

North Wiltshire Local Development Framework

**Gypsy and Traveller Site Search
An Issues and Options Document**

Consultation Statement

June 2008

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 North Wiltshire District Council is committed to ensuring that members of the Gypsy and Traveller communities have the same access to decent and appropriate accommodation as every other citizen and that there are sufficient sites available to meet their need.
- 1.2 Failure to provide a permanent site for Gypsies and Travellers within the district within a reasonable timescale will undermine the Council's ability to control unauthorised development of this nature within the open countryside.
- 1.3 As a result six publicly owned sites were identified and subject to public consultation. These six sites were:
 1. Abberd Lane, Calne
 2. Site Adjoining Oxford Road, Calne
 3. Land at Long Close & Hardens Mead, Chippenham
 4. Marlborough Road, Wootton Bassett
 5. Land at Stanley Lane, Chippenham (2 possible sites)
 6. Land at Stoneover Lane, Wootton Bassett.
- 1.4 The consultation period on the Gypsy and Traveller Site Search Issues and Options document ran from Friday 9th May through until Friday 20th June 2008. This was conducted in accordance with North Wiltshire's Statement of Community Involvement.
- 1.5 During this 6 week public consultation NWDC undertook the following.
 - Neighbour letters sent to all residents within close proximity of the sites listed within the consultation document.
 - A full page notice in the Gazette and Herald in addition to a formal notice of public consultation within the Public Notices section.
 - Notification letters and emails sent to a database of individuals and organisations.
 - Hard copies sent to all parish and town councils.
 - Hard copies and posters sent to all main libraries within the district.
 - Public consultation meeting held at all 5 Area Committees of the District.
 - A special web page was created providing access to the consultation document, a response form and background information.
- 1.6. At the end of the public consultation North Wiltshire District Council has received almost 4000 representations.
- 1.7 This Consultation Statement is intended to summarise the main issues and views that were expressed during the consultation period. All relevant representations that have been received will be made available for public inspection shortly.
- 1.8 The consultation summaries and the council's response have been arranged by site for ease of reference.

North Wiltshire District Council Gypsy and Traveller Issues and Options Document.
 Consultation Statement.
 Site 1 Abberd Lane, Calne

Issue		NWDC Response
Highways	a. There is no pedestrian provision to this site, the roads are narrow with no off street parking, and access would be extremely difficultly raising road safety concerns.	The lack any pedestrian provision is a valid concern and the Highways Authority have highlighted the inadequacy of Abberd Lane.
	b. The site is adjacent to a major industrial unit and is the only access road to the area. The road is constantly used by large vehicles. A Gypsy and Traveller site will only add to this type of traffic on a road that is not adopted.	The private road is built to an appropriate standard for the type of traffic that could be anticipated.
	c. The site is some considerable distance from all the services and facilities on Calne with no bus route. This will lead to reliance on private vehicles and this is not a sustainable option.	Agreed

Issue		NWDC Response
The regeneration of Calne	a. Calne is about to embark on Phase 3 of its redevelopment which will revitalise the town. The presence of a Gypsy and Traveller site in the town will undermine this process.	There is no obvious link between the presence of a Gypsy and Traveler Site and impact upon the economy of a town. It is noted that Chippenham had two sites closeby and there is no evidence that they have detracted from economic growth.
	b. Calne is too often used as a dumping ground for unwanted development and a Gypsy and Traveller site would be wholly inappropriate.	Whilst no examples are provided, there is nevertheless no intention that a site would be chosen on the grounds that it is unwanted elsewhere.

Issue		NWDC Response
Scoring	a. The Humbers Report concluded that this site was the lowest scoring site with 4 out of 9.	Noted.

Issue		NWDC Response
Noise	a. Site adjacent to concrete production factory, which operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week	Site visits by planning officers did not reveal an obvious serious noise issue. However, the site would require a formal noise assessment if a detailed proposal were to be made.

Issue		NWDC Response
Flood Risk	a. Part of site in Flood Zone 2, development in a flood plain inappropriate	Agreed.

Issue		NWDC Response
Policy	a. The DPD is premature and should wait until the Draft RSS is adopted and then feed into a relevant Core Strategy.	The requirement for finding appropriate sites in the short term is supported by the originators of the RSS, the South West Regional Assembly.
	b. The lack of a Core Strategy means that the site criterion has not been properly established	The issue of finding an appropriate location for Gypsies and Travelers was the subject of consultations in December 2006 and May 2007. The Site Criteria were adjusted in the light of the consultation responses received and were used in this most recent G&T consultation. They will continue to be developed.
	c. This site lies within the Adopted Wiltshire and Swindon Minerals Local Plan (Adopted 2001) and the Wiltshire and Swindon Minerals Submission Core Strategy as a mineral consultation/safeguarding area under Policy 5 and Policy MCS6. This presents an issue of potential sterilization of the site	Noted. However, the nature of such a site is unlikely to impact materially on this extensive safeguarding area.
	d. The Government Guidance 'Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites – a Good Practice Guide May 2008 states in para 4.7 and 4.8 that a maximum number of 15 pitches is conducive to providing a comfortable environment.	The suggested maximum of 18 fits with NWDC's recent experience of the requirements by the G&T community and offers sufficient flexibility to comply with the general intention of this advice.
	e. Site designated NE15 in Local Plan 2011	Noted. Subject to the requirements of the policy, the site is not unacceptable in principle.
	f. The site is in the immediate vicinity of land promoted for inclusion in the Local Development Framework Site Search for new housing allocation. A gypsy site in this location could affect the deliverability of housing on this land which would otherwise contribute to supply.	Given the largely residential nature of a Gypsy and Traveler site, it is not an unsuitable use for a residential area. The comment implies that house-builders may be reluctant to build near such sites, however there is no valid planning reason why this may be the case.

Issue		NWDC Response
No access to basic utilities	a. There is no mains, water or sewage systems in place.	Agreed. This would be a significant difficulty with the site, particularly given the ground conditions.

