

# Winchester District Development Framework

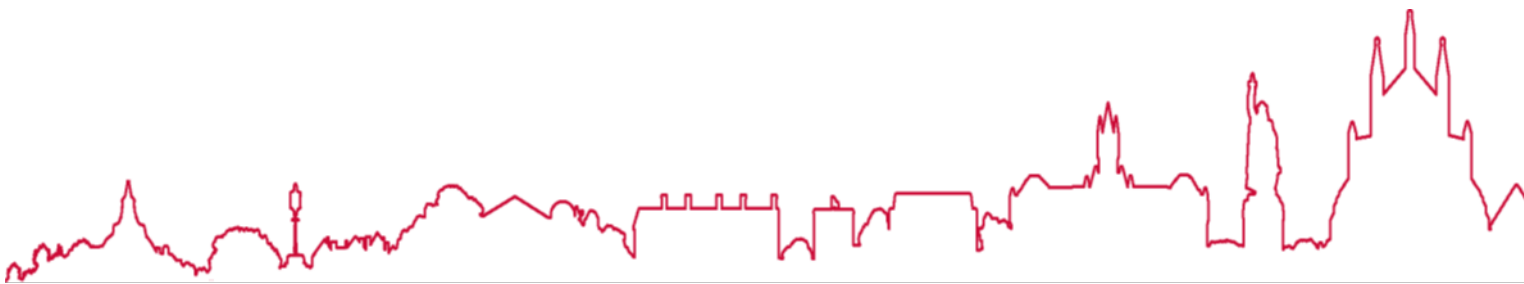


## Winchester District Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Development Plan Document 'Traveller DPD'

## Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA):

# SA Adoption Statement

February 2019



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#### SA Adoption Statement

##### Introduction

- 1 This Statement for the Integrated Appraisal incorporating Sustainability Appraisal, Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulation Assessment of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Development Plan Document 'Traveller DPD' for Winchester City Council has been prepared in accordance with the following requirements:
  - Regulation 36 of the Town & Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004
  - Regulation 16 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans & Programmes Regulations 2004
  - Paragraph 165 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012
- 2 For the purpose of this Statement that complies with planning and environmental assessment Regulations, the integrated appraisal will be referred to as the Sustainability Appraisal (SA).
- 3 The SA process comprises a number of stages that are designed to comply with the requirements of the SEA Regulations and as guided through Government Planning Practice<sup>1</sup>. This SA Adoption Statement satisfies the requirements for post adoption (Stage E) and demonstrates compliance with the requirements of the SEA Regulations as follows:
  - (a) *how environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme;*
  - (b) *how the environmental report has been taken into account;*
  - (c) *how opinions expressed in response to— (i) the invitation referred to in regulation 13(2)(d); (ii) action taken by the responsible authority in accordance with regulation 13(4), have been taken into account;*
  - (d) *how the results of any consultations entered into under regulation 14(4) have been taken into account;*
  - (e) *the reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and*
  - (f) *the measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan or programme*

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal>

## Development of the Traveller DPD

- 4 Winchester City Council adopted the Local Plan Part 1 (LPP1) - Joint Core Strategy on 20 March 2013 and Local Plan Part 2 – Site Allocations and Development Management on 7 April 2017. Both LPP1 and LPP2 include reference to travellers through Policies CP5 and DM4 respectively.
- 5 The Traveller DPD only applies to that part of the Winchester District that lies outside the South Downs National Park.
- 6 Various studies were undertaken to provide the evidence base to inform decision-making, including site assessments and gypsy and traveller accommodation needs assessment.
- 7 The Draft Traveller DPD was published (Reg 18) in for consultation during July - September 2017. Taking into account the comments received the Publication (Pre-Submission- Reg 19) DPD was available for consultation during January – February 2018 with submission of the DPD to the Secretary of State in May 2018. The Traveller DPD was subject to independent Examination with Public Hearings for two days on 3- 4 September 2018. Draft Modifications to the Plan arising from discussions at the Examination were subject to public consultation during October – November 2018. The Planning Inspector's Final Report<sup>2</sup> in January 2019 concluded that the Traveller DPD is sound, subject to the main modifications as amended and can be taken forward for adoption.

