submit proposals for its consideration. The purpose of the commission is to identify and implement a methodology which delivers a sound reflection of local views and is seen to be open, transparent, inclusive and engaging. The public consultation is expected to take at least six weeks.

Proposed Next Steps

- 3.12 The proposed next steps in respect of both site identification **and** the Replacement Local Development Plan are:
- 4th October – Cabinet decision on Gypsy, Roma and Traveller sites for public consultation for at least 6 weeks. Proposed to start 18th October 2023.
 - 26th October Council consideration to endorse the preferred strategy for the RLDP to inform the deposit plan.
 - 9th November – Place Scrutiny Committee for consideration of the Economy, Employment and Skills Strategy and voluntary Local Transport Plan
 - 13th December – Cabinet approval sought for the Economy, Employment and Skills Strategy and voluntary Local Transport Plan.
 - Cabinet decision on which Gypsy, Roma and Traveller sites are to be included in the Deposit RLDP – Date to be confirmed after consultation.
 - April/May 2024 – Deposit Plan to Council for endorsement to consult – the Deposit Plan is the full RLDP containing all site allocations and all policies;
 - September 2024 – Deposit Plan to Council following consultation for approval to submit to the Welsh Government for public examination in public by an independent inspector;
 - Examination in public;
 - July 2025 – RLDP to Council for adoption.

4. EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING)

- 4.1 No negative implications have been identified in respect of this proposal to consult on individual pieces of land. See **Appendix 5**. However, should the Council make a decision to develop pitch provision, negative implications have been identified in respect of some of the locations with consideration being given to any necessary mitigating measures.

5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 All Councils in Wales have a duty under Part 3, Housing (Wales) Act 2014 to meet unmet need for mobile home pitches where it is identified, there are therefore two options to consider in Table One below, Option One is the preferred option.

Table One: Options Appraisal

Option	Benefit	Risk
Option 1: The <u>recommended option</u> is that Cabinet gives approval to	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This contributes to the Council's legal responsibilities to meet	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It is possible there may be community objection to any proposed development of

Option	Benefit	Risk
<p>consult on the proposed pieces of land for potential suitability and development for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pitch provision.</p>	<p>identified Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pitch needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is a requirement of the development of Replacement Local Development Plan includes that identified need for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pitch need is met. • Consultation will help better understand pros and cons of the proposed sites and inform the future site selection decision. • Timely progress is needed to meet the RLDP timetable 	<p>Council owned land for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller sites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be future financial implications associated with continuing to evaluate and finalise suitability e.g., land contamination investigation. • There will be future financial implications associated with any final decisions relating to developing and managing a proposed site, although it is anticipated that Welsh Government capital grant will be available.
<p>Option 2: That Cabinet give approval for to consult on a <u>smaller</u> number of these pieces of land for potential suitability and development for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pitch provision.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This will still contribute positively to the Council's legal responsibilities to meet identified Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pitch needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is possible there may be community objection to any proposed development of Council owned land for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller sites. • Subject to final decisions, this option will impact on the number of pitches the Council will be able to provide and it reduces the likelihood of the Council meeting the remaining identified need (i.e., 11 pitches) for Monmouthshire. • There will be future financial implications associated with any final decisions relating to developing and managing

Option	Benefit	Risk
		a proposed site, although it is anticipated that Welsh Government capital grant will be available.

6. REASONS

- 6.1 The Council has a duty under Part 3, Housing (Wales) Act 2014 to address unmet need for mobile home pitches where identified. Using Council owned land is one option for meeting identified need.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Council can meet its statutory duty through a number of options, including purchasing land or leasing land from another landowner. The Council has opted to focus firstly on determining whether any of the Council's land is suitable for pitch provision and making the best use of existing resources. This is to avoid any unnecessary expenditure and is also subject to the suitability of identified land.
- 7.2 The estimated cost of appointing a specialist agency to consult on the potential land options is approximately £10,000, depending on the pieces of land being deemed suitable for development. This will be funded from the existing Housing and Communities budget.
- 7.3 There will be revenue implications relating to undertaking any surveys that may be necessary to further inform the evaluation of potential land. This will include further site investigation works including land contamination, air quality and noise assessments. Final costs will be dependent upon the outcome of the public consultation and the land identified for further investigation.
- 7.4 Although not relating to this report nor any decision to consult on Council owned land for potential future pitch provision development, there will be capital and revenue cost implications relating to any possible future decision to develop pitch provision. As yet, the Council has **not** sought to identify and estimate site development costs until such time a decision has been by the Council that a site is considered suitable, which will be made after consultation. Costs will be determined at the stage of designing a site. These costs will need to be appraised and evaluated as part of the decision-making process. Such cost will vary depending on the land identified and other variables such as size and number of pitches. The Council will engage with Welsh Government in respect of possible capital grant availability.

8. CONSULTEES

- 8.1 Cabinet; Senior Leadership Team; Communities & Place DMT; Housing Management Team; Travelling Ahead – Gypsy & Traveller Advocates; Principal Environmental Health Officer; Snr Landscape and Urban Officer; Biodiversity & Ecology Lead; Highways Development Manager; Head of Planning and People Scrutiny Committee 19th July 2023.
- 8.2 Although no decision has been made to consult on any land as yet, the Council has already received feedback from members of the public about Langley Close, Magor. In summary the Council has received 58 individual pre-consultation representations,

all of which have objected to the possibility of Langley Close being used for the purpose of Gypsy & Traveller pitch provision. Should Cabinet decide to consult on Langley Close, this feedback will be automatically fed into the consultation process for consideration and passed to the independent specialist agency the Council is hoping to appoint.

- 8.3 Members were asked to scrutinise proposals to inform the 26th July Cabinet report on at the People Scrutiny Committee on 19th July 2023. Please see **Appendix 6** for minutes of the People Scrutiny Committee on 19th July 2023. The meeting can also be viewed [here](#).

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Appendix 1 – Site Profile

Appendix 2 – Frequently Asked Questions & Landing Page

Appendix 3 – Site Identification Process

Appendix 4 – RAG Document

Appendix 5 – Integrated Impact Assessment Document

Appendix 6 – Minutes of People Scrutiny 19th July 2023

Welsh Government Site Design Guide 2015

10. AUTHORS:

Cath Fallon – Head of Enterprise and Community Animation

Ian Bakewell – Housing and Communities Manager

12. CONTACT DETAILS:

Cathfallon@monmouthshire.gov.uk

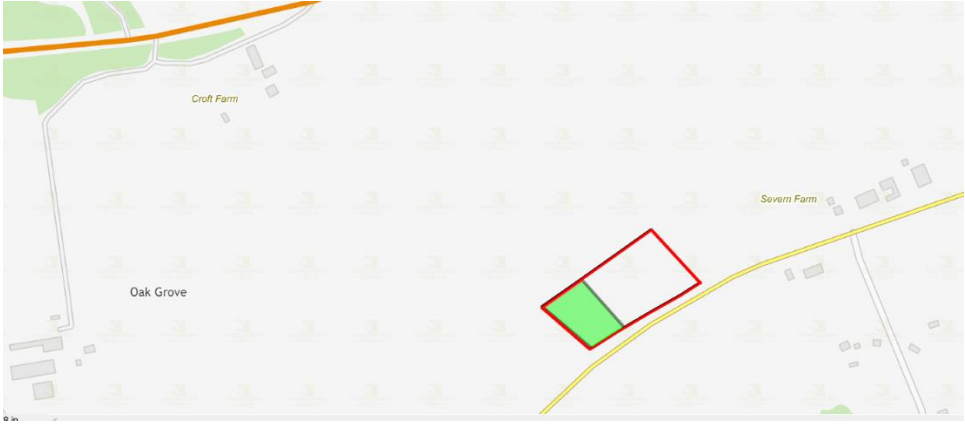
Ianbakewell@monmouthshire.gov.uk

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Appendix 1

Site Summary Profiles

Gypsy & Traveller Site Identification – MCC Land Evaluation

MCC Land – Oakgrove Farm	
Site Size – Approx 7976 m ²	Pitch Capacity – sufficient to meet MCC's pitch needs* *It is recommended no more than 5 or 6 pitches
General Description <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rural• Situated on B4245 approximately a mile from the edge of Caldicot• The land forms part of the Council's County Farms estate and is occupied via an agricultural tenancy. It is anticipated this tenancy would need to be amended should the site be supported for this use.• Land currently used for agriculture.	
Ward – Portskewett	
Photo's 	



Strengths

- Level land
- Good road access to the site.
- Good existing access on to the land
- Sustainable location eg easy access to Caldicot
- No requirements for a margin between existing homes

Weaknesses

- Land currently tenanted
- Loss of existing agricultural land
- Greenfield
- High/medium landscape sensitivity
- Mineral safeguarding area

Opportunities

- 'Blank canvas' for designing and landscaping as part of potential development proposal.
- *Environmentally, scope to deliver 'betterment' eg hedging, tree planting etc*

Threats (Risk)

- Compensation would need to be paid by the Council to release the land from the tenancy.

