

Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocations Plan

**Site Assessments
June 2014 Update**

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1. Introduction

1.1 In July and August 2011 the Council consulted on a Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocations DPD 'Options' paper. This document sought views on how the future accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Solihull could be met by identifying the possible ways pitches and sites could come forward. Both prior to and as part of the Option paper consultation the Council undertook a 'call for sites' exercise where interested parties could suggest sites they considered suitable for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation. A total of 9 sites were suggested including requests from the owners of some existing authorised sites to extend their sites and / or increase the number of pitches.

1.2 The list of suggested sites included:

- Land at School Road, Hockley Heath
- Land between Waste Lane and Old Waste Lane, Balsall Common
- Eaves Green Lane, Meriden
- Land off Old Damson Lane, Solihull
- Land adjacent to 'The Pleck', Shadowbrook Lane, Hampton-in-Arden
- Land off Salter Street, Earlswood
- 'Canal View' off Salter Street, Earlswood
- 'The Warren', Bickenhill Lane, Marston Green
- 'The Haven', Catherine-de-Barnes Lane, Bickenhill

1.3 Since the Options consultation, a further suggested site was submitted to the Council as a potential allocation:

- Old Civil Service Sports Club, off Old Damson Lane, Solihull

1.4 The location of these suggested sites is set out in Appendix 1.

1.5 The Council has also adopted a pragmatic approach by considering whether existing Gypsy and Traveller sites in the Borough without the benefit of full planning permission (where they were not the subject of a planning application at that time) were suitable to meet Solihull's identified need for pitches. These sites included:

- 'The Uplands', Dickens Heath Road, Dickens Heath
- 'The Pleck', Shadowbrook Lane, Hampton-in-Arden

2. The Site Assessment Process

- 2.1 Policy P6 of the Solihull Local Plan on 'Provision of Sites for Gypsies and Travellers' identifies the criteria against which planning applications and site allocations will be considered. The criteria are as follows:
- i. The size and scale of the site and the number of caravans stationed is appropriate to the size and density of the local settled community;
 - ii. Any unacceptable adverse visual impact can be adequately minimised;
 - iii. The site is not in an area prone to flooding;
 - iv. Any unacceptable adverse impact on landscape or local nature conservation designations, ecology, biodiversity or the historic environment can be mitigated;
 - v. There is no unacceptable adverse impact on privacy and residential amenity for both site residents and neighbouring land uses;
 - vi. The site has safe and convenient access to the highway network;
 - vii. Local services and facilities such as schools, health facilities, fresh food and employment are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport, or it can be demonstrated that the site is sustainable in other ways.
- 2.2 Although Policy P6 also states that sites in the Green Belt will not be permitted unless other locations have been considered and only then in very special circumstances, the fact that Solihull has an identified unmet need and no available sites elsewhere may well constitute very special circumstances. In Solihull, all of the suggested sites, together with all the existing authorised and unauthorised sites, are in the Green Belt.
- 2.3 Notwithstanding this, in addition to being suitable in accordance with the criteria in Policy P6, sites also need to be available and achievable. Consideration is also given to these elements.
- 2.4 However, in order to undertake an assessment of how each site performs, there needed to be identification and consideration of the more detailed issues that each criterion in Policy P6 encompasses.
- 2.5 Table 1 outlines the site assessment criteria and the more detailed issues that have been considered as part of the overall site assessment process.

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- 2.6 On 15 January 2014, the Inspector examining the submitted Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocation DPD issued a note expressing concerns with the soundness of the document. The main area of concern was around the deliverability of the number of additional pitches proposed (12) at The Haven and it was recommended that the allocation at The Haven be reduced to around 6 pitches. In light of this, the Inspector requested that the Council review all submitted sites to assess which sites may be suitable to accommodate further pitches, resulting from the shortfall at The Haven.
- 2.7 In view of this, all sites have been re-assessed and the document updated to reflect the current circumstances. All updates to the assessments are highlighted in **bold** for clarity.

Table 1: Site assessment criteria and detailed issues

	Issues to consider
Availability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether the site is available, in principle, for use as a Gypsy and Traveller site. • Land ownership • Legal constraint (ransom strips, tenancies, multiple ownerships etc)
Suitability: Criteria in Policy P6	
The size and scale of the site and the number of caravans stationed is appropriate to the size and density of the local settled community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether the site size is appropriate for its local context in relation to the local infrastructure, the local environment and the local settled population size and density. • Consider impact on the immediate locality and nearest settlement.
Any unacceptable adverse visual impact can be adequately minimised.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the visual prominence and visual impact of the site from various public and private viewpoints including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ public highway ○ public footpaths ○ other public areas ○ surrounding residential properties
The site is not in an area prone to flooding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether the site is located in a flood zone. • Whether evidence suggests that there are other flooding issues affecting the site and its surroundings.
Any unacceptable adverse impact on landscape or local nature conservation designations, ecology, biodiversity or the historic environment can be mitigated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether there are any statutory designations affecting the site including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Site of Special Scientific Interest ○ National Nature Reserve ○ Scheduled Ancient Monument ○ Listed Building ○ Registered Historic Parks and Gardens ○ Conservation Areas
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether there are any local environmental designations affecting the site. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Local Nature Reserves ○ Local Wildlife Site ○ Tree Preservation Orders ○ Ancient Woodland ○ Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation ○ Local Geographical Site

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Heritage Assets (local lists) ● Whether there is likely to be any impact on features that contribute to the landscape character. Eg hedgerows ● Whether there are special qualities to the landscape ● Whether there is likely to be any impact on biodiversity resources or known protected species
There is no unacceptable adverse impact on privacy and residential amenity for both site residents and neighbouring land uses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Whether neighbouring uses are likely to unacceptably affect / be affected by Gypsies and Travellers (light, visual impact, noise, general disturbance, other issues) ● Whether there is likely to be any significantly adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area
The site has safe and convenient access to the highway network.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Whether the access and roads in the vicinity are of an appropriate standard (considering issues such as the adequacy of the existing access, the character and speed of the road and width and alignment) ● Potential for pedestrian / vehicle conflict (considering issues such as whether the road has a designated footway or cycleway and is lit) ● Whether there are other highway safety concerns or other highway issues.
Local services and facilities such as schools, health facilities, fresh food and employment are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport, or it can be demonstrated that the site is sustainable in other ways.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Whether essential key services are available in the nearest settlement (essential services include schools, health facilities and fresh food and all should ideally be available). ● Whether key services are within an appropriate walking and cycling distance and whether the route is conducive to walking and cycling for such trips. ● Whether public transport is available and provides a relatively frequent level of service. <p>Sites will be considered more suitable where all essential services are available in the nearest settlement and are within realistic walking and cycling distances.</p>
<u>Health impacts</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Impact of expansion and/or increasing capacity at existing sites on health and well being.</u> ● <u>Impact of the resultant size of the site on health and well being.</u>
Other Issues to consider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Whether there are any other site specific or other issues that need to be considered.
Achievability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Whether the site has any constraints to delivery. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Alternative land uses ● Remediation work required ● Viability

3. Site Assessments

Land at School Road, Hockley Heath



<p>Availability</p>	<p>The site is currently available for use.</p>
<p>Suitability: Criteria in Policy P6 of the Solihull Local Plan</p>	
<p>The size and scale of the site and the number of caravans stationed is appropriate to the size and density of the local settled community.</p>	<p>The site is located less than 2 km from Hockley Heath, on the extreme edge of the village. There are a small number of dwellings in the immediate vicinity, set within large plots at fairly low density.</p> <p>The size of the site identified and the number of pitches likely to be accommodated (over 20) covers an extensive area such that it would be considered out of scale and inappropriate, when considered in the context of the immediate local environment and population.</p> <p>When considered in the context of the size of Hockley Heath as a whole, the site would not be significantly out of scale, although the village lacks some essential services.</p>
<p>Any unacceptable adverse visual impact can be adequately minimised.</p>	<p>The site, set back from the highway, would be relatively well screened from School Road and not visually prominent from this location.</p> <p>Views of the site from Ashford Lane to the east</p>

	<p>would be more prominent due to the gaps in the existing hedgerows. The same would apply to views of the site from the only public footpath in the vicinity which links Ashford Lane to the A3400 Stratford Road.</p> <p>The site would not be visually prominent from the canal towpath which runs parallel with School Road.</p> <p>The site will represent a significant visual intrusion into the landscape when viewed from many of the surrounding residential properties, particularly those dwellings adjacent to the site access. Views from properties in Ashford Lane are likely to be more limited.</p> <p>Impact on openness as this would appear as a somewhat isolated development within what is largely an open field.</p>
<p>The site is not in an area prone to flooding</p>	<p>The site is not located in a flooding zone.</p> <p>Evidence suggests that there is an issue with surface water flooding on the site and evidence of flooding along School Road in periods of significant rainfall.</p>
<p>Any unacceptable adverse impact on landscape or local nature conservation designations, ecology, biodiversity or the historic environment can be mitigated.</p>	<p>There are no statutory national designations within the site or local environmental designations affecting the site, although the nearby Stratford-upon-Avon canal is a potential Local Wildlife Site.</p> <p>The site is in an attractive rural environment and despite being close to settlements, the area has a remote feel.</p> <p>The trees and hedgerows along School Road are an important feature of the area and some may need to be removed to create a site access.</p> <p>Protected / priority species are unknown at this stage, although it is possible that legally protected species (Great Crested Newts) are present on site as there is a pond within 500m.</p> <p>The Solihull Countryside strategy defines this area as falling within Zone 1 'Hockley Heath Parish' which retains many of the unique features of Arden Pastureland , typically small scale, enclosed landscape containing a variety of natural habitats. At the same time it is an area where "urban fringe" features are already apparent.</p> <p>Development would impact on the current landscape character and appearance of the area, resulting in an isolated development within what is largely an open</p>

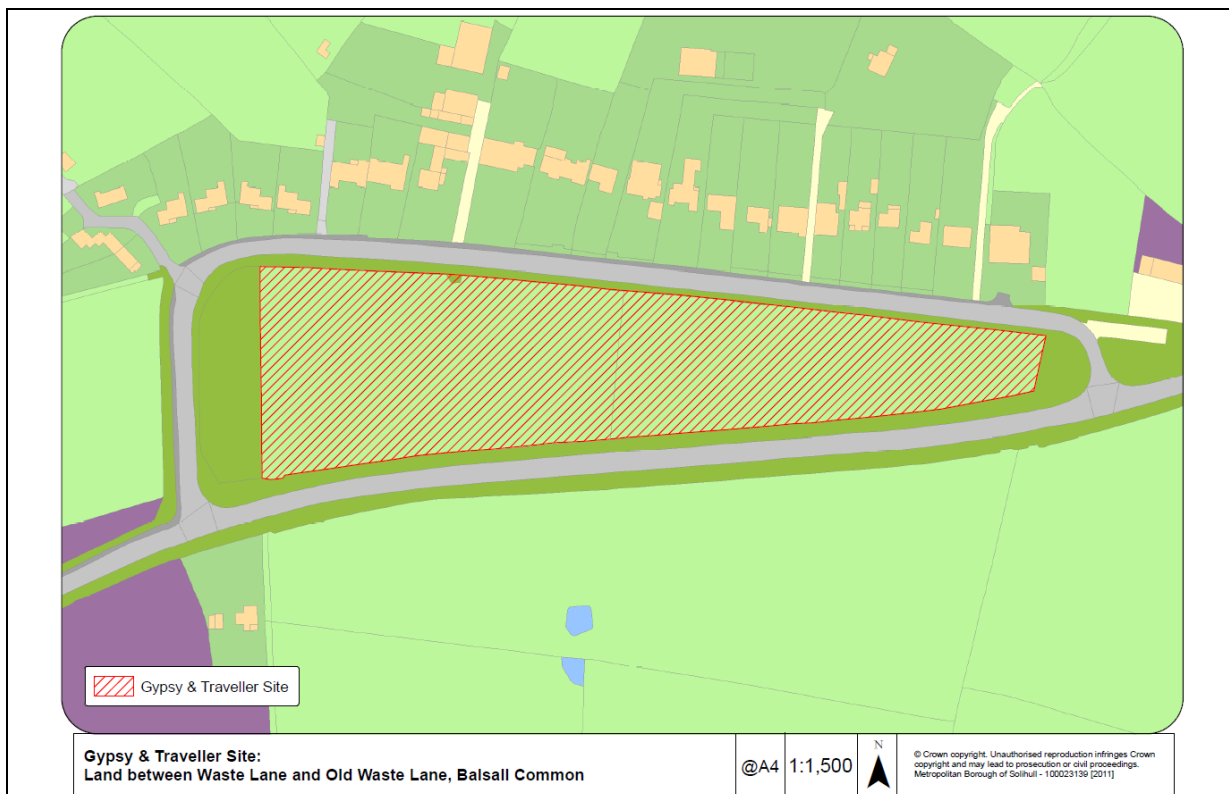
	<p>field.</p> <p>With regard to the historic environment, Ashford Farm may be a 19th century heritage asset, early 20th century cottages/ bungalows to east and south are heritage assets, all of low local significance</p> <p>Some remains of planned enclosure at south edge and nearby.</p> <p>Development of the site unlikely to adversely affect the special interest and setting of the above heritage assets. The layout, density, landscaping and external lighting of any future development would need to pay proportionate regard to their significance and to local distinctiveness.</p>
<p>There is no unacceptable adverse impact on privacy and residential amenity for both site residents and neighbouring land uses.</p>	<p>It is unlikely that there would be an adverse impact on privacy and residential amenity for future site occupants due to the fact that it has no immediate neighbours.</p> <p>The site is bounded on 2 sides by the private amenity space of 3 residential properties. The rural character of the location is such that there is no impact from artificial light sources, no significant noise or other general disturbance.</p> <p>The introduction of a Gypsy and Traveller site in this location, particularly anything more than a small scale site, would significantly affect the privacy and residential amenity of residential properties immediately adjacent the site in terms of noise, increase in vehicle movements, impact from artificial light sources and general disturbance.</p> <p>The residential amenity of occupiers of the dwellings nearest the proposed site access will be affected due to the increase in activity at the site entrance. However, the location of the site which is set well back from School Road and neighbouring properties is such that there is unlikely to be any adverse impact on the privacy and residential amenity of neighbouring land uses as a result of activities on the site itself.</p>
<p>The site has safe and convenient access to the highway network.</p>	<p>School Road is a relatively rural road, becoming increasing rural in character as it passes the suggested site entrance from the direction of Hockley Heath.</p> <p>The road is not characterised by sharp bends or poor visibility and is subject to a 60mph speed limit past the site. The characteristics of the road are therefore</p>

