

Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document

Consultation on Potential Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites

Statement of Consultation

January 2012

Contents

1.	Purpose of the Report	p.1
2.	Overview of Consultation Process	p.2
3.	Overview of representations	p.3
4.	Summary of Main Issues	p.4
5.	How the Representations Have Been Addressed	p.16
	Appendix 1 – List of People Notified	p.17
	Appendix 2 – Public Meeting Minutes – Bewdley	p.26
	Appendix 3 – Public Meeting Minutes – Wolverley	p.31
	Appendix 4 – Public Meeting Minutes – Cookley	p.41
	Appendix 5 – Public Meeting Minutes - Stourport-on-Severn	p.49

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 Following the adoption of the Core Strategy in December 2010, Wyre Forest District Council is now preparing two site specific Development Plan Documents; the Site Allocations and Policies DPD and the Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan DPD. The Site Allocations and Policies DPD will need to allocate sufficient sites to meet the identified need for accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

1.2 The commitment to providing pitches to meet the needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople is clearly outlined in National Planning Policy as well as in Local Planning Policy. Despite the proposed change in policy, the Government's objective remains for local planning authorities to meet the needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople through the identification of land for sites, with the focus of this being through locally generated policy. The proposed PPS will reinforce this ambition and will require Local Planning Authorities to use a robust evidence base to establish need; set pitch and plot targets to address accommodation needs; identify specific sites in their Development Plan that will enable the continuous delivery of sites for at least 15 years from the date of adoption; and identify sufficient specific deliverable sites to deliver site need in the first five years of the adoption of the relevant policy.

1.3 Wyre Forest District Council has already started to put this into place with the adoption of the Core Strategy DPD in December 2010. The Core Strategy sets the strategic policy for considering sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. It also includes a commitment for the authority to ensure that sufficient sites are allocated for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

1.4 The Site Allocations and Policies and Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan underwent a Preferred Options consultation commencing in May 2011. The District Council chose not to consult on potential sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople at that time but to hold a separate specific consultation on the issue, due to its significant importance to local communities within the District.

1.5 This report sets out details of how the consultation was undertaken, the engagement techniques used and an overview of the consultation representation.

2. Overview of the Consultation Process

2.1 Wyre Forest District Council appointed consultants Baker Associates to undertake an assessment of suitable sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople within the District. The study identified 15 sites which were considered to have potential for this use. These sites were presented to the District Council's Local Development Framework Review Panel, Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet during September 2011. At their meeting on 20th September the Cabinet decided to undertake a consultation on 7 of these sites as follows:

- Stourport Road, Bewdley
- Former Sion Hill Middle School
- Former Lea Castle Hospital Site
- Land adjacent Nunn's Corner, Stourport-on-Severn
- Saiwen, Stourport-on-Severn
- The Gable's Yard, Stourport-on-Severn
- Manor Farm, St Johns Road, Stourport-on-Severn

2.2 The consultation took place between 7th October and 18th November 2011. The following engagement techniques were used in undertaking the consultation:

- Letters to all people listed on the database which includes statutory consultees, landowners, businesses, and local residents.
- Letters to all properties who share a boundary with the sites.
- A Public Consultation Information Pack which was published on the web-site and made available at libraries and Hubs across the District.
- A hard copy response form.
- An interactive response form.
- A series of public meetings in areas close to the affected sites.
- Press releases to publicise the consultation details and public meeting details.

3. Overview of Representations

3.1 A total of 1604 representations were received from 1211 respondents. 16 of the respondents were statutory consultees and the remainder were general consultees.

3.2 The table below shows the breakdown of representations received by site.

Site Name	Total Number of Respondents	Total No of Responses	Comments	Objections	Support
Lea Castle	566	583	18	557	8
Sion Hill	273	307	7	297	3
Manor Farm	271	327	4	322	1
Stourport Road Bewdley	185	240	14	214	12
Saiwen	21	21	2	15	4
Nunns Corner	18	18	3	11	4
The Gables	20	20	3	14	3
Not Site Specific	72	88	61	17	5
	1426*	1604	112	1447	40

*There were 1211 respondents in total. Some respondents have been counted more than once where they have made representations on more than one site.

3.3 In addition to these responses, a number of petitions were received as follows:

Sion Hill	411
Sion Hill	179
	<u>590</u>
Lea Castle - From hirer of facilities at Lea Castle	464
Lea Castle Petition handed in by Gill Hill	416
Lea Castle - Cookley Action Group - Signed Comment Forms	256
	<u>1136</u>
Manor Farm - Petition - Facebook -Online	<u>2640</u>

4. Summary of Main Issues

4.0.1 This section will set out a summary of the main issues raised with respect to each of the sites put forward for consultation. Those issues raised by key stakeholders will be drawn out in more detail in addition to key issues raised by Statutory Consultees such as the Environment Agency, Severn Trent and Worcestershire County Council.

4.1 Site at Stourport Road, Bewdley

4.1.1 A total of 240 representations were made in relation to this site from 185 respondents. Of the 240 representations received 14 were comments, 214 were objections and 12 were supportive of the site.

4.1.2 A public meeting was held at The Bewdley High School and Sixth Form Centre on 20th October to look specifically at this site. The main issues raised at the meeting were:

- Concerns regarding the difference between a Gypsy site and a site for Travelling Showpeople.
- Concerns about water supply, sewage disposal and pollution as well as concerns about flooding, proximity to the water borehole and the site's location in Source Protection Zone 1.
- Support for the site because it has no near neighbours, it has water, drainage and electricity and it is close to services such as schools. The site would allow families to have a stable life.
- Concerns over the Green Belt location of the site.
- Concerns over access and road safety issues.
- Concern that the site would dominate the local community.
- Concern over the impact on the regeneration of Bewdley.
- Concern over whether the site will meet local need for true Gypsies.
- Questions regarding the cost of living on the site and whether the residents will pay Council Tax.
- Concern over the fact that Cabinet shortlisted the 15 sites in the Baker Report to 7 for consultation.
- Concern over the effect on house prices and insurance premiums.

Statutory Agencies

- **The Environment Agency** identify that the site lies within Flood Zone 2 and 3 and is also within the Source Protection Zone 1 of a public water supply. The site is also 168m from the bore hole and is therefore highly vulnerable to the risk of pollution from site drainage and other potential on-site activity. For residential caravan sites within this zone the discharge of foul drainage effluent to ground would not be permitted and a connection should be made to the mains foul sewer. For surface water drainage, the discharge of clean roof water to ground may be acceptable provided all down pipes are properly sealed to prevent pollutants from entering the system.
- **Worcestershire Wildlife Trust** identify that the site lies within the Green Belt and the flood zone and should not be brought forward unless the various exceptions and sequential tests can be passed. Notwithstanding those tests it is also important to note that it falls in the green link between the River Severn and a substantial green infrastructure resource at the Blackstone, Devil's Spittleful and Rifle Range SSSI complex. We would therefore suggest that in light of wider green infrastructure aspirations in the district

development in this area should be resisted. Accordingly we would recommend that this site be ruled out of the allocations process.

- **Natural England** identify that the site is 0.5km from Devil's Spittleful SSSI location 0.5km north east and adjacent to River Severn local wildlife site.
- **The Local Education Authority (Worcestershire County Council)** identify that there is sufficient capacity at Bewdley schools to accommodate this development, although some year groups are full at Bewdley schools, a number of pupils are coming from outside the catchment.

General Responses

The main issues raised relate to the following points:

- The fact that visitors to the town may no longer want to use the car-park at Blackstone and walk along the river into Bewdley and the impact this will have on businesses.
- A number of responses question the suitability of the site when brownfield sites are available within the District.
- Green Belt location.
- Many responses question the capacity of the school to take additional children.
- Existing traffic congestion on Stourport Road, especially at school time.
- Many responses question how services such as sewerage, water and electricity would be provided.
- Access to the site and increased traffic congestion.
- Flood risk.
- The proximity of the site to the water bore hole and the fact that it is in Source Protection Zone 1.
- The impact on tourism, particularly the impact on visitors to the Blackstone picnic site and the poppy fields.
- The visual impact at what is a gateway into the town.
- The lack of infrastructure in Bewdley to support the additional population.
- The travelling showpeople feel that the site would be suitable for them but the land is owned by Gypsies.
- The site would enable travellers to walk to local facilities including schools.
- A number of concerns raised relate to landscape impact.
- Many concerns relate to who will pay for the site to be established and maintained.
- Questions are raised as to whether travellers want to be displaced from their existing sites and communities.
- Some responses question whether there will be a limit to how many dogs and horses can be kept on the site and what other activities can take place there.
- A number of responses question how the site will be contained and monitored.
- A number of responses raise fears of an increased level of crime.
- A number of responses relate to concern over house prices in the area falling as a result of the proposal.
- Many responses question the need for additional pitches and why other authorities are not providing pitches.
- Concern over the potential detrimental impact on wildlife.
- Concern that the site is too close to the schools and sports facilities.
- Concern over additional light pollution and noise pollution from the site as well as concern over the impact of existing noise and light pollution on the site.
- Some support for the site relating to its proximity to services and facilities, it is a stand alone site with few neighbours, it is near main roads and it is not a very good piece of Green Belt.

4.2 Former Sion Hill School

4.2.1 A total of 307 representations were made in relation to this site from 273 respondents. Of these, 7 were comments, 297 were objections and 3 were in support of the site. Additionally, two petitions were received against this site containing a total of 590 signatures.

4.2.2 A public meeting was held at Wolverley Memorial Hall on 31st October 2011 to consider this site. The main issues raised were:

- Concerns relating to the future use of the playing fields.
- Concerns about how the site would impact on existing levels of deprivation in Broadwaters and efforts to improve the area.
- Concerns regarding a possible covenant on the site restricting it to educational use.
- Suggestion that the site should be used to provide jobs or a training centre.
- Concern about the costs of bringing the site forward.
- Concern that the Gypsy community do not want to live on that specific site.
- Concern about impact on house prices and whether compensation would be available.
- Concern about the capacity of the existing schools.
- Concern that providing sites will encourage travellers from across Europe to settle in the area.
- Concern that the site could spread beyond any allocated area and onto adjacent open space.

Statutory Agencies

- **Worcestershire County Council** confirms that they own the site and that there are no covenants on the land restricting its use. They refer to the extant planning permission for conversion to a professional development centre and state that whilst no plans exist to implement it as yet it may be implemented at some time in the future. They also state that the playing fields are used by St. Oswald's School and they may require room for expansion at some point in the future. They raise issues relating to drainage and suggest that the cost of the upgrading works required may be uneconomic for this type of development to carry.
- **The Local Education Authority (Worcestershire County Council)** have raised concerns regarding the capacity of the local schools given that the Site Allocations and Policies DPD already allocates sites for significant levels of residential development in the area, particularly the Churchfields sites.

General Responses:

The main issues raised relate to the following points:

- Further consideration should be given to retaining the site for educational use.
- Concern about the capacity of the local schools.
- Concern about whether there is a need and why other authorities are not providing sites.
- Questions are raised as to whether the Gypsy community would want to live on the site.
- Questions are raised regarding demolition costs and how these would be met.
- A number of alternative uses for the site are suggested including a community centre, relocating Wolverley High School, a replacement for Wolverley Primary School, a sports centre, affordable housing, a relief road and drop off point for St. Oswald's school, a youth centre, sheltered accommodation or a day care centre.

- A number of responses raise concerns over the future of the playing fields and the safety of children playing there.
- Concern that the site would prevent Springfield Park gaining Country Park status.
- Concern that the site is out-of-town and too far from amenities.
- Concern over the impact of additional traffic on congestion and road safety.
- Concern that Travellers would be overlooked on this site.
- Concern over falling house prices and increase crime and insurance premiums.
- Concern that the area already suffers from significant levels of deprivation and this would exacerbate the issue.
- Concern that the short listing of sites was undemocratic and flawed.
- Concern that there has not been sufficient engagement with the travelling community to establish their needs.
- Concern that the site is in the Green Belt.
- Concern that there is not good access to a primary school.
- Concern that there are no bus routes past the site.
- Concern that there is a restrictive covenant on the land which is being ignored.
- Concern over the loss of an opportunity to provide employment on the site.
- Concern that it will be detrimental to the regeneration work which has taken place in the Sion Hill area over the last few years.
- Concern that local medical facilities are over-subscribed.
- Concern that the site is too close to the residential community.
- Questions are raised as to why Gypsies and Travellers need permanent sites.
- Concern about noise pollution.
- Concern about anti-social behaviour.
- Concerned about the impact on community spirit.