Key Internal Feedback Comments

The following comments were provided in relation to the adjacent RLDP candidate site eg not site specific:

- The highway authority considers that the site can be developed for the intended purpose, any mitigation and improvements will be subject to further detailed review and analysis submitted in support of any future submission (Transport Assessment etc)
- The site sits within a designated locality and within the Active Travel strategic focus distance of 3 miles to key destinations (education, health, employment and shopping). Good walking links are made out of the site and off-road provision is given to walkers and wheelers.
- From an Environmental Health perspective the site is suitable to be developed for its intended purpose as submitted, or with appropriate mitigation and further dialogue with the LPA
- Not in flood zone but need to consider surface water drainage as part of any scheme.
- It is considered from a Landscape and GI perspective that a development of the proposed scale will have a significant adverse visual impact on Monmouthshire's valued landscape. The proposed site is detached from existing settlement and would appear to coalesce Caldicot and Crick. The land is locally elevated, exposed, undulating open countryside. Light spill would alter the LCA and landscape / GI interventions may not be able to fully mitigate / compensate for the material change in character. The scale of development would not be able to be integrated effectively into the landscape as an urban extension and would be 'out of character' in terms of settlement location in the area. There would be an adverse material change to valued landscape character
- Site close / adjacent to a SAC/SPA/Ramsar/SSSI/LWS/SINC/ASNW. Part of the site includes habitats that meet LWS / SINC threshold. Presence of Priority Habitat (Section 7) within the candidate site (except hedgerow). Veteran / over mature tree(s) present. Site of existing value for connecting semi-natural habitats in the landscape as identified in the ecological connectivity assessment and/or during field surveys. Protected species recorded / reasonable likely to be found on site but unlikely to prevent development if appropriate mitigation and compensation provided.

Gypsy & Traveller Community Comments

- TBC

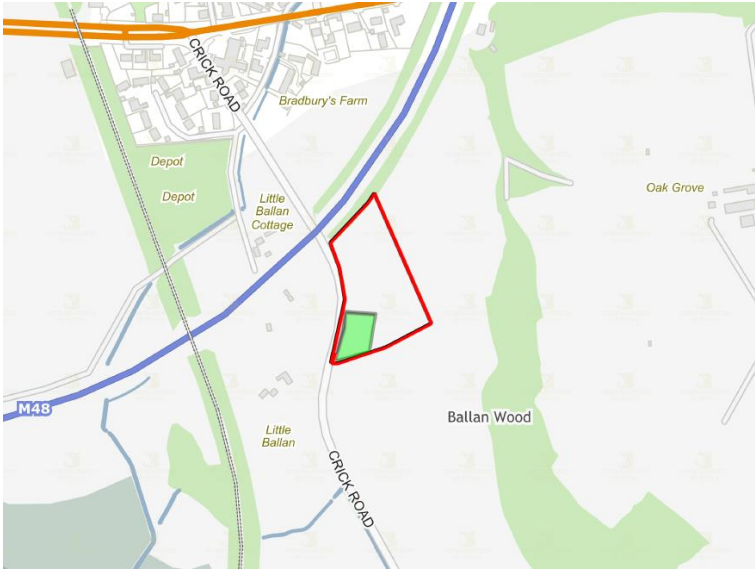
Travelling Ahead Comments

- TBC

Recommendation

Retain in process and put forward for consultation

Gypsy & Traveller Site Identification – MCC Land Evaluation

MCC Land – Bradbury Farm, Crick	
Site Size – Approx 18,022 m ²	Pitch Capacity – sufficient to meet MCC's pitch needs* It is recommended no more than 5 or 6 pitches
General Description <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rural• Situated directly off Crick Road• The land forms part of the Council's County Farms estate and is occupied via an agricultural tenancy. It is anticipated this tenancy would need to be amended should the site be supported for this use.• M48 to the north elevation of the land• Hedgerow and fencing to east, west and south elevation	
Ward – Portskewett	
Photo's 	



Strengths

- Level land
- Good road access to the site.
- Good existing access on to the land
- Sustainable location eg easy access to Caldicot
- No requirements for a margin between existing homes eg not surrounded by existing development
- Existing hedge screening already in place to west elevation.

Weaknesses

- Land currently tenanted by MCC
- Loss of existing agricultural land
- Not adjoining settlement boundary
- Greenfield
- Mineral safeguarding area
- High/medium landscape sensitivity
- Near Mount Ballan House & SAM The Berries Mound & Bailey Castle

Opportunities

- Scope to further develop/expand existing vegetation/natural landscaping

Threats (Risk)

- Compensation would need to be paid by the Council to release the land from the tenancy.

Key Internal Feedback Comments

The following comments were provided in relation to the **RLDP candidate site** (as a whole):

- The highway authority considers that the site can be developed for the intended purpose, any mitigation and improvements will be subject to further detailed review and analysis submitted in support of any future submission (Transport Assessment etc)
- The site sits within a designated locality and within the Active Travel strategic focus distance of 3 miles to key destinations (education, health, employment and shopping). Good walking links are made out of the site and off-road provision is given to walkers and wheelers.
- From an Environmental Health perspective the site is suitable to be developed for its intended purpose as submitted, or with appropriate mitigation and further dialogue with the LPA
- Not in flood zone but need to consider surface water drainage as part of any scheme.
- It is considered from a Landscape and GI perspective that a development of the proposed scale will have a significant adverse visual impact on Monmouthshires valued landscape. The proposed site is detached from existing settlement and would appear to coalesce Caldicot and Crick. The land is locally elevated, exposed, undulating open countryside. Light spill would alter the LCA and landscape / GI interventions may not be able to fully mitigate / compensate for the material change in character. The scale of development would not be able to be integrated effectively into the landscape as an urban extension and would be 'out of character' in terms of settlement location in the area. There would be an adverse material change to valued landscape character
- Site close / adjacent to a SAC/SPA/Ramsar/SSSI/LWS/SINC/ASNW. Part of the site includes habitats that meet LWS / SINC threshold. Presence of Priority Habitat (Section 7) within the candidate site (except hedgerow). Veteran / over mature tree(s) present. Site of existing value for connecting semi-natural habitats in the landscape as identified in the ecological connectivity assessment and/or during field surveys. Protected species recorded / reasonable likely to be found on site but unlikely to prevent development if appropriate mitigation and compensation provided.

Gypsy & Traveller Community Comments

- TBC

Travelling Ahead Comments

- TBC

Recommendation

Retain in process and put forward for consultation

Gypsy & Traveller Site Identification – MCC Land Evaluation

MCC Land – Langley Close, Magor

Site Size – Approx 23,431m²

Pitch Capacity – sufficient to meet MCC's pitch needs*

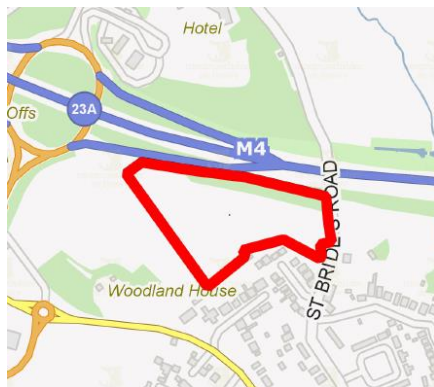
It is recommended no more than 5 or 6 pitches

General Description

- Urban
- Access off St Brides Road.
- The land forms part of the Council's County Farms estate and is occupied via a grazing license. It is anticipated this license would need to be terminated/amended should the site be supported for this use
- Residential properties adjoining southern boundary. M4 to the north, open land to east and west.
- Tree belt around the site

Ward – Magor West

Photo's



<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level land • Scope for expansion (within the context of not creating a large site) • Ability to create a margin between homes and M4 • New access can be created on St Brides Close 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenfield • Mineral safeguarding area • Existing access is not suitable • Traffic and noise assessments/surveys would be needed given the proximity of the M4 – a TAN 11 Noise assessment to establish whether this site is suitable having regard to the existing background noise levels. • Woodland along M4 corridor may support Dormouse, reptiles, birds and lizards • Adjacent to existing homes to south and east • There would be a loss to the current grazing licence holder who would need to be served notice to terminate/amend their existing license. • Near a historical building
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to the size of the land, there is scope to develop just a part of the site away from existing homes and M4. 	<p>Threats (Risk)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close to M4 – air and noise pollution • Possible risk of land contamination eg unrecorded waste disposal from nearby housing development or disposal of made ground or parking from heavy vehicles/equipment.
<p>Key Internal Feedback Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highways - Due to size, scale and type of development the proposal will have a significant impact on the safety and capacity of the immediate local network in particular Route R133 St Brides Road and its junction with the B4245. Off-site improvements are likely over the site's frontage with St Brides Rd. Existing access is not suitable, new access is achievable directly of St Brides Rd but will result in considerable loss of the existing boundary hedge. Well located and accessible site. Public transport within 400m. Traffic assessment would be required. • Active Travel - Designated locality: Magor with Undy. Near route MCC-S17C. • No former development of the land. Given proximity to M4 recommend a TAN11 Noise assessment. Land should be investigated for possible land contamination, and if necessary remediated prior to introducing a receptor. • No real flood risk. Likely to require SAB approval. • Site is relatively flat. 3 small fields bounded by hedge, trees (2 TPOs) and wooded buffer to the north with two storey residential to south. Partly DES2. Buffer to M4. Site not highly visible due to topography and vegetation. Sufficient space for tree planting to limit impact, incorporate SUDs and biodiversity net gain. Suitable for proposed development subject to an appropriate scheme. • The site comprises horse-grazed grassland surrounded by trees which may include veteran and over mature trees. The site is less than 250m from Grange Road SINC and less than 1km from Gwent Levels SSSI. The adjacent site was identified as priority grassland during the Monmouthshire LDP assessment (2010); surveys would be required to establish if the site meets priority grassland criteria. The woodland along the M4 corridor is likely to support 	