## How environmental & sustainability considerations have been integrated into the Traveller DPD; How the Sustainability/Environmental Report has been taken into account

- 8 Throughout the plan-making process, SA (incorporating SEA/HRA) has been carried out as an iterative and ongoing process to inform decision making for the developing Plan. The SA was undertaken in accordance with government guidance<sup>3</sup> for a staged approach that integrates appraisal to consider the effects of the emerging Traveller DPD on socio-economic as well as environmental and habitat factors. Independent specialist consultants Enfusion, were appointed to carry out the SA. They worked closely with the plan-making team in an iterative way such that the findings and recommendations from the SA were integrated into the developing stages of the Plan.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.winchester.gov.uk/planning-policy/traveller-dpd>

## Key Sustainability Issues, Problems and Opportunities

- 9 The key sustainability issues and opportunities for the District overall were identified for the SAs of LPP1 & 2 and remain relevant, as follows:
- Maintaining and developing Winchester City as a centre for commerce and learning, and stimulating the rural economy
  - Reducing unsustainable traffic and transport trends (commuting patterns)
  - Creating opportunities for renewable energy development
  - Improving the supply and availability of affordable housing
  - Protecting valued landscape and habitats; enhancing Green Infrastructure networks
  - The needs of an ageing population
  - Ensuring that infrastructure requirements meet the needs of new development and take account of constraints
- 10 The characteristics of the District with sustainability issues that are particularly relevant to Travellers' pitches/plots may be summarised as follows:
- Tensions with the settled community
  - Accessibility to services, especially schools and medical facilities
  - Connections to local infrastructure, especially drainage
  - Safe play space
  - Sites with direct road access and capacity for storage and parking
  - Limited number of sites appropriate for the preferred size of 5 or less pitches/plots
  - Unauthorised pitches, those with temporary planning permission, and concealed/doubled-up households
- 11 In the same way that site options were tested through for LPP2, the traveller site options were grouped according to relevant settlements. The SA framework was refined to reflect the nature of the DPD. Each option was assessed against each SA Objective using baseline information and professional judgment and the likely significant effects recorded. The SA considered the nature of the likely sustainability effects (including positive/negative, duration (short, medium or long term), permanent/ temporary, secondary, cumulative and synergistic) and according to categories of significance as set out in the following table:

<b>Categories of Significance</b>		
<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Sustainability Effect</b>
<b>x</b>	Absolute constraints	Absolute sustainability constraints to development, for example, internationally protected biodiversity
<b>--</b>	Major Negative	Problematical, improbable because of known sustainability issues; mitigation likely to be difficult and/or expensive
<b>-</b>	Minor negative	Potential sustainability issues: mitigation and/or negotiation possible

+	Minor positive	No sustainability constraints and development acceptable
++	Major Positive	Development encouraged as would resolve existing sustainability problem
<sup>a</sup> ?	Uncertain	Uncertain or Unknown Effects
0	Neutral	Neutral effect

**That reasonable alternatives have been considered & addressed?**

- 12 Policies CP5 and DM4 set out the identified traveller pitch/plot needs. The Council identified 41 options and these were tested through the SA process. It may be noted that the Do-Nothing scenario is not a reasonable option for the Traveller DPD as the Council is obliged to provide development according to the identified needs.

**What are the likely significant effects of the Traveller DPD?**

- 13 The SA found positive effects for sustainability objectives on housing, employment (for travelling showpeople), communities, and cultural heritage. There is the potential for negative effects on integrating with existing communities, access to services and facilities, noise & light pollution, water and waste management; however, there is strong mitigation provided by LPP1 CP5 and the Policies in the Traveller DPD. There are further positive effects on the soil resource through the continuing use of existing sites.
- 14 The SA found that there is the potential for negative effects on some sites for landscape and visual amenity; however, strong mitigation is provided by LPP1 CP5 and the Policies in the Traveller DPD. None of the sites are likely to have significant effects on protected or important biodiversity; some sites are located within 5.6km of the Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy for internationally protected sites at the coastline and as such may be required to contribute to this Mitigation Strategy.
- 15 The SA found some potential negative cumulative effects for the clusters of sites at Shedfield and North Boarhunt. These have been mitigated through the approach of specifying the size and numbers of pitches/plots and the site-specific requirements set out in TR4 Shedfield & TR5 N Boarhunt (subsequently removed from the DPD at Regulation 19 stage). Furthermore, by continuing with existing sites, there will be limited change reducing the potential for adverse effects. The general requirements in TR7 and the site-specific requirements in TR3-4 will ensure that effects are reduced to residual neutral and there is the potential for enhancement with biodiversity and landscape screening.

