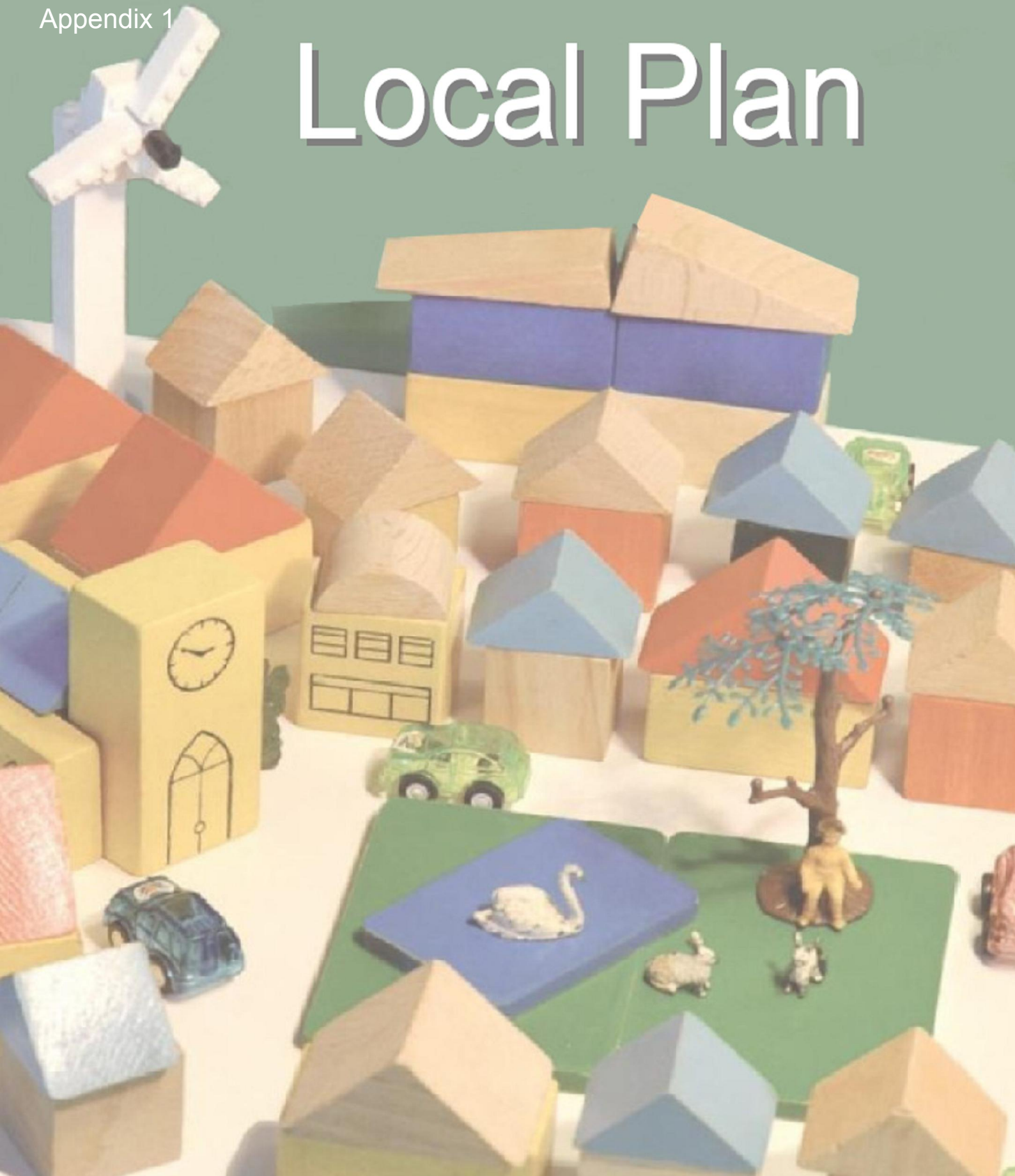


Local Plan



Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople
Local Development Document
(Preferred Options)
Draft for Consultation (October 2014)

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This document proposes to safeguard existing authorised traveller sites, specifically those with permanent permissions and sets out a number of sites that are proposed for use as permanent traveller sites to meet an existing need within the District. It is being published for a 6 week public consultation between 3 October and 14 November 2014.

