



EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Partial Assessment Form

Policy, practice, function or project assessed	Gypsy & Traveller Development Plan Document Issues and Options 2 Site Options and Policies
Lead Officer	Claire Spencer
Team	Planning Policy
Start date of assessment	24 March 2009
Completion of assessment	9 June 2009

Please use this form to record your findings in relation to the assessment of an existing policy, function, service or practice.

A. POLICY, PRACTICE, FUNCTION OR PROJECT TO BE ASSESSED

A1. Please describe what are the main aims, objectives, purpose and intended outcomes of the policy or function?

The main aim of the Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document (DPD) is to ensure that sufficient pitches are provided to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers, in accordance with the numbers set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy, and set out policies for determining planning applications for new pitches.

A2. Is this policy or function associated with any other Council policy or priority?

The Gypsy and Traveller DPD will form part of the Council's Local Development Framework.

South Cambridgeshire Gypsy & Traveller Community Strategy
Sustainable Community Strategy
Corporate Vision, Values, Aims, Approaches and Actions

A3. Who are the intended beneficiaries/stakeholders of the policy or function? How many people are affected and from what sections of the community?

Families from the Gypsy and Traveller communities, which make up approximately 1% of the district's population (see section B2). There may be an indirect benefit for both the Gypsy and Traveller and settled communities from providing greater certainty, and delivery of new sites across the region should reduce the need for illegal encampments.

A4. Is the policy/function corporate and far-reaching?

The Gypsy & Traveller DPD is a corporate priority, and it incorporates corporate values in respect of equality and diversity and equal opportunity. It is far-reaching as the DPD will have a long shelf life, covering the period to 2021. Without the DPD there will be far-reaching consequences from an equal opportunities point of view if Gypsies and Travellers do not have the opportunity for a decent home, and there would be continued problems with illegal encampments.

A5. Are you expecting to make any significant change to the policy or service in the near future? If so, please give details.

Yes, the Gypsy and Traveller DPD is at an early stage of plan-making and will change with subsequent stages.

A6. Is this a new or existing policy or function?

The Gypsy and Traveller DPD is a new planning policy document, however, the Council already addresses Gypsy and Traveller issues:
<http://www.scambs.gov.uk/Environment/TravellerIssues/default.htm>

B. EVIDENCE/ DATA and CONSULTATION

It is important to consider all information that is available in determining whether the policy or function could have a differential impact. Please attach examples of monitoring information, research or consultation reports.

B1. What monitoring or other information do you have about relevant target groups, which will show the impact of the policy or function?

The Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessment 2005 (see B2)
South Cambridgeshire Gypsy and Traveller Community Strategy

The performance of the Gypsy and Traveller DPD will be monitored through the Council's Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), using the following indicators:

- Core Output Indicator CO-H4 - Gypsy & Traveller pitches completed
- Local Output Indicator LOA4 - Unauthorised Gypsy & Traveller sites

B2. Have you compared the data you have with the equality profile of the local population? What does it show?

Gypsies and Travellers were not separately identified in the Census, but the Cambridge Area Travellers Needs Assessment of 2005 estimated just over 6,000, making them the largest single minority group in the county. The estimate for SCDC was 1,330, about 1% of the overall population, and after Fenland, the second highest in the county. The majority of Gypsies and Travellers in the district (90%) are transient rather than 'housed'.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission Research Report 12: Inequalities experienced by Gypsy and Traveller communities: A review highlights the following key areas of concern from among the severe, wide-ranging and mutually reinforcing inequalities and problems faced by members of the communities that are the focus of this report. It is by no means an exhaustive list.

- Gypsies and Travellers die earlier than the rest of the population.
- They experience worse health, yet are less likely to receive effective, continuous healthcare.
- Children's educational achievements are worse, and declining still further (contrary to the national trend).
- Participation in secondary education is extremely low: discrimination and abusive behaviour on the part of school staff and other students are frequently cited as reasons for children and young people leaving education at an early age.
- There is a lack of access to pre-school, out-of-school and leisure services for children and young people.
- There is an unquantified but substantial negative psychological impact on children who experience repeated brutal evictions, family tensions associated with insecure lifestyles, and an unending stream of overt and extreme hostility from the wider population.