Issue		NWDC Response
Environmental	a. The soil is heavy clay and used for farming activities making the site inappropriate for development.	Agreed.
	b. The site is a Greenfield site and should be protected from urban sprawl.	Government advice states that such sites can be considered as “exceptions” in the same manner as affordable housing.
	c. There will be a significant impact on local wildlife and habitat, a full assessment should be undertaken to establish what is present on the site.	The need for an Assessment is agreed.

Issue		NWDC Response
The Gypsy and Traveller community do not want to live here	a. Gypsy and Travellers are by definition “travelling” communities and to force them to reside a permanent site does not meet their needs.	The definition of a Gypsy or Traveler includes those who for reasons specified in the definition (circular 1/2006) have ceased to travel.
	b. The Gypsy and Traveller community will not want to live in such close proximity to local residents	Not a significant issue in respect of this site.

Issue		NWDC Response
Property Value	a. The location of a Gypsy and Traveller site will have a severe impact on property values and even the ability of local residents to sell their property altogether.	Government advice is clear that the impact on property value is not part of a planning assessment process. To do so would bring the planning process to a halt.
	b. This reduction in property value is not considered in this consultation document.	
	c. Will North Wiltshire District Council compensate those residents affected in this way?	No

Issue		NWDC Response
Impact on local area	a. The establishment of a Gypsy and Traveller site will have a devastating impact on the local area. It will swamp the area and should never be promoted when it is in the middle of a residential area.	The site is not within an existing residential area. However, it is preferable for a G&T site to be located away from individual properties if other alternatives exist.
	b. It will have a detrimental impact on the quality of life of existing residents as it will destroy community spirit the potential mixed use of a site will increase noise and pollution.	The site is not within an existing residential area. However, it is preferable for a G&T site to be located away from individual properties if other alternatives exist.

	<p>c. Local people have worked very hard the Council should be acting in the interests of existing residents rather than the Gypsy and Traveller community. A site here will not have any benefits for the local community.</p>	<p>The Authority has a responsibility to plan appropriately for the benefit of all parts of its community.</p>
--	---	--

Issue		NWDC Response
Negative Impact on Calne	<p>a. This site is situated on a gateway into Calne and if a Gypsy and Traveller site is located here it will create a negative perception of Calne to potential visitors and investors.</p>	<p>It is appropriate to consider the visual impact on a “gateway” position to the town. The site is some distance away from the Oxford Road and will not be perceived from that approach to the town.</p>

Issue		NWDC Response
Calne is over developed	<p>a. Calne is small market town has seen too much development in recent years.</p>	<p>This contrasts with other opinions expressed that Calne has improved through its recent developments.</p>

Issue		NWDC Response
Impact on local services and facilities	<p>a. The proposed location of this site is a significant distance from local services and facilities and this would increase the reliance on the private car. Therefore the site is unsustainable and should not be considered for development.</p>	<p>It is agreed that the site is in a less advantageous position for access to services and facilities.</p>

	b. The local services and facilities in Calne are already overstretched, a Gypsy and Traveller site will on exacerbate this situation.	It is not considered that the scale of development suggested would impact materially on the capacity of local services and facilities.
--	--	--

Issue		NWDC Response
Preferential Treatment for the Gypsy and Traveller Community.	a. There is an apparent hypocrisy with the way North Wiltshire District Council dealt with the Leisure Centres and the Gypsy and Traveller issue.	Observation noted.
	b. If the Gypsy and Traveller community want to live in a permanent location then they should have to go through the same procedures as every other citizen.	The issue is being dealt with under the same procedures as normally apply to development proposals.
	c. North Wiltshire District would not permit residential development on these sites, so why should a Gypsy/Traveller site be permitted?	Government advice states that such sites can be considered as “exceptions” in the same manner as affordable housing.

Issue		NWDC Response
Health	a. The consultation document does not consider the health implications of a site so close to the quarry. Noise, traffic pollution and dust will not be good for the health of any Gypsies or Travellers who might reside on this site.	Site visits by planning officers did not reveal an obvious serious pollution issue. However, the site would require a formal assessment of this issue if a detailed proposal were to be made.

Issue		NWDC Response
Footpath	a. The consultation document does not consider the bridal/footpath that runs through this site.	It would be for any detailed proposal to accommodate suitable arrangements to avoid conflict.

North Wiltshire District Council Gypsy and Traveller Issues and Options
 Consultation Statement
 Site 2 Oxford Road Calne

Issue		NWDC Response
Highways	a. The road is busy, noisy and has not pavement.	The site is in a similar relationship with main roads as other residential properties. Any need for additional footpath arrangements can be dealt with at a detailed stage should this be appropriate
	b. The increased traffic would be a safety risk to road users and pedestrians.	It is not considered that the site would pose such a risk if the access arrangements are designed to the highway authority's requirements.
	c. A gypsy site will result in large vehicles using this congested road.	It is not considered that this is an obstacle to the use of the site if the access arrangements are designed to the highway authority's requirements.

Issue		NWDC Response
The Regeneration of Calne	a. Calne is about to embark on Phase 3 of its redevelopment which will revitalise the town. The presence of a Gypsy and Traveller site in the town will undermine this process.	There is no obvious link between the presence of a Gypsy and Traveler Site and impact upon the economy of a town. It is noted that Chippenham had two sites closeby and there is no evidence that they have detracted from economic growth.
	b. Calne is too often used as a dumping ground for unwanted development and a Gypsy and Traveller site would be wholly inappropriate.	Whilst no examples are provided, there is nevertheless no intention that a site would be chosen on the grounds that it is unwanted elsewhere.

Issue		NWDC Response
The Environment	a. A development at this site will see further loss of Greenfield and farmland.	Agreed

Issue		NWDC Response
Negative perception of Calne	a. This site is situated on a gateway into Calne and if a Gypsy and Traveller site is located here it will create a negative perception of Calne to potential visitors and investors.	There is no obvious link between the presence of a Gypsy and Traveler Site and impact upon the economy of a town. It is noted that Chippenham had two sites closeby and there is no evidence that they have detracted from economic growth.