	<p>conducive to fast moving vehicles and the lack of formal footway provision and lighting means that there is potential for conflict between vehicles and pedestrians. However, there are no public footpaths in the immediate vicinity of the site, thereby limiting the number of recreational walkers in the area.</p> <p>Although the road is of sufficient width to allow 2 on coming private vehicles to pass in opposite directions, the presence of a school approximately 800m from the site leads to localised congestion, including the presence of parked cars, thereby reducing the width of the carriageway at certain times of the day.</p>
<p>Local services and facilities such as schools, health facilities, fresh food and employment are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport, or it can be demonstrated that the site is sustainable in other ways.</p>	<p>The nearest settlement is Hockley Heath, located within 2km of the site. Although the village has a school, and a fresh food shop, it does not benefit from a GP surgery.</p> <p>Furthermore, there is no public transport route along School Road and there are limited bus services in the village.</p> <p>Although the suggested site is within realistic walking distance of local bus stops, a small fresh food facility, and a primary school (in line with PPG13), significant weight must be attached to the fact that for 415m of the route into Hockley Heath there is no footway or lighting.</p> <p>This is unlikely to be conducive to pedestrians or cyclists for regular shopping/work/school trips. It would not be a suitable route for young children to use for cycling to school, irrespective of whether they were accompanied by an adult.</p> <p>It is therefore not considered that the site is within an accessible location.</p>
<p>Other Issues to consider</p>	<p>Green Belt location.</p> <p>The Esso Birmingham Airport fuel pipeline runs under the north east corner of the site, although the 25m buffer zone extends further into the site, running along its eastern edge. Development is possible subject to Esso's safety requirements and access arrangements being met. However, it is not clear whether this will be the case and the pipeline is therefore considered to be a site constraint at this stage.</p> <p>The Council has received many letters of objection to this site and there is significant local opposition to</p>

	the development of a site in this location. One of the tests of sustainability is the promotion of peaceful and integrated co-existence between the site and the local community. Although the volume of local objection is no reason to reject the site subject to sound planning arguments being made, there may be difficulty securing community cohesion in this location.
Health Impacts	<u>Developing the site for in excess of 20 pitches would exceed the threshold of 15 pitches suggested in the CLG Good Practice Guide (2008). However, it is acknowledged that large sites can be designed to ensure a comfortable and manageable living environment for site occupants.</u> <u>Over 20 pitches in this location is considered to be out of scale with the immediate locality.</u>
Achievability	Delivery of the site has not been fully determined. The presence of a fuel pipeline under the site may act as a constraint to delivery.

Summary and Conclusion	
<p>The suggested site at School Road is large and is inappropriate in size and scale when considered in the context of the immediate local environment and population. There would be significant visual intrusion into the landscape when viewed from the properties in the immediate vicinity of the site. The introduction of a Gypsy and Traveller site in this location would also significantly affect the privacy and residential amenity of neighbouring properties in terms of noise, increase in vehicle movements, impact from artificial light sources and general disturbance. The site does not perform particularly well in terms of highway and accessibility issues and the character of the road is such that there is potential for pedestrian / vehicle conflict. Hockley Heath has no GP surgery and public transport in the village is not readily available and is of limited frequency. Furthermore, delivery of the site has not been fully determined and the presence of a fuel pipeline under the site may act as a further constraint.</p> <p><u>June 2014 Update:</u> <u>In light of the Inspector's concerns there is a need to review all sites to assess which sites would be suitable to accommodate further pitches. This site was not taken forward as an allocation in the submitted DPD. The resultant size of this site would dominate the immediate locality and potential community cohesion issues with the neighbouring settled population are noted. The Greenfield site would be a significant visual intrusion into the landscape and it continues to perform poorly in terms of its impact on privacy, residential amenity and highway safety. The site is not considered to be in an accessible location. The presence of a fuel pipeline continues to be a potential constraint on delivery of this site.</u></p>	
Conclusion: <u>Reject</u>	

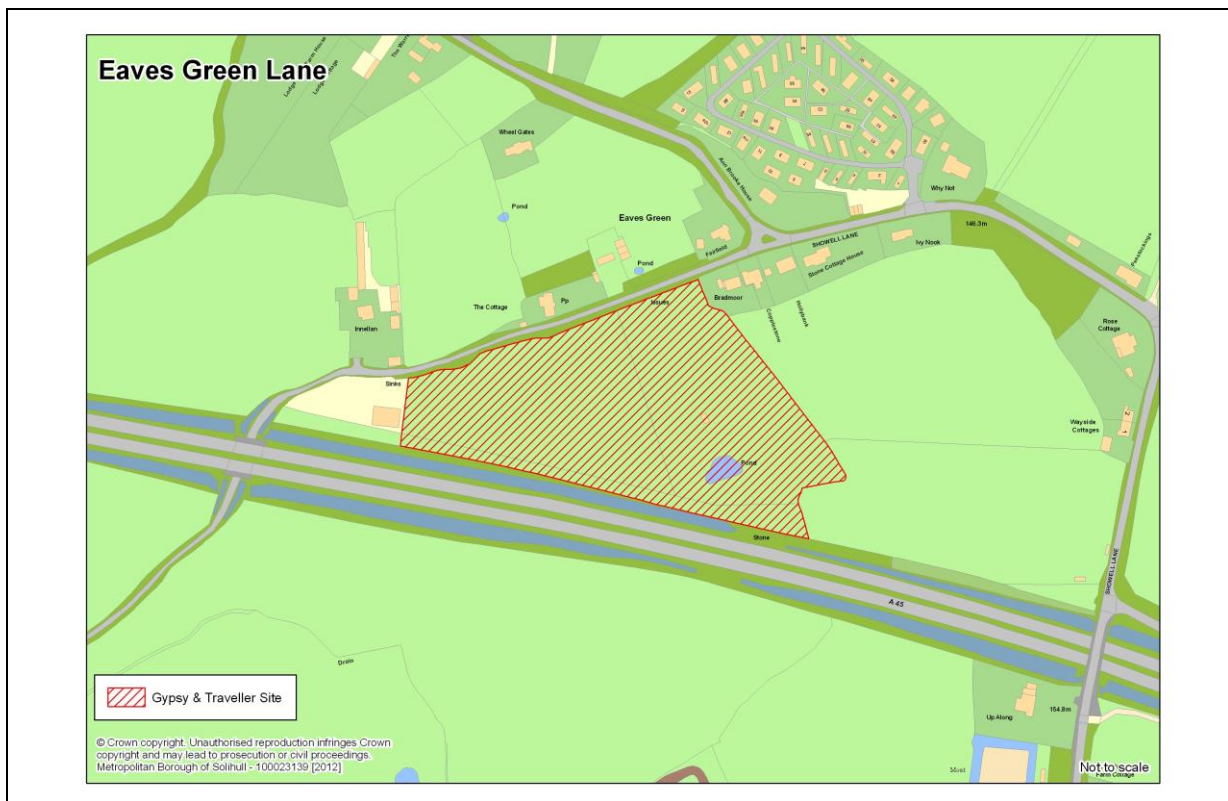
Land between Waste Lane and Old Waste Lane, Balsall Common



Availability	The site is not available as indicated by the site owner.
Suitability: Criteria in Policy P6 of the Solihull Local Plan	N/A
Achievability	The site would not be delivered

Summary and Conclusion	
<p>This site was originally suggested to the Council as a potential site; however the site owner has requested that the site be withdrawn. Therefore in the context of the site assessment process the site is not available or achievable, as it cannot be delivered.</p> <p><u>June 2014 Update:</u> <u>There have been no changes in circumstances. The site is not deliverable.</u></p>	
Conclusion: <u>Reject</u>	

Eaves Green Lane, Meriden



<p>Availability</p>	<p>The site is available for use.</p>
<p>Suitability: Criteria in Policy P6 of the Solihull Local Plan</p>	
<p>The size and scale of the site and the number of caravans stationed is appropriate to the size and density of the local settled community.</p>	<p>The site is around 2km to east of Meriden, in the smaller settlement of Eaves Green.</p> <p>There are a small number of dwellings in the vicinity of the site as well as a large residential mobile home park.</p> <p>It is assumed that there would be 8 caravans (the subject of a recent appeal) on the 2.7 ha site. Although this is a fairly quiet and remote area, the presence of existing residential properties, including the mobile home park means that the scale and size of a Gypsy and Traveller site in this location would not be out of scale with the size and density of the local settled community.</p>
<p>Any unacceptable adverse visual impact can be adequately minimised.</p>	<p>The site is visible from the A45 and visible through gaps in the hedge.</p> <p>Eaves Green is an area popular with walkers and horse riders and there are many public footpaths around the site including 2 long distance walks. The site is visible from public footpaths such that it would</p>

	<p>impact on the quiet recreation enjoyed by horse riders and walkers.</p> <p>The site can be seen from surrounding residential properties along the lane and from the houses opposite which have a view directly over the site.</p> <p>The Inspector at the recent appeal indicated that there is visual sensitivity even if the site is screened - although this would not be desirable for reasons of social isolation. He also commented that development would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area.</p>
<p>The site is not in an area prone to flooding</p>	<p>The site is not located in a flooding zone.</p> <p><u>The appeal decision in 2011 confirmed that part of the site is susceptible to surface water flooding. However, in that specific case, the issue of flood risk did not weigh for or against the appeal.</u></p>
<p>Any unacceptable adverse impact on landscape or local nature conservation designations, ecology, biodiversity or the historic environment can be mitigated.</p>	<p>No specific landscape designations covering the area. However, the hedgerow along the northern boundary to the site is part of a designated Local Wildlife Site.</p> <p><u>There are Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) along part of the northern boundary.</u> Roadside trees and hedges are an important feature of the lanes and the area. Their loss would be harmful.</p> <p>Potential for Great Crested Newts on the site.</p> <p>The site is in an attractive rural environment. Despite being close to settlements, the area has a remote feel.</p> <p>The Solihull Countryside strategy defines this area as falling within Zone 7 'The Northern Uplands' which contain large areas of mixed woodlands of considerable ecological value and is characterised by winding lanes, high hedges and larger fields.</p> <p>With regard to the historic environment the nearby late 19th century cottage to north of site is a heritage asset of low local significance.</p> <p>Development of the site likely to slightly affect the special interest and setting of the above heritage asset. The layout, density, landscaping and external lighting of any future development would need to pay proportionate regard to its significance and to local distinctiveness.</p>
<p>There is no unacceptable adverse impact on</p>	<p>Limited evidence of activities which would harm the</p>

<p>privacy and residential amenity for both site residents and neighbouring land uses.</p>	<p>amenity of local residents.</p> <p>The site is affected by noise from the A45 which runs past the site. However, it is not conclusive as to whether traffic noise would harm the living conditions of the occupiers.</p>
<p>The site has safe and convenient access to the highway network.</p>	<p>The roads in the area are narrow country lanes with limited carriageway width and potentially dangerous bends. It is likely that there would be conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians.</p> <p>There is limited visibility at some points and the roads are liable to flooding.</p> <p>Increased traffic would have a significant effect on the minor roads in the vicinity.</p> <p><u>The recent appeal decisions regarding this site (October 2011) and the adjacent builders' yard (November 2013) noted the substantial harm to highway safety in this location.</u></p>
<p>Local services and facilities such as schools, health facilities, fresh food and employment are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport, or it can be demonstrated that the site is sustainable in other ways.</p>	<p>The nearest settlement is Meriden which includes a limited range of shops, a primary school, GP surgery, church and other facilities.</p> <p>Although facilities are around the walking and cycling distances suggested as acceptable in PPG13, the nature and attractiveness of the walk is also important. In this case potential for vehicle / pedestrian conflict is on the country lane is relevant. It is generally a single carriageway road with no footway or lighting and it is not conducive to pedestrians or cyclists for shopping, work or school trips.</p> <p>Public transport services are poor and any development would tend to be dependent on private vehicles. The site is therefore poorly located. <u>This was also confirmed in the Secretary of State's October 2011 appeal decision.</u></p>
<p><u>Health Impacts</u></p>	<p><u>8 pitches would be less than the threshold of 15 pitches suggested in the CLG Good Practice Guide (2008).</u></p> <p><u>The site would not be significantly out of scale with the neighbouring settled population.</u></p>
<p>Other Issues to consider</p>	<p>Green Belt location.</p> <p>Social cohesion issues. There is significant objection to the current unauthorised development in this</p>

	location, evidenced by the presence of a protest camp.
Achievability	The site has no overriding constraints to delivery.

