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Colchester Borough Council Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment

Need Summary Report

May 2017



The Essex Planning Officers Association (EPOA) endorsed the Greater Essex GTAA Report on the 25th January 2018



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The primary objective of this Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) is to provide a robust revised assessment of current and future need for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation in Colchester Borough for the period 2016-2033.
- 1.2 The primary reason for completing the update was the publication of a revised version of Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) in August 2015. This included a change to the definition of Travellers for planning purposes. The key change that was made was the removal of the term *persons...who have ceased to travel permanently*, meaning that those who have ceased to travel permanently will not now fall under the planning definition of a Traveller for the purposes of assessing accommodation need in a GTAA (see Para 1.8 for the full definition).
- 1.3 The study provides a robust evidence base to enable the Council to assess and meet the needs of the Travelling Community as well as complying with their requirements towards Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople under the Housing Act 1985, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012, Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) 2014, Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) 2015, and the Housing and Planning Act (2016). It also provides the evidence base which can be used to support Local Plan policies and development management.
- 1.4 The Colchester GTAA is part of a wider study that covers the whole of Essex, together with Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock (Greater Essex). The study across all 14 local authorities has been completed following a Joint Methodology which can be found as a separate report¹.
- 1.5 The reporting framework for the wider Essex GTAA comprises the Essex GTAA Joint Methodology Report; individual GTAA Need Summary Reports for each of the 14 local authorities; and an Essex GTAA Summary Report that brings together the final outcomes from each local authority and provides figures for Essex as a whole, figures for the wider study area, as well as providing strategic recommendations on transit provision. The GTAA Need Summary Reports are dated when they were each published.
- 1.6 The purpose of this GTAA Need Summary Report is to provide the Council with a summary of the levels of accommodation need for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in Colchester Borough for the period 2016-2033.
- 1.7 The baseline date for the study is **September 2016**.

¹ Essex, Southend-on-Sea & Thurrock Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment Joint Methodology (January 2018)

The Planning Definition in PPTS (2015)

- 1.8 For the purposes of the planning system the definition of a Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showperson was changed in PPTS (2015). The planning definition is set out in Annex 1 and states that:

For the purposes of this planning policy “gypsies and travellers” means:

Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family’s or dependants’ educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.

In determining whether persons are “gypsies and travellers” for the purposes of this planning policy, consideration should be given to the following issues amongst other relevant matters:

- a) Whether they previously led a nomadic habit of life.*
- b) The reasons for ceasing their nomadic habit of life.*
- c) Whether there is an intention of living a nomadic habit of life in the future, and if so, how soon and in what circumstances.*

For the purposes of this planning policy, “travelling showpeople” means:

Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family’s or dependants’ more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined above.

(Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), August 2015)

- 1.9 The key change that was made to both definitions was the removal of the term *persons...who have ceased to travel permanently*, meaning that those who have ceased to travel permanently will not now fall under the planning definition of a Traveller for the purposes of assessing accommodation need in a GTAA.

Definition of Travelling

- 1.10 One of the most important questions that GTAAs will need to address in terms of applying the planning definition is *what constitutes travelling?* This has been determined through case law that has tested the meaning of the term ‘nomadic’ as well as other travelling characteristics.
- 1.11 **R v South Hams District Council (1994)** – defined Gypsies as “*persons who wander or travel for the purpose of making or seeking their livelihood (not persons who travel from place to place without any connection between their movements and their means of livelihood.)*” This includes ‘born’ Gypsies and Travellers as well as ‘elective’ Travellers such as New Age Travellers.

