

Richmondshire District Council

Gypsies and Travellers Accommodation Assessment

October 2013



1.0 Introduction

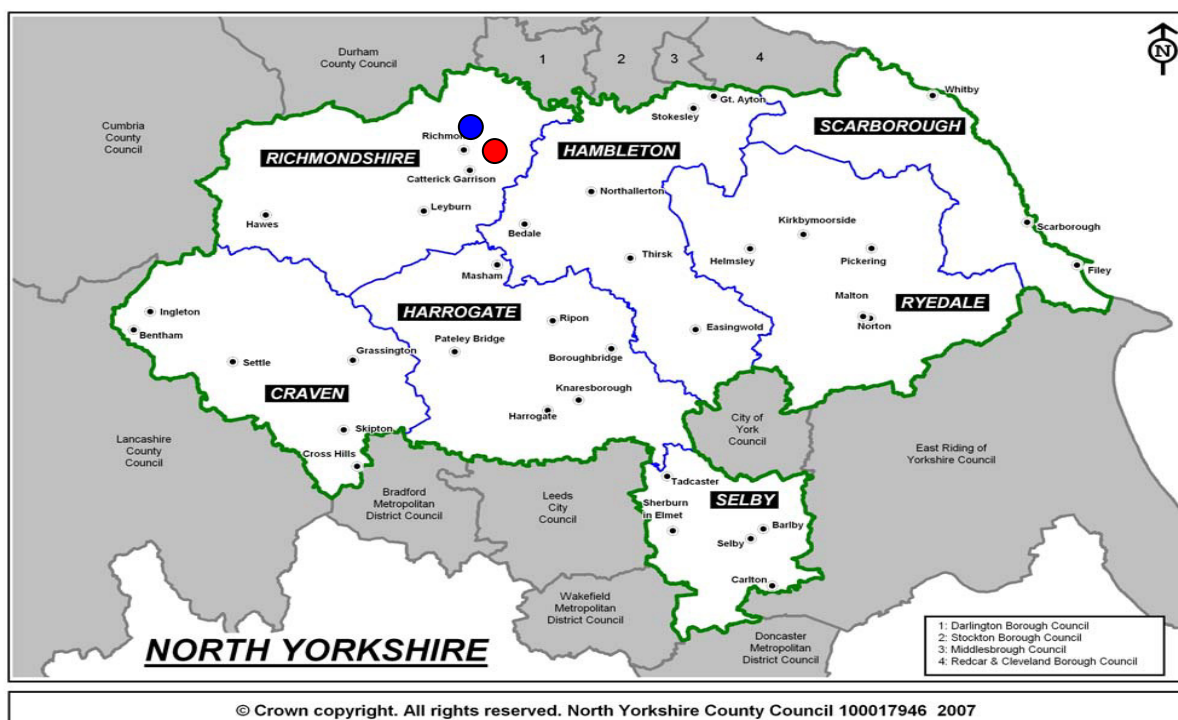
1.1 Planning for Travellers Sites (CLG, March 2012) established the national planning policy framework for traveller sites and was published at the same time as the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It states that:

- Local planning authorities should make their own assessment of need for the purposes of planning
- Ensure that they work collaboratively to develop fair and effective strategies to meet need through the identification of land for sites
- Plan for sites over a reasonable timescale
- Protect green belt from inappropriate development
- Promote more private traveller site provision while recognising that there will always be those travellers who cannot provide their own sites
- Aim to reduce the number of unauthorised developments and encampments and make enforcement more effective.

1.2 This report presents the evidence required to establish the strategic planning requirements for gypsy and traveller accommodation in the Richmondshire Local Plan Area. It covers the capacity and occupancy of local sites. It also reviews the impact of unauthorised sites, additional site applications and any enforcement action. A needs assessment of unmet and emerging local need will highlight any households, local or neighbouring, wishing to change tenure or who currently experience problems finding accommodation within the District. The report then reviews the future supply requirement and recommends any necessary changes to the submission version of the Local Plan Core Strategy (February 2013).

