

OFFICER REPORT FOR DECISION UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

APPLICATION NO: P0544.22

WARD: Heaton **Date Received:** 4th April 2022

ADDRESS: Hogbar Farm, Hogbar Farm East
Fairhill Rise & Vinegar Hill Grove
Caravan Park
Lower Bedfords Road, Romford

PROPOSAL: Change of Use of land to a private Gypsy and Traveller caravan site comprising of Plots 2 - 5, the demolition of an existing dilapidated utility block, the siting of Static Mobile Homes, hardstanding, and external lighting.

DRAWING NO(S): 22/BEDFORDS/01 Revision E
22/BEDFORDS/05 Revision A
22/BEDFORDS/06 Revision A

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that **planning permission be GRANTED** subject to the condition(s) given at the end of the report

SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is located off Lower Bedfords Road at the junction with Noak Hill Road and Straight Road. The site comprises of Hogbar Farm, Hogbar Farm East, Fairhill Rise and Vinegar Hill Grove, Lower Bedfords Road, Romford.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

This application is for a change of use of the land to a private Gypsy and Traveller caravan site comprising of Plots 2 - 5, the demolition of an existing dilapidated utility block, the siting of Static Mobile Homes, hardstanding, and external lighting.

The agent has confirmed via email that it is not intended to include any proposed Dayrooms as part of this application, therefore any previous reference to Dayrooms is omitted. In addition, the larger rectangular units are exiting Static Mobile Homes that are to be retained.

During the course of this application, the description of the proposal was amended from "Change of use of land to a private gypsy and traveller caravan site comprising of Plots 2-5, the demolition of an existing dilapidated utility block, the siting of 48 static mobile homes, the erection of a community dayroom, a further 2 dayrooms, hardstanding and external lighting" to: "Change of Use of land to a private Gypsy and Traveller caravan site comprising of Plots 2 - 5, the demolition of an existing dilapidated utility block, the siting of Static Mobile Homes, hardstanding, and external lighting". It

was not deemed necessary to re-consult neighbouring properties, as the dayrooms have been deleted and the nature of the proposal remains unchanged.

It was noted that there were discrepancies on Drawing No. 22/BEDFORDS/05, as Plot 4 'Fairhill Rise' and Plot 2 'Hogbar Farm' both refer to a dayroom. As noted previously, the application doesn't include the provision of any dayrooms. The agent corrected the discrepancies and submitted a revised plan on 19th December 2023.

RELEVANT HISTORY

P0279.19	Proposed Caravan Site consisting of 8 Mobile Homes and one day room. Apprv with cons 27-09-2019
P0694.16	Continued use of land for extended Gypsy/Traveller family (to include 6 mobile homes). Apprv with cons 18-09-2019
P1682.14	Variation of conditions 2,3,4 and 6 attached to planning permission Ref P0760.14 (Use as a gypsy and traveller caravan site). Finally disposed 18-08-2022
P0760.14	Use as a gypsy and traveller caravan site and 5 No pitches and associated development Apprv with cons 01-08-2014
Q0156.12	Discharge of condition 3 & 4 of P1937.11 DOC Discharge FULL 15-06-2012
P1937.11	Variation of Conditions 1, 2 and 3 of permission granted on appeal APP/B5480/C/06/2007653 Apprv with cons 10-04-2012
P0335.04	Continued use of land as a private gypsy caravan site without complying with Condition No.1 of Enforcement Notice Decision 14/2/03 Lapsed application 23-10-2013
P1841.03	Change of use to residential caravan site for 3 gypsy families including formation of new access and hardstanding, construction of fences and day room (retrospective) Refuse 01-12-2003

CONSULTATIONS/REPRESENTATIONS

Although a site notice was not displayed, the application was advertised in the local press and 62 neighbouring properties were consulted. One letter of representation was received and this is summarised as follows:

- Making a larger site will add crime to the area.
- Not enough doctors available for more people.
- The site looks a mess.

