

Gypsy Transit Site public consultation responses: summaries

<u>Summary of objection issues</u>	<u>Officer response</u>
<p>1. Noise and Odour and Environmental Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly unsanitary place for future occupiers to live. • Inappropriate location for future occupiers due to smells and odours from Reading Sewage Treatment plant - not safe or healthy for families and raised public health concerns. • The 'Whitley Wiff' already unpleasant, would cause serious health harm to future occupiers. • Noise assessment confirms "a significant adverse effect" in noise levels for the site. • Increased potential from noise complaints against existing industrial businesses along Island Road. • Unkind for RBC to place Gypsies and Travellers in such an undesirable location, not 'humanistic'. • Unacceptable location within area of contaminated land. • High risk of water pollution. 	<p>This has been considered in the main committee report.</p>
<p>2. Site Location / Lack of connection to Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inappropriate for 'outsiders' to settle in Reading even on temporary basis. • There are traveller sites around the UK, why build close to housing developments. • Council should focus on making Reading a better place to live. • Should be located in Richfield Avenue/Cow Lane/Portman Road area or closer to M4. • Would bring tourists to the area as well as gypsies and travellers. • RBC should use its own car park for transit site. • Should not be located within a 5 mile radius of a school nor near a railway line. • Should be located on brownfield land. 	<p>Comments on alternative locations are addressed in the main committee report. Opinions expressed about 'outsiders' is not a valid planning consideration.</p>

<p>3. Crime and Anti-social behaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criminal actions will inevitably take place and thefts near where they settle. • Impact on safety of existing residents. • Increased littering in the area. • Vandalism will occur. • Fights between football fans and future occupiers will occur. • Temporary transit nature allowing for reduced accountability of crime. • Motorcycle usage will increase. • Female households will feel more unsafe. • Mental health of residents will be damaged being so close to unlawful, intimidating and aggressive community. • Users of circle Health Group Hospital will no longer use the hospital due to fear of crime, disorder and impact on mental health. • Illegal night fishing will take place. 	<p>These matters have been addressed in the main committee report where material to the proposal. Speculation as to the behaviour of future occupiers is not a planning consideration.</p>
<p>4. Effect on Kennet Island and Green Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On site facilities already overwhelmed by non-locals. • The landscape will be ruined. • What cost to taxpayers and residents of Kennet Island and Green Park for ongoing repairs/maintenance/clearance? • Negative impact on business operations at Green Park. • Not a good idea for lifestyle of existing residential community. • Kennet Island will become a place to avoid. • Loss of lovely community feel and spirit. • Occupiers of these estates do not want views of a gypsy site from their windows. • Kennet Island as a community will challenge any approval. • Will RBC Council pay if proposal has impact on cleanliness of GPV and KI greenspaces? 	<p>Matters relating to the visual impact of the proposal are addressed in the main report. Matters relating to the behaviour of future occupiers is not a material planning consideration.</p>
<p>5. Traffic and Parking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site too close to busy urban highway for future residents - not safe. • Island Road already congested; will become more dangerous and hazardous with additional vehicles. • Too close to already congested junction. • Site would be hindered by the large queues for the tip outside. • Dangerous for children using the play area so close to the road. 	<p>This has been addressed in the main committee report.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turning circle looks difficult for drivers to manoeuvre. <p>6. Location with Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would set precedence for developments within DEPZ areas wherein Council's should avoid housing residential housing. • How can Council go against Office Nuclear Regulation objection? <p>7. Size of Site</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too small to offer any benefit to future occupiers. • How will over capacity of site be handled? <p>8. Location within a Flood Plain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsafe for people to live or children to play within a flood zone. • Travelling community particularly vulnerable to flooding risks. • No flood evacuation plan submitted to show safe means of escape during a flood. • Siting in flood plain contrary to Policy H13. • How can Council go against Environment Agency objection? <p>9. Impact on Ecology and Landscaping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disruption of habitats will cause irreversible results to nesting areas and other wildlife including bats, birds, badgers and reptiles. • Lack of nature conservation due to loss of trees. • Measures to manage and mitigate water pollution and habitat lost have not been fully developed. <p>10. Impact on infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too far from amenities i.e. doctors, dentists, school places, police, fire service, ambulances, libraries, leisure centres. • Already difficult to secure an appointment with the local GPs and dentists. • Will increase pressure on overstretched healthcare facilities. • Prevents the traveller community to actually gain more from society. 	<p>Precedent is not a material planning consideration. Each planning application must be considered on its merits and no planning application should be pre-judged.</p> <p>The proposal relates to a very specific type of housing provision and this this matter has been address in the main committee report.</p> <p>Management of the site has been addressed in the main committee report.</p> <p>Concerns have been addressed in the main committee report and conditions have been recommended to mitigate where possible.</p> <p>Concerns have been addressed in the main committee report and conditions have been recommended to mitigate where possible.</p> <p>This is a relatively small site that would be managed by the Housing authority.</p>
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<p>11. Impact on character and appearance of area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site will have negative effect on character of surrounding areas. • Unacceptable impact on Kennet and Avon Canal, nature reserve and bird sanctuary. • Unsightly fly tipping • This natural space and surrounding areas should be an area that the council should value more and try harder to preserve and protect for local residents to enjoy. • Loss of trees to facilitate harm to character. • Unacceptable intrusion into the countryside. • Loss of greenery between the industrialised and developed land in the area. <p>12. Impact on Existing Residential Amenity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too close to residential housing and amenities in the Basingstoke Road area. • Would lead to friction between the traveller community and the existing local community <p>13. Consultation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation timescale too short, lack of due process. • Lack of engagement with community prior to submission. • Lack of engagement with local businesses prior to submission. 	<p>This has been addressed in the main committee report.</p> <p>There is nothing inherent in the proposal to suggest that behaviour of future occupiers will cause the problems alleged.</p> <p>This has been a long running application with considerable amount of time available for comments to be made. Engagement with the community is a matter for the applicant and would not ultimately affect the decision on a planning application.</p>
<p>14. Other Matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing residents will vote against ward councillors if proposal is approved. • Insurance prices will increase. • Property prices will decrease. • How much will this cost the taxpayer? • Are HCC paying for the site so long as RBC hosts? • There should be no breeding of animals on adjacent fields nor should future occupiers use the fields. • Proposals will result in mental illness to existing residents. • There will be an additional strain on policing. • When travelling community offered legal space at Rivermead, opted not to use it so why provide a site here? • Gypsies and Travellers do not contribute to society. • How will it be maintained as transit and not a permanent site? 	<p>Local politics is not a matter for officers to consider when determining a planning application.</p> <p>Insurance and property value are not a material planning consideration.</p> <p>Collection of taxes is not a material planning consideration.</p> <p>Personal financial considerations are not relevant to the planning assessment, however.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No information with the submission regarding caravan licence requirements. • Future occupiers likely to be unvaccinated against Covid. • Why has this application even been made? 	<p>Speculation as to the behaviour of future occupiers is not a material planning consideration.</p> <p>Conditions are proposed to govern the length of stay.</p> <p>Vaccination status not a material planning consideration.</p> <p>The Local Planning Authority cannot prevent planning applications being submitted.</p>
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Table 2: Content of supporting comments

Topics for Support:	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gypsies and Travellers need a safe place and Council's in general have not provided them. • Wonderful place near town centre and beauty of Green Park, will delight minds and convey nice emotions. • Site will improve conditions for gypsies and travellers. • A rise of unauthorised encampments would be the result if no other transit sites are currently available. • Having a transit site available, it would mean the council has greater legal powers to deal with any unauthorised encampments. 	