
North Northamptonshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment

SYNOPSIS

The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of the recent publication of a new North Northamptonshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Government's planning policies and requirements for gypsy and travellers is set out in the 'Planning Policy for Traveller Sites'¹. It states that local planning authorities should use a robust evidence base to establish accommodation needs to inform the preparation of local plans and make planning decisions. The planning policy also states that local planning authorities should set pitch targets for gypsies and travellers and plot targets for travelling show people which address the likely permanent and transit site accommodation needs of travellers in the area, working collaboratively with neighbouring local planning authorities. Specifically, the national planning policy directs local planning authorities to identify a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years' worth of sites against locally set targets and a supply of specific developable sites or broad locations to meet needs, where possible, for up to 15 years.

2. North Northamptonshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment

- 2.1 The primary objective of the North Northamptonshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment is to identify the current and future needs of the traveller communities in North Northamptonshire.
- 2.2 The existing assessment was published in October 2011 and updated the findings from the 2008 North Northamptonshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment. It identified a need for 1 residential pitch in Corby between 2011 and 2022.
- 2.3 Consultants, Opinion Research Services, were jointly commissioned in April 2018 by Corby Borough Council, Kettering Borough Council, East Northamptonshire Council and the Borough Council of Wellingborough to prepare an updated Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment for the period 2018-2031 to align with the plan period covered by the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and subsequent Part 2 Local Plans. This approach has enabled a consistent partnership approach and better understanding of need across administrative boundaries as well as economies of scale to be achieved in terms of procurement cost savings.
- 2.4 The need for an update followed the change in definition of Travellers in the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites published in August 2015. The Government changed the definition of Gypsy and Travellers so that households that do not travel for work purposes fall outside the planning definition of a Traveller.
- 2.5 The updated Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment is an important aspect of the Local Plan evidence base that will be used to inform development of planning policies and to guide and determine planning applications. The outcomes of this assessment therefore supersede any previous Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment completed in 2011 and earlier.
- 2.6 The methodology used in the assessment is based on national planning policy and best practice, and draws on a combination of desk based research, stakeholder consultation with key Council officers and direct engagement with members of the travelling community through a series of interviews.

¹ [Planning policy for traveller sites](#), August 2015

- 2.7 The updated assessment has a base date of July 2018 and provides a snapshot in time based largely on survey evidence collected from May 2018.
- 2.8 The findings of the updated North Northamptonshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment were presented to Members on 16 May and 13 June 2019 to allow the consultant to explain directly the background to the study, provide details of the methodology and answer questions on the findings of the latest assessment.
- 2.9 The Executive Summary of the assessment is appended and a copy of the main report is available in the member's room or on request from members of the Local Plan team. The following provides a summary of the findings.
- 2.10 Table 1 sets out the existing provision of gypsy and traveller accommodation within Corby. There are 2 public sites with 18 pitches and 2 private sites with 7 pitches.

Table 1: Existing Gypsy and Traveller Supply

Location	No. of pitches
Brookfield	8
Dunlop Close	10
Little Meadow	4
Ashley Road	3
Total Existing Pitches	25

- 2.11 Table 2 below is taken from the updated North Northamptonshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment and summarises the total need for gypsy and traveller accommodation for the 15 year period from 2018 to 2033.

Table 2: Corby Gypsy and Traveller Need 2018-2033

Corby	GTТА	HNA	Total
Meet Planning Definition (+25% Undetermined)	11 (10+1)	0	11
Do not meet Planning Definition (+75% Undetermined)	0	15 (12+3)	15
TOTAL	11	15	26

- 2.12 In terms of travelling show people the updated assessment did not identify a need for travelling show people yards in Corby.
- 2.13 Importantly the assessment splits the overall requirements by five year bands to identify a minimum requirement of 7 pitches to be provided between 2018 and 2023 as illustrated in the table below.

Table 3: Additional need for Gypsy and Travellers that met the planning definition by year periods

Years	0-5	6-10	11-13	14-15	Total
	2018-23	2023-28	2028-31	2031-33	
	7	2	1	0	10

- 2.14 The updated assessment does not identify specific sites to accommodate future requirements. This will be the responsibility of local planning authorities through the planning application process and Local Plan policies.