- 1.12 In **Maidstone BC v Secretary of State for the Environment and Dunn (2006)**, it was held that a Romany Gypsy who bred horses and travelled to horse fairs at Appleby, Stow-in-the-Wold and the New Forest, where he bought and sold horses, and who remained away from his permanent site for up to two months of the year, at least partly in connection with this traditional Gypsy activity, was entitled to be accorded Gypsy status.
- 1.13 In **Greenwich LBC v Powell (1989)**, Lord Bridge of Harwich stated that a person could be a statutory Gypsy if he led a nomadic way of life *only seasonally*.
- 1.14 The definition was widened further by the decision in **R v Shropshire CC ex p Bungay (1990)**. The case concerned a Gypsy family that had not travelled for some 15 years in order to care for its elderly and infirm parents. An aggrieved resident living in the area of the family's recently approved Gypsy site sought judicial review of the local authority's decision to accept that the family had retained their Gypsy status even though they had not travelled for some considerable time. Dismissing the claim, the judge held that a person could remain a Gypsy even if he or she did not travel, provided that their nomadism was held in abeyance and not abandoned.
- 1.15 That point was revisited in the case of **Hearne v National Assembly for Wales (1999)**, where a traditional Gypsy was held not to be a Gypsy for the purposes of planning law as he had stated that he intended to abandon his nomadic habit of life, lived in a permanent dwelling and was taking a course that led to permanent employment.
- 1.16 **Wrexham County Borough Council v National Assembly of Wales and Others (2003)** determined that households and individuals could continue to lead a nomadic way of life with a permanent base from which they set out from and return to.
- 1.17 The implication of these rulings in terms of applying the planning definition is that it will **only include those who travel (or have ceased to travel temporarily) for work purposes and in doing so stay away from their usual place of residence**. It can include those who have a permanent site or place of residence, but that it will not include those who travel for purposes other than work – such as visiting horse fairs and visiting friends or relatives. It will **not cover** those who commute to work daily from a permanent place of residence.
- 1.18 It will also be the case that a household where some family members travel for nomadic purposes on a regular basis, but where other family members stay at home to look after children in education, or other dependents with health problems etc. the household unit would be defined as travelling under the planning definition.
- 1.19 Households will also fall under the planning definition if they can demonstrate that they have ceased to travel temporarily as a result of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age. In order to have ceased to travel temporarily these households will need to demonstrate that they have travelled for work in the past. In addition households may also have to demonstrate that they plan to travel again for work in the future.
- 1.20 This approach was endorsed by a Planning Inspector in a Decision Notice for an appeal in East Hertfordshire that was published in December 2016 (Appeal Ref: APP/J1915/W/16/3145267). A summary can be seen below.

Case law, including the R v South Hams District Council ex parte Gibb (1994) judgment referred to me at the hearing, despite its reference to 'purposive activities including work' also refers to a connection between the travelling and the means of livelihood, that is, an economic purpose. In this regard, there is no economic purpose... This situation is no different from that of many landlords and property investors or indeed anyone travelling to work in a fixed, pre-arranged location. In this regard there is not an essential connection between wandering and work... Whilst there does appear to be some connection between the travel and the work in this regard, it seems to me that these periods of travel for economic purposes are very short, amounting to an extremely small proportion of his time and income. Furthermore, the work is not carried out in a nomadic manner because it seems likely that it is done by appointment... I conclude, therefore, that XX does not meet the definition of a gypsy and traveller in terms of planning policy because there is insufficient evidence that he is currently a person of a nomadic habit of life.

2. Methodology

- ^{2.1} As part of the overall commission a Joint Methodology has been prepared that has been used to complete GTAA's for local authorities in Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock. Although it was a separate commission the Joint Methodology has also been used to complete the GTAA for Basildon. The Joint Methodology sets out the overall approach that has been followed to complete the assessment of need and is a separate document to this report.
- ^{2.2} The Joint Methodology is based on the approach that ORS have been continually refining over the past 10 years for undertaking robust and defensible GTAA's. This has been updated in light of the introduction of the PPG in 2014, changes to PPTS in 2015 and the Housing and Planning Act (2016), as well as responding to changes set out by Planning Ministers, with particular reference to new household formation rates. This is an evolving methodology that has been adaptive to changes in planning policy as well as the outcomes of Local Plan Examinations and Planning Appeals.
- ^{2.3} PPTS (2015) contains a number of requirements for local authorities which must be addressed in any methodology. This includes the need to pay particular attention to early and effective community engagement with both settled and traveller communities (including discussing travellers' accommodation needs with travellers themselves); identification of permanent and transit site accommodation needs separately; working collaboratively with neighbouring local planning authorities; and establishing whether households fall within the planning definition for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
- ^{2.4} In summary this included the following key stages:
- » Desk-Based Review
 - » Stakeholder Engagement
 - » Working Collaboratively with Neighbouring Planning Authorities
 - » Survey of Travelling Communities
 - » Engagement with Bricks and Mortar Households
 - » Applying the PPTS Planning Definition
 - » Calculating Current and Future Need
 - » Transit Provision
 - » Final Outcomes

^{2.5} The approach is the same as that considered in April 2016 and July 2017 by the Planning Inspector for the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy. She concluded in her final Examination Report that was published in October 2017:

'The methodology behind this assessment incorporates a full demographic study of all occupied pitches, a comprehensive effort to undertake interviews with Gypsy and Traveller households, and consideration of the implications of the new national policy. I am satisfied that the GTAA provides a robust and credible evidence base and I accept its findings.'

