

Issue 7 Policy HOU16 (MC57) including Question ix)

Statement:

We contend that the Policy is Unsound and not Positively Prepared and not effective.

1. Retaining a) is necessary as Shadoxhurst has a significant proportion of the Borough's Traveller sites. Increasing the sizes of existing sites brings additional problems as we will show in this statement.
2. In the section 19 Representations for 2017 we made comment MCLP 890 in specific relation to the Traveller sites we have in a community in the village called Nickley Wood Road.
3. In the Appendix 2 – Response to Main Changes Representations on page 121-2, much of the relevant part was disregarded not included and part of the points were lost.
4. We draw attention therefore to our original submission MCLP 890 in full.
5. We anticipate that as the travellers choose a more settled lifestyle, then the need for family related additional dwellings will decrease. Although the families will grow, the lifestyle changes will begin to reduce those that have a genuinely nomadic way of life within the **PPTS** definition.
6. The example cited in our submission meant that ABC accepted that the family was included in the true definition of a Gypsy and/or Traveller.
7. As our submission shows, the original people to live in Nickley Wood Road were house dwellers and were non travellers. The wood is **Ancient Woodland** and most of it is included in **Local Wildlife Site AS21** and over time, travellers have purchased parcels of land, done clearance (extensive in some cases) and become established. The example of Milee in our submission demonstrates admirably the situation. Travellers' dwellings now outnumber the settled community by more than 2:1.
8. ABC would not take this into account when determining to grant the application. They relied on the proportion compared with the whole village. On this basis, with more than 1,200 residents, it could be argued that they would never exceed the numbers nor scale.
9. We firmly believe that the weight of balance must be determined by relating this to the immediate community. The ABC answer in their submission was that the scale of such sites coming forward should not dominate the nearest settled community. It is wrong to take this to be the village as a whole.
10. In our case, Nickley Wood Road, is the only road into the community and this clearly defines it. There are a small number of houses on Church Lane in the vicinity of the junction, and ABC may take these into account.
11. There is a clear gap of a kilometre between the last 'closest' house on Church Lane and the Church and The Street.
12. The impact of additional traveller's sites / pitches is easy to see. Many of the travellers run businesses and their lorries and vans are coming and going through each and every day. Nickley Wood Road is private, owned by the various riparian owners and is damaged and in poor repair in many places.
13. Surface water drainage is a problem and parts of the road regularly flood. Water pressure is not as good as it could be. So in our opinion, the infrastructure is not ever going to be improved.

Statement of RN925 Shadoxhurst Parish Council (D Ledger)

Issue 7 Traveller Accommodation Sites Policy HOU16

Week 3 Session 6 (2nd May) am

14. We note that **HOU17** is present in the Plan to safeguard existing traveller sites, which in effect ensures their permanency. There is nothing in either Policy to regulate the expansion of an existing site and on this point we say the plan is not positively prepared, neither does it provide effective control.
15. It is well known locally that with an expanding family in the years ahead, that further examples of Milee above will come before the LPA, so that there will be pressure to grant permission. Without due controls, the settled community will continue to be disadvantaged. The proverbial ‘playing field’ is far from level.
16. ABC need to be sure that there would be no harm or impact on the surrounding community with an expanding site, in the same way that it should with a brand new site.

How can the Plan be made sound?

17. For clarity, and to reduce the potential for dispute, we suggest that the following sentence be added at the end of **paragraph 5.111** – “In formulating the OAPN, and for all other purposes of **HOU17** and **HOU17**, and in any reference elsewhere to “Gypsies” or “Travellers”, the Council will adopt the PPTS definition as set out above”.
18. We suggest that **HOU16 d)** be amended to read “*Occupation is limited to those able to demonstrate that they currently meet the definition of Gypsies and Travellers or Travelling Showpeople in the relevant national planning policy*”.
19. We propose that **HOU16 f)** be amended to read... “*The site is capable of being provided with on-site services such as water supply, sewage disposal, surface water disposal and power supply provided that all infrastructure requirements including adjacent roads have no adverse impact on the rest of that local community.*”
20. We put forward as Policy **HOU16 j)** – “**Full account and consideration must be given to the proportion of settled and traveller populations in the immediate vicinity of the site.**”
21. We further propose that **HOU16 k)** or perhaps it sits better as **HOU17 d)**, be added to read ... “**The expansion of existing sites must meet fully both Policies HOU16 and HOU17.**”