

# **Traveller and Travelling Showpeople**

## **Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD)**

### **Call For Sites**

### **Background Information**

#### **Introduction**

The South Worcestershire Councils (Malvern Hills District, Wychavon District and Worcester City), have been jointly preparing the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP). The SWDP sets out the strategy, together with policies and site allocations to guide the location of development in south Worcestershire up to 2030.

One of the issues that the SWDP seeks to address is meeting the accommodation needs of Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

The South Worcestershire Councils intend to prepare a Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) which will identify a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years' worth of pitches / plots against the level of need identified in the 2014 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA). The DPD will also identify a supply of developable sites or broad locations for growth for years 6 to 10 (2019/20 to 2023/24) and, where possible, for years 11-15 (2024/25 to 2028/29).

#### **Opportunity to Suggest Sites for Travellers or Travelling Showpeople**

The South Worcestershire Councils preparing the SWDP are inviting members of the local community, landowners and public bodies to put forward sites that they think may be potentially suitable for Traveller or Travelling Showpeople use.

The deadline for suggesting sites is 9:00 am on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

Forwarding potential sites at this stage does not imply that they will be included in the DPD since all sites will undergo a rigorous assessment against specific criteria to assess their potential suitability.

#### **What Have We Done So Far?**

The SWDP was submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination in May 2013. The SWDP includes Policy SWDP17 on Travellers and Travelling Showpeople which:

- Sets out the accommodation needs of Travellers and Travelling Showpeople over the period to 2030;
- Outlines criteria to assess the suitability of proposals and planning applications; and

- Indicates how the need for Traveller pitches and Showpeople plots is to be addressed, including the proposal to allocate two new sites on urban extensions (in Policy SWDP 45) and the intention to prepare a Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Site Allocations DPD.

In November 2014 the six Worcestershire Districts published the Worcestershire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) which identifies the future accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople across the county.

Policy SWDP17 has been updated to reflect the findings of the 2014 GTAA.

Please note, although Policy SWDP 17 is not yet adopted, work has commenced on the Site Allocations DPD so that when the policy related to Travellers and Travelling Showpeople is adopted, the DPD can be produced quickly.

## Definitions

For the purposes of planning, Government guidance defines Gypsies and Travellers as:

*Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of Travelling Showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.*

Travelling Showpeople are defined as:

*Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family's or dependants' more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined above.*

## The National Planning Policy Context

The Government's Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, published in March 2012 states that local planning authorities should, in producing their Local Plan "*identify and update annually, a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years' worth of sites against their locally set targets*". Further, Local Plans should "*identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years six to ten and, where possible, for years 11-15*". (paragraph 9)

The Planning Policy for Traveller Sites says that to be deliverable, sites should be:

- Available now;
- Offer a suitable location for development now; and be

- Achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years and in particular that development on the site is viable.

To be considered developable, sites should be in a suitable location for Traveller site development and there should be a reasonable prospect that the site is available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged.

The Government's Planning Policy for Traveller Sites also says that "*criteria should be set to guide land supply allocations where there is identified need. Where there is no identified need, criteria-based policies should be included to provide a basis for decisions in case applications nevertheless come forward. Criteria based policies should be fair and should facilitate the traditional and nomadic life of travellers while respecting the interests of the settled community*" (paragraph 10).

## **SWDP 17 – Travellers and Travelling Showpeople**

Policy SWDP17 in the South Worcestershire Development Plan sets out the future pitch requirements for Travellers and plot requirements for Travelling Showpeople based on the GTAA (see section on Evidence Base below).

Policy SWDP17 also sets out the following criteria to guide land supply allocations and provide a basis for decisions when planning applications come forward:

- B. Broad locations to meet the need for Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople plots will be considered within, or on the edge of, existing settlements and the proposed urban extensions at Worcester.*
- C. The partner authorities will assess the suitability of proposals and planning applications (including the intensification or reasonable expansion of existing authorised Traveller or Travelling Showpeople sites) against the following criteria:*
  - i. Whether the site is within an international or national<sup>1</sup> designation.*
  - ii. Whether the site is in an area prone to flooding.*
  - iii. Whether the site has any significant adverse impact on local planning designations<sup>2</sup>, ecology or biodiversity that cannot be mitigated.*
  - iv. Whether any adverse visual impact on the landscape can be addressed.*
  - v. Whether there is any adverse impact on privacy and residential amenity for both site residents and neighbouring land uses.*
  - vi. Whether the size of the site and the number of caravans stationed respects the scale of and does not dominate, the nearest settled community.*
  - vii. Whether the site has safe and convenient access to the highway network.*
  - viii. Whether the site is capable of providing adequate on-site services for water supply, mains electricity, waste disposal and foul and surface water drainage.*

---

<sup>1</sup> Examples of international designations include Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar sites. Examples of national designations include Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Green Belts, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, National Nature Reserves.