<p>dormouse, other species that may be present include bats (including roosts in trees), reptiles and nesting birds.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The site comprises horse-grazed grassland surrounded by trees which may include veteran and over mature trees. The site is less than 250m from Grange Road SINC and less than 1km from Gwent Levels SSSI. The adjacent site was identified as priority grassland during the Monmouthshire LDP assessment (2010); surveys would be required to establish if the site meets priority grassland criteria. The woodland along the M4 corridor is likely to support dormouse, other species that may be present include bats (including roosts in trees), reptiles and nesting birds. 	
<p>Gypsy & Traveller Community Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See RAG in respect of generic feedback about urban, semi-rural and rural locations One household has advised not suitable in relation to their current circumstances as wish to remain in home community for school, employment and social reasons. 	
<p>Travelling Ahead Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although close to existing homes, considered a possible option due to the ability to develop the site from the west to centre and create a margin to the existing homes. Being a sizeable site creates flexibility. Near M4 there is the issue of pollution and noise. 	
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>Retain in process for consideration</p>

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Frequently Asked Questions for Website Landing Page

***NB** Please note, some of the links within this document will not be live until the document is made available on the Council's website, subject to Cabinet approval on 4th October 2023.*

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Assessments FAQs

Gypsy, Roma and Travellers

1. How are Gypsy, Roma and Travellers defined?

Gypsy, Roma and Travellers are defined under Section 108, Housing (Wales) Act 2014 as:

- (a) Persons of a nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin, including:
 - 1) Persons who, on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependant's educational or health needs or old age, have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, and
 - 2) Members of an organised group of travelling show people or circus people (whether or not travelling together as such); and
- (b) All other persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or of living in a mobile home.

2. Why is the Council identifying land for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pitches?

There are three main reasons why the Council needs to identify land for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pitches:

- 1. Welsh Government and The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 require the Council to undertake a Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Assessment every five years. If that Assessment identifies a need, the Council has a duty to meet that identified need by facilitating the required pitch provision.
- 2. The second reason is the Council is required to produce a Local Development Plan which sets out the Council's vision for the development

and use of land in the County. The Council is working on the Replacement Local Development Plan 2018-2033. This Plan needs to allocate land to meet all of the County's housing needs, including bricks and mortar homes and sites for Gypsy, Roma and Travellers.

3. We want members of the travelling community who live in Monmouthshire to have a safe and accessible place to live.

3. What were the results of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Assessment completed in 2021?

The Council's most recent Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Assessment was completed in 2021, the summary conclusions are a need for 13 pitches for families already living within Monmouthshire. This need is broken down as follows:

- An unmet need of nine pitches under the assessment period 2020 to 2025;
- Beyond 2025, a further unmet need of four pitches over the remaining length of the Replacement Local Development Plan (2026-33) to accommodate family growth as children become adults and require their own pitch;
- There is no need for an allocation for travelling show people or circus people; and,
- The Gypsy, Roma and Traveller assessment did not identify a need to provide a transit site and given the cross-border movement associated with families passing through Local Authorities, this topic is best addressed via the regional Strategic Development Plan.

The Assessment takes into account accommodation requirements for the period of the Replacement Local Development Plan 2018-2033.

However, of the thirteen pitches needed as identified by the 2020-2025 Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Assessment, two pitches have been granted planning permission. This reduces the pitch requirement to eleven. Discussions are ongoing with two households about the possibility of obtaining planning permission on private sites which could significantly reduce the overall pitch requirement.

For purposes of clarity, a permanent residential site can be privately owned or owned by the Local Authority. This site will be designated for use as a Gypsy, Roma and Traveller site indefinitely. Residents on these sites can expect to occupy their pitches for as long as they abide by the terms of their pitch agreements, under the Mobile Homes (Wales) Act 2013.

The full Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Assessment 2021 can be found [here](#)

4. What is a pitch?

There is no official definition of a 'pitch' however Officer's interactions with the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community have determined that 'A pitch is land provided for a household which should be big enough to provide an amenity block, a mobile home, a touring caravan and parking for two vehicles.

The Council's broad expectation is that sites, particularly any public sites, will be:

- Small sites, ideally occupied by one Monmouthshire family/household;
- Typically, no more than 5 or 6 pitches on each site;
- Well designed and landscaped;
- Sensitive to existing communities.

5. What is the Council's current approach to finding locations for the additional pitches the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Assessment identified?

The location of the pitches is yet to be determined. The Council is seeking to meet the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller additional pitch needs through a variety of ways, including any or a combination of the following:

- Public sites using Council owned land. This can be using land currently owned by the Council or the Council could potentially purchase land for the purpose of providing a public site;
- Invite the public to put potential land forward for consideration; and,
- Continue to seek to address need wherever possible on existing private Gypsy, Roma and Traveller sites subject to the necessary permissions.

6. What has happened so far?

Work commenced on considering the Council's broad approach to identifying land for Gypsy & Traveller pitch provision in 2018. But the more concentrated activity has taken place since the completion of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Assessment 2021.

The aim of the process has been to identify and shortlist parcels of land that are potentially suitable for providing Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pitches that will meet the Council's need, which the Council can then consult upon. Following consultation, a decision will be made on the best sites, and the chosen sites will then be included in the Replacement Local Development Plan, currently in development.

To help develop the Council's site identification process and to explain the Council's legal responsibilities, a schedule of both informal and formal meetings has taken place to capture the knowledge and views of local elected Council Members and to help inform the site identification process. Any decision to consult on any land will be made by the Council's Cabinet.

7. The Council's Site Identification Process

7.1 The RAG Evaluation

The Council's site identification process has reviewed and evaluated all of the Council's 1500 Council assets. [Insert link](#). The core of the site identification process was a broad five staged exercise to sift out/remove unsuitable land using site evaluation criteria, the aim being to identify a short-list of land with potential suitability for development as Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pitch provision, which would then be consulted upon.

This staged exercise to sift out unsuitable assets has been recorded and evidenced in a document, referred to as the RAG document.- (a spreadsheet that utilises a traffic-light system of red, amber and green to colour code evaluation findings and provide a more visual indication/overview). The RAG document is an iterative document that is continually updated as and when new information is identified. This staged process and the RAG document informed the original proposal on the Cabinet agenda on 26th July 2023.

To inform the Site Identification Process, Elected Member Workshops were held to share information with elected members, provide updates on progress and acquire their views. Slides from the workshops can be found below:

- Workshop 29th March 2019 [\(create link\)](#)
- Workshop 29th September 2022 [\(create link\)](#)
- Workshop 3rd November 2022 [\(create link\)](#)
- Workshop 4th July 2023 [\(create link\)](#)

To support the Site Identification Process, elected Members and Council Officers also attended Gypsy & Traveller awareness training. The training was delivered by Travelling Ahead – Gypsy & Traveller Advocates. Slides from the workshop can be found here [\(create link to slides from 31st January 2023\)](#)

8. The Council's Democratic Process

8.1 What is the role of Scrutiny Committee?

The Local Government Act 2000 requires every Authority in England and Wales to establish an Executive and Scrutiny split for the purposes of decision-making. In Monmouthshire County Council, eight Cabinet Members (Executive Councillors) have the power to make the decisions needed to put the Council's policies into practice. The remaining members (non-executive Councillors) form an overview and scrutiny arm and assist the executive through 'constructive challenge'. Scrutiny improves corporate governance arrangements, by ensuring the decision-making process is more open, accountable, and transparent. Through the scrutiny process, Cabinet Members are held to account for decisions they make on behalf of their communities.

The role of Scrutiny therefore is to:

- Act as a 'critical friend', questioning how decisions have been made and providing a 'check and balance' to the decision-makers;
- Scrutinise the impact of decisions to see if they are the right ones for the people of Monmouthshire;
- Ensure that Cabinet Members and Officers perform properly and that the Council is delivering high quality services;
- Develop and review policy to see if it is fit for purpose and meets the public's needs.

Whilst Scrutiny members do not have power to make decisions, they can shape and develop Council policy and review decisions, as well as challenge the performance of the Cabinet and the Council, Scrutiny Committees have enabled the public to help shape the direction of the Council. Scrutiny Committees can challenge and recommend improvements in the way in which key services in Monmouthshire are delivered, and they can influence change, by asking the ‘how’ and why’ questions. They can also recommend that Cabinet explores alternatives, however, *Cabinet Members can accept or reject recommendations made by Scrutiny Committees in line with their executive responsibility for decision-making i.e., all decision-making rests with the Cabinet (executive).*

8.2 How has Scrutiny assisted in this Process?

Throughout this process, Council Officers have regularly consulted with Scrutiny Members on progress. Full details of these meetings can be found here:

- [Report to Joint Select Committee to scrutinise Gypsy and Traveller Assessment, 10/12/2020 10:00 \(monmouthshire.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Report to Adults Select Committee to scrutinise site identification, 21/09/2021 10:00 \(monmouthshire.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Report to Adult Select Committee to include process in forward work programme, participate in workshops, scrutinise methodology for evaluation, invite support from Travelling Ahead, 20/07/2022 10:00 \(monmouthshire.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Report to Cabinet to approve and adopt Gypsy and Traveller Assessment, 06/01/2021 14:00 \(monmouthshire.gov.uk\)](#)

8.3 People Scrutiny Meeting – 19th July 2023 (meeting can be viewed [here](#))

At the People Scrutiny Committee held on the 19th of July, the Committee was asked to consider the following recommendations from the [Report to People Scrutiny Committee 19th July 2023 to scrutinise proposal to consult on four sites and undertake investigative work on a fifth site](#)

- 2.1 Consider the process implemented to identify Council owned land suitable for the potential development of Gypsy & Traveller pitch provision.
- 2.2 Consider the evaluation of five pieces of Council owned land considered to be suitable, subject to the findings of any further

required assessment, for potential development of Gypsy and Traveller pitch provision.