Issue		Property
Impact on property	a. The location of a Gypsy and Traveller site will have a severe impact on property values and even the ability of local residents to sell their property altogether.	North Wiltshire District Council cannot use the impact on property value as part of the assessment process. To do so would bring the planning process to a halt
	b. This reduction in property value is not considered in this consultation document.	
	c. Will North Wiltshire District Council compensate those residents affected in this way?	No

Issue		NWDC Response
The impact on the local area	a. The establishment of a Gypsy and Traveller site will have a devastating impact on the local area. A site should never be promoted when it is in the middle of a residential area.	The site is not within an existing residential area. However, it is preferable for a G&T site to be located away from individual properties if other alternatives exist.
	b. It will have a detrimental impact on the quality of life of existing residents as it will destroy community spirit the potential mixed use of a site will increase noise and pollution.	The Authority is required to consider the interests of parts of its community for planning purposes.
	c. Local people have worked very hard the Council should be acting in the interests of existing residents rather than the Gypsy and Traveller community. A site here will not have any benefits for the local community.	

Issue		NWDC Response
Local Economy	a. The site will put increased pressure on the local economy and the negative perception that a Gypsy and Traveller site will bring will harm the fragile local economy and undermine regeneration efforts.	There is no obvious link between the presence of a Gypsy and Traveler Site and impact upon the economy of a town. It is noted that Chippenham had two sites closeby and there is no evidence that they have detracted from economic growth.

Issue		NWDC Response
Services and facilities	<p>a. The proposed location of this site is a significant distance from local services and facilities and this would increase the reliance on the private car. Therefore the site is unsustainable and should not be considered for development.</p>	<p>The site is in reasonable proximity to local facilities and services and is in a similar relationship to other edge of town residential areas.</p>
	<p>b. The local services and facilities in Calne are already overstretched, a Gypsy and Traveller site will exacerbate this situation.</p>	<p>It is not considered that the scale of development suggested would impact materially on the capacity of local services and facilities.</p>

Issue		NWDC Response
Calne Over developed	<p>a. Calne has seen significant growth over the last few years and this has not been matched by similar developments in local services and facilities. This must be considered before a Gypsy and Traveller site is located here.</p>	<p>Many services in Calne have increased as the town has grown. It is not considered that on the scale proposed, the provision for G&Ts will have a material impact on the need for more.</p>

Issue		NWDC Response
Preferential Treatment For the Gypsy and Traveller Community.	<p>a. North Wiltshire District Council is spending considerable time and resources to find suitable sites for the Gypsy and Traveller community. The same attention is not paid to young professionals are first time buyers struggling to get on the property ladder.</p>	<p>The Authority has and will continue to undertake similar consultations on other aspects of growth in the town; including the need for affordable housing. (See Core Strategy Consultations Dec 2006 and May 2007).</p>
	<p>b. There is an apparent hypocrisy with the way North Wiltshire District Council dealt with the Leisure Centres and the Gypsy and Traveller issue.</p>	<p>Observation noted</p>

	c. If the Gypsy and Traveller community want to live in a permanent location then they should have to go through the same procedures as every other citizen.	The issue is being dealt with under the same procedures as normally apply to development proposals.
	d. North Wiltshire District would not permit residential development on these sites, so why should a Gypsy/Traveller site be permitted?	Government advice states that such sites can be considered as “exceptions” in the same manner as affordable housing.

Issue		NWDC Response
The Gypsy and Traveller community will not want to live here	a. The fact that they are called travellers suggests that they do not want a permanent site.	The definition of a Gypsy or Traveler includes those who for reasons specified in the definition (circular 1/2006) have ceased to travel.
	b. The Gypsy and Traveller community will not want to live in such close proximity to local resident	This is understood and noted.

Issue		NWDC Response
Unitary	a. The process of finding a site for the Gypsy and Traveller community should be considered by the new unitary authority.	Agreed

Issue		NWDC Response
Utilities	a. The site lacks basis services such as gas, electricity, water and waste disposal	The site is in a reasonable position to consider main services connection if required.

Issue		NWDC Response
Health	a. The location of a site near a quarry which is noisy, dusty and potentially very dangerous should be considered.	Site visits by planning officers did not reveal an obviously serious pollution issue

Issue		NWDC Response
Future Strategic Planning and Policy Issues	a. The potential future expansion of Calne must be considered. A gypsy site could be inappropriate because of new housing development and even a new bypass.	Agreed
	b. The site is allocated for further employment uses (B1, B2 & B8), A gypsy site would be contrary to policy and would result in the loss of employment land	
	c. The site is within the Framework Boundary and has potential to contribute to future housing supply.	

Issue		NWDC Response
Humberts Report	a. There are a number of inaccuracies with the original report which need to be addressed in order to judge the suitability of the site.	This is not an issue as a separate assessment has been undertaken.

North Wiltshire District Council Gypsy and Traveller Issues and Options Document.
 Consultation Statement.
 Site 3 Long Close / Hardens Mead, Chippenham

Issue		NWDC Response
Highways	a. The road network around the site is completely inadequate the roads are narrow with very poor access, difficulty in parking and general congestion. A Gypsy / Traveller site will make this situation worse as the only access to the site would be via these unsuitable roads.	North Wiltshire District Council has consulted with the Highways Agency and Wiltshire County Council Highways. These comments will determine the impact on the existing road network and if it is possible how such impacts can be mitigated.
	b. The roads will not be able to handle the large vehicles that are associated with a Gypsy and Traveller site. There are current problems with emergency vehicles accessing the area.	
	c. North Wiltshire District Council must consider the safety aspect of increasing the volume and type of traffic within this residential area. Local children will be at risk.	

