



**Lewes District Council**

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Mr Nick Beaumont  
Chair  
Plumpton Parish Council

18<sup>th</sup> July 2019

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Dear Nick

**Lewes District Local Plan Part 2 – Policy GT01**

Thank you for your recent letter received by email on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2019. I appreciate you taking the time to put your questions to us in writing. Please see below our response to those questions in blue type for clarity.

- What guarantees can LDC provide that GT01 will not provide the precedent for further residential development outside the planning boundary (especially during the life of the made Neighbourhood Plan)?
  - LDC cannot provide guarantees.
  - LDC cannot predict future government planning policy or potential future planning applications and their relative merits.
  - An allocation within the plan making process is essentially providing a boundary for a defined land use.
  - Applications for residential development outside the adopted planning boundary would be judged against 'countryside policies' and in the context of the district's 5 year housing land supply.
  - An allocation outside the adopted planning boundary does not change that basic premise.
  
- What guarantees can LDC provide that the site will not be extended beyond the currently proposed 5 residential pitches?
  - LDC cannot provide guarantees.
  - The policy (GT01) requires that any planning application will define in precise detail how the site will be integrated into the wider landscape. This will be likely to be formed with an element of bunding and a landscape buffer strip.
  - Any development outside of the allocation site would require planning permission. And will undergo the full rigour of the planning process including public and Parish Council scrutiny.

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Planning Policy Lead  
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- What guarantees can LDC provide that once GT01 is adopted, the landowner would not be able to argue for a change of use given the planning and discrimination precedents that the policy provides?
  - LDC cannot provide guarantees.
  - Your question outlines the special circumstances that underpin the allocation and its land use and questions whether this prohibits any changes of use application. Any changes of use application would need planning permission and its merits would be assessed at the time of processing that application
  
- Given that LDC appears to have no statutory duty beyond allocating sites such as GT01, and ESCC has widely publicised funding issues with the indication that only statutory obligations will be met, can LDC please confirm under what statutory duty the site will be developed – if not a statutory obligation, then who is responsible for the costs of establishing the site?
  - There is no statutory duty to develop this site, the requirement on LDC is to identify and allocate land to meet the identified needs.
  - The allocation must be a **deliverable site** and this is what the Examination in Public for Local Plan Part 2 is scrutinising; thus in light of no current private sector interest, the council evidenced deliverability through a range of options including purchase or lease of land using public sector funding. Once allocated the site may be delivered through a combination of local authority partners or the private sector.
  
- How will its use be confined in practice to those with the necessary protected characteristics?
  - The definition governing the ‘end user’ of the proposed site allocation and for the purposes of planning policy (LPP1 and LPP2) uses the definition of Gypsies and Travellers from the *National Planning Policy for Traveller Sites* (August 2015) and is not restricted to those with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act.
  - The definition of Gypsies and Travellers for planning purposes is: “*Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family’s or dependants’ educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.*” (my emphasis)
  - GT01 also includes a criterion to ensure that future occupiers meet the above definition.
  - Any planning application would be required to clarify the intended management arrangements for the site and would be conditioned or subject to S106 legal agreement to ensure compliance with the management plan is enforceable.
  
- Why were LDC’s own housing development sites not considered suitable to meet the needs?
  - LDC reviewed its own land holdings with potential to deliver permanent residential accommodation; the majority of such sites are commonly referred to as ‘garage sites’. These sites are often in urban/sub-urban locations and given their age are often located on quite constrained sites. These sites do not therefore lend themselves to the size requirements of a traveller site. For example please see extract below from the good practice guide.

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*“For practical reasons, caravan sites require a greater degree of land usage per household than for smaller houses and Gypsy and Traveller sites are no exception. Gypsy and Traveller sites are designed to provide land per household which is suitable for a mobile home, touring caravan and a utility building, together with space for parking” “To ensure fire safety it is essential that every trailer, caravan or park home must be not less than 6 metres from any other trailer, caravan or park home that is occupied separately.” (CLG Good Practice Guide Designing Traveller Sites 2008).*

I trust the answers given provide a full response to your questions, if you require anything further please let me know.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T Thom', with a stylized, angular flourish at the beginning.

Tondra Thom  
Planning Policy Lead