4.3 Former Lea Castle Hospital Site, Cookley

4.3.1 A total of 583 representations were received in relation to this site from 566 respondents. Of these representations, 18 were comments, 540 were objections and 8 were in support of the site. Additionally, two petitions were received for this site, one from a group that hires the Lea Castle site containing 464 signatures and one from a local resident containing 416 signatures. 256 signed comment forms were also received in objection to the site.

4.3.2 A public meeting was held at Cookley Village Hall on 29th October 2011 to look specifically at this site. The key issues raised at the meeting were:

- Concern that the consultation letter was not sent to enough households.
- Concern that no other Authorities are providing sites.
- Concern that by using a small area of the site the remainder will remain undeveloped and jobs will not be provided in the local area.
- Suggestion that the site should be used for employment use or an extra care village.
- Concern over property prices falling and insurance premiums rising.
- Concern that the site does not meet the Government guidelines.
- Concern over traffic and access issues.
- Concern over availability of school places and capacity of GP surgery as well as road safety issues related to accessing these.
- Concern over sewerage, water and electricity provision.
- Concerns over Dale Farm type expansion of the site.

- Concern that there is asbestos and ducts on the site posing safety issues.
- Concern over biodiversity and protected species.
- Concern that the meeting was held during half term week.
- Concern that the proposal goes against Adopted Local Plan policies.

Statutory Agencies:

- **Worcestershire County Council** clarify that they own a leasehold property on the site and it is unclear at this stage whether their landholdings would be affected by the proposal. They state that the overall redevelopment potential of the site may make the allocation of part of the site for Gypsy and Traveller uses unacceptable.
- **Severn Trent Water** has a major operational reservoir to the west of the proposed development boundary but is not currently aware of any negative impacts which could arise from the proposal. There will be below ground assets associated with the reservoir and Severn Trent wish to continue to be consulted in order to ensure that assets are not built over.
- **The Local Education Authority (Worcestershire County Council)** state that the proposed sites in Kidderminster would add to the pressure on places and for this reason the Local Authority would have reservations about these sites being progressed.

General Responses:

The main concerns raised relate to the following points:

- Concern over access to services and facilities as the A449 separates the site from the village and there is no safe pedestrian crossing point.
- Concerns about the capacity of Cookley Primary School.
- Site is favoured over Sion Hill by some respondents because it is brownfield and is better screened.
- Concerns are raised regarding the cost of developing the site especially in relation to asbestos and ducts on the site.
- Concern that the site is within the Green Belt and that the site could take time to come forward because of this.
- Concern from travelling showpeople that the site will not come forward soon enough to meet their needs.
- Concern that the site is not on a bus route.
- Concern over the visual impact of the use on what is an attractive site at present.
- A number of objections suggest that the site should remain in employment use and be used to provide jobs for the local community.
- Many responses raise concerns that residents of Austcliffe Park are required to vacate their homes for one month of the year and the new Gypsy sites will have 12 month occupancy.
- A number of responses refer to the impact on biodiversity including endangered species; the pole cat is cited as an example of this.
- Concern that the proposal was not put to people before the planning stage.
- Some responses question whether the houses surrounding the site would also have Green Belt restrictions removed from them.
- Some respondents suggest using the site as a community park.
- A number of responses suggest that using part of the site for Gypsy and Traveller use could impact on the deliverability of employment or any other development on the remainder of the site.
- Concern that the site is too large and the use could spread beyond the permitted area.

- A number of responses raise concern that people living near to the site will be unable to sell their houses should the need arise.
- Many responses raise concerns about the capacity of local services and facilities such as dentists, doctors and schools.
- A number of responses have questioned the availability of services such as gas, electricity, water and sewerage at the site.
- A number of responses question what will happen to the existing public right of way across the site.
- A number of responses question whether there is any historic connection linking Gypsy and Traveller communities to Lea Castle and to Cookley village.
- Some responses question why the policy in the Adopted Local Plan is being changed.
- A number of responses suggest that the road infrastructure is inadequate to accommodate the development.
- Concern that the use is not a suitable neighbour for the nearby children's home.
- A number of responses question why the site is considered suitable for Gypsy and Traveller uses when the SHLAA concluded that the site was not suitable for residential development.
- Concern that Gypsy families would rather live in Stourport-on-Severn close to the existing communities.
- Concern that Wyre Forest District already has sufficient provision of sites and should not provide additional sites until neighbouring Districts do.
- Concern that insufficient consultation has been undertaken with the Travelling community.
- A number of responses suggest the site should be used as a retirement village.
- A number of concerns are raised relating to addition noise and additional traffic as well as the outdoor lifestyle of Gypsy and Traveller families causing more noise and smoke in the area.

4.4 Land Adjacent Nunn's Corner, Stourport-on-Severn

4.4.1 A total of 18 representations were received in relation to this site from 19 respondents. Of these, 3 were comments, 11 were objections and 4 were in support of the site.

4.4.2 A public meeting was held at Stourport-on-Severn Civic Hall on 2nd November 2011. The main focus of the meeting was the Manor Farm site however, there was some concern over the number of sites which already exist in Stourport-on-Severn and a feeling that new provision should be located elsewhere within the District. There was also some concern regarding the relationship between the existing Gypsy and Traveller sites and the business community in the Sandy Lane area.

Statutory Agencies:

- **The Environment Agency** state the site is located within Flood Zone 3 (1%, 'high probability'), based on our Flood Zone Map. They also note that planning permission has recently been granted for the site.
- **Natural England** notes the proximity of the site to Hartlebury Common & Hillditch Coppice 5551 to the north east and to the River Severn local wildlife site to the south west.
- **The Local Education Authority (Worcestershire County Council)** identify that in Stourport-on-Severn there are surplus places at two of the primary

schools and forecast numbers indicate that there will be sufficient places for children from these sites as well as children from other proposed housing developments.

General Responses:

The main concerns raised relate to the following points:

- Some support is expressed for this site arguing that it is better to expand the existing provision in this area than create new provision in other parts of the District.
- Concern that the development would further devalue property and reduce the number of businesses operating in the immediate area.
- Concern that Stourport-on-Severn already provides the majority of sites within the District and provision should be more equally spread.
- Concern that there are currently major problems in the Sandy Lane area between the Travelling community and the businesses and that these need to be resolved before considering formalising the tolerated sites.

4.5 Saiwen, Stourport-on-Severn

4.5.1 A total of 21 representations were received in relation to this site from 21 respondents. Of these, 2 were comments, 15 were objections and 4 were in support of the site.

4.5.2 A public meeting was held at Stourport-on-Severn Civic Hall on 2nd November 2011. The main focus of the meeting was the Manor Farm site however, there was some concern over the number of sites which already exist in Stourport-on-Severn and a feeling that new provision should be located elsewhere within the District. There was also some concern regarding the relationship between the existing Gypsy and Traveller sites and the business community in the Sandy Lane area.

Statutory Agencies:

- **The Environment Agency** observes that the site is located within Flood Zone 2, based on their Flood Zone Map, where there is a medium probability of flooding.
- **Natural England** note the proximity of the site to The Lower Heath industrial estate is adjacent to Hartlebury Common & Hillditch Coppice SSSI to the north east and to the River Severn local wildlife site to the south west.
- **The Local Education Authority (Worcestershire County Council)** identify that in Stourport-on-Severn there are surplus places at two of the primary schools and forecast numbers indicate that there will be sufficient places for children from these sites as well as children from other proposed housing developments.

General Responses:

The main issues raised relate to the following points:

- Some concerns are raised regarding the impact on new Gypsy and Traveller sites on new and existing businesses.
- Some concerns regarding the level of existing provision within Stourport-on-Severn and the fact that provision should be spread around the District.
- Concern that services such as education and medical facilities will struggle to accommodate new residents.
- Suggests the site should be used for affordable housing.

- Support for site as Gypsy and Traveller communities are already in the area, it is not visible and it will not have a detrimental impact on visitors to the town.

4.6 The Gables Yard, Stourport-on-Severn

4.6.1 A total of 20 representations were received in relation to this site from 20 respondents. Of these, 3 were comments, 14 were objections and 3 were in support of the site.

4.6.2 A public meeting was held at Stourport-on-Severn Civic Hall on 2nd November 2011. The main focus of the meeting was the Manor Farm site however, there was some concern over the number of sites which already exist in Stourport-on-Severn and a feeling that new provision should be located elsewhere within the District. There was also some concern regarding the relationship between the existing Gypsy and Traveller sites and the business community in the Sandy Lane area.

Statutory Agencies:

- The Environment Agency observes that the site is located within Flood Zone 2, based on their Flood Zone Map, where there is a medium probability of flooding.
- Natural England observe the close proximity of the site to Hartlebury Common & Hillditch Coppice SSSI to the north east and to the River Severn local wildlife site to the south west.
- The Local Education Authority (Worcestershire County Council) identify that in Stourport-on-Severn there are surplus places at two of the primary schools and forecast numbers indicate that there will be sufficient places for children from these sites as well as children from other proposed housing developments.

General Responses:

The main concerns raised relate to the following points:

- Support for site on the basis that there is an existing Gypsy and Traveller community in the area and that it makes sense to expand this rather than provide sites elsewhere.
- Concerns are raised relating to the impact on new and existing businesses and on property values within the area.
- A number of objections are made on the basis that Stourport-on-Severn has enough provision and that further provision should be made elsewhere in the District or by neighbouring authorities who currently have less provision than Wyre Forest District.
- Some objections relate to the capacity of medical and educational facilities.
- Suggestion that the site should be used for affordable housing.
- Suggests that the existing tensions between the Gypsy and Traveller community and business community at Sandy Lane need to be resolved before tolerated sites are formalised.

4.7 Manor Farm, St. Johns Road, Stourport-on-Severn

4.7.1 A total of 327 representations were received on this site from 270 respondents. Of these, 4 were comments, 322 were objections and 1 was in support of the site. Additionally, a total of 2640 people registered their objection through a combination of a hard copy petition, an electronic petition and a Facebook page.

4.7.2 A public meeting was held at Stourport-on-Severn Civic Hall on 2nd November 2011. The main focus of the meeting was the Manor Farm site and the main issues in relation to this site were:

- Concern for the existing tenants of the farm and the businesses which they operate from there as well as concern for their employees.
- Concern about the Green Belt location of the site and the importance of this particular site in terms of maintaining the local distinctiveness of Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn.
- Concern about the biodiversity which exists on the site.
- Concern about how this proposal relates to the Stourport Relief Road proposals.
- Concern about road safety and the impact of additional traffic on the A451.
- Concern that the only authorised sites in the District are in Stourport-on-Severn and that other areas should provide further sites.
- Concerns were raised relating to the cost of the development and how this would be met.
- Concerns were raised regarding other local authorities not making provision and that this should be done before Wyre Forest District makes further provision.

Statutory Agencies:

- **Severn Trent Water** has landholdings associated with a former operational use within this area. Whilst the site does not appear to include land owned by Severn Trent it is suggested that if this site were to be taken forward a review should be undertaken to confirm the extent of the District Council's landholdings to ensure the development does not impinge on Severn Trent's land holdings.
- **Natural England** note that the farm is adjacent to the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Special Wildlife Site.
- **British Waterways** identify that this site is in close proximity to the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal. Their priorities relate to the canal corridor and land and development within and immediately adjacent to the corridor. BW would require development within and immediately adjacent to the canal corridor to safeguard the safety and structural integrity of waterway infrastructure and the safety of users and neighbours; protect and safeguard inland waterways for water resourcing purposes, including the need for water management, improving water quality, managing land drainage, and avoiding, reducing and managing flood risk; protect and enhance the heritage, natural environment and landscape character of inland waterways; encourage public access to and recreation use of inland waterways; protect and support the navigation of inland waterways and waterway related tourism; and protect the operational waterway infrastructure.
- **The Local Education Authority (Worcestershire County Council)** identify that in Stourport-on-Severn there are surplus places at two of the primary schools and forecast numbers indicate that there will be sufficient places for children from these sites as well as children from other proposed housing developments.

General Responses:

The main issues raised relate to the following points:

- Many responses raised concerns over the fact that the farm was listed as redundant and that the current tenants live on the farm and operate three successful businesses from there.