Issue		NWDC Response
Open Space	a. The sites are well used by local children from the estate for recreational purposes as well as by the Sea and Air Cadets. A relatively new play area is situated on this site. Families, joggers, cyclists and dog walkers use this area daily.	According to Planning Policy Guidance, there is a duty to make provision for open space on site or elsewhere where it is appropriately located in relation to the development. This matter would be addressed at a planning application stage.
	b. Is it legitimate for the Council to propose the loss of this public open space, if so then why are other public parks and open spaces not promoted for possible Gypsy and Traveller sites?	
	c. Taking away open space will impact on the health of local residents.	
	d. The site is identified in the rivers Millenium Project.	

Issue		NWDC Response
Environment	a. This is a very well used Greenfield site that adjoining the River Avon and is home to a variety of wildlife. There are Natural Springs and even deer in the area, some local residents give up considerable time to maintain parts of the site.	It is stated in the consultation document that further work needs to be undertaken on biodiversity and the impact on the landscape.
	b. A Gypsy and Traveller site at this location will ruin the natural beauty of the area and will have negative impact on the attractiveness of Chippenham in general.	
	c. The site is located within Policy NE15 of the North Wiltshire Local Plan and should therefore not be	

	subject to any development. Previous applications on the site were refused.	
	d. The Local Plan 2011 identifies the site to be adjacent to a County Wildlife Site within potential contamination on site. These issues would need further investigation.	It is stated in the consultation document that further work needs to be undertaken.

Issue		NWDC Response
Flooding	a. The sites are within a Flood Plain and are water-logged regularly, this makes the sites completely unsuitable for a Gypsy and Traveller site.	The assessment criteria contained within the consultation document acknowledges that it will not be appropriate to develop on a site that is situated on a recognised flood plain. Part of the site is within the floodplain and therefore flooding/drainage is a problem.
	b. Poor drainage on the site would make it impossible to serve a Gypsy and Traveller site.	These issues would have to be addressed and mitigated at a planning application stage.

Issue		NWDC
Threat to existing facilities	a. The consultation document has not considered the impact that a site will have on the Sea Cadets, Air Cadets and Sailing Club.	These issues would have to be addressed and mitigated at a planning application stage.

Issue		NWDC Response
Legal	a. There have been many references to the site being sold to the Council for it to be used by local residents as an area for public open space on recreational use.	These issues would have to be addressed and mitigated at a planning application stage.
	b. Can the Council confirm is there is any formal undertaking to preserve the land for public recreation.	

Issue		NWDC Response
Footpath	a. This area is used by school children and local residents as access to the town centre and school. Development of a Gypsy and Traveller site will force residents to walk along the much busier London Road	These issues would have to be addressed and mitigated at a planning application stage.
	b. Residents will not use the footpath if there is a Gypsy and Traveller site.	
	c. Footpath is potential access point to any future eastern expansion of Chippenham.	

Issue		NWDC Response
Size of site	a. It is unlikely the site will be of sufficient size to house 18 pitches and the number of additional vehicles that come with each pitch. And when this is combined with the constraints on the site, any possibility of a Gypsy and Traveller site is unacceptable.	The assessments have been updated in light of the comments received. The constraints on the site may prevent it being suitable.

Issue		NWDC Response
The Gypsy and Traveller community do not want to live here	a. Gypsy and Travellers are by definition “travelling” communities and to force them to reside a permanent site does not meet their needs.	The Council is obliged to find permanent sites for those gypsies who owing to their circumstances wish to live on a permanent site (e.g. Heath related needs or education needs).
	b. The Gypsy and Traveller community will not want to live in such close proximity to local residents	The Gypsy and Traveller community have been consulted on this document.

Issue		NWDC Response
Property Value	a. The location of a Gypsy and Traveller site will have a severe impact on property values and even the ability of local residents to sell their property altogether.	North Wiltshire District Council cannot use the impact on property value as part of the assessment process. To do so would bring the planning process to a halt.
	b. This reduction in property value is not considered in this consultation document.	
	c. Will North Wiltshire District Council compensate those residents affected in this way?	No

Issue		NWDC Response
Impact on local area	<p>a. The establishment of a Gypsy and Traveller site will have a devastating impact on the local area. A site should never be promoted when it is in the middle of a residential area.</p>	<p>The Council has to apply similar criteria to finding gypsy sites as it does for general housing.</p>
	<p>b. It will have a detrimental impact on the quality of life of existing residents as it will destroy community spirit the potential mixed use of a site will increase noise and pollution.</p>	
	<p>c. Local people have worked very hard the Council should be acting in the interests of existing residents rather than the Gypsy and Traveller community. A site here will not have any benefits for the local community.</p>	

Issue		NWDC Response
Security	<p>a. There are concerns about the security of property and local residents if a Gypsy and Traveller site is located here.</p>	<p>These are issues which cannot be addressed within this assessment.</p>
	<p>b. Any increase in crime or anti-social behaviour will add to the strain on resources .</p>	

Issue		NWDC Response
Wildlife	a. The green areas are home to a variety of wildlife, the canal and natural grasslands provide a vital area of biodiversity.	It is stated in the consultation document that further work needs to be undertaken on the issue of biodiversity.
	b. A Gypsy and Traveller site will ruin vital habitat and will very damage in ecology terms.	
	c. The protection of wildlife and habitat should be a priority for this council.	

Issue		NWDC Response
Impact on Infrastructure and local services	a. Chippenham has seen significant growth over the last few years and this has not been matched by increased spending on local infrastructure, such as doctors, dentists and schools. A gypsy and traveller site will only exacerbate this situation.	The relevant organizations have been consulted as part of this consultation.

Issues		NWDC Response
Funding	a. The entire process of finding a site for the Gypsy and Traveller community is being funded by the tax payer, this is not acceptable.	The Government has stated that Councils should be finding sites for gypsies.
	b. The taxpayer will be left with the bill when this process is over.	
	c. Can the Council confirm if the Gypsy and Traveller community pay tax like everyone else?	Yes

Issue		NWDC Response
Noise	a. The proximity of a Gypsy and Traveller site with a mixed use element will have a significant noise impact on the local area. This will seriously affect the quality of life for local residents.	The possible mixed use of a Gypsy and Traveller site will be subject to planning application policies and the suitability of the site for such activity will have to be proved at the planning application stage.