Summary and Conclusion

The suggested site at Eaves Green Lane has a number of significant issues. The site performs poorly in terms of visual impact, highway safety and the fact that there is unlikely to be peaceful co-existence between communities, which is one element of sustainability. This is also supported by **the Secretary of State** who dismissed the appeal against a refusal of planning permission for a Gypsy and Traveller site on this land in October 2011.

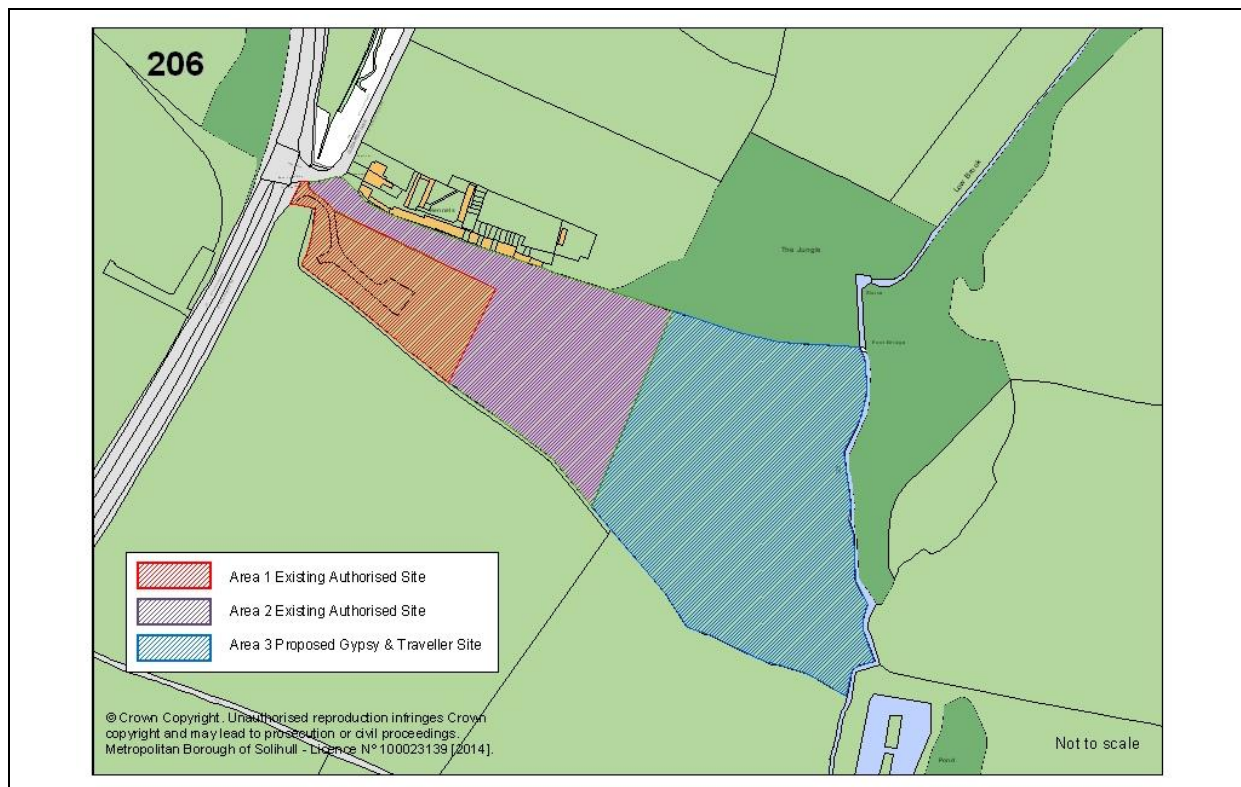
June 2014 Update:

In light of the Inspector’s concerns there is a need to review all sites to assess which sites would be suitable to accommodate further pitches. This site was not taken forward as an allocation in the submitted DPD. The site continues to perform poorly in terms of harm to the openness and purposes of the Green Belt, visual impact, highway safety and the fact that there is unlikely to be peaceful co-existence between communities.

Since the appeal against the refusal of planning permission for use of this site for Gypsies and Travellers was dismissed by the Secretary of State in October 2011, there has been a further appeal on the adjacent builders’ yard, to the west of the site. The application sought permission for 2 pitches for a temporary period of 12 months. This appeal was dismissed by the Secretary of State in November 2013, noting the substantial harm to highway safety, definitional harm to the Green Belt and risk from flooding. This decision is also of relevance.

Conclusion: Reject

Land off Old Damson Lane, Solihull



Availability

The site is available for use.

Suitability: Criteria in Policy P6 of the Solihull Local Plan

The size and scale of the site and the number of caravans stationed is appropriate to the size and density of the local settled community.

The site is less than 2 km to the main built up area of Solihull, where the majority of the settled population of the Borough live and where there is a range of services and facilities.

Although there are very few residential properties in the immediate vicinity of the suggested site, its proximity to the main urban area is such that the suggested site and its potential for 16 pitches (as **initially** proposed by a Registered Social Landlord) would not be out of scale with the local settled community.

However, if utilising the whole site, a much larger number of pitches could theoretically be accommodated. This would be significantly out of scale for the location.

Any unacceptable adverse visual impact can be adequately minimised.

The site is not visible from Damson Parkway and established mature hedgerows allow limited views of the site from the south. The northern boundary of the site is also defined by mature trees and vegetation, although there are views into the site

	<p>from the bottom end of Old Damson Lane. Although views from the east are more open, there are no nearby roads or public footpaths to create any other public view point.</p> <p>There are very few surrounding residential dwellings thus limiting views from private properties. However, the nearest adjoining property will have some views into the site from its boundary.</p>
<p>The site is not in an area prone to flooding</p>	<p>A very small part of the site <u>along the northern boundary</u> is in the floodplain <u>(high and medium flood risk zones 2 and 3)</u>.</p> <p>Surface water flooding issues are present, with the eastern end of the site being more susceptible to surface water flooding.</p>
<p>Any unacceptable adverse impact on landscape or local nature conservation designations, ecology, biodiversity or the historic environment can be mitigated.</p>	<p>There are no statutory designations within the site.</p> <p>The site is adjacent to the Castle Hill Farm Meadows Local Wildlife Site, <u>to the north and east</u>. Impact will need to be considered. <u>The LWS has been under pressure in recent years. As such, the cumulative impact of development affecting the LWS is a consideration.</u></p> <p>The Solihull Countryside Strategy defines this location as falling within Zone 2 'The Western Fringe' which encompasses existing major development at Birmingham Airport, the National Exhibition Centre (NEC) and Birmingham Business Park. It is recognised that this area is strongly dominated by commercial and urban influences and is also subject to significant change as a result of further expansion at the Airport and NEC. Therefore, the site is located in a less sensitive area.</p> <p>Protected / priority species <u>in particular; bats, badgers, great crested newt and white-clawed crayfish need to be considered for this site.</u></p> <p>A large scale site with a large number of trailers and caravans would have an adverse impact on the landscape and would create an urbanising effect on the more rural landscape in this part of Solihull. However, a smaller scale site, with a limited number of caravans would significantly lessen this impact.</p> <p>With regard to the historic environment the early 20th century pair of dwellings to north are heritage assets of low local significance.</p> <p>The Jungle may be a survival of the planned parkland</p>

	<p>of Elmdon Hall or possibly Dunstan House (both demolished).</p> <p>Some remains of planned enclosure around the site.</p> <p>Development of the site is unlikely to have any significant adverse effect upon the special interest and setting of the above heritage assets. The layout, density, landscaping and external lighting of any future development would need to pay proportionate regard to the significance of The Jungle to local distinctiveness.</p> <p>Castle Hills Farmhouse lies a minimum of 350 metres to the east of the site and approximately 500 m from the land beyond the flood risk area. It is a (grade 2 listed) designated heritage asset with surviving arms of a moat and remains of a motte and bailey castle, moated manor house and mediaeval deer park boundary.</p> <p>The proposed gypsy and traveller site would have a minimal impact upon the wider setting of Castle Hills Farmhouse and its heritage assets including the surviving buried archaeology around it. The permanent and temporary structures that the site would accommodate would be visually at odds with the landscape and the traditional building materials in the borough. However, the separation between the site and the Castle Hills site combined with the intervening topography descending from east and west to a separating water course at a locally low point with frequent trees, hedgerows and scrub in lines and groups would prevent any more than a minimal impact upon the appreciation of the significance of the assets. The eastern portion of the proposed site is prone to flooding from Low Brook and the siting of caravans would be restricted to the westernmost 80% or so. If the retention of further trees between the sites can be secured as part of any development of the gypsy and traveller site this would be beneficial to the setting of the heritage assets and to local character.</p>
<p>There is no unacceptable adverse impact on privacy and residential amenity for both site residents and neighbouring land uses.</p>	<p>There would be some impact on the privacy and residential amenity of current occupiers on the existing Gypsy and Traveller site due to the increase in activity. This would be significant should a large number of pitches be accommodated. However, the impact is unlikely to be adverse if the site is relatively small in scale.</p> <p>The other neighbouring land uses include a boarding</p>

	<p>kennels and a pair of dwellings. The nature of these existing uses is such that any further development at the Damson Lane site will have limited impact.</p>
<p>The site has safe and convenient access to the highway network.</p>	<p>The site access is located on the junction of Old Damson Lane and Damson Parkway. Damson Parkway is quite urban in character; it has a 40mph speed limit, is lit and has a designated footway.</p> <p>The potential for pedestrian / vehicle conflict in the vicinity of the site is significantly reduced due to the presence of a footway along Damson Parkway.</p> <p>Sight lines at the site access appear acceptable and an initial site assessment shows that visibility to the north is likely to be in accordance with prevailing speed whilst visibility to the south is slightly obscured by vegetation within the central reserve. However, there have been no accidents which would suggest that the obstruction to the north is causing a highway safety issue.</p> <p>Given that the extant site appears to be operating satisfactory from a highway safety perspective, it is not considered that the additional pitches as a result of the suggested site would materially impact upon highway safety.</p>
<p>Local services and facilities such as schools, health facilities, fresh food and employment are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport, or it can be demonstrated that the site is sustainable in other ways.</p>	<p>Local services and facilities (including education, fresh food and GP surgery) are all available and are located within realistic walking distance. Walking and cycling routes have the benefit of footways and lighting such that accessing local services and facilities without using the car is a realistic possibility.</p> <p>The site is in close proximity to bus stops for service 966. Service 966 connects the site with Solihull Town Centre, Erdington, Birmingham Airport, the NEC and North Solihull. The service operates on 30 minute frequency Monday to Sunday daytimes and evenings.</p> <p>It is therefore considered that the development is acceptable in terms of accessibility.</p>
<p><u>Health Impacts</u></p>	<p><u>The principle of extending the site to accommodate new families has been established through the grant of planning permission for Area 2 (7 pitches) in February 2013 and Area 3 (11 pitches) in November 2013. In view of this, it is not considered that an additional 2 pitches would result in significant harm to the health and well being of the existing family (Area 1) or the new families (Areas 2 and 3) in this location.</u></p>

	<p><u>Providing an additional 2 pitches within Area 3 would result in a total of 27 pitches in this location. This exceeds the threshold of 15 pitches suggested in the CLG Good Practice Guide (2008). However, it is considered that the design of each phase into separate individual ‘closes’ of development, none of which individually exceed 15 pitches, will help to reduce potential tensions between phases and retain a sense of community.</u></p> <p><u>27 pitches would not be significantly out of scale with the neighbouring settled population.</u></p>
Other Issues to consider	Green Belt location.
Achievability	<p>The site has no overriding constraints to delivery.</p> <p><u>The Registered Social Landlord has no objection in principle to an additional 2 pitches on Phase 3.</u></p>

Summary and Conclusion

The site on land at Old Damson Lane has good accessibility, no significant highway safety issues, there is considered to be no adverse visual impact or detrimental effect on landscape or nature conservation interests, subject to the site accommodating an appropriate number of pitches and not becoming too large-scale. All essential services and facilities (considered to be schools, GP surgeries and fresh food) are all available within realistic walking distance of the site. The site is available and deliverable and a Registered Social Landlord has received a funding allocation for the provision of 11 social rented pitches at this location, subject to the site being suitable.