3. Planning Definition

^{3.1} The primary change introduced by PPTS (2015) in relation to the assessment of need was the change in the definition of a Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showperson for planning purposes. Through the site interviews ORS has collected information necessary to assess each household against the planning definition. Since PPTS (2015) was issued only a small number of relevant planning appeal decisions have been issued by the Planning Inspectorate on how the planning definition should be applied – these support the view that households need to be able to demonstrate that they travel for work purposes to meet the planning definition, and stay away from their usual place of residence when doing so. See Paragraph 1.20 for a recent example.

Applying the Planning Definition

^{3.2} The household interview included a structured section of questions to record information about the travelling characteristics of household members. This included questions on the following key issues:

- » Whether any household members have travelled in the past 12 months.
- » Whether household members have ever travelled.
- » The main reasons for travelling.
- » Where household members travel to.
- » The times of the year that household members travel.
- » Where household members stay when they are away travelling.
- » When household members stopped travelling.
- » The reasons why household members stopped travelling.
- » Whether household members intend to travel again in the future.
- » When and the reasons why household members plan to travel again in the future.

^{3.3} The outcomes from these questions on travelling were used to assess the status of each household against the planning definition in PPTS (2015). Through a combination of responses households need to provide sufficient information to demonstrate that **household members travel for work purposes and in doing so stay away from their usual place of residence, or that they have ceased to travel temporarily due to education, ill health or old age, and plan to travel again for work purposes in the future**. The same definition applies to Travelling Showpeople as to Gypsies and Travellers.

^{3.4} Households that need to be formally considered in the GTAA fall under one of 3 classifications. Only those households that meet, or may meet, the planning definition will form the formal components of need to be included in the GTAA:

- » Households that travel under the planning definition.
- » Households that have ceased to travel temporarily under the planning definition.

- » Households where an interview was not possible who *may* fall under the planning definition.

3.5 Whilst the needs of those households that do not meet the planning definition do not need to be included in the GTAA, they have been assessed to provide the Council with information on components of need to be addressed as part of a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) or a Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) for example, and through separate Local Plan policies.

Unknown Households

3.6 As well as calculating need for households that meet the planning definition, the needs of the households where an interview was not completed (either due to refusal to be interviewed or households that were not present during the fieldwork period) need to be considered as part of the GTAA where they are believed to be Gypsies, Travellers or Showpeople who *may* meet the planning definition. Whilst there is no law or guidance that sets out how the needs of these households should be addressed, an approach has been taken that seeks an estimate of potential need from these households. This will be a maximum additional need figure over and above the need identified for households that do meet the planning definition.

3.7 The estimate seeks to identify potential current and future need from many pitches known to be temporary or unauthorised, and through new household formation. For the latter the national rate of 1.50% has been used as the demographics of residents are unknown. This approach is consistent with the outcomes of a recent Planning Appeal where access to a site was not possible but basic information was known about the number of households residing there. (Planning Inspectorate Ref: APP/Z6950/A/14/2212012).

3.8 ORS are of the opinion that it would not be appropriate when producing a robust assessment of need to make any firm assumptions about whether or not households where an interview was not completed meet the planning definition based on the outcomes of households where an interview was completed.

3.9 However, data that has been collected from over 2,500 household interviews that have been completed by ORS since the changes to PPTS in 2015 suggests that overall approximately 10% of households who have been interviewed meet the planning definition. This would suggest that it is likely that only a small proportion of the potential need identified from unknown households will need conditioned² Gypsy and Traveller pitches, and that the needs of the majority from unknown households will need to be addressed through separate Local Plan policies.

3.10 The Council will need to carefully consider how to address the needs associated with unknown Travellers in Local Plan policies as it is unlikely that all of these will have a need that should be addressed through the provision of conditioned Gypsy or Traveller pitches. In terms of Local Plan policies the Council could consider the use of a criteria-based policy (as suggested in PPTS (2015) Paragraph 11) for any unknown households that do provide evidence that they meet the planning definition, and also take into account the NPPF.

² Pitches with planning conditions restricting occupation to Gypsies or Travellers.