2.3 Recommend to Cabinet that the following pieces of Council owned land are consulted on for potential development for Gypsy and Traveller pitch provision:

- Manson Heights, Monmouth
- Rocklea, Mitchel Troy
- Garthi Close, Mitchel Troy
- Langley Close, Magor

2.4 Recommend to Cabinet that further evaluation is undertaken on the following piece of Council owned land, to further inform suitability and if applicable, (subject to findings) future consultation.

- Dancing Hill, Undy (west of Dancing Hill)

The Committee heard from local residents attending the meeting who provided comments about suitability of some of the land. There was a strong feeling about the Site Identification Process and the suitability of the individual sites. When considering the recommendations above, the Scrutiny Committee made a recommendation to reject the four recommendations presented and to recommend that the Members put out a public call to landowners to come forward with parcels of land, which is in line with recommendation 2.3 of the Cabinet report and that the selection process begin again.

8.4 Cabinet – 26th July 2023 (meeting can be viewed [here](#))

The report put to [Cabinet 26th July 2023](#) recommended *‘the commencement of a consultation exercise to look at the following Council owned sites for the potential development of Gypsy and Traveller pitch provision namely:*

- *Manson Heights, Monmouth*
- *Rocklea, Mitchel Troy*
- *Garthi Close, Mitchel Troy.*
- *Langley Close, Magor*

Agree that further evaluation is undertaken on an additional piece of Council owned land, to further inform possible suitability and if applicable, (subject to findings) future consultation.

- *Dancing Hill, Undy (west of Dancing Hill)*

Agree to a 'call' for landowners who may wish to suggest parcels of land to come forward for consideration and further consultation.

The decision taken by Cabinet on 26th July 2023 was to 'Defer consideration of the report to allow officers to undertake further work.' The then Cabinet Member also advised that three sites be removed from the site identification process due to unsuitability namely Manson Heights, Monmouth; Rocklea, Mitchel Troy Common and Garthi Close, Mitchel Troy Common.

3.8 In addition, officers were tasked with the following:

- Review site evaluation work and the RAG document;
- Incorporate and review Council owned candidate sites put forward for potential allocation in the RLDP for development [nine areas of land]. These were previously sifted out on the basis of the potential future development considerations;
- Invite the public to put potential land forward for consideration; and,
- Continue to seek to address need wherever possible on existing private Gypsy, Roma and Traveller sites subject to the necessary permissions.

9. What has happened since the Cabinet Meeting of the 26th July 2023?

Further to the Cabinet meeting of the 26th July 2023, the following activities have taken place and conclusions drawn:

- a) The site identification RAG document has been reviewed by officers to ensure comments and RAG ratings are robust and consistent. The most recent version of the RAG document can be viewed **here (insert link)** . Given a combination of the known historic land contamination, possible noise issues, access issues and location immediately adjacent to a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), officers recommend that *Dancing Hill West* is removed from the process as alternatives are available.
- b) Officers have further reviewed Council owned 'Candidate sites' put forward for potential inclusion in the RLDP. These nine sites are now included in the most recent version of the RAG document which can be viewed at **Stage 6 here. (insert link).**

- c) Following the 'Candidate' site review, two sites at the RLDP strategic Caldicot East site have been identified for up to 6 pitches each; one at Bradbury Farm and one at Oak Grove Farm (**Appendix x**). It is recommended that these are put forward for public consultation, along with Langley Close, Magor as per previous recommendations.

- d) The 'public call' for sites was a positive exercise which resulted in 17 pieces of land being suggested for use. The Council wishes to thank those who responded to the request. Of these suggestions:
 - a. One site was discounted as being located outside of Monmouthshire;
 - b. Nine sites were discounted as being contrary to flood risk policy, following the same approach as the sifting of MCC land;
 - c. One site was discounted due to its location within a Conservation Area, following the same approach as the sifting of MCC land;
 - d. Inadequate information was provided to identify the location of two sites;
 - e. One site was discounted as being too small to meet the identified need;
 - f. Three suitable pieces of land have been assessed using the RAG (see **here**, Stage 6). The Council has written to the owners of the three suitable sites to determine if there is any interest in selling or leasing this land to the Council. If landowners of suitable sites are in agreement to potentially sell or lease for this purpose, these sites will be included in the public consultation.

- e) Discussions are ongoing with existing Monmouthshire households wishing to self-serve on existing sites, in respect of meeting their own need subject to the necessary permissions.

9.1 Public Consultation

It is proposed that a specialist and independent community engagement agency is appointed to undertake the public consultation on behalf of the Council. The Council has invited several companies to submit proposals for its consideration. The purpose of the commission is to identify and implement a methodology which delivers a sound reflection of local views and is seen to be open, transparent, inclusive and engaging. The public consultation is expected to take at least six weeks.

9.2 Proposed Next Steps

The proposed next steps in respect of both site identification **and** the Replacement Local Development Plan are:

- 4th October – Cabinet decision on Gypsy, Roma and Traveller sites for public consultation for at least 6 weeks.
- 26th October Council consideration to endorse the preferred strategy for the RLDP to inform the deposit plan.
- 9th November – Place Scrutiny Committee for consideration of the Economy, Employment and Skills Strategy and voluntary Local Transport Plan
- 13th December – Cabinet approval sought for the Economy, Employment and Skills Strategy and voluntary Local Transport Plan.
- Cabinet decision on which Gypsy, Roma and Traveller sites are to be included in the Deposit RLDP – Date to be confirmed after consultation.
- April/May 2024 - Deposit Plan to Council for endorsement to consult – the Deposit Plan is the full RLDP containing all site allocations and all policies;
- September 2024 - Deposit Plan to Council following consultation for approval to submit to the Welsh Government for public examination in public by an independent inspector;
- Examination in public;
- July 2025 - RLDP to Council for adoption.

9.3 Community Feedback

Although no decision has been made to consult on any land as yet, the Council has already received feedback from members of the public about Langley Close, Magor. In summary the Council has received 58 individual pre-consultation representations, all of which have objected to the possibility of Langley Close being used for the purpose of Gypsy & Traveller pitch provision. Should Cabinet decide to consult on Langley Close, this feedback will be automatically fed into the consultation process for consideration and passed to the independent specialist agency the Council is hoping to appoint.

9.4 Consultation with the Gypsy and Traveller Community

The Gypsy and Traveller Advocacy Group, Travelling Ahead have been working with Council Officers over many months, having also run two training sessions

for Elected Members to raise awareness of Gypsy and Traveller's needs. Meetings with individual families are also taking place and where possible, support is being provided with individual planning applications to enable some families to remain in their current locations, which may result in fewer additional pitch sites being required.

This page will be continually updated, so please check the link. For any urgent queries please contact: housingrenewals@monmouthshire.gov.uk and we will respond as soon as we can.

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Site Identification Process

Process Map

Gypsy & Traveller Site Identification

August 2023

6th October 2018 – Note to Members of the former Adults Select Committee on proposal to establish Workshops.

October 2018 – Officer work commences on considering approach to identifying land for Gypsy & Traveller pitch provision, including MCC assets.

26th October 2018 – Members Workshop to acquire views of Members – Introduction to Legal Duty to meet Gypsy & Traveller pitch needs and update on housing requirement for the Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2020-25 and to 2033 of the Replacement LDP. [No slides produced].

29th March 2019 – Members Workshop to acquire views of Members on the proposed methodology for sifting MCC owned land. Focus was on Gypsy & Traveller site Planning Criteria.

4th June 2019 – Member visit through Adults Select Committee to Torfaen County Borough Council Gypsy & Traveller site, Shepherds Hill, Pontypool.

10th October 2019 – Email to former Adults Select Committee Members asking for comments on draft advert targeting Gypsy & Traveller community inviting to participate in Gypsy & Traveller Assessment.

27th November 2019 – All Members and Officers Awareness Training by Travelling Ahead, Gypsy & Traveller Advocate.

10th December 2020 – Report to Joint Select Committee: Adult and Economy & Development Selects – Scrutinise draft Gypsy & Traveller Assessment report and findings. [Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Joint Select Committee, 10/12/2020 10:00 \(monmouthshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/agenda/10/12/2020/10:00)

6th January 2021 – Report to Cabinet – Approve and adopt Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment report. [Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Cabinet, 06/01/2021 14:00 \(monmouthshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/agenda/06/01/2021/14:00)

March 2021 – **Stage 1** – Asset Review by Estates to start identifying land with potential for use as Gypsy & Traveller site(s)

21st September 2021 – Report to Adults Select – Scrutinise Site identification update.
[\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Adults Select Committee, 21/09/2021 10:00 \(monmouthshire.gov.uk\)](#)

September 2021 – Site Evaluation Commences

Stage 1 – Completed Asset Review by Estates:

- Regard given to Welsh Government Site Design Guidance 2015
- Approximately 1500 council assets have been reviewed and considered
- Sites removed to date through Estates:

[Asset is a MCC property; Cemetery Land; Allocations in the existing adopted LDP; tree planting; Woodland; Covered by a ground lease; Council Car Park; Footpath/road]

Stage 2 – Sites removed due to the following:

- **Site is less than 500sqm; Equipped Children’s Play Area; Playing Fields (Pitch); County Farm Holdings; Allocations in the existing adopted LDP/ RLDP promotion sites; Known unfavourable topography; C1 & C2 Flood Risk – known sites in flood risk removed; Sites with any uncertain inputs have been carried forward to the next stage for further assessment**
- Approximately 70 sites remained from 1500 sites

Stage 3 – to assess for flood risk against and as per updated TAN 15. Land removed due to:

- **Sites wholly or mostly in Zones 2 & 3 of updated TAN15 flood risk maps (sea and river)**
 - Sites where boundary could potentially be amended to remove site out of flood risk kept on list
- **Surface water flood risk highlighted for further assessment**
- **Any constraints identified in Stage 1 & 2 if picked up at Stage 3.**

Approximately 50 sites from 1500 remaining.

