

STRATEGIC PLANNING BOARD UPDATES

20th April 2011

APPLICATION NO: 10/4977C

PROPOSAL: Extension to existing gypsy caravan site, including the laying of hardstanding, stationing of 9 caravans for residential purposes and, erection of 6 utility buildings.

ADDRESS: Horseshoe Farm, Warmingham Lane, Moston, Middlewich, Cheshire, CW10 0HJ

COMMENT

Correction of Agenda Report

The report stated that a plan showing the location of Gypsy and Traveller sites throughout Cheshire would be included within the key plans. However, this plan will be shown as part of power point presentation at the committee meeting.

Consultation on the Draft Planning Policy Statement: Planning for Traveller Sites.

The Government has recently published the above statement. Consultation will take place on it for a 12-week period before a decision is taken on whether it is adopted or otherwise.

The intension is to withdraw:

- Circular 01/2006: Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites
- Circular 04/2007: Planning for Travelling show people

and replace them with new, short, light-touch, single Planning Policy Statement.

The new policy aims to:

- Enable local planning authorities to make their own assessment of need for the purposes of planning.
- Enable local planning authorities to use their assessment of need to set their own targets for pitch / plot provision.
- Encourage local planning authorities to plan for sites over a reasonable timescale.
- Protect the Green Belt from development. Ensure that local planning authorities, working collaboratively, develop fair and effective strategies to meet need through the identification of land for sites.
- Promote more private traveller site provision, while recognising that there will always be those travellers who cannot provide their own sites.
- Reduce the number of unauthorised developments and encampments and make enforcement more effective if local planning authorities have had regard to this policy.
- Ensure that the development plan includes fair, realistic and inclusive policies.
- Increase the number of traveller sites, in appropriate locations with planning permission, to address under provision and maintain an appropriate level of supply.
- Reduce tensions between settled and traveller communities in plan making and planning decisions.

- Enable provision of suitable accommodation from which travellers can access education, health, welfare and employment infrastructure.

Comment

The main proposal seeks to consolidate the two current Circulars into one Policy Statement and enable planning authorities to make their own assessment of need rather than relying on Regional Strategies (which are to be abolished under the Localism Bill). It is also proposed to provide additional protection to Green Belt areas. However, it advises that sites in some rural areas may be acceptable for some forms of traveller sites.

It is clear that the final Statement will alter the way Local Planning Authorities consider applications for Traveller sites. However, it is considered that it would be premature to assess this proposal against this consultation guidance given that it may change following the consultation period.

It is considered that the Statement should be afforded limited weight as a material consideration due to its draft status. Notwithstanding this point, there is nothing in the document to change the recommendation as present, as the new guidance makes provision for transitional arrangements and suggests local planning authorities should consider favourably applications for the grant of temporary planning permission.

RECOMMENDATION

The recommendation is unchanged.