^{3.11} How the ORS methodology addresses need from unknown households was supported by the Planning Inspector for a recent Local Plan Examination in Maldon, Essex. In his Report that was published on 29th June 2017 he concluded:

150. The Council's stance is that any need arising from 'unknowns' should be a matter left to the planning application process. Modifications to Policy H6 have been put forward by the Council setting out criteria for such a purpose, which I consider further below. To my mind, that is an appropriate approach. While there remains a possibility that up to 10 further pitches may be needed, that cannot be said to represent identified need. It would be unreasonable to demand that the Plan provide for needs that have not been established to exist. That being said, MM242h is nonetheless necessary in this regard. It commits the Council to a review of the Plan if future reviews of the GTAA reveal the necessity for land allocations to provide for presently 'unknown' needs. For effectiveness, I have altered this modification from the version put forward by the Council by replacing the word "may" with "will" in relation to undertaking the review committed to. I have also replaced "the Plan" with "Policy H6" – the whole Plan need not be reviewed.

Households that do not meet the Planning Definition

^{3.12} Households who do not travel or have ceased to travel permanently now fall outside the planning definition of a Traveller. However Romany Gypsies and Irish and Scottish Travellers may be able to demonstrate a right to culturally appropriate accommodation under the Equality Act (2010). In addition provisions set out in the Housing and Planning Act (2016) now include a duty (under Section 8 of the 1985 Housing Act that covers the requirement for a periodical review of housing needs) for local authorities to consider the needs of people residing in or resorting to their district with respect to the provision of sites on which caravans can be stationed, or places on inland waterways where houseboats can be moored. Draft Guidance³ related to this section of the Act has been published setting out how the government would want local housing authorities to undertake this assessment and it is the same as the GTAA assessment process. The implication is therefore that the housing needs of any Gypsy and Traveller households who do not meet the planning definition of a Traveller will need to be assessed as part of the wider housing needs of the area, for example through the SHMA or HEDNA process, and will form a subset of the wider need arising from households residing in caravans.

³ "Draft guidance to local housing authorities on the periodical review of housing needs for caravans and houseboats." (March 2016)

4. Survey of Travellers

Interviews with Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

- 4.1 One of the major components of this study was a detailed survey of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population living in Colchester.
- 4.2 Through the desk-based research ORS identified 1 public site (12 pitches); 9 private sites (15 pitches); 1 tolerated site (1 pitch); and no temporary, transit or unauthorised sites. There are also no Travelling Showpeople yards.
- 4.3 Interviews were completed between January and September 2016. Up to 3 attempts were made to interview each household where they were not present when interviewers visited. The table below sets out the sites/yards that were identified and visited, the number of pitches/plots, the number of interviews that were completed, and the reasons why interviews were not completed.

Figure 1 – Gypsy and Traveller sites visited in Colchester

Status	Pitches/Plots	Interviews	Reasons for not completing interviews
Public Sites			
Severalls Lane	12	8	1 x refusal, 3 x no contact possible
Private Sites			
Bridge Side, Stanway	3	0	3 x no contact possible
Clearview, Aldham	1	1	-
Colt Farm, Tiptree	2	1	1 x no contact possible
Emmanuel, Tiptree	1	0	1 x vacant
Gwynlian, Tiptree	1	0	1 x no contact possible
Nunns Farm, Layer Breton	1	1	-
Vernons Road, Chappel	3	1	2 x no contact possible
Stableview, Tiptree	1	1	-
The Paddocks, Tiptree	2	1	1 x no contact possible
Tolerated Sites			
Ponys Farm, Tiptree	1	1	-
TOTAL	28	15	

Efforts to contact bricks and mortar

- 4.4 ORS applied a rigorous approach to making contact with bricks and mortar households as this is a common issue raised at Local Plan examinations and planning appeals. Contacts were sought through a range of sources including the interviews with people on existing sites and yards, intelligence from the Council and local housing providers, and adverts on social media (including the

Friends Families and Travellers Facebook group), as well as writing to households on waiting lists for public sites.

- ^{4.5} At the time of concluding this report no contacts had been identified to interview (although a number of letters were sent by Registered Providers inviting known Gypsy and Traveller to contact ORS if they had any current or future accommodation needs).

5. Current and Future Pitch Provision

- ^{5.1} This section focuses on the additional pitch provision which is needed in Colchester currently and to 2033. This includes both current unmet need and need which is likely to arise in the future. This time period allows for robust forecasts of the requirements for future provision, based upon the evidence contained within this study and also secondary data sources. Whilst the difficulty in making accurate assessments beyond 5 years has been highlighted in previous studies completed by ORS, the approach taken in this study to estimate new household formation has been accepted by Planning Inspectors as the most appropriate methodology to use.
- ^{5.2} We would note that this section is based upon a combination of the on-site surveys, planning records and discussions with Officers from the Council. In many cases, the survey data is not used in isolation, but instead is used to validate information from planning records or other sources.