In addition, the following comments were made by other stakeholders:

Streetcare Department - Please ensure there is sufficient numbers of refuse and recycling bins at this site, suitable storage areas and that the collection crew access requirements are adhered to in particular with the distance to the bin store. Bins are not provided by Havering Council, nor is Havering Council liable for them. Bins need to be purchased and maintained privately.

The Highway Authority was consulted, but no response was received.

Public Protection Department - No concerns about contaminated land.

RELEVANT POLICIES

Havering Local Plan 2016-2031 - Policies 11 (Gypsy and Traveller accommodation), 23 (Transport connections), 24 (Parking provision and design), 26 (Urban design), 27 (Landscaping), 30 (Biodiversity and geodiversity), 34 (Managing pollution) and 35 (On-site waste management).

London Plan 2021 - Policies D3 (Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach), D4 (Delivering good design), D5 (Inclusive design), D11 (Safety, security and resilience to emergency) and H14 (Gypsy and traveller accommodation).

The National Planning Policy Framework

Planning Policy for Traveller Sites 2015

MAYORAL CIL IMPLICATIONS

There are no known CIL implications at the time of assessment.

STAFF COMMENTS

A site visit was undertaken.

Policy 11 of the Havering Local Plan states that the Council will seek to ensure that the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling showpeople who meet the planning definition of a traveller and those who do not meet the planning definition are met for the Local Plan Period 2016-2031. The Council has undertaken a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA). The Update report (July 2019) of the GTAA identifies this need as 220 pitches for Gypsies and Travellers and 5 plots for Travelling showpeople for the Plan period 2016-2031.

The Local Plan allocates a number of sites for Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation. These sites were all previously in the Green Belt, but through the allocation process in the Local Plan, have been removed from it with those sites now inset within it. The sites allocated for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show people households are identified on the Policies Map and listed in the tables in Annex 6. The tables identify the number of pitches and plots that will be accommodated on each site.

The site under consideration is allocated for gypsy and traveller accommodation in the Havering

Local Plan 2016-2031. The principle of development is accepted. The HLP at Annex 6 allocates Hogbar Farm for 16 pitches, Hogbar Farm East for 10 pitches, Fairhill Rise for 7 pitches and Vinegar Hill for 22 pitches, so the total allocation for the site is 55 pitches. The Local Plan Glossary states that a Gypsy and Traveller Pitch is defined as accommodating a household, and in Havering, generally includes a large static trailer, touring caravan, amenity building and parking and turning space.

The application is for a change of use of land to a private Gypsy and Traveller caravan site comprising of Plots 2 - 5, the demolition of an existing dilapidated utility block, the siting of Static Mobile Homes, hardstanding, and external lighting.

Requirements of Policy 11 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation

i. The site has a suitable site layout which demonstrates that the site is able to accommodate the number of pitches and plots sought;

During the course of the application, negotiations took place with the agent and three dayrooms were deleted from the description of the proposal and from the plans and two pitches were added to Vinegar Hill and one additional pitch was added to Fairhill Rise. The plans show fifty one pitches on the site. There is a deficit of four pitches, so there is a slight under provision on these sites. A condition will be imposed stating that the total number of mobile homes on the site shall be restricted to up to 55. The layout meets with the requirements of the Council.

ii. The site has essential services such as water, power, sewerage, drainage and waste disposal or is capable of being provided with these;

Based on the information given in the application and the Pitch Deliverability Assessment the site has mains water, electricity and sanitation available.

iii. The site is provided with high quality boundary treatment and landscaping in accordance with Policy 27 of this Plan;

Policy 27 states that the Council will support proposals which;

- i. Takes full account of the landscape character of the site and its wider setting;
- ii. Retains and enhances existing landscape features that contribute positively to the setting and character of the local area;
- iii. Demonstrates how existing landscape features will be protected during the construction phase;
- iv. Maximises opportunities for greening, through the planting of trees and other soft landscaping;
- v. Provides strong boundary treatment that integrates with and is sympathetic to the local landscape character and street scene; and
- vi. Supports natural habitats and opportunities for enhancing biodiversity.