- Concerns have been raised over the devaluation of properties in the area.
- Concerns about noise pollution.
- A number of responses state that provision should be spread across the District.
- Concerns are raised over the impact of additional traffic on road safety, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists and school children.
- Concerns are raised over the impact on biodiversity.
- Concerns are raised over the location of the site within the Green Belt and the impact the development would have on what is an increasingly vulnerable area of Green Belt separating the District's two main towns and how this may affect the local distinctiveness of these towns.
- Concerns are raised regarding the impact on visitors to the town, the site is a gateway to Stourport and the proposed development would be highly visible.
- Concerns are raised relating to increased crime in the area.
- Concerns that the site does not meet the requirements of policy CP06 of the Adopted Core Strategy.
- Concern over loss of local employment if the businesses currently operating at the site were to close as a result of the proposal.
- Concerned about highway safety at the junction of Manor Road and the A451.
- Concern that neighbouring authorities are not proposing additional provision and feel this should happen before Wyre Forest District increases its provision.
- Questions are raised regarding the accuracy of the Baker Report.
- Concern that the site is safeguarded for the relief road.
- Concern about the impact on a SSSI.
- Concern about the proximity to the crematorium and cemetery.
- Concern about the cost of establishing and running the site and how this will be met.
- Concerns are raised about the cost of putting in an additional access off the A451.
- Concern that the site is too close to existing population and an old people's home.
- Concern is raised over the concentration of sites in Stourport-on-Severn.
- Questions are raised as to why the Cabinet selected the 7 sites they did for consultation from the 15 which were recommended in the Baker Report.
- Questions are raised over the impact on the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Conservation Area.
- Concerns are raised relating to the additional pressure the site would put on local medical and educational facilities.
- Limited support for the site from a small number of respondents.

4.8 General Comments

4.8.1 A total of 88 responses which were not site specific were received from 72 respondents. Of these, 51 were comments, 17 were objections and 4 were in support. A number of these responses suggested alternative sites, further details of which are set out below.

Statutory Consultees:

- **The Highways Agency** concludes that the proposed sites are unlikely to have any significant impact on the operation of the road network. As we have no concerns in this respect, wish to make no comment in response to this

consultation. No responses were received from the Local Highways Authority (Worcestershire County Council).

- **The Environment Agency** state that Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 25 'Development and Flood Risk' classes caravans, mobile homes and 'park homes' intended to be permanently occupied as 'highly vulnerable' development. The instability of such structures places their occupants at special risk and they are likely to be occupied during periods when flood risk is likely to be higher (paragraph D19). In line with PPS25 (Table D.3.), 'Highly vulnerable' development should not be permitted within Flood Zone 3 and within Flood Zone 2 requires the Exception Test to be passed. The selection of sites should follow the Sequential Test set out within PPS25, policy CP02 and policy CP06 (criteria 5) of your Council's adopted Core Strategy (December 2010). The draft National Planning Policy Framework would appear to support this approach. We note that the information pack refers to the Sequential Test requirement and that you are currently undertaking Sequential Testing (flooding) to inform your draft Site Allocations and Policies DPD. This would be informed by your Council's Level 1 and 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment by Royal Haskoning. Notwithstanding the above requirement, a site specific Flood Risk Assessment would need to be undertaken as part of any planning application for sites within Flood Zone 2 and 3, which focuses on safe development requirements.
- **Blakedown Parish Council** considers that the Baker Report is flawed and this should be rectified before any allocations are made.

General Consultees:

The main concerns raised relate to the following points:

- A number of respondents suggest that no Green Belt sites should be considered.
- Concerns are raised over how long families can stay on sites and that there should be a maximum length of stay.
- A number of responses raise concerns over the number of pitches required and the evidence base behind this figure.
- Concerns were raised regarding emerging national guidance on planning for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and respondents suggested that the Core Strategy should be revised to take account of this.
- Concern is raised in relation to attracting Gypsy and Traveller families from further afield because provision has been made and what safeguards will be put in place to ensure the provision meets the local need.
- **Mark Garnier (MP)** raised a number of issues as follows:
 - Questioned the overall level of pitches required.
 - Considers that future provision can be met by formalising existing provision on Sandy Lane.
 - Raises concerns that WFDC has not made it clear to the public the terms under which Gypsies occupy the sites – e.g pitch fees, council tax utilities etc.
 - Raises concern over errors in the Baker Associates report.
 - Considers that the Core Strategy should be reviewed to take account of soon to be published guidance regarding Gypsy and Traveller provision.

4.9 Alternative Sites

4.9.1 A number of alternative sites were suggested through the consultation process. These are set out in the table below:

ALT 1	Land opposite the Gatehouse, Sandy Lane Industrial Estate
ALT 2	1A Broach Road, Sandy Lane, Stourport-on-Severn
ALT 3	28-29 Sandy Lane, Stourport-on-Severn
ALT 4	Land off Wilden Lane, Stourport-on-Severn
ALT 5	R/O Household Waste Site, Minster Road, Stourport
ALT 6	Land off Birmingham Road, off Hurcott Lane, Kidderminster
ALT 7	Land off Sandy Lane opp Equimix Feeds, Stourport-on-Severn
ALT 8	Romwire Site, Stourport Road, Kidderminster
ALT 9	Habberley Road, Bewdley
ALT 10	Land off the Kingsway, Stourport. To r/o Torridon Close
ALT 11	Stone Depot
ALT 12	Land opposite VOSA testing station, Worcester Road, Kidderminster
ALT 13	Wolverley Camp, to r/o Brown Westhead Park
ALT 14	Former British Sugar Site, Stourport Road, Kidderminster
ALT 15	Land on Burlish Top, to r/o Gould Avenue, Kidderminster
ALT 16	Former Settling Ponds, Wilden Lane, Kidderminster
ALT 17	Duke House Clensmore Street, Kidderminster
ALT 18	Land at Finepoint adj Zortech Avenue, Kidderminster
ALT 19	Finepoint, Stourport Road, Kidderminster
ALT 20	Ex Yieldingtree Packing Site, Nr Churchill
ALT 21	Fenced land off Hillary Road, Wilden, Stourport-on-Severn
ALT 22	Site adjacent Fountain Court, Low Habberley, Kidderminster
ALT 23	Land at Shatterford
ALT 24	Clows Top Garage Site
ALT 25	Hoobrook Trading Estate, Kidderminster
ALT 26	Hoobrook Trading Estate, Kidderminster
ALT 27	Site to rear of Lisle Avenue, Kidderminster
ALT 28	Land to Rear of Civic Centre, Stourport-on-Severn
ALT 29	Potters Scrap Yard, Sandy Lane, Stourport-on-Severn

5. How the Representations Have Been Addressed

The representations have each been commented on individually by officers and will be reported to Members through the January committee cycle. Tables setting out the summaries of each of the representations received and the District Council's responses to these will be made available on the District Council's website. In light of the comments received, a number of further sites have been investigated to see if they are potentially suitable for allocation as sites for Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople.

Appendix 1 - List of People Notified

Statutory Consultees

Abberley Parish Council
Astley & Dunley Parish Council
Bayton Parish Council
Belbroughton Parish Council
Bewdley Town Council
British Telecom
Bromsgrove District Council
Broome Parish Council
Central Networks
Chaddesley Corbett Parish Council
Churchill and Blakedown Parish Council
Clent Parish Council
Cleobury Mortimer Parish Council
Dodford with Grafton Parish Council
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Elmbridge Parish Council
Elmley Lovett Parish Council
English Heritage
Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP
Hagley Parish Council
Hartlebury Parish Council
Highways Agency
Highley Parish Council
Homes and Communities Agency
Kidderminster Charter Trustees
Kidderminster Foreign Parish Council
Kinlet Parish Council
Kinver Parish Council
Malvern Hills District Council
Milson & Neen Sollars Parish Council
Mobile Operators Association
National Grid
Natural England
Network Rail
Office of Rail Regulation
Pensax Parish Council
Rock Parish Council
Rushock Parish Council
Severn Trent Water Authority
Shropshire Council
Staffordshire County Council
South Staffordshire District Council
South Staffordshire Water Plc
South Worcestershire Development Plan
Staffordshire Police Authority
Stone Parish Council
Stourport-on-Severn Town Council
Telewest Communications Network Ltd
The Coal Authority
The Environment Agency
The Oil and Pipelines Agency
Wyre Forest District Local Development Framework
Consultation on Potential Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites
Consultation Statement – January 2012

Transco West Midlands Local Distribution Zone
Upper Arley Parish Council
Upton Warren Parish Council
West Mercia Constabulary Police HQ
West Mercia Police
West Midlands South Strategic Health Authority
Wolverley & Cookley Parish Council
Worcester City Council
Worcestershire County Council
Worcestershire County Council Economic Regeneration and Sustainability
Worcestershire County Council, Schools Information and Planning Section
Worcestershire LEP
Worcestershire Primary Care Trust
Wychavon District Council

General Consultees

Act on Energy
Adams Hendry
Age Concern Wyre Forest
Aggborough & Spennells Community Action Group
Aggborough Residents' Association
Alder Kings Property Consultants
All Rivers Hydro Limited
Allan Moss Associates Ltd
Anthony Douglas Homes Ltd
Arley Area Environmental Group
Arlington Planning Service
Armstrong Burton Planning
Arts Council West Midlands
ASDA Stores Ltd
ASHA Wyre Forest
Association of Retired and Persons over 50
Banner Homes
Barton Willmore Planning Partnership -Midlands
Baxter College
Beazer Homes (Mercia) Ltd
Bell Cornwell Partnership
Berkeley Strategic Land
Berrys
Bewdley Chamber of Trade
Bewdley Civic Society
Bewdley Development Trust
Bewdley Primary School
Bewdley Tenant Consultative Committee
Bewdley Town Centre Management Forum
Bigwood Associates Ltd
Birchen Coppice Primary School
Birchen Coppice Tenant Consultative Committee
Bishops Wood Centre
Blakebrook School
Blakedown CE Primary School
Blakedown Tenant Consultative Committee
BNP Paribas Real Estate

Bodenham Arboretum & Earth Centre
Brimble Lea & Partners
British Geological Survey
British Horse Society
British Waterways
Broadwaters Tenant Consultative Committee
Bromford Carinthia
Bryant Construction
BT Wholesale National Notice Handling Centre
Buddhist Community
Burlish Park Primary School
Burlish Park Residents' Association
Business Connections 4 North Worcestershire
Campaign for Real Ale Ltd (CAMRA)
Campaign to Protect Rural England
Canning Associates
Carr Gomm Society Limited
Carver Knowles
CB Richard Ellis
Centro
Cerda Planning
CGMS Consulting
Chaddesley Corbett Educational Foundation
Chaddesley Corbett Endowed Primary School
Chaddesley Corbett Tenant Consultative Committee
Chaplaincy for Agricultural & Rural Life
Charles F Jones & Son
Chiltern Railways
Church Commissioners
Cill Dara
Clive Fletcher Developments
Colin Buchanan & Partners
Colliers CRE
Comberton Primary School
Comberton Tenant Consultative Committee
Community - The Union for Life
Community Action Wyre Forest (CAWF)
Community Action Newtown
Community First
Cookley Sebright Primary School
Cookley Tenant Consultative Committee
Core11
Council for British Archaeology West Midlands
Council for the Protection of Rural England (Wyre Forest District Group)
Country Land & Business Association
County & Metropolitan
Cox Homes Ltd
CPRE (Worcs)
Crest Strategic Planning
D & G Coach & Bus Limited
David Lock Associates
David Wilson Homes(WM) Ltd.,
Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group
Design Council

DIAL North Worcestershire
Diocesan Schools Commission
Disability Action Wyre Forest
DPDS Consulting
Drivers Jonas
DTZ
eco2solar Ltd
Elmsvyne Homes Ltd
ENTEC
Far Forest Lea Memorial CE Primary School
Farming and Rural Conservation Agency
FBC Manby Bowdler LLP
Federation of Small Businesses, Herefordshire & Worcestershire
Ferdale and District Residents' Association
First Group Plc
Fisher German
Foley Park Community Primary School
Foley Park Developments
Forest Oak Short Stay School
Forestry Commission
Four Estates Area Committee
FPD Savilles
Framptons
Franche Community Primary School
Franche Tenant Consultative Committee
Freeth Cartwright
Freight by Water Freight Transport Association
Freight Transport Association
Friends Families and Travellers
Friends of Broadwaters
Friends of the Village Association
Fusion Online Ltd
Fyldene Ltd
G L Hearn
Garden History Society
George Wimpey West Midlands Ltd
Godfrey - Payton
Goldthorn Property Developments Ltd.
GPU Power UK
Greenhill Tenant Consultative Committee
GVA
Haberley Tenant Consultative Committee
Hagley Catholic High School
Hallam Land Management
Hallmark Hulme
Halls
Harris Lamb Ltd
Hartlebury C of E Primary School
Harwood Homes Ltd
Haybridge High School & Sixth Form
Health and Safety Executive, Chemical and Hazardous Installations Division
Heathfield School
Help the Aged
Hereford & Worcester Ambulance Service