New Household Formation Rates

- ^{5.3} Nationally, a household formation and growth rate of 3.00% net per annum has been commonly assumed and widely used in local Gypsy and Traveller assessments, even though there is no statistical evidence of households growing so quickly. The result has been to inflate both national and local requirements for additional pitches unrealistically. In this context, ORS has prepared a *Technical Note on Household Formation and Growth Rates (2015)*. The main conclusions are set out here and the full paper is in the Joint Methodology.
- ^{5.4} Those seeking to provide evidence of high annual net household growth rates for Gypsies and Travellers have sometimes sought to rely on increases in the number of caravans, as reflected in the Traveller Caravan Count. However this data is very unreliable and erratic – so the only proper way to project future population and household growth is through demographic analysis.
- ^{5.5} The Technical Note concludes that in fact, the growth in the national Gypsy and Traveller population may be as low as 1.25% per annum – much less than the 3.00% per annum often assumed, but still greater than in the settled community. Even using extreme and unrealistic assumptions, it is hard to find evidence that net Gypsy and Traveller population and household growth rates are above 2.00% per annum nationally.
- ^{5.6} The often assumed 3.00% per annum net household growth rate is unrealistic and would require clear statistical evidence before being used for planning purposes. In practice, the best available evidence supports a national net household growth rate of 1.50% per annum for Gypsies and Travellers. This view has been supported by Planning Inspectors in a number of Decision Notices. The most recent was in relation to an appeal in Doncaster (Ref: APP/F4410/W/15/3133490) where the

agent acting on behalf of the appellant claimed that a rate closer to 3.00% should be used. The Inspector concluded:

In assessing need account also needs to be taken of likely household growth over the coming years. In determining an annual household growth rate the Council relies on the work of Opinions Research Services (ORS), part of Swansea University. ORS's research considers migration, population profiles, births & fertility rates, death rates, household size data and household dissolution rates to determine average household growth rates for gypsies and travellers. The findings indicate that the average annual growth rate is in the order of 1.5% but that a 2.5% figure could be used if local data suggest a relatively youthful population. As the Council has found a strong correlation between Doncaster's gypsy and traveller population age profile and the national picture, a 1.5% annual household growth rate has been used in its 2016 GTANA. Given the rigour of ORS's research and the Council's application of its findings to the local area I accept that a 1.5% figure is justified in the case of Doncaster.

- 5.7 In addition the Technical Note has recently been accepted as a robust academic evidence base and has been published by the Social Research Association in its journal Social Research Practice. The overall purpose of the journal is to encourage and promote high standards of social research for public benefit. It aims to encourage methodological development by giving practitioners the space and the incentive to share their knowledge – see link below.

<http://the-sra.org.uk/journal-social-research-practice/>

- 5.8 ORS assessments take full account of the net local household growth rate per annum calculated on the basis of demographic evidence from the site surveys, and the baseline includes all current authorised households, all households identified as in current need (including concealed households, movement from bricks and mortar and those on waiting lists not currently living on a pitch or plot), as well as households living on tolerated unauthorised pitches or plots who are not included as current need. The assessments of future need also take account of modelling projections based on birth and death rates.
- 5.9 Overall, the household growth rate used for the assessment of future needs has been informed by local evidence. This demographic evidence from the household interviews has been used to adjust the national growth rate of 1.50% up or down based on the proportion of those aged under 18 in each local authority (by planning status).
- 5.10 In certain circumstances where the numbers of households and children are low it is not appropriate to apply a percentage rate for new household formation. In these cases a judgement will be made on likely new household formation based on the age and gender of the children. This will be based on the assumption that 50% of likely households to form will stay in the area. This is based on evidence from other GTAAs that ORS have completed across England and Wales.
- 5.11 Research by ORS has also identified a national growth rate of 1.00% for Travelling Showpeople and this has also been adjusted locally based on site demographics.

5.12 The outcomes in Colchester are that new household formation for Gypsies and Travellers who meet the planning definition has used the site demographics as there were only 4 children identified; a rate of 1.50% has been used for Gypsy and Traveller households that do not meet the planning definition based on 38% of the population being aged under 18; and the ORS national rate of 1.50% has been used for unknown households.

Breakdown by 5 Year Bands

5.13 In addition to tables which set out the overall need for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, the need has also been broken down by 5 year bands as required by PPTS (2015). The way that this is calculated is by including all current need (from unauthorised pitches, pitches with temporary planning permission, concealed and doubled-up households, 5 year need from teenage children, and net movement from bricks and mortar) in the first 5 years. Total net new household formation is split across the 5 year bands based on the compound rate of growth that was applied – as opposed to being spread evenly.