3. Options to be considered (if any)

- 3.1 No other options have been considered.

4. Issues to be taken into account:-

Policy Priorities

The assessment is important evidence for the Local Plan and will have an impact on the objectives of the Corporate Plan, in particular priorities to promote social cohesion and build and improve the existing housing stock.

Financial

Cost of planned evidence base included within budget.

Legal

None

Human Rights, Community Safety, Performance Information, Best Value

None directly linked to this report.

Equalities and Sustainability

The Gypsy and Traveller communities are recognised ethnic groups. Providing for their needs is a duty of the Council. Equality Questionnaire has been completed for the Part 2 Local Plan.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that Members:

- Note the content of this report
- Agree the inclusion of the North Northamptonshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment as part of the Council's planning evidence base.

Background Papers

[Emerging Draft Options](#) (Regulation 18 Consultation), July 2018

[North Northamptonshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment Update 2011](#), October 2011

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Executive Summary

Introduction and Methodology

The primary objective of this Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) is to provide a robust assessment of current and future need for the North Northamptonshire Authorities of Corby Borough Council, East Northamptonshire Council, Kettering Borough Council and the Borough Council of Wellingborough (the Councils).

As well as updating previous GTAAs, another reason for completing the 2018 study was the publication of a revised version of Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) in August 2015. This included a change to the definition of Travellers for planning purposes. The key change that was made was the removal of the term *persons...who have ceased to travel permanently*, meaning that those who have ceased to travel permanently will not now fall under the planning definition of a Traveller for the purposes of assessing accommodation need in a GTAA (see Paragraph 2.8 for full definition).

The GTAA provides a credible evidence base which can be used to aid the preparation and implementation of Local Plan Policies and the provision of new Gypsy and Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople plots for the 15-year period up to 2033, as required by the PPTS, with a split to 2031 to meet Local Plan Periods. The outcomes of this study supersede the need figures of any previous Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Needs Assessments completed in the study area.

The GTAA has sought to understand the accommodation needs of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population in the study area through a combination of desk-based research, stakeholder interviews and engagement with members of the Travelling Community living on all identified sites and yards. A total of 79 interviews were completed with Gypsies and Travellers and 21 interviews were completed with Travelling Showpeople living on authorised and unauthorised sites and yards. Following efforts to identify households living in bricks and mortar it was possible to identify a small number of households seeking to move to sites. In addition, stakeholder engagement was undertaken and total of 15 telephone interviews were completed.

The fieldwork for the study was completed between May 2018 and August 2018. The baseline date for the study is **July 2018** which was when the majority of the site interviews were completed.

A Glossary of Terms can be found in **Appendix A**.

Key Findings

Additional Pitch Needs – Gypsies and Travellers

Overall, the additional pitch needs for Gypsies and Travellers from 2018-2031/33 are set out below. Additional needs are set out for those households that met the planning definition of a Gypsy or Traveller; for those undetermined households where an interview was not able to be completed

(either due to site owners refusing access on to sites, individual households refusing to be interviewed, or households not being present despite 3 visits to each site or yard) who may meet the planning definition; and for those households that did not meet the planning definition (even though this is no longer a requirement for a GTAA).

Only the need from those households who met the planning definition and from those of the undetermined households who may subsequently demonstrate that they meet it should be considered as need arising from the GTAA.

The need arising from households that met the planning definition should be addressed through site allocation/intensification/expansion Local Plan Policies. Consideration will also need to be given to the allocation of pitches on public sites.

The Councils will need to carefully consider how to address the needs associated with undetermined Travellers as it is unlikely that all of this need will have to be addressed through the provision of conditioned Gypsy or Traveller pitches. In terms of Local Plan Policies, the Councils should consider the use of a criteria-based policy (as suggested in PPTS) for any undetermined households, as opposed to making a specific allocation in Local Plan Policies. A criteria-based policy can also deal with any windfall site applications and unidentified need from households in bricks and mortar.

In general terms, the need for those households who did not meet the planning definition will need to be addressed as part of general housing need and through separate Local Plan Policies - including any plans that have already been adopted, as all Travellers will have been included as part of the overall Objectively Assessed Need - OAN.

