

ID38

Shropshire Council. Examination of Shropshire Local Plan 2016-2038

Inspectors: Louise Crosby MA MRTPI & Nick Palmer BA (Hons) BPI
MRTPI

Programme Officer: Kerry Trueman

Tel: 07582 310364, email: programme.officer@shropshire.gov.uk

Mr West
Planning Policy
Shropshire Council
PO BOX 4826
Shrewsbury
SY1 9LJ

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Dear Mr West

Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment

1. As you will be aware Annex 1 of Planning policy for traveller sites (PPTS) was updated on 19 December 2023. This changed the definition of gypsies and travellers to include those who have ceased to travel permanently on grounds of their own or their family's or dependents' educational or health needs or old age.
2. We note that the Council's 2017 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) considered those persons and families meeting the previous (2015) PPTS definition and those who did not. Similarly, the Council took the view that PPTS and non-PPTS gypsies should be considered in need of culturally appropriate accommodation.
3. However, you will recall that we expressed concern previously about the age of the GTAA which although updated in 2019 and 2022 still relied on the 2017 survey data. Since then, the examination has been greatly delayed due to the need for the Council to update its sustainability appraisal (SA) and housing and employment topic paper, and as set out in our recent letter, further work is required in this regard. Given the extent of this further work and the need for additional consultation and hearings, it is unlikely the plan will be

adopted before 2025. By then the GTAA survey work will be 8 years old.

4. Taking all the above into account we consider it would be appropriate to undertake a fresh GTAA with a new survey based on the December 2023 Annex A PPTS definition. This will provide a comprehensive up to date document looking at both current need and supply for gypsies and travellers and travelling showpeople. If it is undertaken now, it could be consulted upon at the same time as the revised SA. There is also merit in carrying out the surveys now when gypsies and travellers are less likely to be away travelling, compared to the summer months. It would be helpful to know from the Council the likely timescales involved in carrying out this additional work.
5. We are not inviting comments from any representors to our letter. Should the Council have any questions please direct them through the programme officer.

Yours sincerely

Louise Crosby and Nick Palmer

Examining Inspectors