Hereford & Worcester Fire & Rescue Service
 Hereford and Worcester Gardens Trust
 Herefordshire & Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce
 Herefordshire & Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust
 Heronswood Primary School
 Highstone Estates Ltd
 Hillcrest Residents Association
 Holy Trinity School
 Home Builders Federation (Midlands and South West)
 Home-Start Wyre Forest
 Horsefair, Broadwaters and Greenhill Partnership
 Horsefair Family Centre
 Hovi Developments Ltd
 Hunter Page Planning Ltd
 Hurcott Road Flats and Area Tenant Consultative Committee
 Hurcott Village (Management) Ltd
 Ian Murray Associates
 Independent Advisory Group for Black & Ethnic Minority Issues
 Independent Schools Council Central
 Islamic Mosque
 J J Gallagher
 James Bailey Planning
 Jennings Brothers
 Jephson Housing Association
 Jones Lang LaSalle
 JS Bloor (Services) Ltd
 JVH Town Planning Consultants Ltd
 Kendrick Homes Ltd
 Kent Jones & Done
 Key Developments Co (NHD) Ltd
 Kidderminster & District Scout Group
 Kidderminster and District Archaeology & Historical Society
 Kidderminster Civic Society
 Kidderminster College
 Kidderminster Cycle Club (Cyclists Touring Club)
 Kidderminster Horticultural Society
 Kidderminster Swan Centre Manager
 Kidderminster Town Centre Partnership
 Kier Partnership Homes Ltd
 King Charles I School
 King Sturge
 Lafarge Aggregates Ltd
 Lambert Smith Hampton
 Learning & Skills Council
 Les Stephan Planning Ltd
 Levvel Consulting Ltd
 Lickhill Primary School
 Lickhill Tenants and Residents' Association
 LIDL UK
 Lockett Property Holdings
 London Midland
 M & G Builders Ltd
 MADE
 Madinatul Uloom Islamic College

Marches Energy Agency
Marches Housing Association Ltd
Margaret Delabere Almshouse Charity
Marston's PLC c/o First City Ltd
Meeting Deaf Community
mfg Solicitors LLP
Michael Sutcliffe & Associates
Miller Homes
Montagu Evans
Morgan Tucker Ltd
Morgoed Estates Ltd
Morris Homes
Museums, Libraries and Archives, West Midlands
Nathanial Lichfield & Partners
National Air Traffic Services Ltd
National Farmers Union
National Playing Fields Association
National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners
National Travellers Action Group
National Trust
Nex Communications
Nexus Housing Association
Norgrove Developments
North East Wribbenhall Residents' Association
Octavian Development & Construction
Odell Trust
Offmore Comberton Action Group
Oldington & Foley Park Community Network
Oldington & Foley Park Pathfinder
Olympia Homes Ltd
Orion Developments (Midlands) Ltd
Our Lady of Ostra Brama Church
Pawar Developments Ltd
Pegasus Planning Group
Persimmon Homes (Wessex) Ltd
Peter Storrie Associates
PHAB Ltd
Phipps and Pritchard
Pipeline Management Land & Wayleaves Ltd
Planning and Environmental Services Ltd
Pound Green Group
Queensway Tenant Consultative Committee
R & D Aggregates Ltd
Ramblers Association
Redditch Borough Council
Redrow Homes
Renewable UK
Richard Harper Estate Development Ltd
Rifle Range Tenant Consultative Committee
Robert Hitchins Ltd
Rooftop Housing Group
Royal British Legion
Royal Town Planning Institute
RPS

RSPB Midlands Regional Office
 Savills
 Severn Navigation Restoration Trust
 Severn Valley Railway
 Simon Fletcher Architects
 Smith Gore
 Smith Stuart Reynolds
 SPA Housing Association
 Sport England
 Springfield Residents Association
 St Ambrose Catholic Primary School
 St Anne's CE Primary School
 St Bartholomew's CE Primary School
 St Catherine's CE Primary School
 St George's CE Primary School
 St John's CE Primary School
 St Mary's CE Primary School
 St Modwen Developments
 St Oswald's CE Primary School
 St Wulstan's Catholic Primary School
 Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal Society
 Stansgate Planning LLP
 Stoneligh Planning Partnership
 Stourminster School
 Stourport Business Association
 Stourport Central Tenant Consultative Committee
 Stourport Cricket Club
 Stourport Forward Ltd
 Stourport-on-Severn Civic Society
 Stourport on Severn Horticultural Society
 Stourport Primary School
 Stourport Rugby Football Club
 Stourport-on-Severn Town Centre Forum
 Strategic Health Authority (Estates - Midlands Division)
 Strutt & Parker
 Sure-Start Wyre Forest
 Sustainability West Midlands
 Sustrans
 Sutton Park Community Primary School
 Sutton Park Tenant Consultative Committee
 Terrence O'Rourke plc
 The Bewdley School & Sixth Form Centre
 The Coach House Short Stay School
 The Community Housing Group
 The Diocese Board of Finance Worcester
 The Equality and Human Rights Commission
 The Georgian Group
 The Gypsy and Traveller Law Reform Coalition
 The Inland Waterways Association (Birmingham, Black Country & Worcestershire Branch)
 The Knoll School
 The Lawn Tennis Association
 The Showmans Guild of Great Britain Midland Section
 The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings

The Stourport High School & Sixth Form Centre
The Theatres Trust
The Three Counties Planning Consultancy Ltd
The Tyler-Parkes Partnership
The Victorian Society
The Wyre Forest Agenda
Thursfields
Tourism West Midlands
Town & Country Property Services
Town Planning Consultancy Ltd
Transition Bewdley
Turley Associates
Twentieth Century Society
Ukrainian Club
Upper Arley CE Primary School
Veldon Printers Ltd
Vision 21
Wall James & Davies
Walshes Tenant Consultative Committee
Warren Developments
Warwickshire Primary Care Trust
West Midlands Consortium Education Service for Travelling Children
White Young Green Planning
Whitehill Road Residents' Association
Whiteline Developments
Whittles Coaches
Wilden & Stourport Parochial Church Council
Wilden All Saints CE Primary School
Wilkins Chartered Surveyors
Wilson Bowden Developments
Wolverley Allotment Society
Wolverley CE Secondary School
Wolverley Sebright Primary School
Wolverley Tenant Consultative Committee
Worcester Diocesan Board of Finance
Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust
Worcestershire Biodiversity Partnership
Worcestershire County Association of Local Councils
Worcestershire Girl Guides
Worcestershire Greenpeace
Worcestershire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust
Worcestershire Racial Equality Council
Worcestershire Wildlife Trust
Wyre Forest Action Group for Older People
Wyre Forest Advocacy
Wyre Forest Bangladeshi Forum
Wyre Forest Citizens Advice Bureau
Wyre Forest Cycle Forum
Wyre Forest Dial A Ride
Wyre Forest District Youth House
Wyre Forest Friends of the Earth
Wyre Forest Lifelong Learning Partnership
Wyre Forest Matters LSP Chair
Wyre Forest Schools Partnership

Wyre Forest Society
Wyre Forest Tourism and Leisure Network
Wyre Forest Women's Aid
Wyre Forest Youth Strategy Group

In addition to the above, a number of local landowners and organisations were consulted via agents and a large number of individuals were consulted as they had previously expressed an interest in being kept informed of progress on and consultations in relation to the Local Development Framework.

Appendix 2 - Minutes of Public meeting to discuss proposed gypsy site at Stourport Road Bewdley held at The Bewdley School and Sixth Form Centre on Thursday 20th October 2011 at 6:30 pm

Meeting chaired by Councillor S. Clee, Chairman of Wyre Forest DC with presentation by Mike Parker, Director of Planning & Regulatory Services.

Councillor Clee opened the meeting by setting out the format the meeting would take. Mike Parker would give a short presentation. Those people who had registered to speak would then address the meeting and this would be followed by a question and answer session. The meeting would be finished by 8:30 at the latest.

Presentation by Mike Parker

The consultation was launched on October 7th and will run until November 18th. The purpose of the meeting was to hear the public's views on the use of the Blackstone site for Gypsy and Travelling Showpeople use.

Adopted Core Strategy Policy CP06 states that the council will look to allocate sites for gypsy use.

The Site Allocations & Policies DPD Preferred Option was consulted on earlier this year. The allocation of sites for gypsy use was separated out from the document so as not to cloud other issues. Following this consultation, the proposed gypsy sites will be added back into the DPD next year before the entire document moves to an Examination in Public by a planning inspector.

The District has a number of gypsy sites already, including 2 managed by the County Council. Most of these are in Stourport.

The District Council are consulting on 7 potential sites for Gypsy & Travelling Showpeople.

National Guidance is set out in 2 circulars – 2006 on gypsies and 2007 on travelling showpeople. April 2011 – Government consulted on draft guidance 'Planning for Traveller Sites' – no guidance is out yet but document is a material consideration. Robust evidence base is required and need to provide a 5 year supply of sites or any planning applications for gypsy sites will be expected to be treated favourably. The draft policy statement is very similar to the existing circulars.

Why do we need to provide sites? This work is not premature – the Site Allocations and policies DPD needs to be in place to provide certainty. If we don't allocate sites for gypsy and travelling showpeople use it will be very hard to resist any planning applications that come in.

2008 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment set out the requirement for 23 pitches up until 2013. the Regional Spatial Strategy evidence is still the best we have but WFDC agreed to accept a slightly lower number with a requirement for 43 pitches up until 2022.

Baker Associates were appointed to undertake an assessment of potential sites. They looked at a range of sites from many sources. They undertook stakeholder consultation on the key issues not particular sites. An initial desktop study ruled out many sites. The remaining 64 sites were assessed on

accessibility, deliverability and landscape impact and whittled down to shortlist of 15 sites for consideration by Members. 7 were then chosen for public consultation.

Blackstone site – suggested for 15 pitches in the early part of the plan period. Is located in Flood zone 2 so sequential test needed. Could be managed by County, RSL or private.

It was explained that residents of gypsy sites pay council tax and rent to a landlord and for utilities in the same way that residents of other caravan parks. These sites would be for permanent use. There is no requirement for transit sites in the district.

Response forms are available or else please respond electronically via the website. Once this consultation closes on 18th November the responses will be analysed and reported back to members. In 2012, the gypsy sites will be included as part of the wider Site Allocation and Policies DPD which will then proceed to an Examination in Public before being formally adopted as policy.

Speakers were then invited to address the audience.

Jan Adams – Mayor of Bewdley:-

Is there any difference between a travelling showman site and a gypsy site as although the showman sites are listed as temporary there appears to be a clause allowing permanent occupation and storage?

Are there variable licenses for different sites?

How well are any rules or regulations enforced and how?

Anne Hill, Netherton Lane:-

Concerned about water supply, sewage disposal and pollution. Site is adjacent pumping station with groundwater source protection zone surrounding borehole. Underlying bedrock is aquifer supplying town's water. Can we guarantee that noxious substances will not be dumped at the site? Would site be connected to main sewer? Where would funding come from and how much would it cost?

Shirley Nunn – family own site

Earlier in the year the site was a temporary home to 7 families in their caravans. The site has drainage, water and electricity. There are no near neighbours. Schools are nearby and town is within walking distance. Developing the site would allow families to settle and have a stable life. Gypsies and travellers or travelling showpeople would be able to keep their culture.

Richard Styles – Lower Blackstone Farm

Used to own and farm this site before bypass was constructed. Site is in the Green Belt – would development for gypsy use lead to other uses being allowed?

Flooding issues – rising water table with seepage from below ground affecting sewerage connections.

Access issues – increasing vehicle movements – right turn in/out of site poor.

What about future access if playing fields adjacent?

Would an ecological survey be required?

Feel 15 pitches is too high – only small number of existing residents.
Noise from bypass plus light pollution.
Not considered suitable for travelling showpeople as no hardstanding or roads.
Maximum of 3 gypsy pitches more suitable.
What evidence is there that pitches are needed in Bewdley? Why not elsewhere?