The plans show a brickwork wall and gates adjacent to the entrances to the site. There is 1.8m high featheredge timber fencing to all plots and the plans show a new landscape scheme. The D&A contains a landscape schedule and management plan, which will be secured by condition if minded to grant planning permission.

iv. The site has safe access to the highway and public transport services and will not result in unacceptable impact on the capacity and environment of the highway network;

The site has access to the highway network. As stated in the pitch deliverability assessment, the site is located within 800m from a public transport route. There is no evidence before officers that the proposals would give rise to any known highway safety issues, the Highway Authority were invited to comment on this basis, but no response was received.

v. The site does not place an undue pressure on local infrastructure (such as healthcare, schools and shops);

As stated in the pitch deliverability assessment, the site is within 2km of a primary school, GP surgery, and shops. The site has also been occupied for the last 21 years. Therefore, the application is unlikely to place an undue pressure on existing services.

vi. The proposal would not result in unacceptable adverse impacts on the amenity of other site occupants and the occupiers of neighbouring sites;

There is no evidence before officers that the proposals would translate to an unacceptable level of disturbance through noise and movement associated with the use of the site. Based on the specifics of the application, the proposals would not have any material impact on the local character and amenity of the area. This is reinforced through the pitch deliverability assessment.

It would have a character not out of keeping with the residential environment. The static mobile homes would not be in a position where outlook would be unacceptably harmed, or where there would be undue loss of light or overshadowing. The provision of planting on the front and rear boundaries of the site as shown on Drawing No. 22/BEDFORDS/01 Revision E and in the Revised Design and Access Statement Revision E (including a Landscape schedule and management plan) is suggestive of any visual impacts being lessened.

It is considered that the retention of and proposed external lighting would not adversely neighbouring amenity, as the site is reasonably well separated from neighbouring properties. External lighting will be secured by condition in the interests of security and residential amenity.

vii. The proposal would not result in unacceptable adverse impacts on the visual amenity of the local area;

There is some existing landscaping and boundary treatments on the boundaries of the site. It is considered that the landscaping scheme is acceptable and this will be secured by condition if minded to grant planning permission. On balance, it is not considered that the proposals would unduly harm the visual amenity of the area.

viii. Sites at risk of flooding should be subject to the sequential and exception tests.

The site is located in flood zone 1.

CAR PARKING

Parking provision and matters of highway consideration are represented in Policies 23 and 24 of the Havering Local Plan 2016-2031. The PTAL for the site is 1b and 2. PTALs are a detailed and

accurate measure of the accessibility of a point to the public transport network, taking into account walk access time and service availability. The method is essentially a way of measuring the density of the public transport network at any location within Greater London. A low PTAL rating translates to a high vehicle dependency.

The D&A statement states the site has been occupied for the last 21 years. There are existing individual entrances off Lower Bedfords Road into each plot, which are to be retained/alterd as required. There are to be standard turning areas created within each plot.

It is not envisaged that the proposals would perceptibly increase vehicle movement to and from the site and it is evident that the site is more than capable of accommodating vehicles in connection with the residential occupation of the site.

SERVICING

Details of refuse and recycling storage can be secured by condition if minded to grant planning permission.

KEY ISSUES/CONCLUSIONS

Having regard to the above and in doing so all relevant planning policy and material considerations, APPROVAL is recommended accordingly subject to the following conditions.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that **planning permission be GRANTED** subject to the following condition(s)

1 Time limit

The development to which this permission relates must be commenced not later than three years from the date of this permission.

Reason:-

To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

2 Landscaping

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the hard and soft landscaping details shown on drawing no. 22/BEDFORDS.01 Revision E and the information in the Revised Design and Access Statement Revision E including the "Landscape Schedule and Management Plan". All planting, seeding or turfing comprised within the scheme shall be carried out in the first planting season following completion of the development and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local Planning Authority. The existing tree screen shall be retained in place for the duration of the development remaining in place.