June 2014 Update:

In light of the Inspector’s concerns there is a need to review all sites to assess which sites would be suitable to accommodate further pitches. This site was taken forward as an allocation in the submitted DPD. An additional 2 pitches could be accommodated within the boundary of Area 3, within the low risk Flood Zone 1. The resultant size of the site is not considered to dominate the surrounding settled community. The design of the site will provide a comfortable and manageable environment for both the new and existing families on site. It is not considered that the additional pitches would be adversely affected by flooding or the minor increase in pitches would result in an unacceptable impact on visual amenity, the natural and historic environment, privacy, residential amenity or highway safety.

Conclusion: Take forward as an allocation and increase number of additional pitches from 11 to 13.

Land adjacent to 'The Pleck', Shadowbrook Lane, Hampton-in-Arden



Availability

The site is available for use.

Suitability: Criteria in Policy P6 of the Solihull Local Plan

The size and scale of the site and the number of caravans stationed is appropriate to the size and density of the local settled community.

The site is located less than 2km from the village of Hampton-in-Arden, which has a range of local services and facilities.

There are very few residential properties within the immediate locality.

The size of the site suggested is small in scale and the number of pitches proposed (up to 10) is not particularly significant in the context of the size and density of the local population or community of Hampton in Arden and the infrastructure available.

Any unacceptable adverse visual impact can be adequately minimised.

The site is very visually prominent from Shadowbrook Lane and the public footpath which is located opposite the eastern corner of the site due to the lack of hedgerow and natural tree screening along the boundaries.

The site is visible from the one public footpath in the vicinity of the site, due to the lack of natural screening.

There are no views of the site from surrounding residential properties and other public and private views of the site are limited.

The site is not in an area prone to flooding	The site is not in an identified flood zone. There are no other flooding issues.
Any unacceptable adverse impact on landscape or local nature conservation designations, ecology, biodiversity or the historic environment can be mitigated.	<p>There are no statutory designations within the site. There is a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) immediately adjacent to the site to the north and west. The site therefore has potential to have some impact on sensitive designated habitats, however this must also be weighed against the fact that some development on adjacent land already exists.</p> <p><u>A Local Wildlife Site (Greens Ward Piece) adjoins the western boundary of the adjacent wider 'Pleck' site to the west.</u></p> <p><u>The adjacent wider 'Pleck' site has been identified as a potential Local Wildlife Site. This is not a statutory designation and it is noted that development on the site may have affected its ecological value.</u></p> <p>The Solihull Countryside Strategy defines this location as falling within Zone 3 'The Motorway Corridor' - recognising the dominance of the motorway over this zone. This could be argued to lessen the sensitivity of this site.</p> <p>With regard to the historic environment there are no heritage assets other than some trees and hedges of remaining planned enclosure.</p> <p>Development of the site unlikely to affect the special interest and setting of the above heritage assets especially where trees or hedges retained on site. The layout, density, landscaping and external lighting of any future development would need to pay proportionate regard to their significance and to local distinctiveness.</p>
There is no unacceptable adverse impact on privacy and residential amenity for both site residents and neighbouring land uses.	There are very few neighbouring uses. Therefore the adverse impact on privacy and residential amenity for site occupants and neighbouring uses is negligible. The only exception to this is noise, as the site lies almost under the flight path for arriving flights at Birmingham Airport.
The site has safe and convenient access to the highway network.	<p>Although the road is rural in nature, it is not characterised by sharp bends or poor visibility, and it has a 40mph speed limit. It is of sufficient width to allow 2 on coming private vehicles to pass in opposite directions. In places there is room for a private car and service vehicle to pass each other in opposite directions.</p> <p>The road has no formal footway provision however, the character of the road, the speed limit in force and</p>

	<p>the fact that there are wide verges mean that the potential for pedestrian and vehicle conflict is marginally reduced.</p> <p>The suggested site would essentially form an extension to an existing temporary site with existing vehicle access arrangement used. The principle of a Gypsy and Traveller site at the suggested site location has previously been considered at appeal and highway safety was an issue considered by the Inspector. The Inspector opined that the access arrangements were acceptable for the proposed development, subject to adequate sight lines being provided.</p> <p>Given that the extant site appears to be operating satisfactory from a highway safety perspective, it is not considered that the additional plots as a result of the suggested site would raise a highway safety issue.</p>
<p>Local services and facilities such as schools, health facilities, fresh food and employment are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport, or it can be demonstrated that the site is sustainable in other ways.</p>	<p>Key local services and facilities, including a GP surgery, are available in Hampton-in-Arden however, they are at the upper limit or outside of what would be considered realistic walking distances. The nature of the route along Shadowbrook Lane to Hampton-in-Arden (no footways or lighting) means that it is unlikely that pedestrians would use it for shopping or school trips.</p> <p>There are no bus services in the vicinity of the site. Hampton-in-Arden Railway Station is located approximately 2.3km from site. Access to public transport is also poor.</p> <p>Therefore, it is not considered that the site is located within an accessible location.</p>
<p><u>Health Impacts</u></p>	<p><u>There are existing Gypsy and Traveller families on the adjacent ‘Pleck’ site, therefore, providing additional pitches in this location could have an adverse impact on the health and well being of existing and future occupants. However, this could be overcome by effective site design. It is also noted that the temporary planning permissions on the adjacent ‘Pleck’ site have now expired and enforcement action is currently being taken to restore the site to its former condition. This is subject to an appeal.</u></p> <p><u>The site has been submitted for consideration for up to 10 pitches which would result in a total of 14 pitches in this location (there are currently 4 unauthorised pitches on the adjacent ‘Pleck’ site). This is less than the threshold of 15 pitches suggested in the CLG Good Practice Guide (2008).</u></p>

	<p><u>However, it is unlikely that the site would be large enough to accommodate 10 pitches, a capacity of around 4 pitches is more realistic.</u></p> <p><u>Nevertheless up to 14 pitches in this location would not be significantly out of scale with the neighbouring settled population.</u></p>
Other Issues to consider	<p>Green Belt location.</p> <p>The site is subject to noise from aircraft.</p>
Achievability	<p>The site has no overriding constraints to delivery.</p>

Summary and Conclusion

Although relatively small in scale, any development at this site would be very visually prominent from the public highway and from a public footpath immediately opposite. The site has a number of constraints in that it is bounded to the north by a Site of Special Scientific Interest and has itself been identified as a potential Local Wildlife site. In terms of highway safety and accessibility issues, there is some potential for pedestrian / vehicle conflict as Shadowbrook Lane itself has no footway provision and it is questionable whether walking and cycling to access services and facilities in Hampton-in-Arden is a realistic alternative to the car. The site is also subject to impact from aircraft noise.

June 2014 Update:

In light of the Inspector's concerns there is a need to review all sites to assess which sites would be suitable to accommodate further pitches. This site was not taken forward as an allocation in the submitted DPD. This Greenfield site would be visually prominent and it continues to perform poorly in terms of accessibility and its impact on the adjacent SSSI and neighbouring LWS. The site is also subject to impact from aircraft noise.

Conclusion: Reject

Land off Salter Street, Earlswood (site 204)



<p>Availability</p>	<p>The site is available for use.</p>
<p>Suitability: Criteria in Policy P6 of the Solihull Local Plan</p>	
<p>The size and scale of the site and the number of caravans stationed is appropriate to the size and density of the local settled community.</p>	<p>The site is located less than 2km from Cheswick Green. However, the site occupies a fairly isolated location in terms of its proximity to other residential properties, along a track running from Salter Street, alongside the canal (although there is another Gypsy and Traveller site located along the same track).</p> <p>The existing site is small in terms of physical size and the number of pitches accommodated, although the area suggested for extension is much larger and it is proposed that an additional 7 pitches would be created.</p> <p>It is considered that any large physical expansion of the site would be out of scale with the local settled community which live in a scattering of houses along country lanes in the vicinity.</p> <p>It is not out of scale when considered in the context of Cheswick Green as a whole, particularly as all essential services and facilities are available in the village which is less than 2km from the site.</p>
<p>Any unacceptable adverse visual impact can be adequately minimised.</p>	<p>The site is well distanced from the public highway and any footpaths and, whilst adjoining the canal, it is high above it such that the site cannot be seen from the canal boats or towpath.</p>

	<p>Although there are no public views of the site, the contours of land are such that there are more prominent views from the east across the valley, which would affect a small number of residential properties should the site be expanded to the extent suggested.</p> <p><u>In a recent appeal decision (June 2012) relating to unauthorised development on this suggested site, the Inspector particularly noted the material harm to the openness of the Green Belt and the significant harm to the character and appearance of the area, resulting from the development.</u></p>
<p>The site is not in an area prone to flooding</p>	<p>The site is not located in a flooding zone. However, the eastern end of the suggested site extension may be susceptible to some surface water flooding.</p>
<p>Any unacceptable adverse impact on landscape or local nature conservation designations, ecology, biodiversity or the historic environment can be mitigated.</p>	<p>No statutory designations affecting the site. <u>A potential Local Wildlife Site (pLWS) called Lodge Paddocks adjoins the eastern boundary of the proposed site. A Local Wildlife Site (Brooklin) is situated to the east of the pLWS (Lodge Paddocks).</u></p> <p>It is considered that the site <u>would have limited impact</u> on nature conservation interests as an existing site has been established in this location for a number of years.</p> <p>It is unlikely that any existing features such as trees or hedges would be removed to accommodate development, although a large scale extension would impact on local landscape character which, in accordance with the Solihull Countryside Strategy, is a small scale, enclosed landscape.</p> <p>Unknown impact on protected / priority species.</p> <p>With regard to the historic environment the adjacent canal and nearby late 19th century Church of St Patrick (grade 2 listed) are heritage assets.</p> <p>Some remains of planned enclosure around site.</p> <p>Development of the site unlikely to significantly affect the special interest and setting of the above heritage assets especially where trees or hedges retained on site. The layout, density, landscaping and external lighting of any future development would need to pay proportionate regard to their significance and to local distinctiveness.</p>
<p>There is no unacceptable adverse impact on privacy and residential amenity for both site residents and neighbouring land uses.</p>	<p>The site has very few immediate neighbours, therefore no adverse impact on privacy and residential amenity for site occupants.</p> <p>Although the possible increase in vehicle movements</p>

	<p>generated from more pitches on this site could affect the privacy and residential amenity of the neighbouring Gypsy site, it is considered that any impact would be minimal, particularly as the neighbouring site is physically separated and enclosed at the front by a 1.5m high close board fence.</p> <p>Contour of the land is such that longer distance views of the site are available from a small number of residential properties. A significantly extended site would bring the development closer to these properties and have a greater impact on residential amenity in terms of light and increase in general activity.</p> <p>The impact of urbanisation, particularly when considered cumulatively with the neighbouring Gypsy and Traveller site is a concern in this location.</p>
<p>The site has safe and convenient access to the highway network.</p>	<p>Access to the site is via a small track from Salter Street. Although access is shared with the exit of the car park to the adjacent school, there have been no accidents at this junction over the last 5 years.</p> <p>Salter Street has a semi-rural character, classified as a 'B' road, with a 40mph speed limit and a designated footway, thereby significantly reducing potential conflict between vehicles and pedestrians.</p> <p>The proposed increased in trips as a result of the suggested site is likely to be marginal and therefore, it is considered that the development is acceptable from a highway safety perspective.</p>
<p>Local services and facilities such as schools, health facilities, fresh food and employment are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport, or it can be demonstrated that the site is sustainable in other ways.</p>	<p>Although the site is not located within a settlement, Cheswick Green is less than 2km away. The local primary school is less than a 10 minute walk and there is also doctor's surgery and a fresh food shop in Cheswick Green.</p> <p>These services and facilities are within realistic walking distance and the character of the route is conducive to walking and cycling, although some of the route would be unlit.</p> <p>Public transport is not readily available within the immediate vicinity of the site, although it is available in Cheswick Green.</p> <p>On balance, it is considered that the suggested site is acceptable from an accessibility perspective.</p>
<p><u>Health Impacts</u></p>	<p><u>There are 3 existing pitches on the existing adjacent site. Expanding the site to accommodate a further 7 pitches implies that the site extension would cater for more than natural family growth and it is likely to attract new families to the area. This could have</u></p>

	<p><u>an adverse impact on the health and well being of the existing families.</u></p> <p><u>A total of 10 pitches in this location would be less than the threshold of 15 pitches suggested in the CLG Good Practice Guide (2008).</u></p> <p><u>The impact of the large site expansion is considered to be out of scale with the surrounding settled population.</u></p>
Other Issues to consider	Green Belt location.
Achievability	The site has no overriding constraints to delivery.