Planning Status of Households

5.14 Information that was sought from households where an interview was completed allowed each household to be assessed against the planning definition of a Traveller. This included information on whether households have ever travelled; why they have stopped travelling; the reasons that they travel; and whether they plan to travel again in the future.

5.15 Figure 2 shows that for Gypsies and Travellers 2 households meet the planning definition in that it was able to be determined that they travel for work purposes and stay away from their usual place of residence, or have ceased to travel temporarily. A total of 13 Gypsy and Traveller households did not meet the planning definition as they were not able to provide information that they travel away from their usual place of residence for the purpose of work, or that they have ceased to travel temporarily due to children in education, ill health or old age. Some did travel for cultural reasons, to visit relatives or friends, and others had ceased to travel permanently – these households did not meet the planning definition.

5.16 The number of households on each site where an interview was not possible are recorded as unknown. The reasons for this included households that refused to be interviewed and households that were not present during the fieldwork period – despite up to 3 visits.

Figure 2 – Planning status of households in Colchester

Site Status	Meet Planning Definition	Unknown	Do Not Meet Planning Definition	TOTAL
Public Sites	2	4	6	12
Private Sites	0	8	6	14
Tolerated Sites	0	0	1	1
TOTAL	2	12	13	27

Bricks and Mortar Interviews

- 5.17 Despite all the efforts that were made it was not possible to complete any interviews with Gypsy and Traveller households living in bricks and mortar in Colchester as none were identified through the fieldwork, adverts that were placed, or discussions with Council Officers. In addition no households are known to have approached the Council during the GTAA study period seeking a site and none have declared themselves homeless. Given that no one came forward during the study period, it is fair to conclude that no allowance should be made for bricks and mortar households because none have identified themselves as being in need.

Pitch Needs – Gypsies and Travellers that meet the Planning Definition

- 5.18 The 2 households who meet the planning definition were found on 1 public site. Analysis of the household interviews identify that there is need for 2 additional pitches through new household formation. There is no supply from vacant pitches, and there is no other current or future need arising from these households.
- 5.19 Therefore the overall level of additional need for those households who meet the planning definition of a Gypsy or Traveller is for **2 additional pitches** over the GTAA period to 2033.

Figure 3 – Additional need for Gypsy and Traveller households in Colchester that meet the Planning Definition (2016-2033)

Gypsies and Travellers - Meeting Planning Definition	Pitches
Supply of Pitches	
Additional supply from vacant public and private pitches	0
Additional supply from pitches on new sites	0
Pitches to be vacated by households moving to bricks and mortar	0
Pitches to be vacated by households moving to another area	0
Total Supply	0
Current Need	
Households on unauthorised developments	0
Households on unauthorised encampments	0
Concealed households/Doubling-up/Over-crowding	0
Movement from bricks and mortar	0
Households on waiting lists for public sites	0
Total Current Need	0
Future Need	
5 year need from teenage children	0
Households on sites with temporary planning permission	0
In-migration	0
New household formation (<i>from household demographics</i>)	2
Total Future Needs	2
Net Pitch Total = (Current and Future Need – Total Supply)	2

Figure 4 – Additional need for Gypsy and Traveller households in Colchester that meet the Planning Definition by 5 year periods

Years	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-17	Total
	2016-21	2021-26	2026-31	2031-33	
	0	1	1	0	2

Pitch Needs – Unknown Gypsies and Travellers

- 5.20 Whilst it was not possible to determine the planning status of a total of 12 households as they were not on site at the time of the fieldwork, the needs of these households still need to be recognised by the GTAA as they are believed to be Gypsies and Travellers and **may** meet the planning definition.
- 5.21 ORS are of the opinion that it would not be appropriate when producing a robust assessment of need to make any firm assumptions about whether or not households where an interview was not completed meet the planning definition based on the outcomes of households in that local authority where an interview was completed.
- 5.22 However data that has been collected from over 2,500 household interviews that have been completed by ORS since the changes to PPTS in 2015 suggests that nationally approximately 10% of households that have been interviewed meet the planning definition.
- 5.23 This would suggest that it is likely that only a small proportion of the potential need identified from these households will need conditioned Gypsy and Traveller pitches, and that the needs of the majority will need to be addressed through other means.
- 5.24 Should further information be made available to the Council that will allow for the planning definition to be applied to the unknown households, the overall level of need could rise by up to 4 pitches from new household formation (this uses a base of the 12 households and a net growth rate of 1.50%⁴). There is also 1 pitch that will become vacant on the public site in the first 5 years of the GTAA. Therefore additional need *could* increase by up to a further 3 pitches, plus any concealed adult households or 5 year need arising from older teenagers living in these households (if all 12 unknown pitches are deemed to meet the planning definition). However, as an illustration, if the ORS national average of 10% were to be applied this could be as few as no additional pitches.
- 5.25 Tables setting out the components of need for unknown households can be found in **Appendix A**.