<sup>2</sup> Examples of local designations include Conservation Areas, Significant Gaps

ix. *Whether local services and facilities such as schools, health facilities and employment are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport, and whether the site is sustainable in other ways.*

D. *Subject to compliance with other policies in the SWDP and current national standards for site design and management, applications that meet the above criteria and contribute to meeting identified unmet need will be considered favourably.*

E. *Any planning permission will be subject to conditions relating to the number of pitches / plots and restricting occupancy to Traveller or Travelling Showpeople use.*

Any proposals and planning applications for Traveller, Travelling Showpeople or transit pitches will be considered by the relevant Council against the above criteria and in the context of locally set targets.

### **Related Planning Policies**

In addition to SWDP 17, the Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Site Allocations DPD will also relate to Policy SWDP 45 (Directions for Growth Outside the City Boundary) which proposes Traveller pitches on the proposed urban extensions.

SWDP 45 proposes up to 20 pitches through the identification of two sites (up to 10 pitches each) on the proposed Worcester West Urban Extension and in, or adjacent to, the proposed Worcester South Urban Extension. The precise location of the sites would be identified through detailed masterplanning of the urban extensions. At the masterplanning stage, it will also be determined whether the sites on the urban extensions will be to meet Malvern Hills, Worcester or Wychavon's pitch requirements.

### **The Evidence Base - What Is The Level Of Need For Pitches And Plots?**

The Worcestershire GTAA, published in November 2014, identifies the need for additional Traveller pitches, Travelling Showpeople plots and transit pitches in the county in the period between 2014/15 and 2033/34.

Within South Worcestershire, the need identified in the GTAA in the five years to 2018/19 is set out in Table 1 below:

	<b>Permanent Traveller Pitches</b>	<b>Permanent Travelling Showpeople Plots</b>	<b>Transit Pitches</b>
Malvern Hills	-3	-3	3
Worcester	-1	0	0
Wychavon	9	0	2

The GTAA identifies an overall shortfall of 5 permanent Traveller pitches across south Worcestershire in the period to 2018/19. The identified need is primarily in Wychavon where there is a requirement for 9 pitches. Malvern Hills and Worcester have sufficient capacity to cover identified needs up to 2018/19.

The GTAA identified a number of vacant pitches (particularly in Wychavon) and opportunities for the intensification or limited expansion of a number of existing sites in Malvern Hills and Wychavon.

For Travelling Showpeople, the GTAA identifies no overall additional need for plots across south Worcestershire in the period to 2018/19.

The GTAA also recommends that provision be made for a minimum of 5 transit pitches and suggests that the South Worcestershire Councils liaise with a view to providing a shared facility for dealing with future unauthorised encampments.

Whilst the GTAA does not identify a need to plan for large strategic Traveller or Travelling Showpeople sites in the period to 2018/19, it does recommend that the South Worcestershire Councils assess the suitability of proposals and planning applications for smaller sites as they arise against criteria-based planning policies.

The GTAA indicates a desire amongst Travellers for a mixture of Council / Registered Social Landlord managed sites and private sites.

The GTAA also identifies the likely longer-term requirement for pitches and plots, covering the period 2019/20 to 2033/34. The longer-term requirements, based on expected household formation rates, are set out in Table 2. The longer-term requirements make no allowance for turnover on existing sites and are therefore indicative and liable to change in light of future updated turnover rates.