Background

1.2 The Local Plan for Three Rivers will consist of a number of documents including:

- The Core Strategy DPD: provides the over-arching strategy and policies and the long term vision for Three Rivers.
- Site Allocations LDD: allocates sites for housing, employment, retail, open space, education and community uses.
- Development Management Policies LDD: sets out the policies against which planning applications will be assessed.
- **Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople LDD**: allocates sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

1.3 A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) are also carried out to assess the proposals in Local Development Documents to ensure they contribute to sustainable development.

2.0 What is the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Local Development Document?

2.1 Policy CP5 of the Core Strategy sets the criteria against which planning applications for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople will be assessed. The Gypsy Traveller and Travelling Showpeople LDD will identify sites to meet the accommodation needs of Travellers in the District in accordance with national policy.

3.0 National Policy

3.1 Government planning policy relating to Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople is set out in 'Planning policy for traveller sites' which came into force in March 2012.

3.2 In summary national planning policy requires the Council to;

- assess the needs of the traveller community within its area
- set pitch and plot targets to meet the locally assessed need
- identify and update annually, a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years' worth of sites against this locally set target and
- identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years six to ten and, where possible, for years 11-15.

3.3 Paragraph 9, footnote 7 of the Planning policy for traveller sites states 'to be considered deliverable, sites should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that development will be delivered on the site within five years and in particular that the development of the site is viable.'

4.0 Why do we need to allocate sites?

- 4.1 The failure to allocate sufficient land to meet the need for permanent pitches has a number of possible impacts including:
- Unauthorised development and encampments, as well as tensions with the settled community
 - Difficulty of ensuring stable access to all the support and services that Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities need
 - Reinforcing the cycle of nomadism and homelessness for those Gypsies and Travellers who may prefer or need a more settled way of life, but cannot find a permanent site
 - Applications for development being decided on appeal, which can result in sites being permitted that may not be the most suitable or sustainable locations for development
 - Failure of the Council to meet the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers in contravention of its duty under the Housing Act 2004 and
 - Restricting the Council's ability to enforce against unauthorised development as our ability to enforce is related to our activity in meeting the need for new provision.

5.0 Understanding the District's Needs

5.1 In previous years the number of pitches the Council had to supply was based on the policies within the Regional Spatial Strategy. However, with the revocation of the Regional Spatial Strategy and the introduction of the national policy 'Planning for traveller sites' the Council must now determine the future needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople based on its own assessment. This was achieved by a Travellers Needs Assessment that was undertaken in 2012 and updated in 2013 which determined the current provision and the likely future needs of our Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities.

5.2 Travelling Showpeople

5.3 There are two authorised Showmen yards in Mill End with a combined capacity of 20 plots. However, it was determined through the study that there are two other long term Showmen yards that exist in the District and the true number of Showmen on sites in the District is much higher. The Traveller Needs Assessment shows that there is no identified need for further Showpeople sites in the first five years and any future needs can be accommodated on existing sites with applications to be assessed against Policy CP5 of the Core Strategy.

5.4 Transit Sites

5.5 There is currently only one transit site in Hertfordshire which is located in Hertsmere at South Mimms. Transit sites serve a specific function of meeting the needs of Gypsy and Traveller households who are visiting an area or who are passing through on the way to somewhere else. The key issue for determining if there is a requirement for further transit site provision is whether there is evidence of sufficient travelling through the area. Evidence held by Hertfordshire County Council shows that there were only 3 occurrences of unauthorised encampments in Three Rivers between 2008 and 2012. The study concludes that there is no identified need for a transit site in Three Rivers although there is sufficient capacity on the proposed sites to accommodate occasional visitors.

5.6 Gypsies and Travellers

5.7 The results of the Traveller Needs Assessments revealed that the estimated extra site provision that is required now and in the future in Three Rivers will be 7 pitches. The additional pitches will address the needs of the existing households on sites with temporary planning permission

due to expire in the near future and support a small amount of household growth over time. The table below summarises the requirements for each five year period.