Issue		NWDC Response
Access to utilities	a. The site does not have proper drainage, energy supplies or waste disposal.	These issues will be addressed at the next stage or as part of a planning application.

Issue		NWDC Response
Economic Impact	a. The presence of a Gypsy and Traveller site will have a negative impact on visitors to the town. This will in turn have a negative impact on the local economy.	The Government has stated that Councils should be finding sites for gypsies.

Issue		NWDC Response
Pylons	a. The presence of pylons in the area does not appear to have been considered or addressed.	According the consultation document, pylons are more than 200m from the site.

Issue		NWDC Response
Use existing housing stock	Given the expansion of Chippenham the Council should try and house these people within existing housing stock.	Some, but not all gypsies will want to live in houses. Therefore, it is necessary to provide an alternative.

North Wiltshire District Council Gypsy and Traveller Issues and Options
 Consultation Statement.
 Site 4 Marlborough Road, Wootton Bassett

Issue		NWDC Response
Highways	<p>a. There are serious concerns about the safety aspect of a potential Gypsy and Traveller site. The road is a fast road with poor visibility, no street lighting and very little pedestrian provision. Any increased activity on the site will exacerbate the problem and could lead to accidents.</p>	<p>North Wiltshire District Council has consulted with the Highways Agency and Wiltshire County Council Highways. These comments will determine the impact on the existing road network and if it is possible how such impacts can be mitigated.</p>
	<p>b. There is no bus route in this area and if one considers that the main services and facilities are in the centre of the town, this makes this location unsustainable as it will increase the reliance on the car.</p>	<p>The site is scored in a manner indicating the site is still within a practicable distance to access this service.</p>
	<p>c. The possible mixed use of a Gypsy and Traveller site will add considerable volume to this road, the poor access and safety aspects make this area completely unsuitable for the site and the types of vehicles that will inevitably use the site.</p>	<p>The possible mixed use of a Gypsy and Traveller site will be subject to planning application policies and the suitability of the site for such activity will have to be proved at the planning application stage.</p>
	<p>d. To make the road safe will require considerable investment and this will have to be funded by the taxpayer. This is not acceptable and the site should be dismissed on cost grounds.</p>	<p>These issues will be addressed at the planning application stage. It is not necessarily the case that cost will be funded by the taxpayer. Instead it may be within the S106 agreement for a planning application.</p>
	<p>e. The traffic situation in Wootton Bassett is already in a very bad state, this will be made worse by such a development.</p>	<p>North Wiltshire District Council has consulted with the Highways Agency and Wiltshire County Council Highways. These comments will determine the impact on the existing road network and if it is possible how such impacts can be mitigated.</p>

Issue		NWDC Response
Proximity to property/local residents	a. A gypsy and traveller site in this location will swamp the local community and have a detrimental effect on the quality of life of the local residents.	North Wiltshire District Council would not want to see anymore than 18 pitches on any Gypsy and Traveller site. The Council will look on sites favourably that are more than 400 metres from existing settlements. This is not the case with the Marlborough Road site.
	b. A Gypsy and Traveller site will ruin the character of the area and create resentment between two different communities.	The consultation document recognises that sites should not conflict with the landscape character of the area.

Issue		NWDC Response
Impact on property value	a. The location of a Gypsy and Traveller site will have a severe impact on property values and even the ability of local residents to sell their property altogether.	North Wiltshire District Council cannot use the impact on property value as part of the assessment process. To do so would bring the planning process to a halt.
	b. This reduction in property value is not considered in this consultation document.	
	c. Will North Wiltshire District Council compensate those residents affected in this way?	No.

Issue		NWDC Response
	a. The site is to far away from local services and facilities and lacks any public transport to such services. Therefore the site is unsustainable.	The consultation document acknowledges that the site is not within 500 metres of basic services although the scoring indicates that the site is still within a practicable distance to access these service

Impact on local infrastructure		and is scored Yellow.
	b. The local infrastructure in Wootton Bassett is already over-stretched and with significant development ongoing in the town this problem will only get worse. A gypsy and Traveller site will not help this situation.	The relevant organisations have been consulted as part of the consultation process.
	c. A gypsy and Traveller site will be an economic drain on the town.	

Issue		NWDC Response
Nature / Wildlife	a. The site represents a valuable open space and should be protected.	According to Planning Policy Guidance, there is a duty to make provision for open space on site or elsewhere where it is appropriately located in relation to the development. This matter would be addressed at a planning application stage.
	b. The site is situated within a SSSI and designated as Policy NE12 and NE15 within the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011. Therefore the site should not be developed.	The site is not situated within a SSSI. The site is not designated as NE12. The consultation document acknowledges that further analysis is required on biodiversity and landscape character.
	c. The site is home to a variety of wildlife and mud springs as well as the canal. Any development in this area will have serious implications for the enhancement of the canal area.	
	d. A full bio-diversity statement should be released as part of the public consultation prior to any decision being made.	

Issue		NWDC Response
Health and Safety of site	a. The site is not suitable on health and safety grounds. The assessment should consider the proximity to the sewage works, electricity station, the possible contamination of the land, the canal and the railway.	North Wiltshire District Councils acknowledges the proximity of the site to the areas referred to. However, with appropriate design and planning such risks could potentially be mitigated.
	b. With children and animals living on the site it would be extremely dangerous.	

Issue		NWDC Response
The G & T community don't want to live here	a. Gypsy and Travellers are by definition “travelling” communities and to force them to reside a permanent site does not meet their needs.	The Council is obliged to find permanent sites for those gypsies who owing to their circumstances wish to live on a permanent site (e.g. Heath related needs or education needs).
	b. The Gypsy and Traveller community will not want to live in such close proximity to local residents.	The Gypsy and Traveller community have been consulted on this document. This initial stage is limited to publicly owned sites that fall within the criterion outlined in National Government Guidance.