Reason:- To ensure that the development achieves a satisfactory level of landscape quality in accordance with Havering Local Plan 2016-2031 Policies 27 and 30.

3 Refuse and recycling

No building shall be occupied or use commenced until refuse and recycling facilities are provided in accordance with details which shall previously have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The refuse and recycling facilities shall be permanently retained thereafter.

Reason:-

Insufficient information has been supplied with the application to judge how refuse and recycling will be managed on site. Submission of this detail prior to occupation in the case of new building works or prior to the use commencing in the case of changes of use will protect the amenity of occupiers of the development and also the locality generally.

4 Hours of construction

All building operations in connection with the construction of external walls, roof, and foundations; site excavation or other external site works; works involving the use of plant or machinery; the erection of scaffolding; the delivery of materials; the removal of materials and spoil from the site, and the playing of amplified music shall only take place between the hours of 8.00am and 6.00pm Monday to Friday, and between 8.00am and 1.00pm on Saturdays and not at all on Sundays and Bank Holidays/Public Holidays.

Reason:-

To protect residential amenity.

5 Hard Surface Porus/Run-off - application site

All hard surfaces hereby approved as part of the development (including any sub-base) shall be made of porous materials or provision shall be made to direct run-off water from the hard surface to a permeable or porous area or surface within the curtilage of the application site.

Reason:-

In order to ensure no water run-off from the hard surface which would contribute to risk of flooding.

6 No commercial or business activities

No commercial or business activities shall take place on the land, nor shall any equipment or paraphernalia associated with any business use be stored on the land.

Reason:-

To restrict the use of the site to one compatible with the surrounding area and to enable the Local Planning Authority to exercise control over any future intensification use not forming part of this application.

7 Use of the land by gypsies and travellers

The site shall not be occupied by any persons other than Gypsies and Travellers, defined as 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 or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of Travelling Showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.

Reason:-

In accordance with Policy 11 of the Havering Local Plan and the identified need identified.

8 Vehicles exceeding 3.5 tonnes in weight

No vehicle exceeding 3.5 tonnes in weight shall be stationed, parked or stored on the land.

Reason:-

To restrict the use of the site to one compatible with the surrounding area and to enable the Local Planning Authority to exercise control over any future intensification use not forming part of this application.

9 Number of mobile homes on the site

No more than 55 caravans, as defined in the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 and the Caravan Sites Act 1968 as amended, shall be stationed on the land at any time.

Reason:-

To restrict the use of the site to one compatible with the surrounding area and to enable the Local Planning Authority to exercise control over any future intensification use not forming part of this application.

10 Boundary fencing

The boundary fencing shown on drawing no. 22/BEDFORDS.01 Revision E and in the Revised Design and Access Statement Revision E shall be retained permanently, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the visual amenities of the development and prevent undue overlooking of adjoining property.

11 Access to the site

The access to the site shown on drawing no. 22/BEDFORDS.01 Revision E shall be retained permanently, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To maintain access to the site.

12 External lighting

The external lighting shown on Drawing No. 22/BEDFORDS/06 Revision A shall be retained and implemented in full, operated in strict accordance with the approved plans and permanently maintained, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

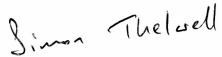
Reason: In the interests of security and residential amenity and in order that the development accords with Policies 7 and 34 of the Havering Local Plan.

INFORMATIVES

1 Approval following revision

Statement Required by Article 35 (2) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015: In accordance with paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework, improvements required to make the proposal acceptable were negotiated with Mr Smith via email on 20th July 2023 and 18th December 2023. The revisions involved altering the description of the proposal, deleting the dayrooms and increasing the number of pitches. The amendments were subsequently submitted on 23rd August and 19th December 2023.

Authorising Officer:



Simon Thelwell

19th December 2023