Pitch Needs - Gypsies and Travellers that do not meet the Planning Definition

- 5.26 It is not now a requirement for a GTAA to include an assessment of need for households that do not meet the planning definition. However this assessment is included for illustrative purposes and to provide the Council with information on levels of need that will have to be addressed through the SHMA or HEDNA and through separate Local Plan policies.

⁴ The ORS *Technical Note on Population and Household Growth (2015)* has identified a national growth rate of 1.50% for Gypsies and Travellers which has been applied in the absence of further demographic information about these households.

- 5.27 On this basis, it is evident that whilst the needs of the 13 households who do not meet the planning definition will represent only a very small proportion of the overall housing need, the Council will still need to ensure that arrangements are in place to properly address these needs – especially as many identified as Romany Gypsies or Irish Travellers and may claim that the Council should meet their housing needs through culturally appropriate housing.
- 5.28 Total need for 10 additional pitches has been identified from households that do not meet the planning definition. This is made up of 1 concealed/doubled-up households or single adult, 4 teenage children in need of a pitch of their own in the next 5 years, and 5 from new household formation. This uses a rate of 1.50% based on the demographics of the households.
- 5.29 A summary of this need for households that do not meet the planning definition can also be found in **Appendix A**.

Waiting Lists

- 5.30 There is 1 public site in Colchester. At the time of reporting information was still being processed by Essex County Council regarding the households on the waiting lists for the site. This will help to identify how many households are currently living on the site; how many are living in bricks and mortar in Colchester; how many are living on other sites in Colchester; how many are living on sites outside of Colchester; and how many are living in bricks and mortar outside of Colchester.
- 5.31 Should these households wish to be considered for a tenancy on one of the public sites they may have to provide information on their travelling patterns during the site allocation process as and when a pitch becomes available.

Plot Needs – Travelling Showpeople

- 5.32 There were no Travelling Showpeople identified in Colchester so there are no current or future accommodation needs.

Transit Recommendations

- 5.33 Analysis of previous stakeholder interviews, Traveller Caravan Count Data and data collected by the Essex County Traveller Unit (ECTU) shows that there are high and increasing numbers of unauthorised encampments in many parts of Greater Essex. However, the analysis does not provide a detailed enough spatial view on where and how much provision is needed. It also does not explore issues such as small numbers of households accounting for multiple records of encampments.
- 5.34 As such it is recommended that further work is undertaken to complete more in-depth analysis of data recorded by ECTU and other relevant sources. This work will be completed by ORS over the next 12 months.
- 5.35 Discussions held with Officers from ECTU have confirmed that analysis of ‘Direction to Leave Notices’ may provide a more robust spatial appraisal of current and future transit needs. They have advised that each of these notices contains information such as the number of caravans and vehicle registration details. From this information ORS believe that they would be able to establish with a

higher degree of certainty, the number of transit sites or stopping places required throughout Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock.

- ^{5.36} This additional analysis will include work on identifying the number of households accounting for multiple records of encampments; analysis of the average number of caravans per encampment and the average length of stay; and identification of the most common locations for encampments. It is hoped that the outcomes of this work will be to identify a figure for the average number of transit caravan spaces that are needed at any given point in time; whether this can be addressed through permanent transit sites, emergency stopping places and negotiated stopping arrangements; and where the geographic need is for new transit provision.
- ^{5.37} In the meantime it is recommended that the situation relating to levels of unauthorised encampments throughout the area should continue to be monitored by ECTU and individual local authorities whilst any potential changes associated with PPTS (2015) develop.
- ^{5.38} Finally work to address unauthorised encampments is a complex issue and it is recommended, through the duty to cooperate, that individual local authorities work closely with Essex County Council and ECTU both to identify the need for future transit provision and how to deal with unauthorised encampments when they occur.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1 This study provides an robust evidence base to enable the Council to assess the housing needs of the Travelling Community as well as complying with their requirements towards Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople under the Housing Act 1985, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012, Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) 2014, Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) 2015, and the Housing and Planning Act 2016. It also provides the evidence base which can be used to support Local Plan policies.