Mrs. Durbin – Little Lakes

Would site be licensed for 12 months?

Derek Killingworth – Bewdley Town Council

Parish Councils have asked why consultants say they had been consulted but none of them were consulted about potential sites.

Question suitability of site – is in Green Belt – would need special circumstances to justify release – is liable to flooding so why is this site considered to be suitable?

Why do 'travellers' need a permanent site?

Mr. Johnston – Acacia Avenue

Road safety issues – there is too much traffic passing site – not considered safe place for gypsy pitches.

Mike Parker's Response

This consultation is about allocating sites for a particular use. Detailed planning applications would still be required at a later date.

Travelling showpeople – those who operate funfairs – would require storage for equipment over winter months plus residential. One site is needed in the district.

Licences – there is no requirement for transit sites. These sites would be for permanent 12 month occupation.

Enforcement of rules – sites would be well-managed as per any other caravan site.

Groundwater protection – Environment Agency and Severn Trent have been consulted. EA would be able to advise about need for treatment plant and borehole protection.

How much would it cost? Would not be directly funded by District Council; would seek grant funding. HCA £60 million provision of G&T sites.

Green Belt – would need to show very special circumstances such as there being no other suitable sites – is not uncommon to have small developments in the Green Belt. It would not set a precedent if sites were allocated for gypsy use in the Green Belt.

Flood Zone 2 – Flood Risk Assessment would be required.

Highways issues – County Council would be consulted about sites.

Light / noise bunding – recognise that this would be required for the site – Environmental health officers will advise.

Why are sites being considered in Bewdley? What is the best solution – concentrate provision in Stourport or spread around district, large sites or small sites?

All sites would be permanent – with 12 month residency.

Parish Council were contacted by the consultants about their experiences of gypsies and travellers. This was not about sites but about issues.

Questions were then taken from the audience.

Paul Simonds – what affect will this have on regeneration of Bewdley? Not good advert for tourists. Site is opposite poppy field and beauty spot. Why was site at Habberley Road discounted?

Martin Lefoy – who is eligible to stay on such sites?

Joan Roberts – lives opposite site – people will stop using car park – they will be wary of leaving cars. Showpeople would not be a problem, but gypsies would.

Les Taylor – want gypsy children to be educated and have equal rights but concerned about fear of mess and crime they may bring and question whether they would integrate with local community. How do we know that they are true gypsies?

Abi Queenan – runs snack bar on Blackstone picnic site – fears for future of her business.

Ian Cumming – do they pay taxes?

Mary Harley – is very little police presence in Bewdley.

Julia Simonds- gypsy site will lower house prices, should reduce our Council Tax.

Emma Sellers – is very little available for youngsters in Bewdley, this will only make things worse.

Mike Parker's response

Impact on first impressions of Bewdley – agree that site is highly visible and would need screening.

Habberley Road was dismissed at Cabinet meeting on 20th September – decision made by Cabinet members – as officer cannot comment – (heckler - why was Sutton Park Rise removed from list? Man then left meeting followed by 2 more. S Clee asked people not to shout out.

Gypsies and travellers do pay into the system just like the rest of us.

Effect on house prices of development is not a planning consideration.

Provision for young people – out of school activities provided by schools.

Further questions from the audience followed.

Angela Davies – development will affect our house insurance.

Amanda Underwood – has the school been consulted?

David Redfern – school has limited places, town survives on tourism – development would have negative impact, thefts from SVR, potential blight. Is it not all sewn up already??

Mike Parker's response - impact on house prices is not a material consideration.

Schools are consulted via the County Council as a statutory consultee.

Meeting closed at 7:30 pm

Appendix 3 - Minutes of Public meeting to discuss potential allocation of the Former Sion Hill Middle School Site as a Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople site

Location: Wolverley Memorial Hall

Date: 31/10/2011

Meeting chaired by Parish Council Vice-Chairman Simon Sherrey with presentation by Mike Parker, Director of Planning & Regulatory Services.

The Chairman opened the meeting by setting out the format the meeting would take. Mike Parker would give a short presentation and then those people who had registered to speak would address the meeting. This would then be followed by a question and answer session. The meeting would be closed by 9.00pm. The Chair also outlined that Wolverley and Cookley Parish Council would meet on 1st November to formulate a Parish Council response to the consultation. The audience were also reminded to get written comments in to the District Council by 18th November 2011. He highlighted that the purpose of the meeting was to get people's views on the site.

Presentation by Mike Parker

Mike Parker gave a presentation setting out why we need to plan for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites, the number of sites required, the background evidence which has been used to inform these figures and how we have arrived at the sites for consultation.

Sue Green

- Highlighted that the playing field is used by a number of community groups as well as the school. Questioned whether the proposals include provision for a separate entrance to the playing fields.
- Questioned whether pupil to area of open space ratios would still be met should the development go ahead and whether this would have implications for compliance with the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Sarah Rook

- Chair of Broadwaters Residents Action Group (BRAG) which was formed in 2009. Highlighted that the area won a Keep Britain Tidy Award in 2010. Also highlighted that the area is in the top 10% most deprived in the country according to the IMD.
- Stated that the area feels like the forgotten estate and that the proposal has stirred a lot of interest amongst residents.
- Identified that although the site is in Wolverley ward the majority of those affected live in Sion Hill.
- Identified possible uses for the site including a training centre, and other educational uses.
- Questioned whether the use of the site for a Gypsy and Traveller site would be in accordance with the covenant on the land.

- Argued that the Baker report is flawed.
- Identified that the Council's direct consultation letters did not include the Sion Hill estate. Asked that residents were not treated as fools and that the Council listen to their voice.

Mike Parker's Response:

- Identified that only the brownfield area of the site was being considered for Gypsy and Traveller use and that access to the playing field would be considered through the more detailed work still needing to be undertaken.
- Applauded the coming together of the local community and identified that they had clear and laudable ideas which need to be considered.
- Argued that apart from the misidentification of Manor Farm as being redundant no-one had pointed to any other specific flaws within the Baker Report and whilst people may not agree with its conclusions, its methodology and approach were considered to be sound.
- Consultation – outlined that all properties sharing a boundary with the sites received a letter which is standard practice when dealing with planning applications. Highlighted that there has also been a great deal of media coverage and publicity within local communities and that all information is on the District Council's website.

Howard Martin:

- Introduced himself as elected member for Broadwaters speaking to provide feedback on the meeting which took place on Monday 17th October. The meeting concentrated on planning and social issues and whether or not the site was suitable. A full written report on the meeting will be submitted to the District Council.
- Cllr Martin welcomed the consultation as the District Council has to listen to views submitted in response to it. Argued that Sion Hill and Lea Castle sites should not go ahead. Although the Sion Hill site would be restricted to the existing footprint it was argued that a similar situation to Dale Farm could occur.
- The Sion Hill area has already lost its community centre and post box and the area gets a rough deal.
- Considered it to be extremely worrying that the Sion Hill School was going to be developed for the benefit of the community and now this proposal is being considered instead.
- Highlighted the area's low IMD score and that help is needed. Highlighted the good work carried out by BRAG and Friends of Broadwaters and Springfield Parks. Argued that if Sion Hill was not developed for the benefit of the community the area will go back into decline.
- Asked all the people to oppose it as it is not right for the area.

John Hart:

- Introduced himself as a District Councillor and Parish Councillor speaking on behalf of Wolverley.

- Identified that in order for the proposal to go ahead the site needs to be demolished and this has a high cost. It makes no economic sense especially given the current restrictions on public spending.
- Highlighted that the current planning permission for a training centre is not being implemented and that other options are being explored.
- Argued that there were no very special circumstances as other sites exist in the District which could be used. This site should be used for community benefit and should provide improved sport and recreation facilities.
- Supported the need for a Gypsy and Traveller site however, the Gypsy community want to remain in the same location and close to each other. Cabinet were urged to take these views on board.

Geoff Hamilton:

- Acknowledged that he was not familiar with the Sion Hill site but that it is close to residential uses and should be returned to school or special needs use. The school in Wolverley village is obsolete and the redevelopment was opposed by the local population because of the disruption to the village. The site could be used as part of the secondary school or for community uses. Both are more commendable than using it to provide permanent dwellings. These people are no longer travellers. Asked Mike Parker as a planning expert what is your opinion on the proposal for the site?

Mike Parker's Response:

- In response to Cllr Hart's question regarding the cost of demolition, the District Council's role is one of facilitation rather than delivery. Third parties will bring the sites forward including the County Council and RSLs. The District Council would support bids for grant funding on allocated sites.
- Education provision is a County Council function and therefore no comments can be made on provision within the District.
- All sites have their difficulties but the sites would not have been recommended to Cabinet if officers did not believe that they were capable of being delivered.

Open Questions

The Chair highlighted that the consultation also invites alternative sites to be suggested and encouraged people to suggest sites.

Derek:

- Moved into area 12 months ago and has attended the Broadwaters meeting and this one. Sion Hill is a deprived area and the only reason for this is that there is no commitment for work or other structures coming in to generate new money for the area.
- Raised concern about sites being run by private landlords who become a law unto themselves, they agree to everything then they make it up

as they go along. Asked “what planet are you on if you think only a small part of the site will be used?” There is no way of controlling it.

- Argued that Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople have to have somewhere to live and perhaps they should attend these meetings too.
- Stated that allowing private landlords to run the sites would be a catastrophe.

Bev:

- All other sites are nowhere near existing residential uses. Why has this site been identified when it is within a residential area. Once we get the money for the sites who is going to look after them? What about education and health provision? The existing services are already at capacity.

Mike Parker's Response:

- Clarified that when referring to landlords it meant RSLs and the County Council which are regulated bodies rather than private landlords.
- It is common planning practice on Green Belt sites to limit new development to the existing built footprint. It is entirely reasonable to consider the use on the existing footprint.
- The Farm at St. John's Road is in a similar situation with regard to proximity to residential properties.

Bev:

- Clarified that she was referring to the existing sites rather than the other sites in the consultation. The existing sites are in the industrial areas of Sandy Lane not residential areas.

Mike Parker's Response:

- With reference to the funding element, the District Council would only help to seek grant funding.
- The Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople will require education and health facilities. Consultation with the relevant providing bodies will identify any capacity issues.

Malcolm Walkward?

- Questioned where the capital costs come from for site clearance £1.5-2million. Asked for confirmation on how much the site would cost to clear and what the development cost would be. Where would this money come from, Central Government or Wyre Forest DC?

Jonathan Hayboard:

- Does 23 pitches include the Travelling Showpeople site or is it in addition and how many pitches are required for Travelling Showpeople?
- The new PPS referred to in the Baker Report does not have a number; please can you confirm the number.

Mike Parker's Response:

- The costs for site clearance are speculative. The providers would apply for grant funding to establish the sites. The HCA have a pot of approximately £60million to bid into up to 2015. Funding would not come from the District Council.
- 43 Gypsy and Traveller pitches are needed and in addition, one site is needed for Travelling Showpeople.
- The PPS draft is contained within 'Planning for Traveller Uses' (2011) which is available from the DCLG website.

Jason:

- Bristol Council have spent £1.5 million for 10 pitches.
- The County Council spent money on Sion Hill School after it closed. Asbestos has now been found there, it should have come up then.

Julia Lockwood:

- These people are not travellers, they are settled travellers.

John B:

- No decision is being made and this is causing blight. House values have been reduced by the proposals. What right has the Council got to devalue people's properties? Why should 45 pitches hold sway over the majority of the population?

Mike parker's Response:

- Clarified that the District Council has no ownership interest in the school site. The County Council own the site.
- The Tonight programme showed Wyre Forest District to be a forward thinking authority trying to plan properly for the needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople so that we don't have to keep moving them on.
- Clarified that the people on top table from the District Council were officers, not elected Members.
- Clarified that property values were not a material planning consideration.

Ken Stokes:

- Introduced himself as Chair of St. Oswald's Board of Governors which is remaining neutral because they are a church school.
- Personal opinion is that schools and sports facilities adjacent to a traveller site will not enhance the education and achievement of children.
- Regarding the letter in the Shuttle asking to open arms to Gypsies and Travellers – people who wrote it don't live on Sion Hill.
- Consultation form asks for planning reasons, can we ask planners if they are true. Planners and members should be finding reasons not to allocate sites.