Summary and Conclusion	
<p>The area identified for expansion by the site owner is very large in scale and would be well over three times the size of the approved site. Coupled with nearby Gypsy and Traveller site which <u>was previously</u> suggested for extension, it is considered that the presence of two large sites in this locality would be significantly out of scale with the local settled community when considered both cumulatively and individually. In addition, although occupying a relatively isolated position with limited public views of the site, there are more prominent views from the east across the valley from a small number of residential properties. Should the site be extended to the extremes suggested by the owner this would bring the site closer to these residential properties and increase visual prominence and the degree of impact.</p> <p>Although it may be argued that these impacts would be lessened if the size and scale of the site extensions were reduced, it is considered that even modest site extensions in this location would have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area and represent a significant visual intrusion into what should be a view of unspoilt Green Belt countryside. The cumulative impact of two site extensions within very close proximity of each other serves to exacerbate the harm that would be caused. Therefore, although the site performs well against some of the other criteria in Policy P6 of the Local Plan, this does not outweigh the detrimental impact that any site extensions would have.</p> <p><u>June 2014 Update:</u></p> <p><u>In light of the Inspector’s concerns there is a need to review all sites to assess which sites would be suitable to accommodate further pitches. This site was not taken forward as an allocation in the submitted DPD. Whilst this Greenfield site performs relatively well against some of the site assessment criteria, the site would represent a significant visual intrusion into the landscape and would have an urbanising effect on this sensitive Green Belt location. Recent appeal decisions regarding unauthorised development on the proposed site (June 2012 and May 2013), have noted the significant harm to the openness of the Green Belt and the character and appearance of the area, in this location. An extension to this site will have a greater impact on Green Belt functions and openness than intensification of the neighbouring site at Canal View. It is also considered that the significant expansion of the site would be out of scale with the surrounding settled population.</u></p>	
Conclusion: <u>Reject</u>	

'Canal View' off Salter Street, Earlswood (site 208)



<p>Availability</p>	<p>The site is available for use.</p>
<p>Suitability: Criteria in Policy P6 of the Solihull Local Plan</p>	
<p>The size and scale of the site and the number of caravans stationed is appropriate to the size and density of the local settled community.</p>	<p>The site is located less than 2km from Cheswick Green. However, the site occupies a fairly isolated location in terms of its proximity to other residential properties, along a track running from Salter Street, alongside the canal (although there is another Gypsy and Traveller site located along the same track).</p> <p>The existing site is small in terms of physical size and the number of pitches accommodated, although the area suggested for extension is much larger. It is considered that any large physical expansion of the site would be out of scale with the local settled community which live in a scattering of houses along country lanes in the vicinity.</p> <p>The site is not out of scale when considered in the context of Cheswick Green as a whole, particularly as all essential services and facilities are available in the village which is less than 2km from the site.</p>
<p>Any unacceptable adverse visual impact can be adequately minimised.</p>	<p>The site is well distanced from the public highway and any footpaths and, whilst adjoining the canal, it is high above it such that the site cannot be seen from the canal boats or towpath.</p> <p>Although there are no public views of the site, the contours of land are such that it may be visible from</p>

	<p>a small number of residential properties <u>on Warings Green Road</u> should the site be expanded to the extent suggested. <u>However, the site extension is bound by mature vegetation to the north and south and an area of woodland adjoins the eastern boundary, along the watercourse. This would, therefore, minimise the visual impact of the site extension from the neighbouring residential properties. It is unlikely that the existing site is visible from those residential properties.</u></p> <p>Intensification of the existing authorised site would lessen the visual impact, although on balance an increase in pitches would impact on the character and appearance of the area. The impact of urbanisation, particularly when considered cumulatively with the neighbouring Gypsy and Traveller site is a concern at this location.</p>
<p>The site is not in an area prone to flooding</p>	<p>The site is not located in a flooding zone. However, the eastern end of the suggested site extension may be susceptible to surface water flooding.</p>
<p>Any unacceptable adverse impact on landscape or local nature conservation designations, ecology, biodiversity or the historic environment can be mitigated.</p>	<p>No statutory designations <u>within</u> the site. <u>The existing authorised site and the adjacent land to the east is a potential Local Wildlife Site (pLWS) called Lodge Paddocks. However, this is not a statutory designation and the existing site has been physically established for many years.</u></p> <p><u>Brooklin Local Wildlife Site is situated to the south east of the pLWS.</u></p> <p>It is unlikely that any existing features such as trees or hedges would be removed to accommodate development, although a large scale extension would impact on local landscape character which, in accordance with the Solihull Countryside Strategy, is a small scale, enclosed landscape.</p> <p>Unknown impact on protected / priority species.</p> <p>With regard to the historic environment the adjacent canal and nearby late 19th century Church of St Patrick (grade 2 listed) are heritage assets.</p> <p>Some remains of planned enclosure around site.</p> <p>Development of the site unlikely to significantly affect the special interest and setting of the above heritage assets especially where trees or hedges retained on site. The layout, density, landscaping and external lighting of any future development would need to pay proportionate regard to their significance and to local distinctiveness.</p>
<p>There is no unacceptable adverse impact on</p>	<p>The site has very few immediate neighbours,</p>

<p>privacy and residential amenity for both site residents and neighbouring land uses.</p>	<p>therefore no adverse impact on privacy and residential amenity for site occupants.</p> <p>There would be no adverse impact on privacy and residential amenity of site occupants, or occupants of the neighbouring Gypsy and Traveller site as the sites are physically separate.</p> <p>Any increase in vehicle movements would also be unlikely to disturb the neighbouring site as vehicles travelling to Canal View would not have to pass the other site.</p> <p>Contour of the land is such that longer distance views of the site extension may be available from a small number of residential properties. A significantly extended site would bring the development closer to these properties and have a greater impact on residential amenity in terms of light and increase in general activity.</p> <p>The impact of urbanisation, particularly when considered cumulatively with the neighbouring Gypsy and Traveller site is a concern in this location.</p>
<p>The site has safe and convenient access to the highway network.</p>	<p>Access to the site is via a small track from Salter Street. Although access is shared with the exit of the car park to the adjacent school, there have been no accidents at this junction over the last 5 years.</p> <p>Salter Street has a semi-rural character, classified as a 'B' road, with a 40mph speed limit and a designated footway, thereby significantly reducing potential conflict between vehicles and pedestrians.</p> <p>The proposed increased in trips as a result of the suggested site is likely to be marginal and therefore, it is considered that the development is acceptable from a highway safety perspective.</p>
<p>Local services and facilities such as schools, health facilities, fresh food and employment are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport, or it can be demonstrated that the site is sustainable in other ways.</p>	<p>Although the site is not located within a settlement, Cheswick Green is less than 2km away. The local primary school is less than a 10 minute walk and there is also doctor's surgery and a fresh food shop in Cheswick Green.</p> <p>These services and facilities are within realistic walking distance and the character of the route is conducive to walking and cycling, although some of the route would be unlit.</p> <p>Public transport is not readily available within the immediate vicinity of the site, although it is available in Cheswick Green.</p> <p>On balance, it is considered that the suggested site is acceptable from an accessibility perspective.</p>
<p><u>Health Impacts</u></p>	<p><u>Large site expansion is considered to be out of scale</u></p>

	<p><u>with the surrounding settled population.</u></p> <p><u>Providing an additional 2 pitches within the existing site for natural family growth will meet the family's needs and enable the existing family to remain on site.</u></p> <p><u>This is a private family owned site and as such, would not be suitable for additional pitches for new families.</u></p> <p><u>A total of 3 pitches is significantly less than the threshold of 15 pitches suggested in the CLG Good Practice Guide (2008). The cumulative impact of small intensification of this site and the neighbouring existing authorised site at Salter Street is not considered to be out of scale with the surrounding settled population.</u></p>
Other Issues to consider	Green Belt location.
Achievability	<p>The site has no overriding constraints to delivery.</p> <p><u>The landowner actively pursued intensification of the existing site for 2 additional pitches at the DPD hearing sessions (December 2013).</u></p>

Summary and Conclusion	
<p>The area previously identified for expansion by the site owner is very large in scale and would be over three times the size of the approved site. Coupled with the nearby Gypsy and Traveller site which has also been suggested for extension, it is considered that the presence of two large sites in this locality would be significantly out of scale with the local settled community when considered both cumulatively and individually. In addition, although occupying a relatively isolated position with limited public views of the site, <u>the site extension may be visible from a small number of residential properties to the east.</u> Should the site be extended to the extremes suggested by the owner this would bring the site closer to these residential properties and increase visual prominence and the degree of impact.</p> <p>Although it may be argued that these impacts would be lessened if the size and scale of the site extensions were reduced, it is considered that even modest site extensions in this location would have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area and represent a significant visual intrusion into what should be a view of unspoilt Green Belt countryside. The cumulative impact of two site extensions within very close proximity of each other serves to exacerbate the harm that would be caused. Therefore, although the site performs well against some of the other criteria in Policy P6 of the Local Plan, this does not outweigh the detrimental impact that any site extensions would have.</p> <p>Notwithstanding this, although the site is unsuitable for extension, this site has also been considered for an increase in capacity on the existing authorised site. Although the size of the existing authorised site is such that additional pitches could be accommodated without the need for an extension, on balance it is considered that increasing the number of pitches in this location would impact on the character and appearance of the area, reduce the openness of the Green Belt particularly as a result of ancillary buildings and domestic paraphernalia associated with such development. The impact of urbanisation, particularly when considered cumulatively with the</p>	

neighbouring Gypsy and Traveller site, is a concern in this location.

June 2014 Update:

In light of the Inspector's concerns there is a need to review all sites to assess which sites would be suitable to accommodate further pitches. Whilst the site was not considered to be suitable for allocation previously, circumstances have changed and it is now necessary to identify pitches on sites where the impact on Green Belt is least harmful. The landowner is no longer pursuing an extension to the site and seeks a modest intensification of the existing Brownfield site to provide an additional 2 pitches to meet the needs of the existing family. This is equivalent to the number of authorised pitches at the neighbouring site at Salter Street. The site performs well against most of the site assessment criteria. It is not considered that the additional pitches would be adversely affected by flooding or the minor increase in pitches would result in an unacceptable impact on the natural and historic environment, privacy, residential amenity or highway safety. As regards the visual impact of the development, intensification of this site is considered to have less impact on Green Belt functions and openness than other suggested sites.

Conclusion: Take forward as an allocation for 2 additional pitches.

‘The Warren’, Bickenhill Lane, Marston Green



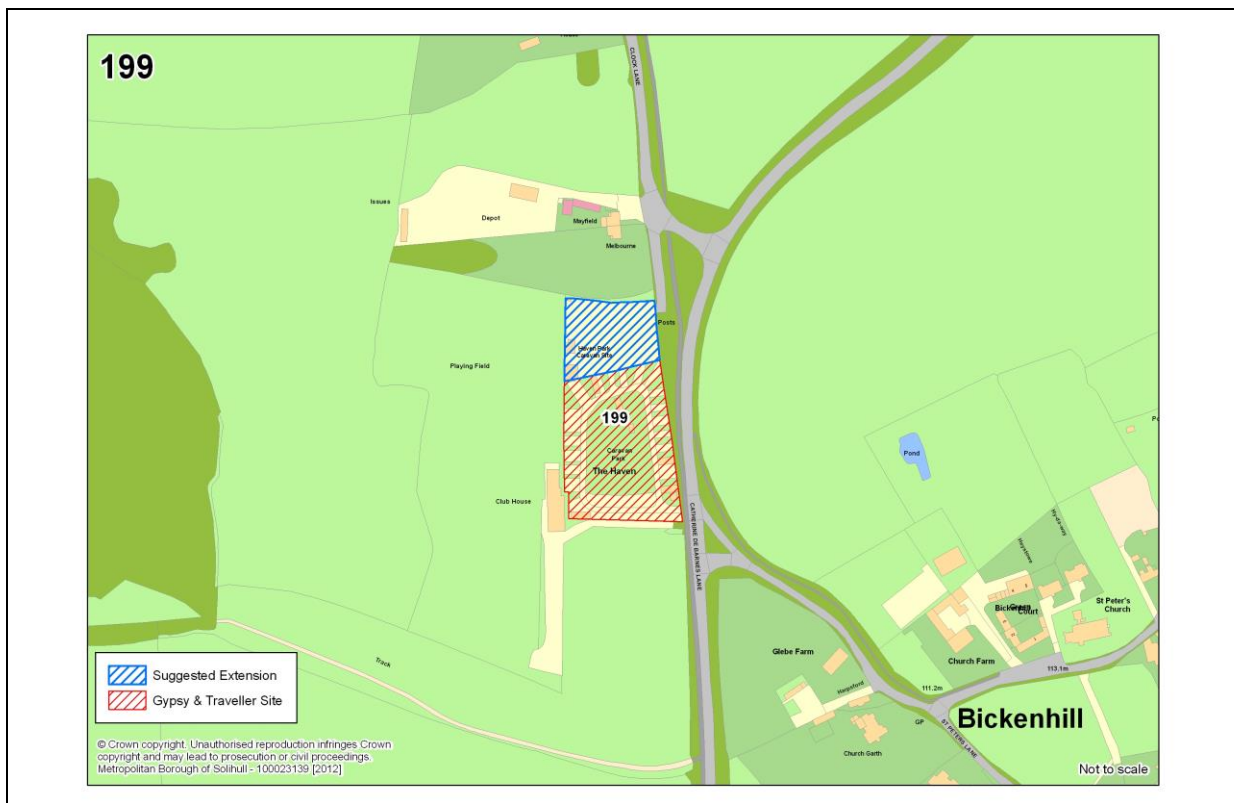
<p>Availability</p>	<p>The site is currently available for use.</p>
<p>Suitability: Criteria in Policy P6 of the Solihull Local Plan</p>	
<p>The size and scale of the site and the number of caravans stationed is appropriate to the size and density of the local settled community.</p>	<p>The site is an extension of an existing authorised site located to the rear of residential properties. The site is within an established residential and commercial area and the existing site has been present without any issues for many years. An extension to this site and increase in pitches would not be out of scale with the size and density with the surrounding land uses or the local settled community.</p>
<p>Any unacceptable adverse visual impact can be adequately minimised.</p>	<p>The site is not visible from the public highway, public footpaths or other public areas as it situated to the rear of residential properties. Existing screening limits views into the site from adjacent residential properties.</p>
<p>The site is not in an area prone to flooding</p>	<p>The site is not located in a flooding zone. However, it is in an area that is susceptible to groundwater flooding issues and there may be surface water issues towards the eastern end of the proposed site extension site.</p>
<p>Any unacceptable adverse impact on landscape or local nature conservation designations, ecology, biodiversity or the historic environment can be mitigated.</p>	<p>There are no statutory designations which cover the site, although the site is adjacent to a Local Wildlife Site - <u>Bickenhill Plantation. Development of the site would need to demonstrate that there would be no</u></p>