Also removed:

- Brecon Beacons National Park Plan
- Within and adjacent to Conservation Areas and/or Historic Park & Garden
- Enclosed/surrounded by built environment privacy and amenity / placemaking
- National Ecological designations eg SSSI

20th July 2022 – Report to Adults Select – to include Gypsy & Site identification into the Committees work programme, participate in officer-led workshops and to scrutinise the proposed methodology for identifying and evaluating Council owned land for the purpose of providing a Gypsy & Traveller site. Also to invite Travelling Ahead – Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Advice & Advocacy Service to support the Council with the agreed approach.
[\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for People Scrutiny Committee, 20/07/2022 10:00 \(monmouthshire.gov.uk\)](#)

8th August 2022 – Letter to Gypsy & Traveller community who contributed to Gypsy & Traveller Assessment, inviting to participate in site identification process.

29th September 2022 – All Member Workshop to acquire views of members – reminder of legal duties; consider ongoing methodology findings; planning implications; proposed approach including involving of Travelling Ahead.

October 2022

Stage 4 – Land/Site Evaluation Criteria Developed

- Site area
- Ability to provide utility infrastructure
- Flood Zone (updated TAN15 flood risk maps)
- Within or adjoining a settlement boundary
- Greenfield/brownfield
- Surround by built development
- Potential for expansion
- Within BBNP or AONB
- Within green wedge or potential greenbelt
- Within phosphates catchment area
- Adopted LDP DES2 allocation
- DES2 in review
- Within/adjacent to Conservation Area or Historic Parks & Garden
- Within Archeologically Sensitive Area
- Permanency
- Ecological Designation on whole or part of site (SSSI, SINC, SAC, RAMSAR, national/local nature reserve)
- Proximity to ecological designation
- Landscape Sensitivity (as recorded in the Landscape Sensitivity Study)

- Mineral safeguarding area
- Proximity to potential 'bad neighbours' e.g. dual carriageways, trunk roads, motorway, railway, industrial estates)
- Contamination (as recorded on Monmaps)
- School proximity
- Medical facility proximity
- Proximity to other amenities
- Public transport proximity and frequency
- Proximity to Historical Designation (inc Listed Buildings and Con Areas)
- Topography
- Access

October 2022 – **Stage 5** Further evaluation of 17 remaining site through officer RAG and visits. Reduced to 11 with parts of 2 sites at Dancing Hill being merged to form an amended Dancing Hill site, leaving 9 sites for internal consultation and discussion with the Gypsy & Traveller community.

1st November 2022 – Email to individual Members with a site in their ward in respect of forthcoming Members Workshop.

3rd November 2022 – All Member Workshop to acquire views – consider proposed 9 pieces of land should remain in the process for continued evaluation.

10th November 2023 – **Stage 5** – Continue evaluating 9 remaining site. Internal services contacted requested to provide feedback on 9 sites.

30th January 2023 – All Member and officer Gypsy & Traveller Awareness Training by Travelling Ahead. See Appendix 3

31st January 2023 – Updated RAG following receipt of feedback from internal consultees. Officer Meeting to consider feedback on 9 site.

13th June 2023 – Informal Cabinet – informally discuss next steps

23rd June 2023 – Email to individual Members with a site in their ward in respect of forthcoming Members Workshop

27th June 2023 – Email to all Members – background papers for 4th July 2023 Members Workshop

4th July 2023 – All Member Workshop to acquire views – proposal to consult on four locations, undertake further investigations in respect of one location and four to be removed from the process.

7th July 2023 – Environmental Health briefing on sites x 5 and Land Contamination, Noise and Air Quality Assessments.

14th July 2023 – All Member site visits x 9. Feedback received to further inform RAG and suitability.

19th July 2023 – Report to People Scrutiny – Proposal to consult on four sites and investigative work on a fifth site. ([Public Pack\)Agenda Document for People Scrutiny Committee, 19/07/2023 10:00 \(monmouthshire.gov.uk\)](#))

26th July 2023 – Report to Cabinet – Approve 4 sites for consultation and one for further investigative work. Decision made to defer consultation on the selection of potential sites for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation to allow more time for consideration – no sites have been confirmed for consultation at this stage.

Three sites removed from process as determined unsuitable.

28th July 2023 – preparations to commission land contamination, air and noise assessments for Magor with Undy sites to continue to assess their potential suitability and to inform future consultation.

August 2023

- Review of 17 site shortlist to a) ensure nothing was ruled out that shouldn't have been and b) ensure wording is consistent and robust.
- Review of 9 site shortlist to ensure information is consistent and robust
- Assessment of MCC RLDP candidate sites – there are 5 sites submitted for residential development, one for tourism, two for solar farms and one for a mix of employment and solar farm. All 9 will be assessed for suitability
- Public call for any sites closing 23rd August 2023.
- Potential review of all other (non-MCC) RLDP candidate sites (approx..250)

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Stage 1 - An appraisal of All MCC owned land and regard to WG Site Design Guide 2015. Approximately 1500 council assets have been reviewed and considered. Sites removed to date through Estates: Asset is a MCC property; Cemetery Land; Allocations in the existing adopted LDP; tree planting; Tree Planting Scheme; Woodland; Covered by a ground lease; Council Car Park; Footpath/road

Stage 2 – Sites removed due to the following: Site is less than 500sqm – desired pitch size is min 500sqm for public sites. [A pitch capable of accommodating an amenity block, mobile home, caravan and parking for two vehicles]; Equipped Children’s Play Area; Playing Fields (Pitch); County Farm Holdings; Allocations in the existing adopted LDP/ RLDP promotion sites; Known unfavourable topography; Woodland areas that were missed on Stage 1; C1 & C2 Flood Risk – known sites in flood risk removed; Sites with any uncertain inputs have been carried forward to the next stage for further assessment

Stage 3 – to assess flood risk as per updated TAN 15. Site removed due to: • Sites wholly or mostly in Zones 2 & 3 of updated TAN15 maps (sea and river) • Sites where boundary could potentially be amended to remove site out of flood risk kept on list • Surface water flood risk highlighted for further assessment • Any constraints identified in Stage 1 & 2 if picked up at Stage Approximately 50 sites from 1500 remaining Also removed: • Brecon Beacons National Park Plan • Within and adjacent to Conservation Areas and/or Historic Park & Garden • Enclosed/surrounded by built environment privacy and amenity / placemaking • Within national Ecological designations eg SSSI

Stage 4 – Post Workshop 2. Site Area Ecological Designation on whole or part of site (SSSI, SINC, SAC, RAMSAR, national/local nature reserve) ,Ability to provide utility infrastructure, Flood Zone (Updated TAN 15 Flood Maps), Proximity to ecological designation, Within or adjoining a Settlement Boundary, Landscape Sensitivity (as recorded in the Landscape Sensitivity Study), Greenfield/Brownfield, Mineral Safeguarding Area, Surrounded by Built Development, Proximity to potential ‘bad neighbours’ (e.g. dual carriageways, trunk roads, motorway, railway, industrial estates), Potential for expansion, Within BBNP or AONB, Contamination (as recorded on Monmaps), Within Green Wedge or potential Green Belt, School Proximity, Within Phosphates Catchment Area, Medical Facility Proximity, Adopted LDP DES2, Allocation Proximity to other Amenities, DES2 in Review, Public transport proximity and frequency, Within/adjacent to Conservation Area or Historic Parks & Garden, Proximity to Historical Designation (inc Listed Buildings and Con Areas), Within Area of Archeological Sensitivity, Topography, Permanency, Access

Stage 5 - RAG rating against criteria above following officer site visits, input from internal consultees, feedback from Gypsy and Traveller community and Travelling Ahead

