

SDC Letter, Gloucestershire Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment Inspectors Questions

Can you please ask the Council when they anticipate the new GTAA will be published? When are the different authority sign offs proposed to occur?

Please see attached the GTAA which has been signed off by all joint authorities and is now ready to be published as part of the Examination Library. Please let the Council know when this can be published.

As the Council is aware of the contents of the assessment, are they able to give an indication as to the implications of this new evidence on the Plan and whether any additional work is required and if so what? Or is the Council not able to set this out until the GTAA is publicly available?

The new GTAA sets out a new series of accommodation needs for a new time period which are different from the figures set out in the Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan Core Policy CP10 (which was based on the previous GTAA (EB11)). Therefore, there will need to be a modification made to Core Policy CP10 to include updated need figures for the period 2021-2040.

For meeting the needs of Gypsies and Travellers, the new GTAA sets out three alternative approaches, based on an ethnic definition, the PPTS 2015 definition and a work definition.

Period	Ethnic definition	PPTS 2015 definition	Work definition
Total 2021-26	4	-2	-12
Total 2026-31	5	4	4
Total 2031-36	6	5	4
Total 2036-40	7	6	4
Total 2021-40	22	13	0

The new GTAA recommends that “each study area local planning authority determines for itself which of the accommodation needs figures in relation to Gypsies and Travellers it chooses to prioritise in its Local Plan” (para. S21). Whilst the consultants recommend adopting the ethnic definition, an alternative approach is identified whereby the PPTS definition is adopted, “with the difference between the PPTS 2015 figures and Ethnic’ definition being an additional need that the council(s) may choose to meet” (para. S.22). If the local authority chooses to meet this additional need, the report suggests this additional need could be accommodated through windfalls, using a criteria based policy (para. S22. and 2.19). The consultants recommend that the work definition “should simply be used as a form of reference and comparison with other authorities who use this approach” (para. S22).

As the new GTAA has only recently been completed, the District Council has not formally considered these alternative approaches and therefore has not determined which of these accommodation needs figures should be planned for.

However, in a recent legal case (Lisa Smith v SSLUHC [2022] EWCA Civ 1391) the Court of Appeal has “determined that PPTS 2015 was discriminatory in relation to excluding households who had permanently ceased to travel from being recognised (for planning purposes) as Gypsies and Travellers” (para. 2.18). Subject to confirmation by Government and the courts, this decision may

remove the alternative approach identified by the consultants and require the Council instead to meet the higher level of needs identified by the ethnic definition.

For meeting the needs of Travelling Showpeople, the results are more straightforward, in that there is a defined need of 27 additional plots for the period 2021-41, with 12 plots to delivered by 2026 and an additional 5 plots by 2031.

2021-26	12
2026-31	5
2031-36	5
2036-40	5
2021-40	27

The District Council is now working with the Gypsy and Traveller and the Travelling Showpeople communities to identify potential additional provision, as required. It is noteworthy that the emerging Gypsy and Traveller Policy CP10 encourages the expansion or rationalisation of existing sites and this forms the basis of the work now being carried out by the District Council.

It is also anticipated in 2023 that the local authorities in Gloucestershire will jointly commission work on a Gypsy and Traveller call for sites throughout the County using the latest accommodation assessment figures.

The new GTAA also includes additional recommendations relating to Gypsies and Travellers' transit provision and to meeting the accommodation needs of boat dwellers. If these recommendations are accepted, these would require additional modifications to the Plan.

The District Council would like to request a view from the Inspectors on how to proceed with this matter in the context of the examination hearings.