## How the results of consultation have been taken into account

- 16 Consultation is an important aspect of SA and there was statutory and public consultation at each key stage of the plan preparation and the SA as follows:

<b>Plan Stage/ Documents Consultation</b>	<b>SA Documents Consultation</b>
<b>Early preparation of the Traveller DPD 2016/17</b>	<b>Updating the SA Scoping</b>
GTAA needs assessment and sites assessments	Refining the SA Framework
<b>Draft Traveller DPD (Reg 18)</b> Public consultation July – September 2017	<b>Draft SA Report (September 2014)</b> Public consultation July – September 2017
Proposed Site Allocations and policy guidance for Settlements	Each draft Policy was subject to SA according to sustainability themes that address inter-relationships. Site options were assessed & significant effects identified; mitigation measures were suggested for negative effects for options & taking into account any cumulative effects.
<b>Publication (Reg 19)</b> Public consultation January – February 2018	<b>Publication (Pre-Submission) SA Report</b> <b>November 2015</b>
Considers comments received from consultation	Addresses the changes to the draft Plan arising from consultation; responds to comments on the SA
<b>Submission to Secretary of State</b> <b>May 2018</b>	<b>Submission to Secretary of State</b> <b>March 2016</b> As part of evidence supporting the Traveller DPD + Note to accompany submission to assess proposed changes to clarify and update the DPD
<b>Examination Hearings</b> <b>September 2018</b>	
<b>Proposed Modifications to Traveller DPD</b>	<b>Note to accompany Traveller DPD Proposed Modifications</b>
Public consultation for 6 weeks October – November 2018	Screens the Proposed Modifications arising from the Examination, including an additional policy ; Public consultation October to November 2018
Inspector's Final Report January 2019	
<b>Traveller DPD Adopted 28</b> <b>February 2019</b>	<b>SA Adoption Statement (February 2019)</b>

- 17 At each stage of the consultations on the draft Traveller DPD through to Submission and Examination, representations made on the SA were also considered and reported. This included the formal consultation with the statutory environmental bodies – Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England. Thus the SA and consultation responses have been considered in an iterative and ongoing way throughout the plan-making process and in accordance with the requirements of the SEA Regulations.

### **Reasons for choosing the Traveller DPD as adopted, in the light of other reasonable alternatives**

- 18 Given the nature of the DPD, there are limited options available for consideration. The role of the SA is to inform the Council in the selection and assessment of options; SA is undertaken of those reasonable alternatives (options) identified through the plan-making process.
- 19 The Council identified 41 options that might be suitable for allocation as pitches or plot sites for gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople. These options were identified through the call for sites; various technical studies, including a sites assessment study. Most of the identified site options are established gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople sites – some are authorised, some have temporary planning permission, and some are unauthorised. The Council has taken an approach in line with responses received during consultation and to focus on safeguarding existing sites and granting planning permission to temporary sites to meet the identified need<sup>4</sup> for gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople plots/pitches in the District.
- 20 Each option was subject to SA using the full SA Framework of Objectives and decision-aiding questions, thresholds of significance refined for applicability to testing a single topic DPD.
- 21 The SEA Regulations requires assessment of the likely significant effects of implementing the plan and "*reasonable alternatives*" taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan; and the reasons for selecting alternatives should be outlined in the Report. The term "*reasonable alternative*"; however, extant SA/SEA guidance advises that it should be taken to mean "*realistic and relevant*" i.e. deliverable and within the timescale of the plan
- 22 The Traveller DPD has to be in conformity with LPP2 in particular DM4 which identifies the objective assessed need for pitches/plots in the Winchester District for the period 2016 – 2031. Therefore there were limits to the possible alternatives.

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<sup>4</sup> ORS for Winchester Council (2017) Winchester Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment

## **Measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant sustainability & environmental effects of the implementation of the Traveller DPD**

- 23 The SEA Regulations require that the significant environmental effects of implementing the plan should be monitored with the purpose of identifying unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage and being able to undertake appropriate remedial action. Local Planning Authorities are required to produce Monitoring Reports<sup>5</sup> on the progress of Local Plans. Government Guidance on SA/SEA advises a pragmatic approach with shared monitoring for the SA/SEA and the Plan. The Winchester Monitoring Framework includes a wide range of indicators that also relate to the SA Framework. It is considered that these indicators will be sufficient to identify any unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage, and also provide information on the predicted effects from the SA.

For further information, please refer to the Council's website:

<http://www.winchester.gov.uk/planning-policy/>

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.winchester.gov.uk/planning-policy/annual-monitoring-report-amr/>