

Wiltshire Council Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Consultation

Wiltshire Council has announced that their Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan (GTDP) document is now open for final public pre-submission consultation running from 9am Tuesday 20 August to 5pm on Friday 4 October 2024. Further information on this consultation can be found at: [Have your say \(Regulation 19 consultation\)](#).

In as much as this plan specifically applies to Edington Parish, two proposed sites lie within the Parish boundary, namely GT25 and GT26 near Housecroft Farm (see link to [GTDP Appendix 1](#) for location and background information). The focus for the consultation is related to receiving representations on three aspects of the plan:

1. **Legal Compliance** - does the plan meet the legal requirements made under various statutes? This encompasses whether the draft Plan complies with the relevant legislation and regulations in the way it has been prepared and its content.
2. **Soundness** - has the plan been positively prepared, is it justified, effective, and consistent with national policy? Plans are sound if they are:
 - (a) Positively prepared – providing a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area's objectively assessed needs; and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development;
 - (b) Justified – an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence;
 - (c) Effective – deliverable over the plan period, and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground; and
 - (d) Consistent with national policy – enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in this Framework and other statements of national planning policy, where relevant.
3. **Meets the Duty to Cooperate** - has the council engaged and worked effectively with neighbouring authorities and statutory bodies?

Comments can be made on the plan as a whole, or parts of the plan such as on specific sites. So, for example, people wishing to comment on a particular site may consider the evidence informing the plan to understand why the site was selected and then set out their own views or judgements on the suitability of a site. They may relate to issues such as (but not limited to) highways, flooding, ecology, landscape or archaeology, or access to schools or health services; and have an impact on the justification of the policy - one of the tests of soundness.

Edington Parish Council will submit comments to the consultation, but individuals are also encouraged to submit their own views via the link [Have your say \(Regulation 19 consultation\)](#). A response from one member of the village community has been seen by the Parish Council as at the end of this note, and this is an example of the level of detail that will be required as a guide to those who may wish to comment themselves. You do not need to send comments via the Parish Council (although we are happy to view comments as we determine our own response), you can submit comments yourself through the link given and they will be given equal weight by the consultation. Any comments on individual sites should be backed up by reference to specific aspects of the site rather than simple objections with no background supporting evidence.

Site Plan Policies for sites GT25 and GT26 from the Wiltshire Council 'story' maps can be found at <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/41dce73be6f549a3be3d7f856124e737> (Policy GT25: Land at Housecroft Farm 1, Bratton Road, Edington; and Policy GT26: Land at Housecroft Farm (2), Edington Road, Edington).

For further information on things to consider when making representations please view the [Gypsies and Travellers Development Plan Document Statement of Representation Procedure \(PDF\) \[254KB\] \(opens new window\)](#)

Example comments about sites GT25 and GT26

I would like to raise my concerns over the proposed new Gypsies and Travellers locations in Edington. I do not feel that these locations are appropriate sites for a number of reasons and would ask the Parish Council of Edington to carefully consider its formal response to Wiltshire Council in the consultation.

The sites take away land from an organic farm. Within a time of climate emergency, sustainable farming should be encouraged and land retained to the farm to enable its future viability with appropriate acreage.

Land providing ecological function for priority species and habitats for wildlife should be protected. The land on these sites is within wildlife corridors and has an established network of hedgerows connecting surrounding habitats. Having been farmed organically for a number of years, I would like to see ecological survey results and analysis of why WC have proposed this land, surely avoidance first as opposed to mitigation should be followed as per mitigation hierarchy (The Local Plan Review- WC).

The location of the new developments cannot be carbon neutral, are reliant on use of private car to access facilities, schools etc and therefore risk social exclusion, there is not currently appropriate infrastructure in place (ie high speed Internet connectivity, sustainable public transport or appropriate highway access other than in a private car)

These objectives are all in the WC Climate Strategy 2022-2027, the WC Blue and Green Infrastructure Strategy (Feb22) as well as The Local Plan review. Therefore, the development of these 2 new sites goes against these WC strategy objectives. I do not feel this has been appropriately considered within the proposals and would urge the Parish Council to consider these points.