	<p><u>potential impact on the LWS.</u></p> <p>The area of the proposed extension <u>is covered by a woodland Tree Preservation Order (TPO), however, an arboricultural assessment has revealed that most of the trees within the site are in poor condition and constitute lower category trees, in terms of quality.</u></p> <p>The Solihull Countryside Strategy highlights that the area is strongly dominated by commercial and urban influences and is also subject to significant change as a result of further expansion at the Airport and NEC. The sensitivity of the site is therefore debateable.</p> <p>Unknown impact on protected / priority species.</p> <p>With regard to the historic environment the plantation to the east is a pre-1888 woodland and a heritage asset of some local significance previously eroded by removal of some trees for road scheme and house building.</p> <p>Nearby pre-1937 houses are heritage assets of low local significance indicating development of the area.</p> <p>Development of the site will only slightly affect the special interest and setting of the above heritage assets. The layout, density, landscaping and external lighting of any future development would need to pay proportionate regard to their significance and to local distinctiveness.</p>
<p>There is no unacceptable adverse impact on privacy and residential amenity for both site residents and neighbouring land uses.</p>	<p>Increase in vehicle movements to an extended site may slightly reduce residential amenity for occupiers of properties adjacent to the site.</p> <p>Extended site would be further away from neighbouring residential properties, therefore limiting any adverse impact on residential amenity.</p>
<p>The site has safe and convenient access to the highway network.</p>	<p>The suggested site would be accessed from Bickenhill Lane, a wide, residential cul-de-sac off Coleshill Heath Road, which is inter-urban in character and links the NEC and Birmingham Airport to Chelmsley Wood.</p> <p>Direct access to the site is relatively narrow but wide verges could provide occasional overrunning to allow two vehicles approaching in opposite directions to pass. Given the relatively low number of movements which could be expected by the suggested and existing site, this is considered to be an acceptable situation.</p> <p>Both Bickenhill Lane and Coleshill Heath Road are lit, have designated footways and a 30mph speed limit in force, thereby significantly reducing vehicle and pedestrian conflict.</p> <p>It is considered that the site is acceptable in highway</p>

	safety terms.
Local services and facilities such as schools, health facilities, fresh food and employment are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport, or it can be demonstrated that the site is sustainable in other ways.	<p>The suggested site is located within 2km of all key local services and facilities. Bus stops are also located within close proximity. Access to these facilities would be along routes where footways and street lighting is present.</p> <p>The nearest bus stops are located within 200 metres of the site and provide access to Solihull Town Centre, Erdington, Birmingham International Station, Birmingham Airport, The NEC, Damsonwood and North Solihull. These services offer 3 buses per hour during the weekday daytimes and 3 buses per hour on weekday evenings and at weekends.</p> <p>With this in mind, the suggested site is considered to be within an accessible location.</p>
<u>Health Impacts</u>	<p><u>Adding another pitch to the previous site allocation will result in a total of 12 pitches in this location. This is less than the threshold of 15 pitches suggested in the CLG Good Practice Guide (2008). The resultant size of the site is not considered to be out of scale with surrounding land uses or the neighbouring settled population.</u></p> <p><u>This is a private family owned site and the additional pitches are required for natural family growth, to meet the family's needs. The pitches would not be suitable for new families.</u></p>
Other Issues to consider	Green Belt location.
Achievability	There site has no overriding constraints to delivery.

Summary and Conclusion	
<p>The suggested site extension at The Warren performs well against the criteria listed. There are no significant highway issues, all essential services are realistically accessible by walking and cycling and there is a good range and frequency of public transport available within close proximity of the site. Visual impact is not considered to be an issue as the site is naturally well screened, and although the site includes a Tree Preservation Order, allocation for a site extension may result in opportunities for the area to be more appropriately managed. The site is available and achievable and already integrates well with the existing settled community.</p> <p><u>June 2014 Update:</u></p> <p><u>In light of the Inspector's concerns there is a need to review all sites to assess which sites would be suitable to accommodate further pitches. This site was taken forward as an allocation in the submitted DPD for 5 additional pitches. Planning permission has since been granted in May 2014 for 6 additional pitches. Increasing the site allocation by one pitch would reflect the extant planning permission for the site.</u></p>	
<u>Conclusion: Take forward as an allocation and increase number of additional pitches from 5 to 6.</u>	

‘The Haven’, Catherine-de-Barnes Lane, Bickenhill



<p>Availability</p>	<p>The site is available for use.</p>
<p>Suitability: Criteria in Policy P6 of the Solihull Local Plan</p>	
<p>The size and scale of the site and the number of caravans stationed is appropriate to the size and density of the local settled community.</p>	<p>The site is not near or within a village, although it is in close proximity to the small settlement of Bickenhill. There are very few residential properties in the immediate vicinity and as the existing site is already well established, an extension would not represent a dominant feature in the area and would not be considered to be out of scale with the settled community.</p>
<p>Any unacceptable adverse visual impact can be adequately minimised.</p>	<p>The existing site and proposed extension is well screened from public viewpoints, public footpaths and the public highway. The visual impact would therefore be minimal. There are few residential neighbours and no private views of the site.</p>
<p>The site is not in an area prone to flooding</p>	<p>The area is not located in a flooding zone and there are no surface water flooding issues on the site.</p>
<p>Any unacceptable adverse impact on landscape or local nature conservation designations, ecology, biodiversity or the historic environment can be mitigated.</p>	<p>There are no statutory designations on the site. However, the site is approximately 250m from Castle Hill Farm Meadows Local Wildlife Site. <u>The LWS has been under pressure in recent years. As such, the cumulative impact of development affecting the LWS is a consideration.</u></p>

	<p>The site is also approximately 400m from Bickenhill Meadows SSSI.</p> <p>The Solihull Countryside Strategy identifies that the area is strongly dominated by commercial and urban influences and is also subject to significant change as a result of further expansion at the Airport and NEC. The sensitivity of the site is therefore debateable.</p> <p>With regard to the historic environment the site is part of the wider setting of Bickenhill Conservation Area but significant separating distance and road, lower land level of site and existence of current caravan site and runway extension would prevent any appreciable impacts upon that designated heritage asset.</p> <p>Some trees and hedges south and west of the site evidence planned enclosure of low local significance.</p> <p>Development of the site would not significantly affect the special interest and setting of the above heritage assets especially where trees or hedges retained on site. The layout, density, landscaping and external lighting of any future development would need to pay proportionate regard to their significance and to local distinctiveness.</p>
<p>There is no unacceptable adverse impact on privacy and residential amenity for both site residents and neighbouring land uses.</p>	<p>There are very few neighbouring uses. Therefore the adverse impact on privacy and residential amenity for site occupants and neighbouring uses is negligible.</p> <p>The site does suffer significant noise issues due to its proximity to Birmingham Airport. However, noise contour maps submitted with the planning application for Birmingham Airport's runway extension show that the area identified for the Haven's site extension is further away from the higher noise contour than the existing Gypsy and Traveller site, which did not require relocation as part of the Airport's future growth plans.</p>
<p>The site has safe and convenient access to the highway network.</p>	<p>The suggested site would be accessed from an existing vehicular access shared with the existing Gypsy and Traveller site.</p> <p>The road in the immediate vicinity is semi-rural in character, it has a 40mph speed limit past the site and a designated footway / cycleway thereby reducing potential conflict between vehicles and pedestrians.</p>
<p>Local services and facilities such as schools, health facilities, fresh food and employment are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport, or it can be demonstrated that the site is sustainable in other ways.</p>	<p>The nearest settlement with a range of key services and facilities is Hampton-in-Arden, which is approximately 3km away. There are no key services within walking distance of the site.</p> <p>However, it is recognised that walking and cycling</p>

	<p>routes to Solihull Town Centre further south are reasonable in that there is a dedicated shared use footway/cycle way available. Although a majority of this route would not be lit.</p> <p>There are no bus services which pass the site and local services and facilities are outside of realistic walking distance. The suggested site therefore fails to meet accessibility criteria.</p> <p>Accessibility to key services and facilities is a concern in this location, however, the existing site is well established and has been present in the location for a significant number of years, thereby contributing to its social sustainability.</p>
<u>Health Impacts</u>	<p><u>The total number of pitches proposed will be reduced from 37 to 31 (25 existing and 6 new). This exceeds the threshold of 15 pitches suggested in the CLG Good Practice Guide (2008), however, it is a significant reduction in pitches from the previous proposed allocation.</u></p> <p><u>The expansion of the site for 6 additional pitches could accommodate the needs arising from existing family growth on the site. A small number of new families may also be attracted to the extended site.</u></p> <p><u>Any extension to the site will form part of a comprehensive re-development to improve the existing standard of living accommodation. It is considered that a re-design of the site into 3 cul-de-sacs/‘closes’ of development, none of which individually exceed 15 pitches, will help to reduce potential tensions between families and retain a sense of community.</u></p> <p><u>31 pitches would not be significantly out of scale with the neighbouring settled population.</u></p>
Other Issues to consider	Green Belt location.
Achievability	<p>The site has no overriding constraints to delivery.</p> <p><u>The landowner still intends to develop the site for the reduced number of pitches (31).</u></p>

Summary and Conclusion

With regard to The Haven, the main concern is around accessibility to local services and noise impact due to proximity to Birmingham Airport. However, the site has been suggested as an extension to an existing, well established and long term authorised use which is considered to be of an appropriate scale, thereby contributing to its social sustainability. The site has limited impact on landscape character and nature conservation interests, and there are no overriding constraints to delivery.

June 2014 Update:

In light of the Inspector’s concerns regarding the deliverability of 12 pitches on The Haven there is

a need to reduce the number of pitches to 6 as part of a comprehensive scheme to provide an improved layout, conducive to community and individual well being , through good design. It is considered that a re-design of the whole site into 3 cul-de-sacs/'closes' of development will provide a comfortable and manageable environment for both existing residents and any new families to the site. The resultant size of the site is not considered to dominate the surrounding settled community. Given that fewer pitches are now proposed, there would be no additional impact on visual amenity, the natural and historic environment, privacy or residential amenity. The site is not affected by flooding. In terms of highway safety, a re-design of the site would enable a new access to be provided, improving the existing situation.

Conclusion: Take forward as an allocation and reduce number of additional pitches from 12 to 6.

Old Civil Service Sports Club, off Old Damson Lane, Solihull



Availability	The site is currently available for use.
Suitability: Criteria in Policy P6 of the Solihull Local Plan	
The size and scale of the site and the number of caravans stationed is appropriate to the size and density of the local settled community.	The site is located on a parcel of land between the main built up area of Solihull and the main A45 route from Birmingham to Coventry. It is also close to the Birmingham Airport site. A residential bungalow is situated immediately to the north of the site, with open views into it. The site has no other immediate neighbours, although Old Damson Lane provides access to a small number of other isolated residential properties, farms and guest houses. A number of businesses are also located within 500m of the site along the A45. The size of the site is considered to be out of scale when compared to the neighbouring bungalow, however, it is not significantly out of scale for its wider local environment or the local settled community, although this will ultimately depend on the number of pitches accommodated.
Any unacceptable adverse visual impact can be adequately minimised.	The site is very visually prominent from a range of public and private viewpoints including the public footpath to the south of the site as well as from the driveway to the sports club and adjacent bungalow to the north.