Mr Bennett:

- If your property was devalued you would not be calm. It is disgusting to take value away when people have worked all their life. Travellers means devaluing life. The Council should be looking after the people who are already settled in the area.
- Use industrial sites they already have hard standing areas. Do not push this disruption into settled areas.

John Bennett:

- What have you based the assumption on that providing sites will reduce travelling.

Mike Parker's Response:

- Professional officers will set out the pros and cons of the sites. Members will take this on board when making their decisions.
- Clarified that it did not reduce people travelling. It gives the Council greater strength to resist sites that occur where we don't want to see them if we can point to the process that has been gone through and where the provision has been made.

Claire Salter:

- We have lived here for 15 years and do not consider ourselves to be deprived although the area is recognised as an area of deprivation.
- The school is full to capacity with the kitchen being extended to provide enough space to prepare school meals. The teachers work hard to get an acceptable OFSTED report. It is reported that 30 travellers would bring 10 children. Where will these children go to school and what will they do all day when the school can not accommodate them?

Adrian Sewell:

- If the Baker Report is not flawed why have 8 sites, 4 of the preferred sites been removed?

Mike Parker's Response:

- The County Council are the education provider and we will take their advice regarding school place provision.
- In response to Cllr Sewell's point, just because the Council took a different approach does not mean that the Baker Report is flawed.

Geoff Hamilton:

- Would you consider that this site is better than sites already ruined by industry e.g everywhere between Wilden Lane and Stourport Road? It would be easier to slot the development in there. Slotting it into Sion Hill is bad planning. Any site is capable of accommodating the use if it is cleared. *Note: it was clarified through the chair that this is to be considered as an alternative site.*

Mike Parker's Response:

- Reminded attendees that if they have other sites in mind to submit them.

- Drew attention to the fact that there are a number of brownfield sites within the Green Belt.
- Reiterated that all of those sites out to consultation are believed to be capable of being delivered.

Dean Cox:

- Reiterated that the Parish Council do not support either the Sion Hill site or the Lea Castle site. Pointed out that the Parish Council do not make decisions. Identified members of the Cabinet in the audience.

Unknown:

- Argued that the former British Sugar site would be ruled out because of the Ashland Chemicals blast zone. If this was true we should not hang much hope on it being developed.

Gail Alexander:

- The voluntary effort that the community have put into the regeneration of Broadwaters Park should be rewarded by using the Sion Hill site for the good of the community rather than to its detriment.

Unknown:

- Stated that both his daughters had had bad experiences with Gypsies having had their horses stolen by them. Suggested that Gypsies and Travellers may be difficult to live next to.

Mike Parker's Response:

- Clarified that County Council will look into the covenant on the school site.
- With reference to the blast zone, the HSE have recently reduced the area which is covered. The British Sugar site is earmarked for mixed use development including some residential. If people wish to submit the site as an alternative then they should not be put off by the blast zone.

Fleur:

- Raised concerns over the fact that providing sites could encourage travellers from across Europe to settle in the area.

Unknown:

- The Tonight programme showed a successful site which was built on industrial land which had no impact on existing residents.

David Palmer:

- Stated that he had recently moved into the area. The Councillors make the decisions. It appears to have been taken for granted that there is a requirement on the basis that we may, at some point, want to move travellers on. Considers that we should not be providing residential sites across the District on the off chance that Travellers might settle somewhere that we want to move them on from.

- Questioned how many travellers would work within the Wolverley and Cookley area and argued that most won't want to go there, they will be forced to the area because a site has been provided that the local community do not want. Suggested that as there were no representatives of the Traveller community at the meeting perhaps that was an indication that the Travellers did not want to come to the site.

Mike Parker's Response:

- Reiterated that we are not looking to provide transient sites within the District as no need has been identified for such sites. The sites will be for settled Travellers. We need to provide sites in order to avoid Travellers settling where we would not want them to. It is a long process to move Travellers on from sites which are not authorised.
- Reiterated that the Baker Report sets out what evidence has been used to underpin the identified need.
- Reiterated that all members of the community, including the Gypsy and Traveller community were welcome to attend the meetings and that representatives of the Gypsy and Traveller community were present at the Bewdley meeting.

Malcolm Hazlewood:

- Who holds the licence for the parks once they are operational and what monitoring will be in place to make sure that the conditions are not breached.

Brian Marks:

- Questioned the need for more sites - is it to clear the unauthorised sites in Stourport-on-Severn? Moving unauthorised people to authorised sites?
- The school problems have arisen from Sion Hill School being closed down. The other schools are now oversubscribed with children in portakabins. The money to rebuild the schools has fallen by the wayside.
- Referred to a school in Malvern which has a high number of Travelling children and has received a poor OFSTED report because Travelling children are disruptive.

Terry Foller:

- The field is used by the community and the school. The development will disrupt the children.
- Questioned whether Sport England have been notified.
- Questioned why some sites were excluded by the Cabinet.

Mike Parker's Response:

- In response the question regarding licences it was clarified that the District Council would issue a licence and enforce the conditions of that licence. Monitoring of the sites would take place.
- Clarified that the 43 pitches are in addition to the current facilities within Stourport-on-Severn. 8 of the pitches within Stourport-on-Severn are

currently tolerated and one of the options is to formally recognise these pitches and then they will come off the need figure.

- Confirmed that Sport England have been consulted as part of this consultation process. Also clarified that we are talking about the existing hard standing, not the playing fields.

Victoria:

- Asked for a show of hands for and against the proposal. No one indicated that they were in favour of the proposal and almost everyone in the room indicated that they were against it.

Geoff Hatch:

- Questioned why no member of the County Council was present if they are part of the consultation process and own the site.

Mel:

- Encouraged all attendees to fill out a response form.

Ryan:

- Lea Castle and Sion Hill – how can the Council say the sites are capable of being brought forward when they do not know the cost of doing this? How much certainty is there over the viability of these proposals?

Mike Parker's Response:

- There is a long way to go before the financial issue is considered. No bids have been made and no money has been offered as yet. At this stage we are bringing forward the principle and location. More detail will be required through the planning application process and the funding stage. The detail and delivery will emerge during the 20 year plan period.

Ken Stokes:

- How many people have said they want Travellers? Most attendees are against. A show of hands at Broadwaters and Cookley meetings showed that most people were against these sites coming forward.

Adrian Sewell:

- Indicated that he was not against Travellers per se but Sion Hill is not a suitable site because of the deprivation within the area and the highways issues. Questioned why the Sutton Park site was removed from the consultation.

Trevor:

- Questioned what would happen to new sites suggested through the consultation process. The response form asks people to support, object or comment, how can people do this on additional sites which come forward? Mike Parker responded stating that they would be reported to LDF Panel, Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet. Both

Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet are open to the public to attend. Indicated that if significant additional sites come forward which are viable a further consultation stage may need to be undertaken however, we need to be time efficient.

Chris Nicholls:

- Questioned whether there was any point suggesting alternative sites when Mike Parker's response had suggested that there would not be an additional stage of consultation on these sites. Suggested that the process will not be fair because the Baker Report put forward 15 sites and only 7 are being consulted on. 4 of the 5 preferred sites were rejected by Cabinet. Feels that the consultation is a sham.

Barry MacFarlane:

- Cookely Parish Councillor – Felt that it was not fair that a show of hands demonstrated that people are against both of these sites but the 5 Cabinet Members will decide on the sites.

Vince Smith:

- Requested a truthful answer as to why the sites were removed. In response to this Mike Parker referred people to the Cabinet minutes.

Meeting closed at 9.05pm

Appendix 4 - Minutes of Public meeting to discuss potential allocation of the Former Lea Castle Hospital Site as a Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople site

Location: Cookley Village Hall

Date: 26/10/2011

Meeting chaired by Parish Council Chairman Dean Cox with presentation by Mike Parker, Director of Planning & Regulatory Services.

The Chairman opened the meeting by setting out the format the meeting would take. Mike Parker would give a short presentation and then those people who had registered to speak would address the meeting. This would then be followed by a question and answer session. The meeting would be finished by 9.00pm.

Presentation by Mike Parker

Mike Parker, Director of Planning and Regulatory Services gave an introductory presentation that set out the current situation with regards to planning for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in terms of national planning policy and also local planning policy. He also outlined how the current consultation had occurred as well as identifying how this particular topic fits in with the rest of the future planning of Wyre Forest District.

Following the presentation a number of speakers addressed the audience.

Peter Ashcroft

- Residents were united in their response – this was a people issue and not a political issue.
- Concerned that the consultation letter had not covered a wide enough area and that the first people knew about what had occurred was at the start of the consultation.
- There was real concern about the property blight that would occur over a long period of time. From the moment the proposal was identified there could be 7 year blight, with figures suggesting that in the Crescent alone, the devaluation could be £1.5million pounds. Concerned that the proposal is incompetent and commercially unaware.
- Why are we producing a long term plan when other authorities aren't?
- The comments are public knowledge and not racism – Worcestershire has the second highest number of gypsy sites in the country
- Lea Castle is the Jewell in Wyre Forest's crown and needs a high value use, otherwise it will cost the rate payers a fortune in terms of clearing asbestos and underground pipes and sewers
- Site should be used for a nursing home or extra care village for the elderly, which would provide a good return on rates
- Concerned that Wyre Forest will be known as a soft touch and that control of the wider site would be difficult

Mike Parker – Response to Comments

- The consultation letter had followed standard practice, following the Development Control process
- Local Plans have always had a long time period, plan for 10-15 years, the current Government consultation identifies the need to plan for a 15 year time-frame
- Property Valuations – Government guidance indicates what can be used as a 'material planning consideration' when looking at proposals, and this does not cover the impact on house prices
- Cost of Clearance – District Council won't be running the site. The Council's role will be in allocating and facilitating development. There is grant funding available from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) to help develop sites
- By looking to allocate sites we would be in a better position in terms of removing unauthorised encampments

Harold Keeling

- The site was a former Hospital complex that was a major employer for the area – it is an idyllic location
- Over the years planning constraints have made the site unattractive to developers resulting in an eyesore. These are the same regulations that are now considering this site for Gypsy and Traveller use
- Currently the HCA control access to the site but if this proposal were to go ahead then control could be difficult and the site could become a beacon for the travelling community
- The HCA, the current owners, currently allow horses on the land as they can't afford to cut the grass and so they are not going to have the money to carry out evictions of unauthorised sites
- Concern about the property devaluation, which could be 30%, reducing the value of the Crescent by £1.5million
- Potential for the site to be an employer once again with incentives and relaxed planning regulations. Or alternatively, there is a shortage of high end properties with in this area, £1million+ houses could be a good use for the site
- The response to the Cabinet members is that the community don't want to see the site developed for Gypsy and Traveller use

Mr D J Coultas

- A retired engineer, who worked at the Lea Castle Site
- Surprised that the Secretary of State for Health would have divided up the site
- Most of the other sites in the consultation meet the Government guidelines but this site does not
- There are no services on site which are not privately owned
- Gas mains – at the top of the site is metered and is private property
- Electricity –privately owned
- Water – travels round the site in asbestos mains

- Sewerage – private property until it meets the Wolverhampton crossroads
- Storm water and drainage – travels down to pools at Broadwaters
- Roads don't meet current adoptable standards and it would cost a lot of money to get them to a standard that the County Council would adopt
- Concerned about a Travellers site devaluing properties in the area
- Unless the site is fully developed and enclosed then we could have a situation like Dale Farm
- Just today there are reports from Wales that a Travellers site is objecting to a right of way passing their site due to the invasion of privacy

Mike Parker – Response to Comments

- With regard to evictions from unauthorised encampments – we need to have authorised sites so that we can take enforcement action
- The redevelopment of the wider site is an important point and it will be a challenge for officers and members to balance the considerations for the site and identify the right mix of uses, taking into account the need to demolish the buildings and the issues surrounding this
- With any redevelopment of the site, appropriate services will be a key component
- With regard to ownership of the site, the HCA own approximately 90%, with the Secretary of State for Health 1% and the final 9% belonging to Warwickshire NHS
- Unsure as to what Government guidelines Mr Coultas was referring to but consider that the site does satisfy criteria set out in current consultation

Gill Hill

- Lives in the Crescent, which bounds the Lea Castle Site
- Concerned about the meeting date, being half term, which meant that many residents are away on holiday
- Also concerned about the meeting on Monday, which is Halloween
- Concerned about the boundary used for the basis of the consultation, as it only covered one house in Axborough Lane and didn't go to houses in Hurcott
- Offered help to anyone who wanted to fill in objection forms
- The Council's proposals will blight property value, at one of the other sites in the consultation a buyer has recently pulled out of purchasing a house adjacent to the site because of the proposal
- Concern that there is no natural boundary to Lea Castle and there would be nothing to stop the site expanding
- Concern about services – Cookley School is full (and some of the £60million made available for Gypsy and Traveller Sites might have been better spent improving the school).
- The GP surgery is full and access to services is difficult – across the busy A449
- Concerned about the current state of the site and the presence of asbestos.