- Employment rates are low, and poverty high.
- There is an increasing problem of substance abuse among unemployed and disaffected young people.
- There are high suicide rates among the communities.
- Within the criminal justice system – because of a combination of unfair treatment at different stages and other inequalities affecting the communities – there is a process of accelerated criminalisation at a young age, leading rapidly to custody. This includes: disproportionate levels of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders against Gypsies and Travellers, instead of the use of alternative dispute resolution processes; high use of remand in custody, both because of judicial assumptions about perceived risk of absconding and lack of secure accommodation; prejudice against Gypsies and Travellers within pre-sentence reports, the police service and the judiciary; and perpetuation of discrimination, disadvantage and cultural dislocation within the prison system, leading to acute distress and frequently suicide.
- Policy initiatives and political systems that are designed to promote inclusion and equality frequently exclude Gypsies and Travellers. This includes political structures and community development and community cohesion programmes.
- There is a lack of access to culturally appropriate support services for people in the most vulnerable situations, such as women experiencing domestic violence.
- Gypsies' and Travellers' culture and identity receive little or no recognition, with consequent and considerable damage to their self-esteem.

B3. Have you identified any improvements or other changes that could be made from monitoring the data?

The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) aims to address the need for new sites through setting targets for the number of pitches to be provided across the region. As these are delivered at the district level there should be a reduction in the number of illegal encampments. The RSS has an Implementation and Monitoring Framework to ensure delivery of the policies.

Similarly, the performance of the Gypsy and Traveller DPD will be monitored through the Council's Annual Monitoring Report. This will identify whether there is any change in trend, and if necessary action can be taken.

Through the provision of additional pitches in consultation with both the Gypsy/Traveller and settled communities it is hoped that myths can be dispelled and relations improved, and many of the inequalities experienced can be addressed.

B4. Have you consulted or involved external stakeholders about the policy or function? If so, what were their views?

Yes, the Gypsy and Travellers DPD is subject to statutory processes for public consultation. These processes determine which stakeholders are consulted, as a minimum, and over what period.

The Issues and Options 1: General Approach consultation was subject to a six-week consultation between 13 October to 24 November 2006. The results of the public consultation were reported to Members on 22 February 2007 and is available to view on the Council's website: <http://scambs.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.asp?CId=410&MId=3145&Ver=4>.

The Issues and Options 2: Site Options public consultation will provide another opportunity for the early involvement of stakeholders and the wider public to influence the production of the Gypsy and Traveller DPD.

The Council is currently developing a policy statement to make it clear to the public that it will not tolerate racist comments.

B5. Have you undertaken any consultation with staff to assess their perception of any impacts of the policy or function? If so, what has been learnt from them?

Yes, the Development Control and Appeals teams have been consulted during the early drafting of the Gypsy and Traveller DPD. The Strategic Officer Group on Traveller Issues, involving senior officers from across the Council, also considered the draft report before it was reported to Members for approval to consult.

B6. Please provide information about any other consultation, research, or involvement undertaken in relation to this impact assessment.

Various Planning Circulars, national guidance, Best Practice Guides and research from the Equality and Human Rights Commission informed the production of the Gypsy and Traveller DPD.

C1. IMPACT OF THE POLICY OR FUNCTION

Assess the potential impact on each of the equality strands/groups. The impact could be negative, positive or neutral. If you assess a negative impact for any of the groups then you will need to assess whether that impact is low, medium or high. Refer to the evidence you use.