2.0 Current Supply Assessment

2.1 There are two authorised sites in Richmondshire for Gypsies and Travellers shown on the map below:



2.2 Lime Kiln Wood (red) near Catterick Village is a public site with a capacity of 14 pitches. It is owned by the County Council and managed locally. A phased refurbishment programme is underway and this site could accommodate three more pitches through remodelling and extended further subject to county council agreement. Local managers report that this site has not been full to capacity for a number of years and there have been no demands from the travelling community for more pitches.

2.3 Blue Anchor (blue) at Scotch Corner has 8 pitches. It is privately owned and managed by a family member. It is currently below capacity and would provide additional pitches for family members if required. Further land is available for expansion if required.

2.4 The table below details the actual pitches and there occupancy levels as at June 2013:

Total Pitches	Lime Kiln Wood, Catterick Village	Blue Anchor, Scotch Corner
All	14	8
Occupied	5	4
Vacant	9	4

The spare capacity at each site accommodates general transit needs.

- 2.5 Appleby Horse Fair, in Cumbria, was established in 1685 and creates additional movements during the event in June of each year. The regular trans-Pennine routes for motorised travellers are the M62 and A66. The Gypsy Council in partnership with Durham Police identify up to 20 transit pitches for travellers on A66 route. South Milford, between Selby and Leeds, is a popular transit site for those travelling from the South up the M62 route to Appleby. Wensleydale has also been a traditional route to Appleby and Bainbridge, in the Yorkshire Dales National Park, is a traditional stopping off point. But, the growth of the fair and changes in the dynamic of the traveller community is putting this remote rural community under considerable strain to manage this influx.
- 2.6 The neighbouring areas of Hambleton and Darlington have large gypsy and traveller populations. The Tees Valley GTAA (date) covers Darlington Borough Council. In summary, Darlington has 69 residential pitches and 24 transit pitches within private and public ownership with a large number of planning applications submitted and approved in the past 12 years. The details can be found at www.darlington.gov.uk/preferredoptionsdevelopmentplan
- 2.7 Hambleton District Council has undertaken its own GTAA in 2011, which has led to an identified need of 26 pitches within 15 years. As a result a call for sites has been carried out, with a number coming forward and now progressing to pre application discussions and member support.

3.0 Needs Assessment and Future Supply

- 3.1 The North Yorkshire Gypsies and Travellers Accommodation Assessment (2007) estimated that there was a requirement in Richmondshire for three additional pitches. This was, in fact, one additional pitch because the overall capacity of local sites had been incorrect. No planning applications have been received in relation to transit sites or permanent pitches in the past 10 years. In the same time there has also been no enforcement action on unauthorised encampment across the District either by Richmondshire District Council or the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority.
- 3.2 The Council's Housing Management and Housing Options Teams indicate that three travelling households have been re-housed in bricks and mortar homes in the past five years due to changes in family circumstances, for example old age or ability to cope.

- 3.3 The travelling community in Richmondshire is very small. Currently there are just nine households, of these 6 are over or nearing retirement age, 2 are single people and one is a family with young children. The detailed results of face to face and telephone interviews have not been included in this report to respect their privacy. In general, the discussions with travelling families indicates that the younger members of the families will want to remain with the family and there is sufficient vacant pitches to accommodate them and the older members of the family will look to move into bricks and mortar at the time that they feel they can no longer cope living in a caravan or do not have family to care and support them. But the two sites in Richmondshire are considered unpopular with young families due to their isolation away from larger settlements and lack of employment opportunities.
- 3.4 The GTAA's for Hambleton and Darlington show that Richmondshire does not cause an undue problem through either outward migration from our travelling community or those wishing to move into this District. Officers from Durham County Council also concur with this assessment.
- 3.5 The vacant capacity on local sites, the lack of pressure from emerging families and from neighbouring areas means that there is no requirement to seek an additional supply of land for traveller accommodation. This will be kept under review through further accommodation assessments.