	<p>The site is very visually prominent from the sports pitches to the east of the site due to the lack of a physical boundary.</p> <p>There are some limited views into the site from the farm and farm shop to the south.</p> <p>Views into the site from the public highway are slightly more limited due to the presence of mature trees and hedgerows. However, the removal of these features to create an access would increase public views into to the site.</p> <p>Concern that development would have an urbanising effect on the more rural, open landscape in this part of Solihull.</p>
<p>The site is not in an area prone to flooding</p>	<p>The site is not located in a flood zone.</p> <p>There are no surface water flooding issues on the site</p>
<p>Any unacceptable adverse impact on landscape or local nature conservation designations, ecology, biodiversity or the historic environment can be mitigated.</p>	<p>No specific landscape or other statutory designations covering the site.</p> <p><u>Castle Hill Farm Meadows Local Wildlife Site adjoins part of the southern boundary. The LWS has been under pressure in recent years. As such, the cumulative impact of development affecting the LWS is a consideration.</u></p> <p>As there is currently no access to the site some mature trees and hedgerows would require removal. This would have a detrimental impact on the existing character of Old Damson Lane.</p> <p>The Solihull Countryside Strategy defines this location as falling within Zone 2 'The Western Fringe' which encompasses existing major development at Birmingham Airport, the National Exhibition Centre (NEC) and Birmingham Business Park. It is recognised that this area is strongly dominated by commercial and urban influences and is also subject to significant change as a result of further expansion at the Airport and NEC. The sensitivity of the site is therefore lessened, however, the site is adjacent to a Local Wildlife Site and any development should demonstrate that there would be no potential impacts on this site.</p> <p>With regard to the historic environment the 19th century Dunstan Farm and perhaps some farm buildings to the south are heritage assets.</p> <p>Some remains of planned enclosure to north, south and west edges of site.</p> <p>Development of the site likely to moderately affect the setting of the above heritage assets especially where trees or hedges are removed on site. The layout, density, landscaping and external lighting of</p>

	any future development would need to pay proportionate regard to their significance and to local distinctiveness.
There is no unacceptable adverse impact on privacy and residential amenity for both site residents and neighbouring land uses.	There would be limited impact on privacy and residential amenity for potential site occupants due to the lack of immediate neighbours. However, the impact on privacy and residential amenity for residents of the bungalow to the north would be more severe particularly as a result of the increase in activity, noise and vehicle movements from a Gypsy and Traveller site in this location.
The site has safe and convenient access to the highway network.	The site is located off a narrow country lane which does not benefit from a dedicated footway or lighting, thereby increasing the potential for pedestrian / vehicle conflict.
Local services and facilities such as schools, health facilities, fresh food and employment are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport, or it can be demonstrated that the site is sustainable in other ways.	<p>The site is within a theoretical realistic walking distance to local bus services with a primary school and fresh food facility located an approximate 25min walk away which is considered to be just outside theoretical walking distance.</p> <p>However, it is not just the linear distance which is important. The nature and attractiveness of the walk/cycle is also important, and in the case of the identified site, the potential for pedestrian – vehicle conflict on the country lane is relevant. Old Damson Lane is a generally single carriageway road, with no footway or lighting, and its nature is not likely to be conducive to pedestrians or cyclists for regular shopping/work/school trips or to access local bus services. It would not be a suitable route for young children to use for cycling to school, irrespective of whether they were accompanied by an adult. The site is neither within a sustainable location nor a location which would be safe for vulnerable road users to use.</p>
<u>Health Impacts</u>	<p><u>The number of pitches to be provided has not been stated. However, the size of the site could accommodate over 20 pitches. Any development of the site would need to have regard to the CLG Good Practice Guide (2008), which suggests a threshold of 15 pitches.</u></p> <p><u>However, there is concern that the cumulative impact of this site together with the neighbouring site at Old Damson Lane, which currently has permission for a total of 25 pitches, may result in development which is out of scale with surrounding locality.</u></p>
Other Issues to consider	Impact on openness of the Green Belt

	<p>The potential loss of sports pitch provision.</p> <p>The site is identified as an area of compensation, where MG5 (a type of species rich) grassland will be created, to offset Birmingham Airport's runway extension, as agreed through the Section 106 agreement. It cannot be both a compensation site and a Gypsy and Traveller site.</p>
Achievability	<p>The site is identified as an area of compensation to offset Birmingham Airport's runway extension, as agreed through the Section 106 agreement. It cannot be both a compensation site and a Gypsy and Traveller site. Delivery of the site is therefore uncertain.</p>

Summary and Conclusion

This site is located off Old Damson Lane, between Damson Parkway and the main A45. The site is very visually prominent and clear views into the site are available from the public footpath running along the southern boundary, as well as from the driveway to the Sports Club and residential bungalow to the north, and the sports pitches to the east. Old Damson Lane has a rural character and the roadside mature trees and hedgerows are important features. As there is currently no access to the site some of the mature trees and hedgerows would require removal, detrimentally impacting on the character of the area and that of Old Damson Lane. The site is not in a flood zone area and there are no flooding issues at the site. In terms of highway safety and convenience of access, Old Damson Lane is a narrow country lane which does not benefit from a dedicated footway or lighting. Although schools, GP surgeries and fresh food shops are all available in the main urban area of Solihull which is located within 2km of the site, the character of Old Damson Lane is not conducive to walking and cycling for such trips and the potential for pedestrian – vehicle conflict is relevant. The site is not considered to be in a particularly sustainable location nor a location which would be safe for vulnerable road users to use. There is also an issue regarding the potential loss of sports pitch provision and deliverability as the site is identified as an area of compensation to offset Birmingham Airport's runway extension, as agreed through the Section 106 agreement.

June 2014 Update:

In light of the Inspector's concerns there is a need to review all sites to assess which sites would be suitable to accommodate further pitches. This site was not taken forward as an allocation in the submitted DPD. This Greenfield site would be visually prominent and there is concern that it would result in an urbanising effect on the rural, open landscape character of this part of Solihull. The site continues to perform poorly in terms of its impact on residential amenity and highway safety and there is concern that the cumulative impact of sites on Old Damson Lane could, together, dominate the surrounding locality. The site is not considered to be in an accessible location. A S106 obligation identifying the site as an area of compensation providing MG5 (a type of species rich) grassland continues to be a constraint on delivery of this site.

Conclusion: Reject

'The Uplands', Dickens Heath Road, Dickens Heath



Availability	The site is currently available for immediate use.
Suitability: Criteria in Policy P6 of the Solihull Local Plan	
The size and scale of the site and the number of caravans stationed is appropriate to the size and density of the local settled community.	The site is a well established unauthorised site. It is a small scale, family owned and occupied site located approximately 1km from Dickens Heath village centre. Its small scale, unobtrusive location does not dominate the immediate local environment or the nearest settled community.
Any unacceptable adverse visual impact can be adequately minimised.	The site is not visually obtrusive. It is located to the rear of a residential property and is well screened along the side and rear boundaries. There are limited views of the site from the public highway and there are no surrounding residential properties from which views are available. The site is adjacent to an allotment, although the site boundaries are well screened and views are not readily available into the site.
The site is not in an area prone to flooding	The site is not in an area prone to flooding and evidence suggests there are no significant surface or ground water flooding issues at the site.
Any unacceptable adverse impact on	There are no specific landscape designations

landscape or local nature conservation designations, ecology, biodiversity or the historic environment can be mitigated.	<p>affecting the area.</p> <p>Some of the trees on the site are covered by a Tree Preservation Order, although as the site is well established and there has been no impact on these trees, it is considered that the TPO is not a significant factor weighing against the regularisation of the site.</p> <p>With regard to the historic environment there are no nearby heritage assets other than some trees and hedges of remaining planned enclosure.</p> <p>Development of the site would have little impact upon the special interest and setting of these heritage assets. The layout, density, landscaping and external lighting of any future development would need to pay proportionate regard to their significance to local distinctiveness.</p>
There is no unacceptable adverse impact on privacy and residential amenity for both site residents and neighbouring land uses.	The site has very few neighbouring land uses. Therefore any adverse impact on privacy and residential amenity for site occupants and neighbouring uses is negligible.
The site has safe and convenient access to the highway network.	The site has good access to the highway network. Dickens Heath Road has a designated footway and a cycleway separated from the carriageway by a grass verge. It is well lit and has a 30 speed limit. Therefore the potential for pedestrian / vehicle conflict is significantly reduced.
Local services and facilities such as schools, health facilities, fresh food and employment are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport, or it can be demonstrated that the site is sustainable in other ways.	<p>The site is less than 1km to Dickens Heath village centre. Access to the nearest primary school is within a 10-15 minute walk, there is good access to secondary schools, a GP surgery and fresh food.</p> <p>A dedicated footway / cycleway runs past the site and provides access to Dickens Heath, thereby making travel by foot and cycle a realistic alternative to the car.</p> <p>A bus service to Dickens Heath and Solihull also runs past the site with dedicated stops within 200m.</p>
<u>Health Impacts</u>	<p><u>Permission was granted in November 2013 for 4 pitches on the site. This has regularised the existing use and provides an additional pitch for natural family growth, meeting the family's needs. This is a private family owned site and as such, would not be suitable for additional pitches for new families.</u></p> <p><u>4 pitches is significantly less than the threshold of 15 pitches suggested in the CLG Good Practice Guide (2008). The resultant size of the site is not considered to be out of scale with the neighbouring settled population.</u></p>
Other Issues to consider	Social sustainability. The site has been well

	established over many years and there may be issues about how acceptable it is to remove the occupants after such a time.
Achievability	The site has no overriding constraints to delivery.

Summary and Conclusion

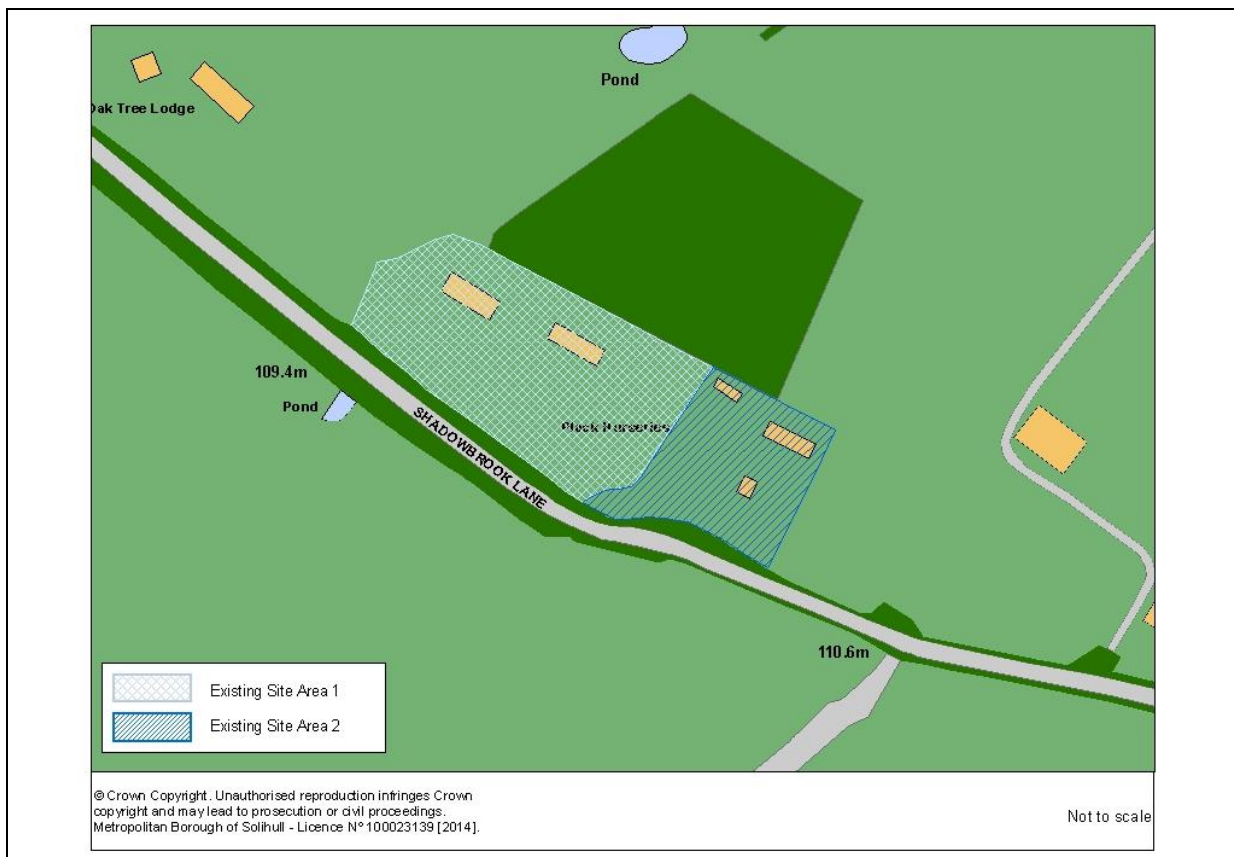
The site is a well established unauthorised site. It is a small scale, family owned and occupied site located approximately 1km from Dickens Heath village centre. The site is not visually obtrusive. It is located to the rear of a residential property and is well screened along the side and rear boundaries. There are no specific landscape designations affecting the site, although some of the trees are covered by a Tree Preservation Order. The site has good access to the highway network and Dickens Heath Road has a designated footway and a cycleway, is well lit and has a 30mph speed limit. All essential services are realistically accessible by walking and cycling and a bus service runs past the site with bus stops within 200m. The site provides, and has provided a settled base for the families that live there for a number of years, enabling them to access health and education facilities, and it has co-existed peacefully with the local community in this location for many years, thereby meeting wider sustainability objectives. It is considered that the site performs well against the criteria in Policy P6 of the Local Plan and should therefore be taken forward as a preferred site with a view to regularisation through the formal planning application process.