Issue		NWDC Response
Can NWDC effectively enforce on the site	a. How will North Wiltshire District Council be able to ensure that if a site is permitted that it can guarantee that the site will not exceed the permitted number of pitches.	This is a matter for the planning decision stages, the use of appropriate planning conditions and when required enforcement action will be undertaken by the Council.

Issue		NWDC Response
Previous housing developments rejected	a. Previous applications for housing on this site have been rejected in the past because the site was deemed unsuitable. Therefore it should also be unsuitable for a Gypsy and Traveller site.	Any site that is promoted through a formal planning application will be assessed using planning policies and an appropriate decision made.

Issue		NWDC Response
Consultation document	a. There a number of inaccuracies with the consultation document such as the distance to local services. These need to be corrected in order to accurately judge the suitability of the site.	The site assessments have been revised.

Issue		NWDC Response
Flooding	a. The site has a history of flooding and a thorough assessment should be undertaken.	<p>The assessment criteria contained within the consultation document acknowledges that it will not be appropriate to develop a site that is situated on a recognised flood plain.</p> <p>This site is not situated on a floodplain and mitigation measures can be incorporated into the design of the site to deal with any potential flooding issues.</p>

Issue		NWDC Response
WB already has a G&T site J16	a. Wootton Bassett already has a Gypsy and Traveller site near to the M4. It would be unfair and disproportionate to make the town accommodate a further site.	The assessment does not take into account existing sites.

Issue		NWDC Response
Tax payers Money	<p>a. The entire process of finding a site for the Gypsy and Traveller community is being funded by the tax payer, this is not acceptable.</p> <p>b. The taxpayer will be left with the bill when this process is over.</p>	<p>The Government has stated that Councils should be finding sites for gypsies.</p>
	<p>c. Can the Council confirm if the Gypsy and Traveller community pay tax like everyone else?</p>	<p>The Gypsy and Traveller community are liable for Council Tax just as everyone else.</p>

Issue		NWDC Response
Policy	<p>a. The settlement has two Local Plan allocations for employment and residential development on the southern boundary of the town. A gypsy site will prejudice the amenities of future residential properties and the ability of employment land to be effectively marketed, thus impacting on supply.</p>	<p>The Government has stated that Councils should be finding sites for gypsies. The assessment does not take into account existing housing and employment allocations.</p>
	<p>b. The site is within the rural buffer which seeks to prevent coalescence of settlements and a landscape character area which seeks to avoid development that would 'adversely affect the character of an area and features that contribute to local distinctiveness.'</p>	<p>Gypsy sites are to be treated as 'exception' sites (similar to that for affordable housing) by which it is meant they are an 'exception' to normal planning policies including NE15.</p>

	<p>c. This site is subject to a planning application submitted by Wiltshire County Council for a highway development. It is an integral part of Wiltshire County Council's highway rationalisation strategy.</p>	<p>Wiltshire County Council has been consulted.</p>
--	--	---

North Wiltshire District Council Gypsy and Traveller Issues and Options
 Consultation Statement.
 Site 5a &5b Stanley Road, Chippenham

Issue		NWDC Response
Highways	<p>a. The current road around the Stanley Lane sites is narrow with no pedestrian provision or street lighting. There are a number of bends that have the potential to lead to accidents. The Highways Authority in the past have referred to the road as a “rat run”</p>	<p>North Wiltshire District Council has consulted with the Highways Agency and Wiltshire County Council Highways. These comments will be crucial in determining the impact on the existing road network and if it is possible how such impacts can be mitigated.</p>
	<p>b. A gypsy and traveller site will increase the volume of traffic and result in larger vehicles using the road. This will have serious safety implications for pedestrians, joggers and children who attend the nearby school.</p>	
	<p>c. The distance of the site(s) from local services will result in increased car based journeys, which makes the location of any site unsustainable.</p>	<p>Agreed. The Council is aware of the location of the site from existing services and facilities and this has been reflected in the scoring.</p>

Issue		NWDC Response
Impact on local area	a. The location of a Gypsy and Traveller site at these locations will “Swamp” the local residential area. It will have a detrimental impact on the quality of life of existing residents. The potential mixed use of a site will increase noise and pollution.	Observation noted.
	b. The sites are far to close to Abbeyfield School, this will have safety implications for the children who attend the school	NWDC agrees with the road safety concerns with a site in close proximity to a school.
	c. A Gypsy and Traveller site will have a negative impact on this area.	Observation noted.

Issue		NWDC Response
	a. Both sites are used by the residence of the local community as an area for recreation. At weekends you will find families, joggers and dog walkers. Any development on this site will take away an extremely valuable resource for the local community. The protection of our open space and Greenfield areas should be paramount.	Noted and Agreed
	b. In order to assess the suitability of this site a full environmental assessment should be presented. The potential impact on wildlife should be fully assessed.	Noted. If a site is deemed suitable at this initial stage the council will undertake further detailed analysis of such sites.

Environment	c. The site is identified as being with Policy NE15 of the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011. Therefore development should not be permitted. A site will have detrimental impact on the natural beauty of the countryside.	The site assessment concludes that the sites score Green in respect of potential for landscaping and screening in accordance with the general landscape character assessment. It is also noted that further detailed analysis will be required at a later stage.
	d. The Local Plan 2011 identifies the site to be within a landscape character are which seeks to avoid development which would ‘adversely affect the character of an area and features that contribute to local distinctiveness.’	Noted. The consultation document acknowledges that the sites have high landscaping potential which could mitigate any impact on the landscape character.

Issue		NWDC Response
Reputation of G&T	a. The recent illegal occupation of Stanley Park highlights the impact that such a site can have on the area.	The Council is aware of recent illegal encampments, the intention of this document to find suitable permanent site for the Gypsy and Traveller community which would help reduce the number of illegal encampments.
	b. A Gypsy / Traveller site in these locations will cause resentment.	Observation noted

Issue		NWDC Response
Land unsuitable	a. There is poor drainage on both sites, the fields are often water-logged throughout the year.	Such issues would need to be addressed at the planning application stage by the applicant.
	b. The sites lack any standard facilities such as electricity and waste disposal.	