	2013 – 2018	2019-2023	2024 - 2027
Private Pitches	5	2	0

6.0 Proposed Traveller Site Allocations

6.1 Deliverable Sites for Traveller Use

6.2 The policy identifies 2 sites which are current Gypsy and Traveller sites which are each subject to temporary planning permission. These sites offer an immediate opportunity to meet the identified current and future needs of our travelling community to 2023. Site plans are attached for information at Appendix 1.

POLICY GT1: TRAVELLER SITE ALLOCATIONS
<p>The following sites have been identified for traveller site use:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rear of 59 Toms Lane, Kings Langley 2. Land between Langleybury Lane and Old House Lane, Langleybury <p>These sites are considered to be suitable, available and achievable for traveller use. The development of the sites will be subject to other relevant policies in the adopted development Plan and national planning policy.</p> <p>These sites shall be occupied only by those persons who meet the definition of ‘gypsies and travellers’ in Annex 1: Glossary of the DCLG document ‘Planning policy for traveller sites’.</p>

6.3 Safeguarding Existing Authorised Sites

6.4 Sites which have unrestricted planning permission for Gypsy and Traveller or Travelling Showpeople site use will be ‘safeguarded’ to ensure that the permitted use as a traveller site is not lost through the grant of any subsequent planning permission whilst there remains a need for sites.

POLICY GT2: SAFEGUARDING EXISTING AUTHORISED SITES
<p>Existing traveller sites will be safeguarded for traveller use. These sites will continue to be safeguarded for as long as the need exists for traveller accommodations within the District:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Oaklands, Bedmond Road, Bedmond 2. Fir Trees, Dawes Lane, Sarratt 3. Land Adjacent to 321B Uxbridge Road, Mill End, Rickmansworth 4. Rear of 317-319 Uxbridge Road, Mill End, Rickmansworth 5. Rear of 321 Uxbridge Road, Mill End, Rickmansworth <p>Any new traveller sites granted planning permission and implemented shall also be safeguarded under provisions of this policy as long as the need exists as identified in the Council’s latest, agreed Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment.</p>

6.5 The Planning policy for traveller sites (DCLG) states that Green Belt boundaries should be altered only in exceptional circumstances. Limited alterations to the Green Belt boundaries to

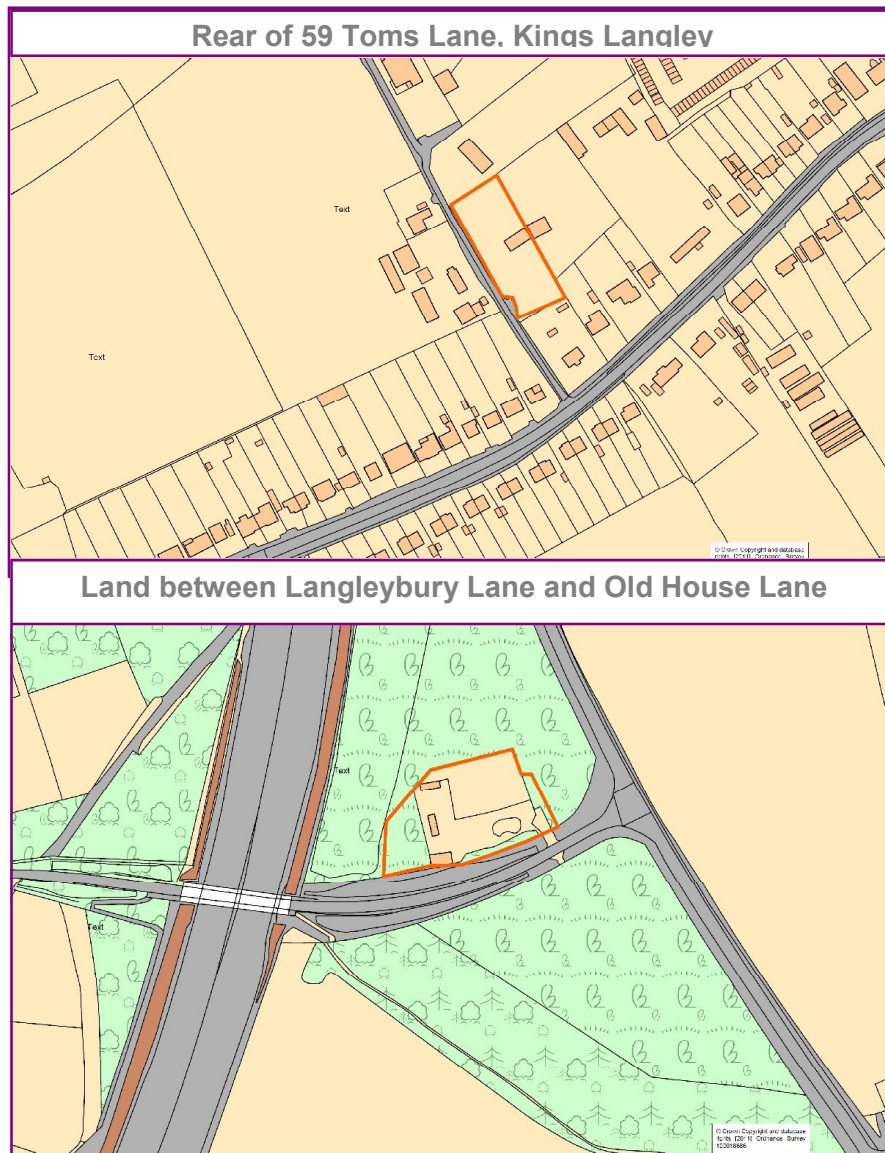
meet a specific, identified need for a traveller site should only be done through the plan making process and not in response to a planning application.¹

