

Stroud Local Plan Review 2020 - 2040

STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND

**between Gloucester City Council Cheltenham Borough Council Tewkesbury Borough Council
Cotswold District Council, Stroud District Council and Forest of Dean District Council**

10 February 2023

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared by Gloucester City Council, Cheltenham Borough Council, Tewkesbury Borough Council, Cotswold District Council, Forest of Dean District Council and Stroud District Council, referred to hereafter as 'the parties'. It documents the current position and future work regarding planning for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities within Gloucestershire.

2. Matters that are agreed

- 2.1 Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS, 2015) sets out the Governments planning policy for traveller sites, which should be read alongside the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2019). PPTS requires local authorities to undertake an assessment of need for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities and, working collaboratively with other local authorities, develop fair and effective strategies to meet need through the identification of land for sites over a reasonable timescale.
- 2.2 The parties, together with Gloucestershire County Council, worked in partnership in commissioning a county-wide Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA), which was completed in early 2023, setting out needs between 2021 and 2041 for most districts, and 2021 – 2040 for Stroud District, to reflect the timeframe of the plan. The GTAA was prepared by an independent planning consultant, RRR Consultancy, and forms part of the evidence base supporting Local Plans for district authorities in Gloucestershire (Gloucestershire Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment – SLP-03).
- 2.3 The Gloucestershire Statement of Common Ground (Duty to Co-operate Statement EB3) has now been signed by all parties and Agreements 7, 8 and 9 are particularly relevant to this matter. Agreement 7 includes a commitment to make provision for the '...full range of housing needs in the right places at the right time' and that '...this may result in one local authority accommodating the identified needs of another local authority'. Agreement 8 states 'The parties agree to jointly seek to meet in full (at least) the aggregated housing needs for Gloucestershire as identified by the statutory standard method at the time'. Furthermore, Agreement 9 states 'The parties agree to explore the full range of development opportunities available, taking into account the potential impact on existing communities, resources and infrastructure'.
- 2.4 The parties are committed to working collaboratively on strategic cross-boundary planning matters and to satisfy the requirements of the Duty to Cooperate, including those relating to Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople matters, in the identification of deliverable sites to meet need, where it can be demonstrated needs cannot be met in an authority. In progressing this work, there is a county-wide Gypsy and Traveller Officer Working Group, which is currently considering options to meet the identified needs.

2(a) Identified needs

- 2.5 The needs have been identified in the Gloucestershire Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment 2022 (SLP-03).

2(b) Current position in delivering supply

Gloucester City

- 2.6 Gloucester City has a tightly drawn local authority boundary, with significant planning constraints and a limited land supply. The Inspector examining the Gloucester City Plan (adopted January 2023) accepted that there are no deliverable sites within the administrative area of Gloucester City and that consequently, there are currently unmet needs relating to the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities. It is therefore necessary to consider how neighbouring authorities can assist with addressing these unmet needs.
- 2.7 In responding to this, Stroud District made provision at G2 Land at Whaddon, for 8 serviced Travelling Showpeople plots to be provided as part of the safeguarded site, should it be required and in accordance with the Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) strategy.
- 2.8 Further opportunities will continue to be considered as part of the JSP and other mechanisms (see section 2(c) below).

Other district authorities

- 2.9 Currently no other district authority has made a request for help in meeting their identified needs in Stroud District.

2(c) Future work

- 2.10 A county wide officer group, consisting of a representative from each district (typically planning policy and housing officers) and the county council's Gypsy and Traveller Service meets once every two months. Representatives from One Legal and the Police are also invited. The group is focussed on taking forward the recommendations from the GTAA and developing delivery mechanisms and options.
- 2.11 The current work of the group includes raising the profile of GT issues with housing colleagues to ensure parity between the implementation of the GTAA and the Local Housing Needs Assessment. This includes elevating appropriate recommendations of the GTAA to the county wide Strategic Housing Partnership. The group are in the process of setting the parameters for a follow-up piece of work to the GTAA which will look at the potential for existing site expansion, working with partners to identify and create smaller family managed sites, engaging with the community through a third party to encourage the community to put forward sites they may already own, and agree a site allocation methodology. It will also include a further call for sites.
- 2.12 In addition to the county wide officer group, those districts with waterways will also be participating in a meeting with the Canal & River Trust to plan an approach for meeting the Bargee need.
- 2.13 The parties recognise that it may be necessary to identify sites to provide for unmet Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople need in neighbouring local authorities, where possible and appropriate, when justified through a shortage, or lack of any suitable/deliverable sites to provide for that need where it arises.

3. Matters that are not agreed

3.1 None

4. Signatories

Signed on behalf of Cheltenham Borough Council



Director of Communities and Economic Development

Signed on behalf of Cotswold District Council



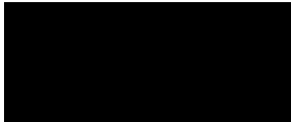
Forward Planning Manager

Signed on behalf of Forest of Dean District Council



Forward Planning Manager

Signed on behalf of Gloucester City Council



Planning Policy Manager

Signed on behalf of Stroud District Council



Head of Planning Strategy and Economic Development

Signed on behalf of Tewkesbury Borough Council



Planning Policy Manager

Dated

03/03/2023