Issue		NWDC Response
Recreation use of land	a. The sites are used extensively for recreation purposes and by the local school.	Agreed
	b. Areas of the Stanley Lane sites are designated as part of the national cycle network.	This has been noted.

Issue		NWDC Response
Mixed use	a. Site is not suitable for a mixed use development that is a common feature of Gypsy and Traveller sites. It will result in increased traffic, noise and pollution.	Noted. NWDC has requested a full highways assessment from Wiltshire County Council and this will be form an important element in determining the suitability of a site. Such issues will also be dealt with at the planning application stage if a site is deemed to be suitable.

	b. A mixed use will ruin the natural beauty of the area.	There is potential for landscaping measure that could mitigate any impact. NWDC acknowledges that a mixed use development will have some impact on the attributes of the surrounding area.
--	--	--

Issue		NWDC Response
Security	a. There are legitimate concerns about the security of property of local residents and Abbeyfield School	Noted

Issue		NWDC Response
The impact on property value	a. The location of a Gypsy and Traveller site will have a severe impact on property values and even the ability of local residents to sell their property altogether.	North Wiltshire District Council cannot use the impact on property value as part of the assessment process. To do so would bring the planning process to a halt.
	b. This reduction in property value is not considered in this consultation document.	
	c. Will North Wiltshire District Council compensate those residents affected in this way.	No.

Issue		NWDC Response
Impact on local infrastructure	a. Local services such as schools, doctors and dentists are already over stretched. The location of a Gypsy and Traveller site(s) will make this situation worse.	Noted
	b. The Stanley Lane sites are situated to far from the main service centre, it is therefore unsustainable.	Agreed. The consultation document acknowledges that the site is not within 500 metres of basic services although the scoring indicates that the site is still within a practicable distance to access these services.
	c. Chippenham has seen considerable expansion over recent years, whereas the local services and facilities have not.	Noted
	d. Wiltshire County Council confirm that Site A is not available as this provides an opportunity for the expansion of Abbeyfield School.	Noted

Issue		NWDC Response
Preferential treatment of G&T	a. North Wiltshire District Council is spending considerable time and resources to find suitable sites for the Gypsy and Traveller community. The same attention is not paid to young professionals are first time buyers struggling to get on the property ladder.	The Council has received a grant from the Government of £150,000 towards the provision of permanent Gypsy and Traveller sites. The Council has committed a further £100,000 for the project.

	<p>b. There is an apparent hypocrisy with the way North Wiltshire District Council dealt with the Leisure Centres and the Gypsy and Traveller issue.</p>	<p>Observation noted</p>
	<p>c. If the Gypsy and Traveller community want to live in a permanent location then they should have to go through the same procedures as every other citizen.</p>	<p>The Gypsy and Traveller community are entitled to register on the housing register in the same manner as every other citizen.</p>
	<p>d. North Wiltshire District would not permit residential development on these sites, so why should a Gypsy/Traveller site be permitted? An example of this would be the proposed Building at Hither Farm</p>	<p>Government advice states that such sites can be considered as “exceptions” in the same manner as affordable housing.</p>

Issue		NWDC Response
Burden on the Tax payer	a. The entire process of finding a site for the Gypsy and Traveller community is being funded by the tax payer, this is not acceptable.	The Council has received a grant from the Government of £150,000 towards the provision of permanent Gypsy and Traveller sites. The Council has committed a further £100,000 for the project.
	b. Can the Council confirm if the Gypsy and Traveller community pay tax like everyone else?	The Gypsy and Traveller community are liable to pay Council Tax and other charges in the same way as the rest of the population.
	c. The taxpayer will be left with the bill when this process is over.	

Issue		NWDC Response
G&T do not want to live near to a residential area	a. Gypsy and Travellers are by definition “travelling” communities and to force them to reside a permanent site does not meet their needs.	The term “Gypsy and Travellers” means <i>persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on the grounds only of their own or their family’s or dependents’ educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently.</i>
	b. The Gypsy and Traveller community will not want to live in such close proximity to local residents.	This is understood and noted.

Issue		NWDC
Assessment	<p>a. There are a number of inaccuracies with the original consultation document.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location of an electricity pylon 	<p>The consultation process highlighted a number of inaccuracies within the report. Officers have considered such issues and amended according. The Executive Committee will be presented with data that has been corrected.</p>
	<p>b. The consultation document does not contain any detailed assessment, such as bio-diversity or any detailed Highways Assessment, or the capacity of local schools to deal with extra numbers.</p>	<p>If after this initial stage a site is deemed to be suitable then the council will undertake further detailed analysis.</p>

Issue		NWDC Response
Long term strategic planning	<p>Both sites are likely to be important locations for the potential expansion of Chippenham. The presence of a site could have a negative affect on the delivery of housing through expansion.</p>	<p>Noted</p>

North Wiltshire District Council Gypsy and Traveller Issues and Options Document.
 Consultation Statement.
 Site 6 Land at Stoneover Lane, Wootton Bassett

Issue		NWDC Response
Highways	a. Direct access on to the A3102 has serious safety implications for road users and pedestrians. The A3102 is a fast road which is notoriously difficult to access.	Observations noted. The Council will give consideration to road safety both on site and the surrounding area. North Wiltshire District Council has sought formal highways assessment to ascertain the constraints on the site. The site search criterion acknowledges that direct access would not be permitted from the A3102 and the alternative route through a residential area would not be acceptable.
	b. If access is to be achieved through the residential area this will have a detrimental impact on the quiet road network of the area. Some access scenarios will require access through third party land.	
	c. The increase volume and type of vehicle used by the Gypsy and Traveller community will make the roads within the estate even more dangerous for local residents, especially children.	
	d. The current road network is simply not able to accommodate a Gypsy and Traveller site.	
	e. The Stoneover Lane is road used for diversion and is a crucial road for commuters which is already heavily congested, a Gypsy and Traveller site will only add to the problems.	

