

Equality Analysis (EIA) Form

A) Description

Name of service, function, policy (or other) being assessed

Traveller Sites Document : The Draft Preferred Options for Consultation

Directorate or organisation responsible (and service, if it is a policy)

Economy, Environment and Corporate , Strategic Planning

Date of assessment

July 2016

Names and job titles of people carrying out the assessment

Angela Newey, Senior Planning Officer

Accountable person

Kevin Singleton Team Leader Strategic Planning

What are the aims or main purpose of the service, function or policy? What does it provide and how does it provide it?

Introduction

- The Council is aiming to ensure fair and equitable treatment in finding accommodation for Travellers, which includes Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, in a way that facilitates their traditional and nomadic way of life whilst respecting the interests of the settled community.
- The main aim of the Travellers Site Document is to enable the provision of sites to meet the assessed needs of the Gypsy and Traveller Community. The Travellers Sites Document will also include policies relating to the number of pitches required, requirements for site design and facilities and environmental and amenity protection.
- Travellers can be at greater risk of lower quality of life outcomes and it is hoped that through enabling the provision of sites that this will help to reduce such inequalities. With greater site availability there should be a reduction in unauthorised encampments and associated issues in accessing education and health care.

Context

- Local Authorities are currently required by The Housing Act 2004 to assess the accommodation needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community. A Herefordshire Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Show Person Accommodation Assessment has been carried out and can be found at: <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/travellers-sites-doc>
- The Department for Communities and Local Government issued a revised Planning Policy for Traveller Sites in August 2015. This sets out the Government's Planning Policy for Traveller sites including the definition of travellers for planning purposes.
- The Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy (2011 – 2031) sets out the strategic

planning framework for the County. It balances environmental issues with economic and social needs and ensures that development will be sustainable.

- Policy H4, Traveller Sites, of the Herefordshire Core Strategy sets out the context for the provision of traveller sites in Herefordshire. This policy includes criteria for the assessment of planning applications for traveller sites and states that the accommodation needs of Travellers will be provided for through a Travellers' Sites Document.

Travellers Site Document Progress to date:

- An issues and options consultation took place in August 2014. This considered how the need for Traveller accommodation in Herefordshire should be met and discussed possible ways in which sites for permanent and transit pitches and plots could come forward.
- This is now the first consultation on suggested sites which have undergone an initial assessment although more detailed work will be required to complete the assessment of their suitability. The preferred options document also includes a number of criteria that should be considered when looking at new pitches. The purpose of the consultation is to invite views on these as well as inviting suggestions for new sites and additional criteria.
- Following this public consultation period, the consideration of all the representations received and any subsequent amendments, there will be a further round of 'pre-submission' public consultation. All the representations received at that stage will be submitted to the secretary of state together with the DPD. A planning inspector will be appointed to examine the plan and will usually hold hearing sessions to hear the views of invited participants. The inspector will publish a report with their findings and any recommended changes. The plan is then adopted by the council and becomes part of the Herefordshire Local Plan.

Intended Outcome

- Once adopted the Travellers' Sites Document will allocate land for Traveller Sites which can then be the subject of planning applications for development as authorised Gypsy and Traveller sites.
- Of course, planning permission can also be sought on sites that are not included in the Sites Document and any such applications will be assessed against a number of criteria including those in core strategy policy H4 and relevant policies in the travellers' sites document.

Location or any other relevant information

Further information about work on the Travellers Sites Documents can be found at:

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/travellers-sites-document>

List any key policies or procedures to be reviewed as part of this assessment.

This assessment at this first stage of sites consultation will help to ensure that the next stage of the Travellers Sites Document fulfils the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Who is intended to benefit from the service, function or policy?

- Romany gypsies and Irish Travellers are recognised by the courts as being distinct ethnic groups and are protected from discrimination by the equality act 2010. There is a statutory duty on public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in the course of developing policies and delivering services.
- In addition other travellers including travelling showpeople make up the wider travelling community will also benefit from the Travellers' Site Document by the

allocation of authorised places to live.