- Polecats have been seen on the site, which are a protected species
- Concerned about collapsing buildings, tunnels and derelict houses, which could cause issues for Gypsy children and could be unsafe
- This is another fiasco which follows the Icelandic Banks fiasco
- Employment is wanted on the site and that is what should be provided
- Concerned about a conflict of interest as the HCA are the owners of the site and are also the body that administer the grant funding to help deliver new sites
- Called for a vote of 'no confidence' in the Cabinet, the chief planning officer and all of the planning policy department

District Councillor Chris Nicholls

- Welcomed people to the meeting, including the Cabinet members that were present
- Concerned that a number of sites had been withdrawn from the consultation and questioned the validity of the Baker report
- Concerned that Baker's did not know the area well and some of their suggested sites were totally inappropriate, such as Westhead Road North, Cookley
- Bakers had originally identified 5 sites as being 'preferable' but 4/5 of these were removed from the consultation, which now means Lea Castle is in the preferred shortlist, when before it wasn't
- Identified that 240 people turned up to their meeting on Friday night and the message was clear that the people of Cookley felt that the site was inappropriate
- The community had discussed the possible redevelopment of the Lea Castle site during the Site Allocations Preferred Options consultation. The views were that they wanted to see the site developed for a variety of different purposes, which could be sheltered housing for the elderly or a hospice as the grounds are calming. A Gypsy and Traveller site was not one of the options the community put forward.
- Provided some information about Cookley from the OCSI (Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion) to the panel. The information identified that Cookley is the most deprived rural LSOA (Lower Super Output Area) within Worcestershire in terms of employment, education and health. This is an important point as the site could be developed for multiple uses which could help tackle these inequalities
- The community also agreed about potential leisure uses and thought that this site could provide for this type of development
- Cookley Action Group has been set up and they can help fill in objections and get responses in to the consultation
- A session was to be held on Sunday 30th October in the computer suites at Cookley Village Hall to help people fill in response forms
- The message to the Cabinet is that Cookley does care
- Asked why Wyre Forest was the only District in Worcestershire undertaking this exercise and whether other authorities were watching to see how it shouldn't be done
- Confusion had arisen after a meeting with the MP as he has questioned the amount of pitches that we need to find within the District

- Asked as to whether or not a petition was a good or bad idea and said that although travellers have a right, this isn't the right location and they would fight the proposals all the way

Mike Parker – Response to Comments

- Apologised for the half term date and said that a lot of effort was made to avoid a meeting during this week but because of room availability and short lead in time that this was the only date available
- Reiterated that the consultation letter had followed standard practice, following the Development Control process
- With regards to services in terms of schools/gp – the District Council would rely on external partners to provide comments back to us to consider as part of the consultation
- With regard to the cost of bringing the site forward, this would not be borne by the District Council
- The Baker report is valid and the reasons why the other sites weren't taken forward can be seen via the minutes of the Cabinet meeting that took place on September 20th
- The £60million funding available is not just for Wyre Forest District and bids would have to be submitted to gain funding on a case by case basis
- The site would need to be looked at for comprehensive redevelopment and the challenge for the authority will be to balance all the considerations and come up with the right solution
- In terms of the petition – the response was to do what was easiest/best for the community as responses can be received in any form

R.Whiston

- The proposal is going against Adopted Local Plan policies which identify the site is for Employment Use (Emp.4)
- Concerned how you can go against an Adopted Plan
- The proposal is against the wishes of the general public within the area
- Development of the site breaches serious planning considerations such as the fact that there is no safe and convenient pedestrian access to and from the site
- Deeply concerned that the site has not been marketed for employment use and that no effort has been made to redevelop for economic use

S.Randle

- HCA publish a list of disposal sites and Lea Castle is identified as an asset that they want to get rid of within the next 2 years, which therefore brings into question the validity of identifying it as a potential Gypsy and Traveller site
- Concerned that local people have been put through stress and strain and the site may not be available
- If identified as a Gypsy site it will be impossible to attract developers for the wider site development

- Raised a question over sustainability and as the site was identified as not being sustainable for housing then it shouldn't be considered as sustainable for Gypsy and Traveller use

Mike Parker – Response to Comments

- The proposals would not be contrary to the Local Plan as the Local Plan is currently being replaced by the Local Development Framework and therefore allocations for sites are currently being re-considered
- Unsure as to the commercial marketing of the site
- The site would need to be looked at on a comprehensive basis, taking into account issues surrounding sustainability

N.Simpson

- Concerned about asbestos and the environmental disturbance in cleaning up the site
- Has any research been done in terms of insurance payout for asbestos related illnesses?

Mike Parker – Response to Comments

- We are at the early stage of planning and more detailed work would come through via a planning application
- If there are environmental concerns currently then these will need to be followed up with the HCA

Question from the floor: How will you stop unauthorised encampments – it hasn't worked in Stourport?

Mike Parker – Response to Comments

The previous Local Plan identified 'tolerated' sites and now we need to allocate sites. We need to be in a position where we have enough allocated sites so that we can refuse unauthorised developments

B.McFarland (Wolverley and Cookley Parish Council)

- We have heard cogent arguments about the site and in line with the new Government's agenda, this should be a local decision made by local people, and they are saying that this is an inappropriate use for the site
- Baker Associates were not familiar with the area as we have heard that the site could be sold off within 2 years
- The cost of the clearance of the site would fall on the developer and in order for this to happen we need jobs and employment
- Earlier in the year we provided a list of sustainable/realistic ideas for the site which would bring jobs into the area and these local ideas appear to have been dismissed
- We have a legal and moral obligation to provide facilities/sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, but we can't tell them where to live and we need to be sensitive to their traditional travelling roots within the District, which aren't in the Lea Castle area. Have we consulted the Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople about these plans?

- This should be a public consultation and not a Cabinet consultation
- What are the current plans for Lea Castle? Is the Baker Report flawed? As there has been no take up on the site, can you identify how it has been marketed?

Unknown Speaker

- Corrected a few statements made by Mike Parker. Firstly, that it was English Partnerships before it was known as the HCA and not English Estates and secondly, that the meeting had been arranged jointly with Wolverley and Cookley Parish Council and not just Wolverley Parish Council.
- Criticised the Council's website in terms of ease of use and the references to the various committees

G.Webb

- Apparently the footpaths on the site have been closed off (This comment was considered to be untrue according to other members of the audience)

Ryan Tilley

- Need to give weight to the practical issue of the openness of the site and the need to ensure comprehensive redevelopment and the costs that this will incur. Create demand and need.

Jackie Bell

- If not a suitable site for housing why is it suitable for Gypsy and Traveller use

Cllr Dixon Shepherd

- Member for Stourport and we have our debate next week
- Figures provided by the MP currently show the following split of gypsy sites across Worcestershire – Wychavon 50%, Wyre Forest 30% and Malvern Hills 6%, which doesn't appear to be equitable

Mike Parker – Response to Comments

- Many of the comments have been answered through the course of the evening
- In terms of a site for allocation for housing – we have other, more suitable sites available to meet our 4,000 dwelling requirement. There are other considerations to take into account which are different to new housing sites
- Worcestershire Districts will have to go through the same process and the difference is that we are further ahead of them in terms of planning and replacing the Local Plan

Gill Hill

- The Crescent used to have swings and a cricket pitch but these have long since disappeared. The guidance for developing new sites suggests the provision of play equipment for the Travellers children.

How can the council consider giving a play area to the Travellers children when ours has been taken away?

K.Ludwick

- Confused by the process and concerned that if the Baker Report was considered to be valid, why did the Cabinet reject some of the sites included within it?

Mike Parker – Response to Comments

- Details of site construction/design would come through a planning application
- With regards to the decision on the short listed sites, the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on the 20th September can be seen on the Council's website

Meeting closed at 9.05 pm

Appendix 5 - Minutes of Public meeting to discuss potential allocation of the Manor Farm, Saiwen, The Gables Yard and land adjacent Nunn's Corner as Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople sites

Location: Stourport Civic Centre

Date: 2nd November 2011

Meeting chaired by Mayor of Stourport-on-Severn Cllr David Little with presentation by Mike Parker, Director of Planning & Regulatory Services.

The Chairman opened the meeting by introducing himself and the thanking people for attending. He then set out the format the meeting would take. Mike Parker would give a short presentation and then those people who had registered to speak would address the meeting. This would then be followed by a question and answer session. The meeting would be closed by 8.30pm.

Presentation by Mike Parker

Mike Parker began by offering an apology for Manor Farm being labelled as redundant within the Baker Report. He then gave a presentation setting out why we need to plan for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites, the number of sites required, the background evidence which has been used to inform these figures and how we have arrived at the sites for consultation.

Tim Barnes:

- Identified that unlike the opposition to other sites, he and his wife were coming at this from the angle of safeguarding their home and businesses and the livelihoods of their employees.
- Pointed out that they were upset that the farm has been referred to in a number of ways but should only ever have been referred to using its correct title - Manor Farm.
- Set out the history of Manor Farm, the farm is 190 years old and is on the local list. It has been there twice as long as British Sugar. The farm has been affected by many changes since 1957 when the Barnes family took over the farm. They have lost land to many new developments.
- In 1991 the tenanted farm was reduced to 17 acres.
- Three businesses currently operate from the farm and all operate within profit even during these difficult times. The businesses employ three full time staff.
- Identified that if this policy was applied across the Country there would be around 55,845 new pitches by 2022 – Mr Barnes stated his belief that there was not a need for this level of provision.
- Argued that Travellers were causing trouble and giving Gypsies a bad name.
- Referred to Dale Farm pointing out that the land there was sold to the Gypsy community and occupied illegally. If Manor Farm is occupied by Gypsies then the land adjacent to the site will become vulnerable.
- Made a plea to full Council to reject this site as real people are involved.

- Offered thanks to Mark Garnier MP, and Jon Campion and Ian Miller for their time as well as the other Councillors who have given their support.

Leander Walton:

- Pointed out that Manor Farm has been her home for over 10 years and that it is not a redundant farm but a diversified working farm.
- Identified that the Baker Report contains some inaccuracies and flaws, however, the Council have accepted the report and tax payers have paid for it so should use it.
- The report acknowledges that the development of a Gypsy site at Manor Farm would be inappropriate development within the Green Belt. It also identifies that there are other sites where such development could be accommodated more successfully in Green Belt terms.
- Referred to the Core Strategy vision which outlines the triangle of three towns each with their distinct identities separated and maintained by the Green Belt between them.
- The Baker Report identifies that the relief road, during its construction, could have an impact. Pointed out that once a plan has been approved and accepted for an area new plans cannot be approved over the top of that. The line of the relief road is safeguarded.
- Pointed out that the Barnes family have been legal and trustworthy tenants and that there is strong protection for agricultural farmers. All buildings on the farm are currently utilised, part of the farm can not be taken, the whole farm would need to be taken to terminate the tenancy agreement.
- Aware that we are in the early stages of the identification of sites but if Manor Farm is taken forward businesses would cease and people would be made redundant. These are strong businesses which are continuing to grow despite the recession. Asked how can we plan for the future of these businesses with this hanging over our head?
- The Government refer to small enterprises as the future of the economy. We have worked all our lives for this, how can it be justified to cease this.
- We also own land adjacent to the tenanted 17 acres which is a haven to wildlife.
- The site is the gateway to Stourport, if the farm was lost there would be no distinct character.
- Thanked the public for their overwhelming support and urged them to send their comments in before the deadline of 18th November and sign the petition which was available at the meeting.
- Asked the Council to give Manor Farm the future it deserves.

Mike Parker's Response:

- Thanked the speakers for raising some important points and welcomed these to be submitted through the consultation.
- Acknowledged that the Green Belt issue is a difficult one and that decisions will need to be made.

- Pointed out that the relief road line is indicative only at this stage and the exact line will not be known until detailed designs are produced and this will not be undertaken until funding is confirmed.
- Ecology and wildlife will be considered in detail at the planning application stage if this stage is reached.