This approach is specifically referenced in the revised National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019). Paragraph 60 of the NPPF sets out that in determining the minimum number of homes needed, strategic plans should be based upon a local housing need assessment conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance. Paragraph 61 then states that (emphasis added) *'Within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, **travellers**, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes'*. The footnote to this section states that *'Planning Policy for Traveller Sites sets out how travellers' housing needs should be assessed for those covered by the definition in Annex 1 of that document.'*

It is recognised that all of the Council's already have in place an NPPF (2012) compliant adopted Local Plan (The North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy) that sets out overall housing need. When this plan is reviewed, or a new plan prepared, the findings of this report should be considered as part of future housing mix and type within the context of the assessment of overall housing need.

Corby Borough Council

There were 8 Gypsy or Traveller households identified in Corby that met the planning definition, 4 undetermined households that may meet the planning definition, and 12 households that did not meet the planning definition.

The GTAA identifies a need for **10 additional pitches** for households that met the planning definition. This is made up of 7 concealed or doubled-up households or single adults, 3 teenagers who will need a pitch of their own in the next 5 years, and 3 from new household formation derived

from the household demographics². In addition, there was a supply of 3 vacant pitches on the public site.

The GTAA identifies a need for up to 4 additional pitches for undetermined households and this is made up of 1 doubled-up household that was unable to be assessed against the planning definition of a Travellers, 1 teenager from this household in need of a pitch of their own in the next 5 years, and 2 from new household formation derived from the household demographics³. If the ORS national average⁴ of 25% were applied this could result in a need for 1 additional pitch. Whilst the proportion of households in Corby that met the planning definition is higher (40%) than 25% this is based on a small household base. Therefore, it is felt that it would be more appropriate to consider the more statistically robust ORS national figure. However, if the locally derived proportion were to be applied this could result in a need for 2 additional pitches from undetermined households.

Whilst no longer a requirement to include in a GTAA, there is a need for 12 additional pitches for households that did not meet the planning definition. This is made up of 6 concealed or doubled-up households or single adults, 1 teenager who will be in need of a pitch of their own in the next 5 years, and 5 from new household formation using a rate of 1.60% derived from the household demographics.

Figure 1 – Additional need for Gypsy and Traveller households in Corby 2018-2031/33

Status	2018-31	2031-33 ⁵
Meet Planning Definition	10	0
Undetermined	3	1
Do not meet Planning Definition	11	1

East Northamptonshire Council

There were no Gypsy or Traveller households identified in East Northamptonshire that met the planning definition, 67 undetermined households that may meet the planning definition, and 6 households that did not meet the planning definition. The reason for there being so many undetermined households was that ORS were refused access to the majority of pitches on the 3 private sites by the site owners. However, the site owners were able to confirm that they are able to meet any current and future needs that may arise on their existing sites over the 15-year GTTA period.

The GTAA identifies a need for **no additional pitches** for households that met the planning definition as none were identified.

The GTAA identifies a need of up to 17 additional pitches for undetermined households and this is all made up of new household formation (this uses a base of the 67 households and a net growth rate of 1.50%). If the ORS national average of 25% were applied this could result in a need for 4 additional pitches. Whilst there were no households that were interviewed that met the planning definition it is possible that a higher proportion of undetermined households will meet the planning definition.

² Further information of how new household formation rates have been calculated can be found in Chapter 5. This explains the reasons why different rates of formation have been used.

³ Whilst it was not possible to determine the planning status of these households it was possible to obtain details of household demographics.

⁴ Based on the outcomes of over 3,500 interviews completed by ORS in England since 2015.

⁵ The split for 2018-31 and for 2031-33 has been calculated using the year-on-year breakdown for new household formation.

Whilst no longer a requirement to include them in a GTAA, there is a need for 11 additional pitches for households that did not meet the planning definition. This is made up of 6 concealed or doubled-up households or adults, 4 teenagers who will be in need of a pitch of their own in the next 5 years, and 1 from new household formation derived from the household demographics.