4.0 Appleby Horse Fair

- 4.1 The annual Appleby Horse Fair affects many local communities on the traditional routes to Cumbria. In Richmondshire no enforcement action has been reported due to unauthorised parking and many local communities, for example Scorton and Coverbridge near Middleham, tolerate the upheaval, which lasts for up to 9 days around the event. Temporary transit sites for Appleby are negotiated between landowners, police and travellers in the areas provided. The small village of Bainbridge, in the Yorkshire Dales National Park area of Richmondshire, has been the main traditional stopping off point in the District and experiences greatest disruption. This has increased over the years due to the changes in dynamics of traveller communities. Bainbridge Parish Council has previously allowed travellers to use the village green. A larger piece of ground has also been provided due to the increasing numbers stopping at any one time.
- 4.2 The Yorkshire Dales National Park is the local planning authority for Bainbridge and has been supporting the local community to manage this situation. North Yorkshire County Council has also recently adopted its Consistent Response to Unauthorised Encampments (October 2013), which sets out the corporate policy and procedures for responding to unauthorised encampments in a range of settings, including village greens.

5.0 Planning Policy Recommendations

- 5.1 These results indicate that there is no need for the Council to increase local provision and the following addition to Local Plan Core Strategy Spatial Principle SP4 is suggested to reflect this latest update in the Local Plan:

“Gypsies and travellers accommodation requirements will be met on the existing sites at Lime Kiln Wood in Catterick Village and Blue Anchor at Scotch Corner.”

- 5.2 The local situation will be reviewed regularly to ensure that sufficient capacity is maintained.
- 5.3 Any private sites that come forward will be assessed in line with the following proposed criterion-based policy:

Core Policy CP4a: Sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

Provision will be made for travelling groups at the existing site of Lime Kiln Wood at Catterick Village. Where required, additional sites for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling showpeople, which are appropriate to provide a safe and healthy environment for residents will be considered in accordance with CP4 1a-3e. Preference will be given firstly to locations within and then adjacent to existing settlements, and then to the re-use of brownfield land in other locations.

Appendix 1 - Organisations consulted

Gypsy Council – Chair – Hugh Smith

Site managers at Blue Anchor (Private) and Lime Kiln Wood (Public)

Richmondshire DC – Development Management, Housing Management and Housing Options Teams

North Yorkshire County Council – Gill Warner – Commissioning & Development Manager (Supporting People)

Horton Housing – Hannah Brown – Manager – Gateway NY & St@y Selby

Darlington Borough Council - Valerie Adams – Principal Planning Policy Officer – Development Target Review Representation

Hambleton District Council – Graham Banks – Planning Policy Manager – Development Target Review Representation

Durham County Council – Louise Stokoe – Gypsy, Roma Traveller Officer

Appendix 2 - References

CLG, Planning for Travellers Sites (2012) Available online at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6078/2113371.pdf Accessed on 16/10/13

CLG, National Planning Policy Framework (2012), Available online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2> Accessed on 16/10/13

CLG, Gypsy and Travellers Accommodation Needs Assessment Guidance (2007), Available online at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7838/accommneedsassessments.pdf Accessed on 16/10/13

Durham County Council, County Durham Gypsy and Travellers Accommodation Assessment (2007)

Hambleton District Council (ORS), Hambleton District Traveller Housing Needs Survey (2012) Available online at http://www.hambleton.gov.uk/HambletonDistrictCouncil/documents/Planning/LDF/Hambleton_GTAA_Final_Report.pdf Accessed on 16/10/13

NYSHP (Arc4), North Yorkshire sub-region Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (2008) Available online at <http://www.northyorkshirestrategichousingpartnership.co.uk/Hambleton%20District%20Council/NYSHP/GypsyandTravellerAccommodationAssessmentMay08.pdf> Accessed on 16/10/13

Tees Valley Local Authorities (Salford University), Tees Valley Gypsy and Travellers Accommodation Needs Assessment (2009) Available online at http://www.darlington.gov.uk/dar_public/documents/Place/PolicyRegeneration/PlanningPolicy/CoreStrategy/Evidence_Library/gypstandtravellerfinalreport.pdf Accessed on 16/10/13