Land at rear of Langley Close, Major with Unity	Agriculture, Grazing	5.75 acres	23.431 acres	No	Adjoining	Completed	Provisional to south and rear (on opposite side of road), MA to north	No	No	No	No	5.1 ha of site DSE2 on western boundary	Liable to delete DSE2 designation as not readily accessible	No	No	Landed building within 200m of western end of site - site could be included in area to assist report	Within 200m of DSE2 (100 metres) present, 2x TPO trees adjacent southern boundary	No	Within MNGC LLCA - medium potential to residential development	Shaded (interconnecting sites)	Whole site within 100m of MA (closed part of site within 40m of MA)	No	Major DMU Primary - 1.3 miles	0.4 miles	Approx 1.2 miles to Major Design Centre	Low frequency and daily frequency bus services available. Train station with frequent services at Colindale and Seven Tunnels Junction	Flat site	Access off St Bruns Road			Site is much larger than needed. Scope to expand in the future and build in the future to allow for expansion of residential development on site.	Site should progress to the next stage of the process for further consideration
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<p>Final use of George Road. George Road is a Major Road with a Class 1000 (R1000) zone.</p>	<p>Applicable: George</p>	<p>130 acres</p>	<p>2023 Sept</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Following</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>Residential to south and east of opposite side of road. MR to north.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>1. Use of site is Class 1000 (R1000) residential</p>	<p>Large lot size (2000 sqm) and a high density of dwellings.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Use of site is Class 1000 (R1000) residential</p>	<p>Large lot size (2000 sqm) and a high density of dwellings.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Use of site is Class 1000 (R1000) residential</p>	<p>Large lot size (2000 sqm) and a high density of dwellings.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Use of site is Class 1000 (R1000) residential</p>	<p>Large lot size (2000 sqm) and a high density of dwellings.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Use of site is Class 1000 (R1000) residential</p>	<p>Large lot size (2000 sqm) and a high density of dwellings.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Use of site is Class 1000 (R1000) residential</p>	<p>Large lot size (2000 sqm) and a high density of dwellings.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Use of site is Class 1000 (R1000) residential</p>	<p>Large lot size (2000 sqm) and a high density of dwellings.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Use of site is Class 1000 (R1000) residential</p>	<p>Large lot size (2000 sqm) and a high density of dwellings.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Use of site is Class 1000 (R1000) residential</p>	<p>Large lot size (2000 sqm) and a high density of dwellings.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Use of site is Class 1000 (R1000) residential</p>	<p>Large lot size (2000 sqm) and a high density of dwellings.</p>
<p>Final use of George Road. George Road is a Major Road with a Class 1000 (R1000) zone.</p>	<p>Applicable: George</p>	<p>170 acres</p>	<p>2023 Sept</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Following</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>Residential to south and east of opposite side of road. MR to north.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>1. Use of site is Class 1000 (R1000) residential</p>	<p>Large lot size (2000 sqm) and a high density of dwellings.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Use of site is Class 1000 (R1000) residential</p>	<p>Large lot size (2000 sqm) and a high density of dwellings.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Use of site is Class 1000 (R1000) residential</p>	<p>Large lot size (2000 sqm) and a high density of dwellings.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Use of site is Class 1000 (R1000) residential</p>	<p>Large lot size (2000 sqm) and a high density of dwellings.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Use of site is Class 1000 (R1000) residential</p>	<p>Large lot size (2000 sqm) and a high density of dwellings.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Use of site is Class 1000 (R1000) residential</p>	<p>Large lot size (2000 sqm) and a high density of dwellings.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Use of site is Class 1000 (R1000) residential</p>	<p>Large lot size (2000 sqm) and a high density of dwellings.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Use of site is Class 1000 (R1000) residential</p>	<p>Large lot size (2000 sqm) and a high density of dwellings.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Use of site is Class 1000 (R1000) residential</p>	<p>Large lot size (2000 sqm) and a high density of dwellings.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Use of site is Class 1000 (R1000) residential</p>	<p>Large lot size (2000 sqm) and a high density of dwellings.</p>	

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<p>Name of the Officer completing the evaluation</p> <p>Ian Bakewell</p> <p>Phone no: 01633 644479 E-mail: ianbakewell@monmouthshire.gov.uk</p>	<p>Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal</p> <p>Meeting The Unmet Pitch Needs of the Gypsy & Traveller Assessment January 2021</p>
<p>Name of Service area</p> <p>Housing & Communities</p>	<p>Date</p> <p>7th July 2023 updating 31st August 2021 Version</p>

1. Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics? Please explain the impact, the evidence you have used and any action you are taking below.

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Age	<p>The proposal will positively contribute to the Gypsy & Traveller community.</p> <p>Children and young people will be more likely to receive stable accommodation to ensure that they can enjoy a decent standard of living and reach their potential.</p>	<p>Some of the shortlisted sites are used as recreation space, the loss of which will impact negatively on young people in particular.</p>	<p>The Council has and will continue to engage with the Travelling Ahead advocacy service.</p> <p>The proposed public consultation will help assess the potential impact relating to different site options.</p>

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Disability	Members of the travelling community can be provided with more appropriate accommodation. This can also help access to health and care services.	There are no negative impacts in respect of the proposed consultation, but it is known that if one of the pieces of land is developed, it may impact negatively on young disabled people living in the vicinity who are known to use this land for recreational and play purposes.	Ensure that sites, when developed, are fully accessible. For the wider community, the proposed public consultation will help assess the potential impact relating to different site options.
Gender reassignment	Positive impact	N/A	N/A
Marriage or civil partnership	As above	As above	As above
Pregnancy or maternity	The identification of new sites should have a positive impact on those who are pregnant as giving better access to pre-natal care and provide more stable accommodation for the family.	As above	As above

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Race	Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers are recognised as having a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. The identification of new sites providing permanent authorised accommodation will have a positive impact on this community in terms of education, health and quality of life	As above	Many people express negative opinions about gypsies and travellers and work will be needed to counter these negative perceptions and ensure social cohesion. Racist comments and behaviour will be reported to the Police.
Religion or Belief	Positive impact	As above	As above
Sex	As above	As above	As above
Sexual Orientation	As above	As above	As above

2. The Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice

The Socio-economic Duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage when taking key decisions This duty aligns with our commitment as an authority to Social Justice.

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage.	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?

<p>Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice</p>	<p>It is recognised that Gypsy and Travellers can be disadvantaged in part, due to lack of stable accommodation, including available permanent pitch provision, resulting in a more transient lifestyle due to the need to regularly move on.</p> <p>This can be detrimental to community inclusion including accessing (or retaining) employment/training opportunities and accessing financial services e.g. insurance.</p> <p>Good quality permanent pitch provision also supports wider priorities such education, particularly for children and young people, as well as health and well-being.</p>	<p>There are no negative impacts associated with this proposal to consult on the suitability of Council owned land.</p> <p>However, there would be negative impacts if the Council determined not to develop any of the identified land.</p> <p>Dancing Hill – this is currently tenanted for horse grazing, which would impact negatively on the tenant’s employment and income.</p> <p>Concerns have been expressed about negative impacts about property values. Not a material planning consideration.</p>	<p>There is no current mitigation against the identified employment detriment relating to possible development of Dancing Hill. Should it be selected then mitigating actions can be considered.</p> <p>There is no current mitigation against the possible impact on property values of neighbouring homes. Should any be selected be selected then any possible mitigating actions would need to be investigated.</p> <p>The Council has previously established a pitch waiting list and allocation policy in potential readiness for pitch provision. This, however, needs to be published. This provides a mechanism for households to apply for future pitches.</p>
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3. Policy making and the Welsh language.

How does your proposal impact on the following aspects of the Council's Welsh Language Standards:	Describe the positive impacts of this proposal	Describe the negative impacts of this proposal	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts
Policy Making Effects on the use of the Welsh language, Promoting Welsh language Treating the Welsh language, no less favourably	The Council has a pitch allocation policy and it is appropriate to establish a bi-lingual version.	None	N/A
Operational Recruitment & Training of workforce	Neutral impact. This proposal does not involve the appointment of staff.	None	N/A
Service delivery Use of Welsh language in service delivery Promoting use of the language	Whilst the current proposal to consult on potential pitch provision has a neutral impact, in the longer term, the aim is to establish Gypsy & Traveller pitch provision. This is an opportunity to promote the Welsh Language e.g. signage, agreements, welcome packs etc.	None	N/A



4. Does your proposal deliver any of the well-being goals below? Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal. There's no need to put something in every box if it is not relevant!



Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p>A prosperous Wales Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs</p>	<p>Meeting the pitch needs of Gypsy & Traveller households creates stability for households and enables them to establish firm links with local communities e.g. schools, employment.</p> <p>It reduces the likelihood of unauthorized encampments and the associated resource implications of dealing with such.</p> <p>Dancing Hill - this is currently tenanted for horse grazing, which would impact negatively on the tenant's employment and income.</p>	<p>There is no current mitigation against the identified employment detriment relating to possible development of Dancing Hill. Should it be selected then mitigating actions can be considered.</p> <p>We will involve and liaise with Travelling Ahead Gypsy and Traveller advocates.</p>
<p>A resilient Wales Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g., climate change)</p>	<p>There may be a possible opportunity to give consideration to this in respect of the design of a possible public provision.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>A healthier Wales People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized, and health impacts are understood</p>	<p>There are no negative impacts associated with this proposal to consult on the suitability of Council owned land.</p> <p>However, it has been suggested an alternative option for the use of the Langley Close land is for recreational purposes. Should this location</p>	<p>N/A</p>


Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
	<p>be used for Gypsy & Traveler pitch provision, this could impact upon the possible alternative recreational option.</p> <p>It has also been suggested that an existing footpath across Dancing Hill could be an Active Travel route. Possible use for Gypsy & Traveller pitch provision may impact detrimentally on the possible Active Travel route option.</p> <p>Facilitating pitch provision supports good quality accommodation for Gypsy and Traveller households which is conducive to good health and well-being and helps tackle health inequalities.</p> <p>It also supports households being able to access health services e.g. GP's, dentists, opticians etc.</p>	
<p>A Wales of cohesive communities Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected</p>	<p>The potential to facilitate the availability of new pitch provision provides the opportunity to invest in appropriately located and well-designed provision that is attractive to the Gypsy & Traveller community and has no impact on existing communities.</p>	<p>A pitch waiting list policy is already in place.</p> <p>Two Gypsy & Travelling training and awareness sessions have been organised to support Members and officers.</p> <p>Work with the community cohesion team to counter any negative perceptions of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community.</p>
<p>A globally responsible Wales</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A.</p>