Figure 2 – Additional need for Gypsy and Traveller households in East Northamptonshire 2018- 2031/33

Status	2018-31	2031-33
Meet Planning Definition	0	0
Undetermined	14	3
Do not meet Planning Definition	11	0

Kettering Borough Council

There were 25 Gypsy or Traveller households identified in Kettering that met the planning definition, 15 undetermined households that may meet the planning definition, and 20 households that did not meet the planning definition.

The GTAA identifies a need for **23 additional pitches** for households that met the planning definition, and this is made up of 7 concealed or doubled-up households or adults, 5 teenagers in need of a pitch of their own in the next 5 years, 2 from pitches with temporary planning permission, and 9 from new household formation using a rate of 1.75% derived from the site demographics.

The GTAA identifies a need of up to 4 additional pitches for undetermined households and this is made up of new household formation of up to 4 from a maximum of 15 households. If the ORS national average of 25% were applied this could result in a need for 1 additional pitch. Whilst the proportion of households in Kettering that met the planning definition is higher (56%) than 25% this is based on a small household base. Therefore, it is felt that it would be more appropriate to consider the more statistically robust ORS national figure. However, if the locally derived proportion were to be applied this could result in a need of up to 2 additional pitches from undetermined households. It should be noted that the 6 temporary pitches are currently unoccupied and have not been included as components of need; the Council should continue to monitor the occupancy of these pitches.

Whilst no longer a requirement to include them in a GTAA, there is a need for 21 additional pitches for households that did not meet the planning definition. This is made up of 10 concealed or doubled-up households or adults, 5 teenagers who will be in need of a pitch of their own in the next 5 years, and 6 from new household formation using a formation rate of 1.50% derived from the household demographics.

Figure 3 – Additional need for Gypsy and Traveller households in Kettering 2018-2031-33

Status	2018-31	2031-33
Meet Planning Definition	22	1
Undetermined	3	1
Do not meet Planning Definition	20	1

Borough Council of Wellingborough

There were 2 Gypsy or Traveller households identified in Wellingborough that met the planning definition, 29 undetermined households that may meet the planning definition, and 2 households that did not meet the planning definition. The reason for there being so many undetermined

households was that ORS were refused access to pitches on a large private site by the site owners. However, the site owners were able to confirm that they are able to meet any current and future needs that may arise on their existing sites – they have 13 unimplemented pitches at present.

The GTAA identifies a need for **1 additional pitch** for households that met the planning definition, and this is made up of 1 teenager in need of a pitch of their own in the next 5 years.

The GTAA identifies a need of up to 7 additional pitches for undetermined households and this is made up of new household formation of up to 7 from a maximum of 29 households. If the ORS national average of 25% were applied this could result in a need for 2 additional pitches. Whilst the proportion of households in Wellingborough that met the planning definition is higher (50%) than 25% this is based on a small household base. Therefore, it is felt that it would be more appropriate to consider the more statistically robust ORS national figure. However, if the locally derived proportion were to be applied this could result in a need of up to 4 additional pitches from undetermined households.

Whilst no longer a requirement to include them in a GTAA, there is a need for no additional pitches for households that did not meet the planning definition.

Figure 4 – Additional need for Gypsy and Traveller households in Wellingborough 2018-2031/33

Status	2018-31	2031-33
Meet Planning Definition	1	0
Undetermined	6	1
Do not meet Planning Definition	0	0

Additional Plot Needs - Travelling Showpeople

Overall the additional plot needs for Travelling Showpeople from 2018-31/33 are set out below. Additional needs are set out for those households that met the planning definition of a Travelling Showperson; for those undetermined households where an interview was not able to be completed (due to site owners refusing access to sites) who may meet the planning definition; and for those households that did not meet the planning definition (although this is no longer a requirement for a GTAA).

Only the need from those households who met the planning definition and from those of the undetermined households who may subsequently demonstrate that they meet it should be considered as need arising from the GTAA.

The need arising from households that met the planning definition should be addressed through yard allocation/intensification/expansion Local Plan Policies.

The Councils will need to carefully consider how to address the needs associated with undetermined Travelling Showpeople as it is unlikely that all of this need will have to be addressed through the provision of conditioned Travelling Showpeople plots. In terms of Local Plan Policies, the Councils should consider the use of a criteria-based policy (as suggested in PPTS) for any undetermined households that do provide evidence that they meet the planning definition.