June 2014 Update:

In light of the Inspector's concerns there is a need to review all sites to assess which sites would be suitable to accommodate further pitches. This site was taken forward as an allocation in the DPD. Planning permission has been granted for an additional pitch since the allocation of the site in the submitted DPD, providing a total of 4 pitches, which meets the family's needs. The size of the site is relatively small so further intensification of the site to provide more than 4 pitches is not considered to be feasible.

Conclusion: Take forward as an allocation and increase number of pitches from 3 to 4.

'The Pleck', Shadowbrook Lane, Hampton-in Arden



Availability	The site is available for use.
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Suitability: Criteria in Policy P6 of the Solihull Local Plan

<p>The size and scale of the site and the number of caravans stationed is appropriate to the size and density of the local settled community.</p>	<p><u>The whole of the 'Pleck' site is currently unauthorised, therefore the suitability of the whole site will now be assessed. There are a total of 4 unauthorised pitches in this location.</u></p> <p>The site is located less than 2km from the village of Hampton-in-Arden, which has a range of local services and facilities.</p> <p>There are very few residential properties within the immediate locality.</p> <p>The size of the site suggested is small in scale and the number of pitches currently present is not significant in the context of the size and density of the local population or community of Hampton in Arden and the infrastructure available.</p>
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<p>Any unacceptable adverse visual impact can be adequately minimised.</p>	<p>The site is partially screened by trees and hedgerows, although there are gaps which allow views into the site from the highway, particularly from the site access.</p> <p>The site is visible from the one public footpath in the vicinity of the site, due to the lack of natural screening.</p>
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	There are no views of the site from surrounding residential properties and other public and private views of the site are limited.
The site is not in an area prone to flooding	The site is not in an identified flood zone. There are no other flooding issues.
Any unacceptable adverse impact on landscape or local nature conservation designations, ecology, biodiversity or the historic environment can be mitigated.	<p>There are no statutory designations within the site. There is a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) <u>located to the north which adjoins a small part of the northern boundary of the site.</u> The site therefore has potential to have some impact on sensitive designated habitats, however this must also be weighed against the fact that the development already exists.</p> <p><u>The western boundary of the site adjoins a Local Wildlife Site (Greens Ward Piece) and the site itself has been identified as a potential Local Wildlife Site (pLWS). However, this is not a statutory designation and it is noted that development of the site may have affected its ecological value.</u></p> <p>The Solihull Countryside Strategy defines this location as falling within Zone 3 'The Motorway Corridor' - recognising the dominance of the motorway over this zone. This could be argued to lessen the sensitivity of this site.</p> <p>With regard to the historic environment there are no heritage assets other than some trees and hedges of remaining planned enclosure.</p> <p>Development of the site is unlikely to affect the special interest and setting of the above heritage assets especially where trees or hedges retained on site. The layout, density, landscaping and external lighting of any future development would need to pay proportionate regard to their significance and to local distinctiveness.</p>
There is no unacceptable adverse impact on privacy and residential amenity for both site residents and neighbouring land uses.	There are very few neighbouring uses. Therefore the adverse impact on privacy and residential amenity for site occupants and neighbouring uses is negligible. The only exception to this is noise, as the site lies almost under the flight path for arriving flights at Birmingham Airport.
The site has safe and convenient access to the highway network.	<p>Although the road is rural in nature, it is not characterised by sharp bends or poor visibility, and it has a 40mph speed limit. It is of sufficient width to allow 2 on coming private vehicles to pass in opposite directions. In places there is room for a private car and service vehicle to pass each other in opposite directions.</p> <p>The road has no formal footway provision however, the character of the road, the speed limit in force and</p>

	<p>the fact that there are wide verges mean that the potential for pedestrian and vehicle conflict is marginally reduced.</p> <p>The principle of a Gypsy and Traveller site at this location has previously been considered at appeal where temporary planning permission was granted. Highway safety was an issue considered by the Inspector who opined that the access arrangements were acceptable for the proposed development, subject to adequate sight lines being provided.</p> <p>Given that the extant site appears to be operating satisfactory from a highway safety perspective, it is not considered that the site would raise a highway safety issue.</p>
<p>Local services and facilities such as schools, health facilities, fresh food and employment are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport, or it can be demonstrated that the site is sustainable in other ways.</p>	<p>Key local services and facilities, including a GP surgery, are available in Hampton-in-Arden however, they are at the upper limit or outside of what would be considered realistic walking distances specified within PPG13. The nature of the route along Shadowbrook Lane to Hampton-in-Arden (no footways or lighting) means that it is unlikely that pedestrians would use it for shopping or school trips. There are no bus services in vicinity of site. Hampton-in-Arden Railway Station is located approximately 2.3km from site. Access to public transport is also poor.</p> <p>Therefore, it is not considered that the site is located within an accessible location.</p>
<p><u>Health Impacts</u></p>	<p><u>There are currently 4 unauthorised pitches on the whole 'Pleck' site. The first temporary permission for 1 pitch on the eastern part of the site expired in June 2012 and a second temporary permission for 3 pitches on the western part expired in June 2013. An enforcement notice has been issued requiring the whole site to be returned to its former condition. This is subject to an appeal.</u></p> <p><u>Not taking this site forward as an allocation would require the existing families to be relocated.</u></p> <p><u>This is a private family owned site and as such, would not be suitable for new families.</u></p> <p><u>A total of 4 pitches is significantly less than the threshold of 15 pitches suggested in the CLG Good Practice Guide (2008). The site is not considered to be out of scale with the surrounding settled population.</u></p>
<p>Other Issues to consider</p>	<p>Green Belt location.</p> <p>The site is subject to noise from aircraft.</p>

	The 'very special circumstances' which justified temporary planning permission on appeal are no longer applicable.
Achievability	The site has no overriding constraints to delivery.

Summary and Conclusion

The **eastern part of the** 'Pleck', Shadowbrook Lane was granted temporary planning permission on appeal in March 2006, extended to June 2012 by a further planning application. **This** site is well established, having been present in this location for over six years; however, the grant of temporary planning permission was given on the basis that the Council lacked evidence on the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and had no policy framework in place at the time. These factors, along with the personal circumstances of the occupiers and the fact that there were no other suitable sites available, represented 'very special circumstances' which justified the granting of temporary planning permission, despite the development being inappropriate and by definition harmful to the Green Belt. These 'very special circumstances' did not however, justify the granting of full planning permission.

Since this time, circumstances have changed; the Council has undertaken two GTAA's and is seeking to address the issues around Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs through the Local Development Framework. As such, these previous 'very special circumstances', would not therefore carry as much weight.

Notwithstanding this, in terms of the assessment, the **whole of the 'Pleck' site** is small scale, accommodating **4 pitches** and does not therefore dominate the immediate locality or the nearest settled community. The site is screened from Shadowbrook Lane to some extent, although views into the site are available through gaps in the trees and hedgerows, and the relatively wide and open access affords more prominent views into the site from the highway. The lack of neighbours limits any adverse impact on privacy and residential amenity.

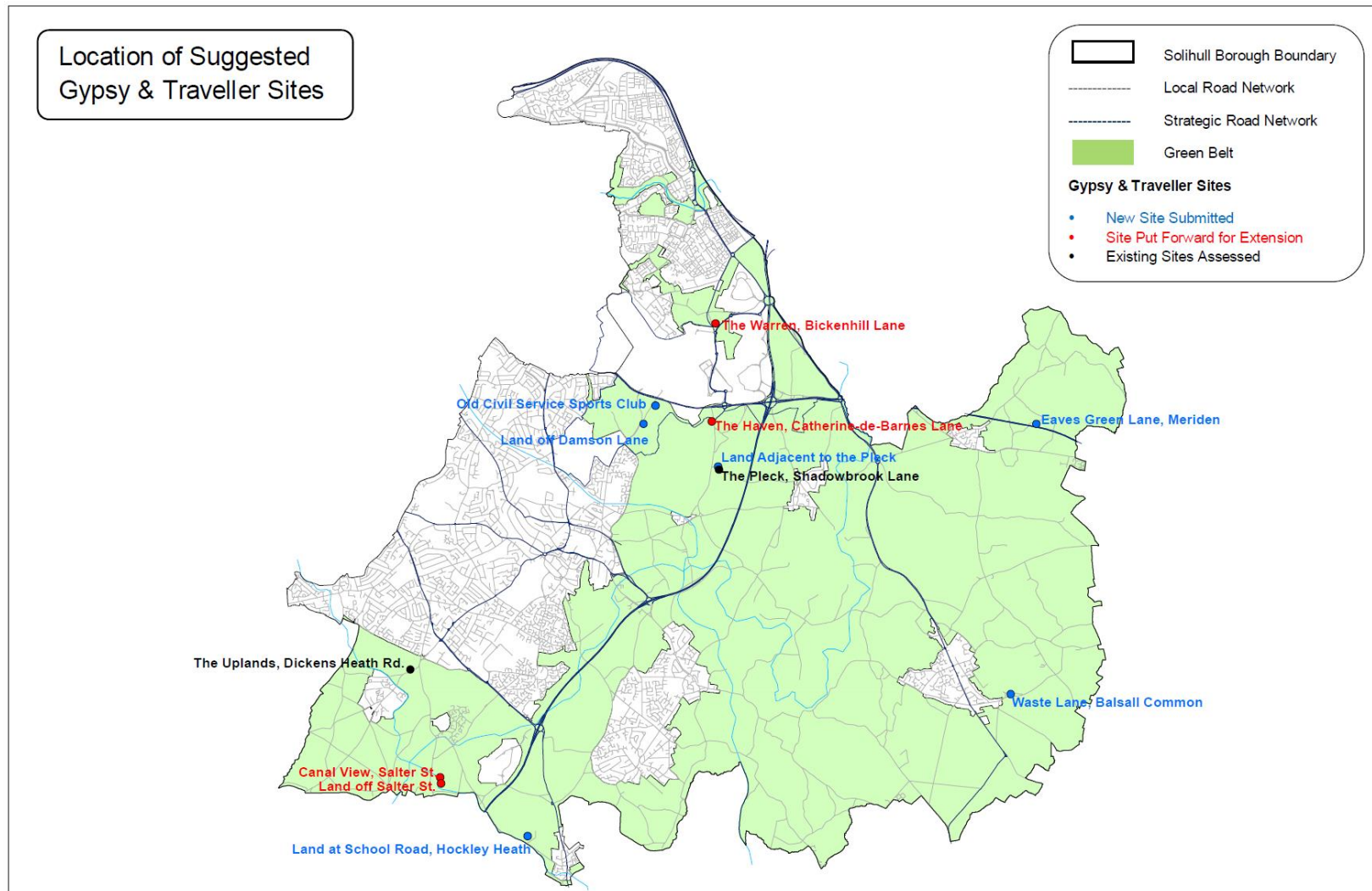
The site is immediately adjacent to a SSSI **to the north and a LWS to the west. As such**, there is potential for impact on sensitive designated habitats. However, Gypsy and Traveller pitches have been present on this site for a number of years and it could be argued that any impact has already occurred. In terms of highway safety and accessibility issues, there is some potential for pedestrian / vehicle conflict as Shadowbrook Lane itself has no footway provision and it is questionable whether walking and cycling to access services and facilities in Hampton-in-Arden is a realistic alternative to the car. The site is also subject to impact from aircraft noise.

June 2014 Update:

In light of the Inspector's concerns there is a need to review all sites to assess which sites would be suitable to accommodate further pitches. This site was not taken forward as an allocation in the submitted DPD. The site continues to perform poorly in terms of accessibility and its impact on the neighbouring SSSI and LWS. The site itself has been identified as a potential Local Wildlife Site. The site is also subject to impact from aircraft noise. However, it is recognised that not taking this site forward as an allocation will require the existing families to be relocated. It is noted that an enforcement notice was served in November 2013 requiring the whole site (4 pitches) to be restored to its former condition. The enforcement notice is currently subject to appeal.

Conclusion: Reject

Appendix 1 – List of Sites Suggested Through the Call for Sites Exercise



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Not to scale