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing		
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation	Should the Council's site identification result in public pitch provision, this presents an opportunity to promote the Welsh Language.	N/A
A more equal Wales People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances	The proposals directly supports equality and protected and or disadvantaged groups.	As above

5. How has your proposal embedded and prioritised the sustainable governance principles in its development?

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Long Term future</p> <p>Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future</p>	<p>The proposal is informed by a Gypsy and Traveller Assessment Jan 21, which makes population projections up to 2033.</p> <p>Planning for pitch provision helps to reduce the likelihood of unauthorised encampments. If the resulting outcome to meet need is public provision, households will be able to apply to live there.</p>	<p>The continued engagement with Travelling Ahead advocacy service.</p> <p>Future Gypsy & Traveller pitch assessments.</p>
 <p>Collaboration</p> <p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p>	<p>The proposals will be developed with Welsh Government and Gypsy & Traveller advocates including Travelling Ahead and a specialist planning consultant.</p> <p>The Council if applicable will engage with Welsh Government in respect of potential funding.</p> <p>Although not applicable at present, but there could be scope to include other organisations e.g. RSL's, although no decision has been made at present,</p>	<p>Gypsy & Traveller Households themselves are key stakeholders. It's important that households want to live on potential pitches provided by the Council.</p>

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Involvement</p> <p>Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p>	<p>The proposal facilitates greater involvement with local G & T households.</p> <p>There is a particular opportunity for involving families in the design of new sites.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
 <p>Prevention</p> <p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p>	<p>The proposal supports preventative activity from the perspective of households having a stable homes (e.g. pitches) enabling households to better access facilities e.g. employment, education, health etc and community links.</p>	<p>In respect of potential sites, site management, tenancy agreements and improved access to well-being support.</p>

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p data-bbox="237 555 376 587">Integration</p> <p data-bbox="203 603 528 746">Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p>	<p data-bbox="589 312 1312 456">The proposal supports increased access to good quality pitch provision that helps to provide safety, security and stability that also supports all aspects of well-being e.g. physical health, medical health etc.</p> <p data-bbox="589 472 1290 576">The direct benefits this has for the Gypsy & Travellers is that accommodation supports the priorities of wider agencies such as health services.</p>	<p data-bbox="1335 312 1995 408">The proposal will build upon existing services that support well-being which Gypsy & Traveller households would be supported to access.</p>

6. Council has agreed the need to consider the impact its decisions has on the following important responsibilities: Corporate Parenting and Safeguarding. Are your proposals going to affect any of these responsibilities?

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has	What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Safeguarding	The proposal supports households where there could be safeguarding issues by providing safe and secure pitch provision.	None.	N/A
Corporate Parenting	The proposal supports Corporate Parenting by potentially providing safe and secure pitch provision. If needed or applicable, it also supports the development of positive engagement and a relationship between any families and the Council due to there being no requirement to move on, perhaps, from an unauthorised encampment.	None.	N/A

7. What evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?

<p>Gypsy & Traveller Assessment January 2021</p> <p>Feedback from advocacy support services.</p> <p>Elected member scrutiny workshops</p> <p>Elected member visit on 14th July 2023.</p> <p>Pre-consultation feedback received from local councillors and members of the local community.</p>
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8. SUMMARY: As a result of completing this form, what are the main positive and negative impacts of your proposal, how have they informed/changed the development of the proposal so far and what will you be doing in future?

.This section should summarise the key issues arising from the evaluation. This summary must be included in the Committee report template

The main benefits of the proposal are:

- It seeks to address unmet pitch need identified by the Gypsy & Traveller Assessment Jan '21
- The Council will be meeting its legal responsibilities under Part 3, Housing (Wales) Act 2014
- It supports the Gypsy & Traveller requirement relating to the development of the replacement Local Development Plan

9. ACTIONS: As a result of completing this form are there any further actions you will be undertaking? Please detail them below, if applicable.

What are you going to do	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible
Officer Meeting – Site identification	13 th Aug 21 – completed	Mark Hand,
Officer Meeting – Site identification	19 th Aug 21 - completed	Mark Hand
Report to Enterprise DMT	6 th Sept 21	Ian Bakewell, Housing & Communities Manager
Report to Adults Select - Update report	21 st September 21	Ian Bakewell, Housing & Communities Manager
Report to People Scrutiny	20 th July 2022	Ian Bakewell, Housing & Communities Manager

Members Workshop	29 th September 2022	Ian Bakewell, Housing & Communities Manager
Members Workshop	3 rd November 2022	Ian Bakewell, Housing & Communities Manager
Members Workshop	4 th July 2023	Ian Bakewell, Housing & Communities Manager
Report to People Scrutiny	19 th July 2023	Ian Bakewell, Housing & Communities Manager
Report to Cabinet	26 th July 2023	Ian Bakewell, Housing & Communities
Report to Cabinet	4 th October 2023	
Consultation (6 weeks)	18 th October 2023 onwards	Ian Bakewell, Housing & Communities Manager

10. VERSION CONTROL: The Equality and Future Generations Evaluation should be used at the earliest stage, such as informally within your service, and then further developed throughout the decision-making process. It is important to keep a record of this process to demonstrate how you have considered and built-in equality and future generations considerations wherever possible.

Version No.	Decision making stage	Date considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consideration
1	Report to Enterprise DMT	06.09.21	
2.	Report to People Scrutiny in preparation for Report to Cabinet	19.07.23	Utilised up to date template and updated on timeline. No changes otherwise
3.	Report to Cabinet	26.07.23	Updates to reflect initial feedback (e.g. pre proposed consultation) provided to the Council
4	Report to Cabinet	04.10.23	No changes necessary

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People Scrutiny Committee 19th July 2023

Note: the following minutes focus on the challenge from members – for the full discussion, the recording of the meeting is at

www.youtube.com/watch?v=fBQzUYgfHeM&list=PLlmqn4nAaFJCbj_Cu0DbhGQkCrLYK7xM&index=2

Attendees:

Councillors: John Crook, Fay Bromfield, Penny Jones, Maureen Powell, Sue Riley, Maria Stevens, Jackie Strong, Simon Howarth, Louise Brown, Frances Taylor, Richard John, Jane Lucas, Sara Burch

Officers: Ian Bakewell, Cath Fallon, Mark Hand, Craig O' Connor, Susan Hall, Sally Meyrick, Lynne Garnett (Travelling Ahead), Rachel Lewis, Frances O'Brien, Matthew Gatehouse, Hazel Ilett, Robert McGowan

1. Apologies for Absence.

Apologies were received from Councillor Edwards and Councillor Brown was confirmed as substituting.

2. Declarations of Interest.

None.

3. Public Open Forum.

The Chair welcomed the public to the People Scrutiny Committee meeting, which would consider the Gypsy and Travellers Needs Assessment. He explained that the scrutiny committee's role was to offer views to the cabinet and make any recommendations, which the Cabinet could accept or reject as part of their future decision-making, but that Members were keen to hear from the public.

The Chair confirmed that the Committee had received a large number of written responses from members of the public providing their views, together with a petition from Mitchel Troy with many signatures, Members noting the strength of public feeling on the matter before them. He thanked the public and reassured them that all of representations received by Members would be submitted to the Cabinet Member and Officers following the meeting, to be included as part of the Cabinet's future deliberations.

There was a large public presence at the scrutiny meeting, the public highlighting key concerns relating to the suitability of the sites under discussion. The meeting was livestreamed (the recording being available on the Council's agenda page of the website), providing full details of the discussion, however, the following concerns were raised in relation to the various sites discussed:

- Village greens/common land that is currently used for recreation by communities, particularly children who may be unable to access other facilities due to health and disability and the impact of the loss of green spaces on their health and well-being.
- Accessibility for the travelling community and the following concerns;
- Road safety concerns, lack of pavements, lack of safe walking routes, no street lighting and absence of active travel routes.
- Poor links to public transport, other public services like schools, doctors.
- Environmental concerns related to biodiversity and AONB (areas of outstanding natural beauty).
- Proximity to motorways, noise and air pollution.
- Land contamination concerns.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and speaking under the Public Open Forum to assist the Committee with their deliberations.

4. Respite Provision for adults with learning disabilities

The Chair advised that the Committee would be deferring items 4 and 6 of their agenda to a future meeting, because the Committee had received significant interest from the public in attending the Public Open Forum to speak on the Respite Provision. He explained that Members were keen to ensure that the voice of service users would be heard as part of the scrutiny process and that Members had therefore agreed to postpone their consideration of the Respite Provision report and the Home to School Transport Policy. A date had not yet been confirmed for the meeting, but the Chair reassured that anyone who had expressed an interest in contributing to the meeting would be informed of the new date.

5. Gypsy and Travellers Needs Assessment.

Cabinet Member Sara Burch and Ian Bakewell introduced the report, highlighting the process that had been followed to date, including the timeline of reports that had been tabled to the scrutiny committee, in addition to the informal scrutiny workshops that all elected Members had been invited to. The Cabinet Member answered the Members' questions with Mark Hand and Craig O'Connor.

The local Ward Members Councillors Richard John, Frances Taylor, Fay Bromfield on behalf of Jane Lucas, and John Crook spoke at length to share their concerns about the suitability of the sites identified in their wards and Councillor Richard John proposed that the Committee recommended Option 3, rejecting all of the sites under discussion.

