

Horsham District Council's response to query on proposed allocation at Bramblefield, Thakeham

16 October 2026

Context

- 1 The Inspector has raised two questions about the proposed allocation at Bramblefield, Thakeham based on a representation received by a resident of the neighbouring property at the Regulation 19 and a response from the owner of the land to which the allocation relates.
- 2 As background, the site has an existing pitch, which was allowed on appeal on 7 February 2020 (DC/18/1543). Policy 43 (as proposed to be modified by MM178), the site is a proposed allocation for a net addition of 3 pitches (gross allocation for 4 pitches, given the existing pitch on the site). The proposed allocation followed the findings of the Horsham Gypsy and Traveller Site Assessment (**H07**) that concluded it was appropriate to allocate the site.

(i) whether and how satisfactory access can be provided to the allocation

- 3 The call for sites process required the submission of a proforma to enable the assessment of the site. The proforma submitted by the site owner, identified that they had control of access and identified a link to Cray's Lane.
- 4 The existing site is accessed from a lane (Bramble Lane) that links to both Cray's Lane and Duke's Hill. Officers have visited the site on multiple occasions due to the assessment of the site for allocation and as part of the Caravan Count process and accessed/left the site in both directions. This has informed the conclusion that the site has safe access to the highway network (**H07, page 21**).
- 5 From the correspondence that the Inspector has seen, the site owner disagrees with any suggestion that they do not have rights of access to the site (both existing and the proposed allocation) via Bramble Lane to Cray's Lane. The Council does not involve itself in disagreements of this nature and thus assumes that the existing links can be accessed, as stated by the site owner.
- 6 Even if it were the case that site owner was incorrect and that the owners would need to establish, through legal routes, access rights to the wider highways network, there would still remain the possibility that such rights could be secured in the future. Indeed, this is something that they would need to be done whether the site was allocated or not, given that the existing pitch is currently home to residents that gives further confidence that an agreement will be reached even if it were not currently secured.

- 7 Ultimately however, the matter of disagreement between the parties is a civil matter beyond the ability of the Council to intervene in.

(ii) whether and how the requirements of Strategic Policy 20: Development Principles are capable of being met and maintained in the long term by this allocation.

- 8 The Council has proposed the deletion of Strategic Policy 20, per MM85. The response therefore focuses on Strategic Policy 19 (as modified by MM84) which incorporates elements of the submission version of Strategic Policy 20. Given the representation by the neighbour on the impact of the proposed allocation (and indeed, the existing site) on residential amenity, this response focuses on criteria 3 of Strategic Policy 19 (as amended by MM84) that reads:

“Provides and retains a good standard of amenity for existing and future occupants of the proposed site. Proposals should avoid unacceptable harm to the amenity of existing and future occupiers or users of nearby property and land, for example due to overlooking, overdominance or overshadowing, light pollution, noise, odour and / or vibration and having regard to the sensitivities / impacts of surrounding development.”

- 9 In relation to the above, the site assessment (**HO7, page 21**) found that the site would have a low impact on local character and amenity - noting that the Inspector for the allowed appeal concluded similarly. In relation to impact on amenity of local residents, it similarly found there to be a low impact noting and the site assessment also concluded that the site was not particularly visible from its surroundings.

Consequently, it is the Council's view that the development of the site in accordance with the policy is capable of being meeting the above requirements and would be assessed in full at a planning application stage and appropriate conditions imposed. Notwithstanding the claims made by the representation of the neighbour, it would be expected that should an application be approved, that the site would be developed in accordance with a planning permission and that unlawful development would be enforced against.

- 10 The Council has not considered further expansion of the site – it has not been promoted as part of the Local Plan. Should an application be forthcoming on land outside of the proposed allocation it would be dealt with as part of the development management process in accordance with the adopted policy framework.

Conclusion

- 11 In conclusion, the Council is of the view that the allocation should be retained. Even if it were not and should the Inspector recommend its removal, the Council would highlight that (as expressed in MM176) the plan provides enough pitches to meet needs and allow for a small headroom to ensure resilience in supply. As a result, the removal of the site would not significantly impact upon the plan's approach to Gypsy and Traveller provision as a whole.