

APPENDIX 1: COMMENTS BY NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL ON SITE AT LOWER SPINKS LANE

Dear Mr Barker

Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document (DPD) Regulation 25 Consultation – additional site, Lower Spinks Lane, Wymondham

Thank you for consulting the County Council on the additional site for the above LDF document. As you will be aware Norfolk County Council has provided comments already on the sites identified in the above DPD (see letter dated 30 April 2009 to Mr Tim Horspole). The comments below are made on a without prejudice basis and are an officer-level response to your consultation.

Highway and Transport Comments: the site is located on the southern side of the A11 Trunk Road, with access expected to be taken from the U78290/A11 roundabout junction. Circular 01/2006 *Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites* highlights the need to be realistic about the likely availability of alternatives to the car in accessing local services in rural areas, or on the outskirts of built-up areas. However, in this case there is no reasonable expectation of alternatives to the private car due to the lack of footway links from the site. In addition, there are no bus stops located within reasonable walking distance (considered to be 800m) of the site. Consequently the site is segregated from the town by the A11 junction. Norfolk County Council has highway safety concerns due to the lack of footway links to the town centre from the site and the potential for pedestrians to use the A11 slip roads, and would therefore raise an objection to the site. If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact Richard Doleman on 01603 223263.

Landscape Comments: the site comprises arable land in open countryside to the north of Spinks Lane, and forms a gateway site to Wymondham when approached from the north east. It is well-screened from residential dwellings but is visible from the A11 when approaching from Norwich. In landscape terms, the site would impact on the open countryside and the rural approach to Wymondham. If it is to be allocated, it would require a sensitive scheme of screening, which would probably require more land than the current site area. This would allow for sensitive mounding and woodland planting which should take the form of a small copse or wood. If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact Judith Cantell on 01603 222768.

Ecology Comments: there are no nearby designated nature conservation or habitat sites, therefore there are no objections on ecological grounds. Notwithstanding this, South Norfolk Council's Tree Officer may wish to inspect trees on the site to assess the need for Tree Preservation Orders. If you have any questions regarding these comments, please

contact Ed Stocker on 01603 222218.

Public Rights of Way Comments: there is no record of any public right of way registered in the vicinity of Lower Spinks Lane, Wymondham, therefore, there are no Countryside Access objections to the site. If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact Paul Ryan on 01603 223317.

Archaeology Comments: The site lies within an area where a large number of artefacts dating from the prehistoric to post medieval periods have previously been recorded. If this

site was allocated as a gypsy and traveller site, it is likely that Norfolk Landscape Archaeology would request a programme of archaeological work to be undertaken. If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact James Albone on 01362 869279.

Fire Service Comments: The proximity of the proposed site to the A11 is cause for some concern. During the period of gypsy and traveller occupancy of the A140 Dunston site, Norfolk Fire Service received frequent 999 calls to that location, mainly as a result of deliberately ignited fires causing thick black smoke to blow across the A47 or A140. The proximity of the proposed site to the A11 creates potential for a similar risk to fast-moving traffic. Additionally, if such a fire is in close proximity to LPG gas cylinders (generally used in caravans for heating and cooking) as was also the case at the Dunston site, standard fire-fighting procedure would require a 200 metre exclusion zone to be established. This may result in closure of the A11 and slip road from Wymondham while the incident is brought under control. If the site was allocated, site management would need to incorporate fire safety measures. If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact Guy McCurley on 01603 810351.

I hope these comments are of assistance; should you have any queries please call either myself or the named officer above.

Yours sincerely

Anita Ragan
Planner