Gypsies and Travellers

- 6.2 In summary there is a need for **2 additional pitches** in Colchester over the GTAA period to 2033 for Gypsy and Traveller households that meet the planning definition; a need for up to 3 additional pitches for Gypsy and Traveller households that may meet the planning definition; and a need for 10 additional pitches for Gypsy and Traveller households who do not meet the planning definition.

Travelling Showpeople

- 6.3 There were no Travelling Showpeople identified in Colchester so there is no current or future need for additional plots.

Transit Provision

- 6.4 Whilst there is historic evidence to suggest that there may be a need for some form of transit provision in Greater Essex, it is not recommended that any should be provided at this point in time as the robustness of the data which could indicate this is not considered to be sufficient. It is recommended that the situation relating to levels of unauthorised encampments should continue to be monitored whilst any potential changes associated with PPTS (2015) develop. It is also recommended that further work is completed to identify the need for transit provision on an Essex-wide basis. Colchester Borough Council is therefore recommended to engage, through the Duty to Cooperate, with the other Essex authorities in the future to ensure this work on Transit Sites can be completed. This will establish whether there is a need for investment in more formal transit sites or emergency stopping places.

Summary of Need to be Addressed

- 6.5 Taking into consideration all of the elements of need that have been assessed, together with the assumptions on the proportion of unknown households that are likely to meet the planning definition, the table below sets out the likely number of pitches and plots that will need to be addressed either as a result of the GTAA, or through the SHMA or HEDNA and through separate Local Plan policies.

^{6.6} Total need from Gypsy and Traveller households that meet the planning definition, from unknown households, and from households that do not meet the planning definition is for 15 additional pitches. The table below breaks need down by the GTAA and SHMA/HEDNA by taking 10% (the ORS national average for Gypsies and Travellers) of need from unknown households and adding this to the need from households that meet the planning definition, and by adding the remaining 90% of need from unknown households to the need from households that do not meet the planning definition.

Figure 5 – Breakdown of need to be addressed for Gypsies and Travellers in Epping Forest (2016-2033)

Status	GTAA	SHMA or HEDNA	TOTAL
Meet Planning Definition (incl. 10% of unknowns)	3 (2+0)	0	2
Not meeting Planning Definition (incl. 90% of unknowns)	0	13 (10+3)	13
TOTAL	2	13	15

Appendix A – Need from unknown and households that do not meet the Planning Definition

Figure 6 - Additional need for unknown Gypsy and Traveller households in Colchester (2016-33)

Gypsies and Travellers - Unknown	Pitches
Supply of Plots	
Additional supply from vacant public and private pitches	0
Additional supply from pitches on new sites	0
Pitches vacated by households moving to bricks and mortar	0
Pitches vacated by households moving away from the study area	1
Total Supply	1
Current Need	
Households on unauthorised developments	0
Households on unauthorised encampments	0
Concealed households/Doubling-up/Over-crowding	0
Movement from bricks and mortar	0
Households on waiting lists for public sites	0
Total Current Need	0
Future Need	
5 year need from teenage children	0
Households on sites with temporary planning permission	0
In-migration	0
New household formation	4
<i>(Household base 12 and formation rate of 1.50%)</i>	
Total Future Needs	4
Net Pitch Total = (Current and Future Need – Total Supply)	3

Figure 7 - Additional need for unknown Gypsy and Traveller households in Colchester by 5 year periods

Years	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-17	Total
	2016-21	2021-26	2026-31	2031-33	
	0	1	2	0	3

Figure 8 - Additional need Gypsy and Traveller households in Colchester that do not meet the Planning Definition (2016-33)

Gypsies and Travellers – Not Meeting New Definition	Pitches
Supply of Pitches	
Additional supply from vacant public and private pitches	0
Additional supply from pitches on new sites	0
Pitches vacated by households moving to bricks and mortar	0
Pitches vacated by households moving away from the study area	0
Total Supply	0
Current Need	
Households on unauthorised developments	0
Households on unauthorised encampments	0
Concealed households/Doubling-up/Over-crowding	1
Movement from bricks and mortar	0
Households on waiting lists for public sites	0
Total Current Need	1
Future Need	
5 year need from teenage children	4
Households on sites with temporary planning permission	0
In-migration	0
New household formation	5
<i>(Household base 19 and formation rate 1.50%)</i>	
Total Future Needs	9
Net Pitch Total = (Current and Future Need – Total Supply)	10

Figure 9 - Additional need for Gypsy and Traveller households in Colchester that do not meet the Planning Definition by 5 year periods

Years	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-17	Total
	2016-21	2021-26	2026-31	2031-33	
	6	2	2	0	10