- The sites document will also make provision for authorised serviced temporary stopping places. This will help to address the unauthorised encampments on both private and public premises as well as providing better quality stopping places and providing greater certainty for both the travelling and settled community.
- By covering issues such as quality of build, design and layout better outcomes for those living on the pitches will be achieved.

Who are the stakeholders? What is their interest?

- The Stakeholders are primarily the travelling community as the Travellers Sites Document will be focused on their particular requirements in relation to land use planning. There are a number of organisations representing the travelling community and we will engage them in the process as well as seeking the views of individual travellers.
- As with all such documents involving development, the wider Herefordshire Community either as individuals or represented by parish councils for example, will also have an interest in the proposals.
- Other stakeholders include a number of government agencies such as Highways England, Environment Agency and Natural England as well as other organisations with specialist interests such as water companies, housing associations and environmental organisations.

B) Information

What information (monitoring or consultation data) have you got and what is it telling you?

- The Travellers' Sites document is informed by the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment which was prepared by independent consultants, Arc 4. This assessment tells us how many pitches and what type of accommodation the Travellers' Sites Document should make provision for.
- The assessment forms part of the evidence base for the DPD and will be subject to examination by the government inspector along with the other parts of the plan. Therefore there is opportunity for any stakeholders that disagree with the findings of the assessment to have their concerns considered by the inspector.
- We also have information about planning permissions granted for traveller sites and this information is reported in the annual authority monitoring report.

C) Assessment/Analysis

Describe your key findings (e.g. negative, positive or neutral impacts - actual or potential). Also your assessment of risk.

Strand/community	Impact	Assessment
Gender, Pregnancy and Maternity	Positive	Permanent and temporary authorised sites in locations accessible to services is likely to be particularly beneficial for pregnant women by providing greater opportunity to access maternity services.
Transgender and Sexual orientation	Neutral	There is no evidence to indicate that the Travellers Sites Document will have a positive or negative impact on this protected characteristic.

Disability	Positive	Pitches, parking spaces and amenities (such as day blocks) will be required to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.
Race	Positive	The Travellers Sites Document has potential to foster good relations between the travelling community and the settled community by providing authorised pitches.
Age	Positive	By providing good quality facilities on suitable sites there will be a positive effect for people of all ages e.g. access arrangements of buildings and the provision of play areas for children. There will also be better opportunities for children to attend school.
Religion	Neutral	There is no evidence to indicate that the Travellers Sites Document will have a positive or negative impact on this protected characteristic.
Socio-Economic Disadvantaged	Positive	Allocation of sites will have a positive effect on the socio economically disadvantaged by allocating sites that are accessible to a range of services and facilities and will improve equitable opportunity in this regard. There will also be a greater opportunity to access employment opportunities from an authorised site.

E) Consultation

Who will be consulted? How will you engage people in the consultation?

- The list of consultees for the DPD will include a broad and diverse cross-section of society as well as organisations representing minority groups.
- They will be notified about the consultation on the Travellers Sites Document and this equality impact assessment.
- All documentation will be made publicly available on the Herefordshire Council website and in Herefordshire Libraries and Customer Service Centres.
- The Council's Travellers Service will assist in seeking the views of residents of the local authority traveller sites.

Will you use diversity monitoring categories? Yes X No

(if No you should use this as an action as we are required by law to monitor diversity categories)

If yes, which categories?

- Ethnicity
- Age
- Gender

What will you do with the diversity monitoring data you gather? Is this information published? And if so, where?

We will use the information to tell us how well we have engaged with different categories of the community. The information we collect about ethnicity will be particularly useful in helping us understand how effective we are at engaging with the travelling community.

F) Conclusions

	Action/objective/target OR justification	Resources required	Timescale	I/R/S/J
a)	Continue Site identification and allocation process to help meet the accommodation needs of the Travelling Community.	Resources already allocated as part of the LDF budget.		I
b)				
c)				
d)				

- (I)** Taking immediate effect.
- (R)** Recommended to Council/Directors through a Committee or other Report*.
- (S)** Added to the Service Plan.
- (J)** To be brought to the attention of the Equality Manager.

*Summarise your findings in the report. Make the full assessment available for further information.