<b>Table 2: Longer-Term Requirement for Permanent Traveller Pitches and Travelling Showpeople Plots 2019/20 – 2033/34</b>						
(source: Worcestershire Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment, 2014)						
	<b>2019/20 – 2023/24</b>		<b>2024/25 – 2028/29</b>		<b>2029/30 – 2033/34</b>	
	<b>Traveller Pitches</b>	<b>Showman Plots</b>	<b>Traveller Pitches</b>	<b>Showman Plots</b>	<b>Traveller Pitches</b>	<b>Showman Plots</b>
Malvern Hills	6	2	6	2	8	4
Worcester	5	0	3	0	5	0
Wychavon	19	0	23	0	33	0
Total	30	2	32	2	46	4

The GTAA suggests a need for up to 30 Traveller pitches between 2019/20 and 2023/24, 32 pitches 2024/25 to 2028/29, and 46 pitches 2029/30 to 2033/34 – with most of the need arising in Wychavon.

For Travelling Showpeople, the GTAA indicates a need for an additional 8 plots in Malvern Hills between 2019/20 and 2033/34.

## **The Approach to Meeting Need**

Policy SWDP 17 says that each of the South Worcestershire Councils will identify and update annually a five year supply of deliverable pitches for Travellers and plots for Travelling Showpeople set against local targets. These targets will be based on the findings of the GTAA which are summarised in Tables 1 and 2 above.

With regard to meeting the need for pitches and plots between now and 2030, the future requirements could be met through a combination of the following approaches:

- (a) Determining planning applications as-and-when they arise through the Development Management process;
- (b) Expansion of, or increasing the capacity on, existing authorised Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites;
- (c) Allocating new sites on the proposed urban extensions;
- (d) Allocating pitches through a 'call for sites'.

## **Call for Sites**

In Policy SWDP 45, the South Worcestershire Councils have proposed up to 20 pitches through the identification of small sites (up to 10 pitches) on the Worcester West Urban Extension and in, or adjacent to, the Worcester South Urban Extension. The precise location of these sites would be identified through detailed masterplanning of the urban extensions.

The South Worcestershire Councils have not discounted the possibility of other sites coming forward.

The South Worcestershire Councils are therefore providing an opportunity for individuals, organisations and other stakeholders to suggest any sites that they consider might be suitable for allocation as a Traveller or Travelling Showperson site. Proposals could be for either new sites or an expansion or intensification of an existing site. Proposals are invited for permanent residential sites or transit sites / temporary stopping places.

Any suggested sites put forward under this 'call for sites' exercise, together with those proposed for the urban extensions, will be assessed for their suitability against the criteria proposed in SWDP17 and other good practice guidance, and then subject to public consultation, in order to determine which may be identified for allocation in the DPD.

## **How Do You Put Forward A Site?**

We would like your assistance in identifying potential sites using the Call for Sites Submission Form.

Please send your completed Call for Sites Submission Form, together with a map showing the site plan for each site, to us by 9:00 am on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2015. This will enable us to consider responses in the preparation of the initial consultation document.

You can send your Call for Sites Submission Forms in two ways:

- By email. To: [contact@swdevelopmentplan.org](mailto:contact@swdevelopmentplan.org); or
- By post. To: South Worcestershire Development Plan, c/o Wychavon Civic Centre, Queen Elizabeth Drive, Pershore, Worcestershire, WR10 1PT.

Further information about the Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Site Allocations DPD and an electronic copy of the Sites Submission Form are available on the SWDP website at [http://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/?page\\_id=9752](http://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/?page_id=9752)

Hard copies of this Background Information and the Call for Sites Submission Form are also available at Customer Service Centres (CSC) and/or Libraries.

### **Next Steps**

The timetable for the preparation of the Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Site Allocations DPD is outlined in each of the South Worcestershire Council's Local Development Schemes (LDS's), published in September 2014. It is summarised as follows:

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
<b>Commencement</b>	September 2014
<b>Initial consultation</b> (Regulation 18)	July – August 2015
<b>Publication</b> (Regulation 19)	December 2015
<b>Submission</b> (Regulation 22)	April 2016
<b>Independent Examination</b> (Regulation 24)	July 2016 <i>Precise dates of examination hearing sessions will be determined by the Inspector</i>
<b>Receipt of Inspector's Report</b> (Regulation 25)	November 2016
<b>Adoption</b> (Regulation 26)	December 2016

The next stage in the process will be for the South Worcestershire Councils to consider and assess responses to the Call for Sites exercise.

Sites that are identified as potential site allocations will be considered and assessed prior to initial consultation in July 2015 and publication of a Draft DPD document in December 2015, in which final site allocations will be identified.

### **Sustainability Appraisal**

The Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Site Allocations DPD will be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal which will contribute to the evidence base and ensure that the DPD delivers sustainable development.