Mr Frizzle:

- Spoke against Manor Farm on the basis that it is in the Green Belt. Any development in the Green Belt is deeply regrettable and inappropriate in planning terms.
- Quoted DOE circular on Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople which identifies that sites in the Green Belt should not be allocated for this purpose.
- Identified that four sites had already been rejected because they are in the Green Belt, called for Manor Farm to also be rejected on this basis.
- The Green Belt here is a narrow ribbon which separates two towns and is needed to maintain the character of the town.
- Encouraged the recycling of derelict land – there are other suitable sites.
- Finds it incredible that Manor Farm has been considered and called for it to be rejected now.

Alison Frizzle:

- Objected to the Manor Farm site. Pointed out that this was not a racist issue and that cultural diversity should be welcomed. Not prejudiced against Gypsies and Travellers or Travelling Showpeople and appreciates their different lifestyles.
- Manor Farm is not suitable for development. It is still the home and livelihood of the Barnes family. The land is lower lying than the neighbouring land and would be overlooked. It is impossible to screen because of the change in levels and would lead to privacy issues, most noticeable when people are using outdoor space.
- Highway safety concerns – pedestrian and cyclists are already at risk because the road is narrow and has no pavement. Children use this route to walk to Stourport High School and additional traffic will place children in significant danger.
- It should be very explicitly set out in the final documentation that the site is not suitable for this use.
- Questioned where the entrance to the site would be and what investigations have been carried out into highway safety and how much the highway solutions would cost.

Mike Parker's Response:

- Set out that the District Council would seek detailed advice from the County Council on these issues. The County Council have been consulted as part of this consultation process. Identified that the whole junction may look different in the future and that access may be achieved directly from the relief road.

Cllr Jim Parish:

- Introduced himself as leader of Stourport Town Council and provided feedback on the meeting of the Town Council the previous evening.
- Highlighted that the Town Council had put a holding response to the District Council on 6th July 2011 stating that they would object to any further provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople within the town.
- The only authorised sites are within Stourport. Could be over 100 already in Stourport. Bakers consulted with Gypsies and Travellers and their preference was for sites within the Sandy Lane area close to existing sites. We cannot set long term site provision based around today's preferences. We should make choices available to the Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
- In examining the issue it is desirable to consider overall and wider provision of caravan sites for holiday and leisure uses to increase caravans for whatever purpose can change the character of the area. There has been a great deal of recent investment in preserving the Georgian heritage of the town. Caravans are in conflict with the nature of the town.
- There is no element of choice for Gypsies and Travellers; Stourport-on-Severn is the only provider of authorised sites within the District.
- Manor Farm – the Baker Report identifies the farm as redundant and concludes that the site is suitable for Romany Gypsies or Travelling Showpeople. The report deals with landscape issues. Although the site is owned by Wyre Forest DC it is considered reckless and flawed to state that the farm is redundant. It remains in agricultural use and is located in a vulnerable part of the Green Belt. It should be deleted and receive no further consideration.

Gordon Taylor:

- Objected to Manor Farm from an ecological point of view. Tim and Leander completed a full ecological survey of the farm where people actually walked around the farm rather than looking at it from Google Earth which it appears is what Bakers have done.
- Farm is in the Green Belt and should not be developed; other brownfield sites should be developed. This is a valuable piece of Green Belt, home to a diverse range of species of wildlife and bordering corridors occupied by protected species.
- Referred to policy NC.7 of the Adopted Local Plan which seeks to protect species.
- Badgers and bats are protected species, both of which are present at the farm. A licence is required to disturb a badger sett. There are also small pockets of acid grassland on the site. The whole site is home to a range of habitats and species.
- Biological records at WCC note protected species in the Manor Farm area. A 2km radius of the site has been assessed to identify protected species.

- Asked the Council to recognise that the Barnes family have been prey to the Council for years. Say no to this development. Leave the family alone.

Tracy Vallor Jones:

- Read a letter on behalf of Mrs Jane Taylor which was a heartfelt plea on behalf of Tim and Leander. She supported them in their efforts to save Manor Farm as her husband had received care from Prospect Physio based at the farm.
- Whilst Mrs Taylor appreciated the need for sites she felt it was unfair to close existing businesses for the proposal to go ahead.

Ian Wright:

- St. John's Road resident.
- Questions:
 - Who will pay for it to be developed?
 - MP responded: the role of the Council is as a facilitator, the Council will not bring forward or operate any of the sites. We would work with partners including the County Council and RSLs to bring sites forward offering support for funding bids.
 - Ian Wright: This is only a small part of the bigger picture, there are 6 District Councils in Worcestershire and the Core Strategy covers all of them. WFDC has the most caravans per square mile, question why Malvern Hills don't do their bit as they have the least. Ask other Councils to do their bit. Furthermore, a site has just been approved by Conhampton in Wychavon District, these 35 pitches will encroach on Stourport's infrastructure. Consider this before jumping ahead with more pitches.
 - Ian Wright: When do the Travelling Showpeople need to vacate their site by and why?
 - MP: The Core Strategy only covers Wyre Forest District. The other districts are currently at different stages with their Core Strategies but they too will need to consider how they provide for Gypsies and Travellers. MP was unable to comment specifically on the Wychavon approval but offered to find out more information. With reference to the Travelling Showpeople, the site owners wish to reclaim the land and we are working with them to ensure a seamless transition.
 - Ian Wright: If you don't know where the relief road is going to go how can you shortlist the Manor Farm site? You are taking someone's land to build the site; he will accept the relief road but not this use. Guidance states that Gypsy and Traveller sites should not be adjacent to a landfill site or a reclamation site. This site goes against the recommendations.
 - MP: We are planning over a long period. The indicative line of the relief road is preserved within the Local Plan. The detailed line will only become clear when the funding is in place and detailed proposals are progressed. The Gypsy and Traveller site would be to the South of the relief road and therefore away

from the landfill site. Assumptions have been made due to the long timescale.

- Ian Wright: The Baker Report states that sites should be in keeping with the landscape character. He also referred to compensation for planning blight and stated that should the site go ahead he would look into this and if all his neighbours did too the cost could be significant. Stated that he is not against development or racist but felt that this site needed to be kept green. Drew attention to the fact that the Baker Report concluded that there were other sites where development can be accommodated more satisfactorily.
- MP: Acknowledged that landscaping is a problem on the site and will need to be considered as part of the decision. The site is not a perfect site but given the difficulties in finding sites we need to consider sites which do not tick all the boxes.

Ann Taylor:

- Asked for confirmation that the Council is looking at moving the Travelling Showpeople onto a working farm as she could not see the logic in that. Questioned why the area was considered let alone shortlisted.

Cllr John Holden:

- Thanked people for making well researched comments.
- Offered condolences to Tim and Leander and thanked them for his visit to the farm.
- Stated that he had received some information in writing from the District Council setting out that there are 75 legal pitches on Sandy Lane with a further 23 in the planning system. Stated that the ward members would fight to make sure that Manor Farm is delisted.

Chris Rodgers:

- Manor Farm came into existence as a horse farm and its principle business is still equestrian. Despite the recession there is growth in the equestrian industry. This is an immense facility to people in the District and it would be a travesty to take it away.

Cllr Dixon Sheppard:

- Introduced himself as a District Cllr and Town Cllr and the former Mayor of Stourport.
- Endorsed the Manor Farm comments.
- Currently 50% of the pitches in Worcestershire are in Wychavon and 30% are in Wyre Forest. Malvern Hills has 6%.
- WFDC first of Worcestershire authorities to consult on additional pitches, raised concern that the whole need for Worcestershire would end up being met in Wyre Forest District.
- Gypsies and Travellers are separate communities and they do not always get on with each other.

- Sandy Lane has major problems and the Council need to sit down with the residents and businesses there to sort out their differences before authorising more sites.
- These people are settled not Travellers. What will happen when Travellers come and all of the pitches are taken with permanent residents?
- There is a hidden population of travellers in housing and on holiday caravan sites. This all adds to pressure on local services and facilities.
- Tim Barnes and his family have been treated appallingly by Wyre Forest District Council. The site should not have been shortlisted.
- This is the second major problem in Stourport. Last year we were fighting to retain the Civic Centre.

Stephen Brown:

- Thanked Tim and Leander for their speeches and argued that we should thank them for providing employment.
- It is a disgrace that Tim and Leander have been treated appallingly by the District Council.
- Stated that he is a green activist and will be making a submission based on Green Belt, ecology and safety issues.

S Glover:

- Stated that he had attended all of the meetings and heard all of the points raised. The Stourport meeting has been the most passionate and he asked the Council to consider this when making their decisions.
- Identified that there are flaws in the Baker Report and argued that it is ludicrous to take away someone's home and business for this.

J Lawson:

- Questioned the timescale for the Travelling Showpeople leaving Longbank. The owner has stated that he wants them to leave but can not afford to take legal action to move them on.
- There was a £5million legal bill for Dale Farm which was met by tax payers. This is disgusting.
- Questioned why the British Sugar site could not be used as one large site. It already has infrastructure and the new road will open up access. Would only upset one lot of residents instead of smaller sites dotted around upsetting lots of groups of people.

Mike Parker's Response:

- Cllr Oborski is right to call for other sites to be put forward.
- Clarified that Lloyds Garage was not compulsorily purchased for the relief road but to open up pedestrian access to the Basins.

C Morton:

- Wyre Forest is not a Kingdom and we are not your obedient servants. You were elected by us to run Wyre Forest in our best interests. This is a clear message for you to stop these proposals. No reference has

been provided to any national legislation that makes this necessary. Mark Garnier has been quoted stating that Wyre Forest does not need any more pitches.

- Urged Council to wait and see what the other Districts do.
- Put energy into regeneration not blight.

Open Questions:

Neville Farmer:

- It is obvious that Manor Farm is not a suitable site. Bakers did not visit all of the sites. The site at Blakedown is locked and no-one was asked to open it.
- Suggested site adjacent to Zortech Avenue – large area which already has facilities and services. How come Bakers did not see this on their Google search?
- The consultation is the wrong way around. The Council owes the whole District an apology.

Cllr Smith:

- Have Bakers consulted schools, doctors and highways?

Mike Parker's Response:

- This was not in their brief. This is being undertaken through the current consultation process.

Cllr Vi Higgs:

- Manor Farm is not a preferable site. 15 sites were recommended through the Baker Report, why was Sutton Park Rise taken out and not Manor Farm?

Mike Parker's Response:

- Referred people to the minutes of the Cabinet meeting on 20th September to explain why the 7 sites out to consultation came forward.

Tim Barnes:

- If the relief road route is not known can I take the metal pegs out of my field that have been there for over 15 years?

Cllr Graham Ballinger:

- Baker Report – the consultants claim to have visited all of the sites but they clearly just looked on Google. The Manor Farm site is totally inappropriate.

Tim Hollis:

- Had Baker Associates have visited Manor Farm it would have been clear that it was not redundant.
- Questioned whether the District Council had requested a refund of money paid to Bakers.

Mike Parker's Response:

- Whilst Bakers were incorrect in referring to Manor Farm as redundant, the methodology used for the report is sound.

Jonathan Cooper:

- Why were Baker Associates appointed when the District Council should know the area better than anyone. How did it get to the point where the District Council did not realise that this was an operational farm?

David Morer:

- The site is inappropriate because of its position. It is on the relief road land and adjacent to the new crematorium.

Cllr Nigel Thomas:

- District Councillor for Areley Kings. Stourport Cllrs fight long and hard for Stourport. Kidderminster have more Cllrs so ultimately they will decide what happens in Stourport.

Phil Jones:

- Stated that Cabinet has destroyed his faith in the Conservative Party and if one single pitch was put in Stourport he would never vote Conservative again.

Janet Langford:

- Stated that she is totally against anymore pitches anywhere in Wyre Forest District.
- Questioned the financial incentives for developing new pitches.
- Questioned where the funding comes from when people can not afford homes and nothing is done for them.

Mike Parker:

- With reference to cash incentives, MP clarified that there were none to his knowledge.
- Clarified that Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople paid Council Tax and paid for their utilities in the same way as all other residents do.

Unknown:

- If the Baker Report methodology is sound how come the Cabinet were able to visit sites and dismiss them?
- Mike Parker referred people to the Cabinet meeting minutes from 20th September.

The chair thanked everyone for attending and contributing to the meeting.

Meeting closed at 8.40pm