Issue		NWDC Response
The Impact on the Local Area	a. The establishment of a Gypsy and Traveller site will have a devastating impact on the local area. A site should never be promoted when it is in the middle of a residential area	North Wiltshire District is required to consider the interests of parts of its community for planning purposes.
	b. It will have a detrimental impact on the privacy and quality of life of existing residents as it will destroy community spirit the potential mixed use of a site will increase noise and pollution.	
	c. Local people have worked very hard the Council should be acting in the interests of existing residents rather than the Gypsy and Traveller community. A site here will not have any benefits for the local community.	The council represents all residents within the District.

Issue		NWDC
Impact on local services and infrastructure	a. Wootton Bassett has seen considerable growth with even more development coming forwards, such as the St Ivel Site and the possible development of the Rugby ground. The level of development has not been matched by improvements to local services and facilities. A Gypsy and Traveller site will put more pressure on over-stretched services.	Observation is noted
	b. The site is situated some distance from the main services and facilities. This could lead to a reliance on private vehicles. This is not sustainable.	Agreed.

Issue		NWDC Response
Recreational use	a. This green space is often used by local residents as a recreation area. The council should be protecting such spaces and not developing them.	Agreed

Issue		NWDC Response
Security	a. There are concerns about the security of property and local residents if a Gypsy and Traveller site is located here.	Noted
	b. Any increase in crime or anti-social behaviour will add to the strain on resources .	Noted

Issue		NWDC Response
Impact on property value	a. The location of a Gypsy and Traveller site will have a severe impact on property values and even the ability of local residents to sell their property altogether.	North Wiltshire District Council cannot use the impact on property value as part of the assessment process. Government guidance is clear that the impact on property value is not part of the planning process. To do so would bring the planning process to a halt.
	b. This reduction in property value is not considered in this consultation document.	
	c. Will North Wiltshire District Council compensate those residents affected in this way?	No

Issues		NWDC Response
Funding	a. The entire process of finding a site for the Gypsy and Traveller community is being funded by the tax payer, this is not acceptable.	The Council has received a grant from the Government of £150,000 towards the provision of a permanent Gypsy and Traveller sites. The Council has committed a further £100,000 for the project.
	b. Can the Council confirm if the Gypsy and Traveller community pay tax like everyone else?	The Gypsy and Traveller community are liable to pay council tax and other rates just as every other citizens.
	c. The taxpayer will be left with the bill when this process is over.	The Council has received a grant from the Government of £150,000 towards the provision of a permanent Gypsy and Traveller sites. The Council has committed a further £100,000 for the project.

	d. How can the council not afford to keep the leisure centres open but it can pay for a Gypsy and Traveller site?	Observation noted.
--	---	--------------------

Issue		NWDC Response
Health and Safety	a. The report does not consider the health and safety implications of a Gypsy and Traveller site in this location. The proximity to the very busy road, the pollution and noise from the road would all be unacceptable to normal residents.	The site assessment criterion states that the Council will not look favorably on sites that share a boundary with sites that produce high noise (e.g. traffic noise). An impact of noise on this site will be subject to further analysis.

Issue		NWDC Response
Wildlife	a. There is a wide variety of wildlife on this site that will be destroyed if a Gypsy and Traveller site is located here.	The consultation document recognises that the council will not allocate sites where they will have an impact on protected species that cannot be mitigated. Further detailed analysis of the bio-diversity on this site will need to be undertaken.
	b. Previous attempts by local residents to purchase the land were blocked due to the presence of Great Crested Newts. In light of this how can the land now be suitable for Gypsy and Travellers?	
	c. The consultation document should contain a full environmental assessment of the site so that it can be judged against the criteria correctly.	

Issue		NWDC Response
Negative perception of Wootton Bassett	a. A Gypsy and Traveller site in such a prominent location will detract visitors and potential investors.	The site assessment concludes that there is potential for high quality landscaping on this site in accordance with policy as set out in the Landscape Character Assessment.

Issue		NWDC Response
The Gypsy and Traveller community do not want to live here	a. Gypsy and Travellers are by definition “travelling” communities and to force them to reside a permanent site does not meet their needs.	The term “Gypsy and Travellers” means <i>persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on the grounds only of their own or their family’s or dependents’ educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently.</i>
	b. The Gypsy and Traveller community will not want to live in such close proximity to local residents	This is understood and noted.

Issue		NWDC Response
Information Gap	a. The consultation document does not include within the conclusions of detailed assessment. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bio-diversity study • Noise Study • Contaminated land study • Traffic study. Such information is crucial to judge the suitability of a site.	The site search criterion is an initial stage in the selection of a suitable site or sites. If at the end of this initial stage a site or sites are deemed to be suitable, further detailed analysis will be undertaken. It is agreed that further detail is required.

Issue		NWDC Response
The site will be an economic drain.	a. The cost of providing and maintaining a site as well as cost of the impact that such a site will have on the local economy.	There is no obvious link between the presence of a Gypsy and Traveler site and impact on the economy of a town. It is noted that Chippenham had two sites close by and there is no evidence that they have detracted from economic growth.

Issue		NWDC Response
Contrary to Policy	a. The site is not allocated in the North Wiltshire Local Plan and goes against Policy C3, H9, NE12 & NE15	Noted
	b. Local Plan Policy H2 seeks approximately 100 new dwellings on the rugby club site on Stoneover Lane and Policy CF1 which allocates land on Stoneover Lane for a new school.	Agreed

Issue		NWDC Response
Wootton Bassett Already has a site	a. Wootton Bassett already accommodates one site near to the M4. Another site will be disproportionate and unfair.	Observation noted.

Issue		NWDC Response
Ownership		

	a. The footpath and pond on the site are privately owned.	Any issues or private ownership will be investigated by the Council if the site is considered to be a suitable site based on the criterion contained within the consultation document.
--	---	--