



**MID DEVON LOCAL PLAN REVIEW 2013 – 2033**

Proposed Submission (incorporating proposed modifications) Examination

Inspector: Paul Griffiths BSc (Hons) BArch IHBC

**Main Hearings - Hearing 4: Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2019**

**Matters and Issues**

**Development Management Policies**

**Statement of Mid Devon District Council**

**ISSUE 6      Is draft policy DM7 (Traveller Sites) reasonable and/or workable?**

- 6.1 The local Plan Review proposes to meet the bulk of identified need for Gypsy and Traveller pitches within its major sites and existing Gypsy and Traveller sites. Policy DM7 is a criteria based policy to consider proposals that come forward for pitches and plots outside of the site specific proposals in TIV1, CU1, CU7 and CRE5. The Policy builds on the previous Local Plan policies, but has been updated to meet the policies in the Planning Policies for Traveller Sites (PPTS-2015).
- 6.2 The Council's proof of evidence for Hearing 1 Issue 7 sets out how the bulk of Mid Devon's identified need for 35 traveller pitches and 11 travelling showpersons' plots will be provided for. However, around 21 pitches/plots will need to be accommodated outside of the major sites over the Plan period.
- 6.3 Policy DM 7 is intended to assess the other proposals that come forward for traveller sites. It builds on **Policy AL/DE/7** of the Allocations and Infrastructure Development Plan Document but has been modified to meet the policies set out in the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS-2015).
- 6.4 The criteria in Policy DM7 are fair and facilitate the needs of the travelling community whilst also respecting the interests of the settled community. The Policy requires sites to provide a suitable environment for residents including the provision of play areas. It acknowledges that

there may be a mixed use employment/storage element on sites (in accordance with paragraph 13(h) and Policy H of the PPTS).

- 6.5 The PPTS requires Traveller sites to have access to local services including health and education. It allows for a more restrictive policy in rural settings (Policies C and D). It is appropriate for Policy DM7 to apply the tests of Policy S13 Villages and S14 Countryside to proposals that arise in these areas.
- 6.6 It is noted that the National Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups (reference 6689) made a representation at the 2017 Proposed Submission consultation. Overall it supported changes made to Policy DM7 but requested criteria (e) occupancy criteria include the dependants of gypsies and travellers. In the Council's view the current wording is likely to include dependents.
- 6.7 The Liaison Group objected to the deletion of references to gypsy and traveller pitches in S14 Countryside. Policy DM7 is clear that traveller sites are not excluded from Policies S13 (Villages) or S14 (Countryside) subject to the criteria in those policies. However, specific reference has been removed from Policy S14. The PPTS does however seek to locate sites close to services, rather than in open countryside, and the Local Plan Review is consistent with this approach.
- 6.8 The Federation objected to Paragraph 4.14 of the Plan (p157) which notes that pitches can affect Special Areas of Conservation. The Council agrees that all types of accommodation could affect Special Areas of Conservation and therefore the box in paragraph 4.12 will be amended to state "**Residential accommodation including** Gypsy and traveller Sites" as a matter of factual clarification.
- 6.9 There were no other representations to Policy DM7 at the 2017 Consultation.
- 6.10 There were three representations to DM7 at the 2015 consultation. The most significant objection was from the National Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups (3597) who objected to the requirement in the (former version of DM7) for proposals to establish the need for sites. This criteria has been deleted from the Policy, which the Federation confirmed met this objection. Willand Parish Council (person 44) made an overarching general statement (which does not appear to relate directly to Policy DM7). The Environment Agency (943) supported the exclusion of sites from floodplains (in paragraph 4.48).
- 6.11 Accordingly, Policy DM7 is fair to all parties, is a workable policy and is in accordance with national policy. The policy was modified (from the 2015 draft) in response to the Gypsy Liaison Group's representation.