Key points raised by the Committee Members

- Committee Members questioned whether as a Council, we are truly considering the needs of Gypsies and Travellers and whether the Council is paying due respect to their feedback, given the travelling community has stated that none of the sites would meet their requirements.
- The Scrutiny Committee expressed grave concerns around the accuracy of the RAG process and the process taken to remove sites from the list, leaving 4 sites that the Committee felt were wholly unsuitable for a wide range of reasons outlined by the public and the ward Members.
- Members questioned whether the Council is evidentially applying the Guidance on Gypsy and Traveller Sites, which states that good quality accessible roads for heavy duty traffic are required ~ this was just one example of where the Scrutiny Committee felt the guidance hadn't been applied.
- The Committee felt the process has been rushed, with Members not having sufficient notice to visit the sites and fully appraise themselves of their suitability. Members felt that the decisions are too important for Gypsy and Travellers and for existing communities to be rushed to meet the timescales of the Replacement Local Development Plan.
- Members urged the Cabinet Member and Officers to negotiate with National Resources Wales to resolve issues on existing sites, where Gypsies and Travellers are settled and have strong ties to the local area.

Formal Outcome of the Scrutiny:

The Chair thanked everyone for their patience throughout the process and the public for their attendance and valuable contribution. He also thanked Cabinet Members and Officers for their input and concluded:

- That Members rejected the four recommendations presented to the Scrutiny Committee.

- That Members recommend that a call is put to landowners to come forward with parcels of land (in line with the recommendation 2.3 in the Cabinet report for 26th July 2023) and that the selection process begin again.
- That Members recommend that existing Gypsy and Traveller Communities should be supported as far as possible, which could also assist the Council in meeting identified need.
- A formal summary would be presented by the Chair to the Cabinet to reflect the views of the Committee, together with some additional comments for the Executive to consider in their future decision-making.

6. Home to School Transport Policy

The Chair confirmed that this item had been deferred, as explained and that a Special Meeting of the People Scrutiny Committee would be arranged to consider this item, at a date to be confirmed.

7. Next meeting: 5th October 2023

The Chair confirmed the date of the next ordinary People Scrutiny Committee would be 5th October 2023, but reminded Members that the Committee would need to call a Special Meeting during August for scrutiny of Respite Provision and Home to School Transport Policy.

Meeting Close

CALL-IN MECHANISM

Call-in

(a) When a decision is made by the executive, an individual member of the executive or a committee of the executive or an area committee or under joint arrangements, the decision shall be published, including where possible by electronic means, and shall be available at the main offices of the Council normally within two days of being made. All members will be sent copies of the records of all such decisions within the same timescale, by the person responsible for publishing the decision.

(b) That notice will bear the date on which it is published and will specify that the decision will come into force, and may then be implemented, on the expiry of five clear working days after the publication of the decision, unless a select committee objects to it and calls it in.

(c) During that period, the proper officer shall call-in a decision for scrutiny by the committee if so requested by the chairman or any three non-executive members and shall then notify the decision-taker of the call-in. He/she shall call a meeting of the committee on such date as he/she may determine, where possible after consultation with the chairman of the committee, and in any case within fifteen working days of the publication of the decision.

(d) If, having considered the decision, the select committee is still concerned about it, then it may refer it back to the decision making person or body for reconsideration, setting out in writing the nature of its concerns or refer the matter to full Council. If referred to the decision maker they shall then reconsider, amending the decision or not, before adopting a final decision.

(e) If following an objection to the decision, the select committee does not meet in the period set out above, or does meet but does not refer the matter back to the decision making person or body, the decision shall take effect on the date of the select meeting, or the expiry fifteen working days, from the publication of the decision, whichever is the earlier.

(f) If the matter was referred to full Council and the Council does not object to a decision which has been made, then no further action is necessary and the decision will be effective in accordance with the provision below. However, if the Council does object, the Council will refer any decision to which it objects back to the decision making person or body, together with the Council's views on the decision. That decision making body or person shall choose whether to amend the decision or not before reaching a final decision and implementing it. Where the decision was taken by the executive as a whole or a committee of it, a meeting will be convened to reconsider within ten clear working days of the Council request. Where the decision was made by an individual, the individual will reconsider within ten clear working days of the Council request.

(g) If the Council does not meet, or if it does but does not refer the decision back to the decision making body or person, the decision will become effective on the date of the Council meeting or expiry of the period in which the Council meeting should have been held, whichever is the earlier.

EXCEPTIONS

(h) In order to ensure that call-in is not abused, nor causes unreasonable delay, certain limitations are to be placed on its use. These are:

- i) only decisions involving expenditure or reductions in service over a value of £10,000 may be called in;
- ii) three members of the council are needed for a decision to be called in;

CALL-IN AND URGENCY

(i) The call-in procedure set out above shall not apply where the decision being taken by the executive is urgent. A decision will be urgent if any delay likely to be caused by the call in process would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public's interests. The record of the decision, and notice by which it is made public shall state whether in the opinion of the decision making person or body, the decision is an urgent one, and therefore not subject to call-in. The Head of Paid Service or his/her nominee must agree both that the decision proposed is reasonable in all the circumstances and to it being treated as a matter of urgency. Decisions taken as a matter of urgency must be reported to the next available meeting of the Council, together with the reasons for urgency.

(j) The operation of the provisions relating to call-in and urgency shall be monitored annually, and a report submitted to Council with proposals for review if necessary.

**CABINET
DECISION RECORDING LOG**

DECISION DETERMINED ON: Wednesday, 4 October 2023

DECISION WILL COME INTO EFFECT ON: Friday 13th October 2023

Decisions made by full cabinet and individual cabinet members are subject to "Call-in" by the appropriate Select Committee. Should a decision be subject to call-in it will not take effect as stated above and will be presented again at a later date.

CABINET MEMBERS PRESENT:

County Councillors Mary Ann Brocklesby, Rachel Garrick, Paul Griffiths, Martyn Groucutt, Catrin Maby, Angela Sandles, Ian Chandler and Ben Callard

OTHER ELECTED MEMBERS PRESENT:

County Councillors Richard John, Frances Taylor, Lisa Dymock, Phil Murphy, Rachel Buckler, Jane Lucas and John Crook

OFFICERS PRESENT

Peter Davies, Paul Matthews, Jane Rodgers, Frances O'Brien, Ian Saunders, Amy Gullick, Joanne Chase, Ian Bakewell and Mark Hand

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Item Number	Title	Purpose, Consultation & Author	Declaration of Interests	Decision
3	MEETING GYPSY, ROMA AND TRAVELLER PITCH NEEDS - LAND IDENTIFICATION	As set out in the report		<p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That Cabinet accept the recommendations as set out below:</p> <p>Ratification of the proposal to remove the following sites from the site identification process as per the statement made to Cabinet on the 26th of July 2023 by the then Cabinet Member for Inclusive Communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manson Heights, Monmouth • Garrow Road, Mitchel Troy • Rocklea, Mitchel Troy <p>Following further consideration of feedback from the Place Scrutiny Committee on the 19th of July 2023 and the wider Magor and Undy community, ratification of the proposal to remove Dancing Hill West, Magor from the list of potential sites, as per the reasons stated in paragraph 3.9.</p> <p>Following a review of Council owned 'Candidate sites', to put forward two sites of up to 6 pitches each at the Caldicot East strategic site identified within the Replacement Local Development Plan Preferred Strategy.</p> <p>The commencement of a public consultation exercise on the following Council owned sites (site summary profiles provided in Appendix 1), for the potential provision of up to six Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pitches each:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bradbury Farm, Crick, Caldicot • Oak Grove Farm, Crick, Caldicot • Langley Close, Magor <p>Inclusion in the public consultation, any suitable sites brought forward through the public call for sites, that the owner is willing to sell or lease long term to the Council.</p>

				<p>Further exploration of the 19th July Place Scrutiny Committee's request to support households wishing to self-serve on existing sites which, subject to the necessary permissions, would reduce the number of new pitches needed.</p> <p>To approve the attached FAQs (Appendix 2), an iterative document which will be displayed and regularly updated on the Council's website.</p>
Additional Information:				



SCHEDULE 12A LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 EXEMPTION FROM DISCLOSURE OF DOCUMENTS

Meeting and Date of Meeting: Place Scrutiny Committee – 23rd October 2023

Report: GYPSY, ROMA AND TRAVELLER PITCH NEEDS – LAND IDENTIFICATION

Author: Cath Fallon - Head of Enterprise and Community Animation, Ian Bakewell – Housing and Communities Manager

I have considered grounds for exemption of information contained in the background paper for the report referred to above and make the following recommendation to the Proper Officer:-

Exemptions applying to the report:

1. Anything that relates to existing Gypsy, Roma and Traveller sites
2. Any proposed private sites
3. Any information relating to a particular individual or family or which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual
4. Any information relating to any consultation or negotiations which relate to the financial or business affairs of any particular person

Factors in favour of disclosure:

Transparency regarding sites being considered for purchase or lease by the Council.

Prejudice which would result if the information were disclosed:

Prejudice towards members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community

My view on the public interest test is as follows:

Factors in favour of disclosure are outweighed by those against.

Recommended decision on exemption from disclosure:

Withhold

Date: 17th October 2023

Signed: Cath Fallon

Post: Head of Enterprise and Community Animation

I accept/~~I do not accept~~ the recommendation made above

Signed: F O'Brien Chief Officer for Communities and Place

Date: 17th October 2023