DESCRIPTION OF IMPACT	Nature of Impact (Positive, Neutral, Adverse)	Extent of Impact (Low, Medium, High)
GENDER: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on men and women	Neutral	
RACE: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on different race/ethnic groups		
<p>Gypsies / Travellers: The Gypsy and Traveller DPD has been specifically developed to ensure that the needs of Gypsy/Travellers are met.</p> <p>Non-Gypsy / Traveller communities: Whilst the Gypsy and Traveller DPD has been specifically developed to ensure that the needs of Gypsy/Travellers are met, non-Gypsy /Traveller communities will also benefit from the Gypsy and Traveller DPD. There is plenty of opportunity for public engagement during the Plan’s development, including influencing site location and design. Providing additional sites to meet needs should reduce illegal encampments which cause friction between the Gypsy/Travellers and the settled communities.</p>	<p>Positive</p> <p>Positive</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Low</p>
DISABILITY: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on disabled people	Neutral	
AGE: Identify the potential impact of the policy or function on different age groups	Neutral	
SEXUAL ORIENTATION: potential impact of the policy on lesbian, gay men, bisexual or heterosexual people	Neutral	
RELIGION/FAITH: Identify the potential impact the policy on different religious/faith groups	Neutral	
OTHER		

PLEASE NOTE: Following completion of the section above, if the nature of the impact is adverse then you may need to proceed to a full equality impact assessment.

C2. Could you minimise or remove any adverse or potential impact that is high, medium or low significance, in advance of a full impact assessment? Explain how.

N/A

C3. Does the policy or function actively promote equal opportunities and good community relations? Or could changes be made so that it does so?

National planning policy requires that everyone should have the opportunity for a decent home. Travelling and living in a caravan is part of the heritage of a Gypsy and Traveller and not a lifestyle choice. Gypsies and Travellers are recognised ethnic groups and therefore are entitled to the same access to housing as the settled community. The provision of further pitches for Gypsies and Travellers through the Gypsy and Traveller DPD, in consultation with both the Gypsy/Traveller and settled communities, will assist in meeting their housing needs and may be able to dispel myths and improve relations, and address many of the inequalities experienced.

The Gypsy and Traveller DPD seeks to accommodate the needs of Gypsies and Travellers in a way that is consistent with the approach in other DPDs for accommodating the needs of the settled community. Sites have been tested using a number of criteria to ensure their suitability. As well as addressing known needs at the present time, the DPD includes policies to assess the suitability of any additional sites that may come forward.

There is plenty of opportunity for public engagement during the development of the Gypsy and Traveller DOD, including influencing site location and design, and providing additional sites to meet needs should reduce illegal encampments which cause friction between the Gypsy/Travellers and the settled communities. Consultation will be directed at both the Gypsy/Traveller and settled communities to build relations between the two, and to try to avoid conflict.

C4. Please provide any further information, qualitative or quantitative that does not fit into the questions but you feel has a likely impact on this assessment.

D. CONCLUSIONS			
D1. Was there sufficient data to complete the partial assessment?	Yes?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	If “NO”, what arrangements are in place for evidence gathering and continuing with the assessment?
	No?	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D2. Is the outcome of the partial assessment that the policy or function would have an adverse impact (medium or high impact) on one or more target group?	Yes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	If “YES”, will you proceed to a full assessment? If so, what arrangements are in place to carry out the full assessment?
	No?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
D3. Is the outcome of the partial assessment that the policy or function would have a neutral or positive impact on equalities?	Yes?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	If “YES”, have you included proposals in the Action Plan to further improve the impact of the policy or function on equalities? Do you plan to review the service or policy again in future to assess whether there has been any change? If so, when? Yes, in Summer 2010
	No?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Has the Equalities Steering Group and the Consultative Forum reviewed the assessment? If so what were their comments? No
D4. Do you have any other conclusions/outcomes from the partial assessment?			

ACTION PLAN for enhancing existing practice

Recommendation/ issue to be addressed	Planned Milestone	Planned completion of milestone (date)	Officer Responsible	Progress
Development of a policy statement to make it clear that the Council will not tolerate racist comments.		June 2009	Paul Williams	

RESOURCES

Does the above action plan require any additional resources?

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ARRANGEMENTS FOR MONITORING

Please give your plans for monitoring the achievement of the above actions.

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SIGN OFF: The officers below confirm that this partial assessment has been completed in accordance with the Council's guidance

Signature of Lead Officer		Date:
Signature of Corporate Manager or Chief Officer:		Date:

Please retain the original form on your service area and return a copy of the completed form to the Equality & Diversity Officer.