In general terms, the need for those households who did not meet the planning definition will need to be addressed as part of general housing need and through separate Local Plan Policies (including any plans that have already been adopted, as all Travellers will have been included as part of the overall Objectively Assessed Need - OAN). See Paragraphs 1.12-1.13 for further details.

Corby Borough Council

There were no Travelling Showpeople identified in Corby so there is no current or future need for additional plots for the GTAA period 2018-31/33.

Figure 5 – Additional need for Travelling Showpeople households in Corby 2018-2031/33

Status	2018-31	2031-33
Meet Planning Definition	0	0
Undetermined	0	0
Do not meet Planning Definition	0	0

East Northamptonshire Council

There is 1 Travelling Showperson yard in East Northamptonshire. It was possible to complete an interview with all 4 households and all of these households met the planning definition. There were no undetermined households and no households that did not meet the planning definition.

The GTAA identifies a need for **6 additional plots** for households that met the planning definition, and this is made up of 3 concealed or doubled-up households or adults, 2 from teenagers who will be in need of a plot of their own in the next 5 years, and 1 from in-migration. There was no additional new household formation identified.

Figure 6 – Additional need for Travelling Showpeople households in East Northamptonshire 2018-2031/33

Status	2018-31	2031-33
Meet Planning Definition	6	0
Undetermined	0	0
Do not meet Planning Definition	0	0

Kettering Borough Council

There were no Travelling Showpeople identified in Kettering so there is no current or future need for additional plots for the GTAA period 2018-31/33.

Figure 7 – Additional need for Travelling Showpeople households in Kettering 2018-2031/33

Status	2018-31	2031-33
Meet Planning Definition	0	0
Undetermined	0	0
Do not meet Planning Definition	0	0

Borough Council of Wellingborough

There are 4 private Travelling Showperson yards in Wellingborough. Interviews were completed with all 17 households and 12 met the planning definition and 5 did not meet it. There were no undetermined households.

The GTAA identifies a need for **8 additional plots** for the household that met the planning definition, and this is made up of 2 concealed or doubled-up households or adults, 1 teenager in need of a plot of their own in the next 5 years, and 5 from new household formation derived from the household

demographics. The GTAA identifies a need for no additional plots for households that did not meet the planning definition.

Figure 8 – Additional need for Travelling Showpeople households in Wellingborough 2018-2031/33

Status	2018-31	2031-33
Meet Planning Definition	6	2
Undetermined	0	0
Do not meet Planning Definition	0	0

Transit Recommendations

There is currently no public transit provision in any of the 4 local authorities – although it was reported that a number of the larger private sites are sometimes used for transit visitors.

Analysis of the stakeholder interviews, Traveller Caravan Count Data and data collected by the Countywide Traveller Unit (CTU) shows that there are increasing numbers of unauthorised encampments in many parts of North Northamptonshire, as well as increasing numbers of caravans on some of these encampments. It also suggests that there has been no public transit provision put in place as a result of recommendations in the previous GTAA and that there are instances of transit provision on some larger private sites.

As such it is recommended that the Councils, together with the CTU work together to identify opportunities for the provision of emergency stopping places. Given the implications of Local Government Reorganisation in Northamptonshire leading to the establishment of a new North Northamptonshire Unitary Authority by 2020 it is recommended that work be progressed on a strategic basis as opposed to work to identify potential sites within each current local authority.

In order to identify the likely number of emergency stopping places that will be needed it is recommended that a detailed analysis should be completed of the number of caravans on recorded encampments on a month by month basis. This will identify whether there are any seasonal variations in numbers of caravans and a minimum and maximum number of caravan spaces that may be required. This data is currently recorded by the CTU in a raw format, but detailed analysis has not yet been completed. This additional analysis should also include work on identifying the number of households accounting for multiple records of encampments.

In the meantime, it is recommended that the situation relating to levels of unauthorised encampments throughout the area should continue to be monitored and managed by the CTU whilst any potential changes associated with PPTS (2015) develop.