6.6 We are therefore removing the Green Belt designation from the sites listed in Policy GT1 and Policy GT2. The revised Green Belt boundary is detailed in the Policies Map.

6.7 **Application for Gypsy and Travellers on windfall site**

6.8 Applications for Gypsy and Traveller uses on sites not identified by this document (windfall sites) will be determined in accordance with Policy CP5 of the Council's Core Strategy, adopted October 2011.

APPENDIX 1: IDENTIFIED TRAVELLER SITES FOR ALLOCATION



¹ Policy E of Planning policy for traveller sites (DCLG) states :Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances. If a local planning authority wished to make an exceptional limited alteration to the defined Green Belt boundary (which might be to accommodate a site inset within the Green Belt) to meet a specific, identified need for a traveller site, it should do so only through the plan-making process and not in response to a planning application. If land is removed from the Green Belt, it should be specifically allocated in the development plan as a traveller site only.

Have your say

We are interested to hear the views of everyone including residents, businesses, community groups and all other stakeholders. All comments received will contribute towards the final document that will be submitted to the Government at a later date.

We are only seeking views on the site and **not** the principle of allocating sites. That principle is set out in the adopted Core Strategy which was the subject of previous consultation. The Council will consider the suitability of any additional sites brought forward during this consultation period together with consultation responses. Sites not previously considered will need to be accompanied by a location map and a map clearly showing the boundaries of the site and evidence of suitability, availability and deliverability.

This document and supporting documents can be viewed on the Council's website at www.threerivers.gov.uk/Default.aspx/Web/LocalDevelopmentFramework.

Hard copies can also be viewed at the Council's offices in Rickmansworth and at all public libraries in the District.

Please let us have your comments in one of the following ways:

By email to TRLDF@threerivers.gov.uk or

By post to Development Plans, Three Rivers District Council, Three Rivers House, Northway, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire, WD3 1RL

The closing date for responses is 5pm 14 November 2014.

Please note that Three Rivers District Council will only consider comments by respondents who provide their names and address. Inappropriate, offensive or racist comments will not be accepted.

For further information on this document, please contact the Council:

By e-mail: trldf@threerivers.gov.uk

By telephone: 01923 727106 or Minicom on 01923 727303

In writing: Economic and Sustainable Development, Three Rivers District Council, Three Rivers House, Northway, Rickmansworth, WD3 1RL

A separate sustainability appraisal report has been prepared on an independent basis for the Council. This document appraises the environmental, social and economic implications of the policies. The appraisal can be viewed on the Council's website, at the Council's reception and at the libraries in the District.