



SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOODS)

Meeting to be held in Civic Hall, Leeds, LS1 1UR on
Monday, 17th January, 2011 at 10.00 am

A pre-meeting will take place for ALL Members of the Board
in a Committee Room at 9.30 am

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors

- B Anderson (Chair) - Adel and
Wharfedale;
- A Barker - Horsforth;
- G Driver - Middleton Park;
- P Ewens - Hyde Park and
Woodhouse;
- R Grahame - Burmantofts and
Richmond Hill;
- G Hyde - Killingbeck and
Seacroft;
- M Iqbal - City and Hunslet;
- J Marjoram - Calverley and
Farsley;
- L Mulherin - Ardsley and Robin
Hood;
- P Wadsworth - Guiseley and
Rawdon;

Please note: Certain or all items on this agenda may be recorded.

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A G E N D A

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7			<p>INTERRUPTIONS IN THE REFUSE COLLECTION SERVICE</p> <p>To consider a report of the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods on interruptions in the Refuse Collection Service.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p>	9 - 14
9			<p>INQUIRY TO REVIEW GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS SITE PROVISION IN LEEDS - DRAFT REPORT</p> <p>To receive and consider the Board's draft final report of it's Inquiry to review Gypsies and Travellers Site Provision in Leeds.</p> <p>(Draft Final Report and recommendations attached)</p>	15 - 62

Agenda Item 6

SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOODS)

THURSDAY, 6TH JANUARY, 2011

PRESENT: Councillor B Anderson in the Chair

Councillors A Barker, G Driver, P Ewens,
R Grahame, G Hyde, J Marjoram,
L Mulherin and P Wadsworth

69 Late Items and Supplementary Information

The Chair agreed to accept the following documents as supplementary information to the agenda already published:-

- Agenda Item 7 (Minute No. 72 refers) – Possible Inquiry on Acquisitive Crime with Focus on Domestic Burglary – copy of PowerPoint presentation slides submitted by Safer Leeds.
- Agenda Item 10 (Minute No. 75 refers) – Variances against Departmental Budget 2010/11 – A copy of the summary for Period 8 supplied by the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods.

The above documents were not available at the time of the agenda despatch.

70 Declarations of Interest

The following personal declarations of interest were made:-

- Agenda Item 13 (Minute No. 78 refers) – Strategic Governance Board and Shared Service Centre – Councillors G Driver, R Grahame and P Wadsworth in their capacities as ALMO Directors.

See also later Minute No. 78.

71 Minutes - 23 November and 2 December 2010

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meetings held on 23rd November and 2nd December 2010, together with the notes of the Gypsy and Traveller Working Group meeting held on 13th December 2010, be confirmed as a correct record.

72 Possible Inquiry on Acquisitive Crime with Focus on Domestic Burglary

The Board considered whether or not to undertake a Scrutiny Inquiry into acquisitive crime, with the focus on domestic burglary.

To assist the Board, it received a presentation from Superintendent Simon Whitehead, Chief Officer, Community Safety, and Simon Hodgson,

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to be held on Monday, 17th January, 2011

Performance and Intelligence Manager, Safer Leeds, who both responded to Members' queries and comments.

In brief summary the main points of discussion were:-

- The historic statistical performance in this particular area, from a high of 16,341 domestic burglaries in 2002/03 to a low of 7,670 in 2005/06, before an increase over the past four years to a figure of 9,521 in 2009/10.
- The co-ordinated efforts being made via the Safer Leeds Partnership to tackle the issue, and the fact that for the period from October 2009 to September 2010 there had been 8,756 recorded domestic burglaries – down 1,104 compared to the previous 12 month period.
- The November 2010 follow-up inspection by the Audit Commission and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, the results of which were imminent. It was agreed that these should be circulated to Board Members when they were received.
- The links to anti-social behaviour, and the current initiative to integrate Police, ALMO and Council approaches and initiatives in this area.

RESOLVED –

- a) That the Board agrees to undertake an Inquiry in respect of acquisitive crime, with the focus on domestic burglary.
- b) That a Working Group be established to take the work forward, open to all Board Members to participate, but to include the Chair and Councillor R Grahame.
- c) That it be accepted that, due to the Board's current work programme, it may not prove possible to commence this Inquiry until the 2011/12 municipal year.

73 Environment and Neighbourhoods Performance Report - Quarter 2 2010/11

The Board received and considered a report submitted by the Head of Policy and Performance relating to performance information in respect of a raft of national and local performance indicators which fell within the remit of the Board to monitor.

RESOLVED – That the report be received and noted.

74 Initial Budget Proposals 2011/12

In accordance with the Council's Budget and Policy Framework, the Board considered the Executive's initial budget proposals for 2011/12, as discussed at the Executive Board meeting held on 15th December 2010.

In attendance at the meeting, and responding to Members' queries and comments, were:-

- Councillor P Gruen, Executive Member, Neighbourhoods and Housing.
- Councillor T Murray, Executive Member, Environmental Services.
- Neil Evans, Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods.
- Richard Ellis, Head of Finance, Environment and Neighbourhoods
- Stephen Boyle, Chief Regeneration Officer, Environment and Neighbourhoods

In brief summary, the main points of discussion were:-

- The current difficulties being experienced with refuse collection across the City. It was noted that an update report would be submitted to the Board on 17th January 2011.
- The current discussion taking place between the Council and the Police regarding the funding, numbers and role of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs). It was noted that the Board would receive a specific report on this issue in due course.
- The Council's waste management strategy and the effect of the £8 per tonne increase in the landfill tax from April 2011, which would cost the Council an additional £1.2m in 2011/12. It was noted that a decision had been taken not to currently roll-out across the City the food waste recycling project successfully piloted in the Rothwell area, as it was currently not cost-efficient to do so. However, this would be reviewed in the future, and part of that review would include an evaluation of the possible use of anaerobic digesters.
- The drop in car parking income, and the comprehensive review currently being undertaken to ensure that Council-owned parking facilities remained competitive. The possible use of the Primrose Hill High School site for parking purposes was raised, and it was agreed that this suggestion should be referred to Councillor R Lewis, Executive Member, Development and Regeneration.
- The current corporate review of Council premises and staffing numbers was raised. Reference was made to the statement at Paragraph 10.9 of the report of the Director of Resources to the Executive Board on 15th December 2010, and the comments relating to 'equality impact assessments and workforce representation issues'. A Member

commented that this sounded very much like affirmative action to protect certain categories of employees, whereas, in his view, any staffing review should concentrate purely on identifying and retaining the best people for the job, regardless of age, gender or ethnicity considerations.

The officer responded by stating that this was a reference to issues such as reasonable adjustments for disabled employees who may be relocated, and the possible disproportionate effect of some proposals on certain sections of the workforce, e.g. cleaning staff, due to gender issues.

- The possible amalgamation of regulatory functions, e.g. Environmental Health, across several authorities.
- Locality working, and the possible greater delegation of functions to Area Committees. There was criticism from some Board Members regarding the timing and the manner in which the locality working proposals had been handled at Area Committee level.
- The possible assimilation of CareRing into Telecare Services in Adult Social Care, with resultant cost savings. A Member mentioned a problem with a specific property, and he was encouraged to raise the matter outside the meeting with the Board's Principal Scrutiny Adviser.

RESOLVED –

- a) That, subject to the above comments, the report be received and noted.
- b) That a further report on the more detailed budget proposals be submitted to the Board at the appropriate meeting.

- (NB: 1 Councillor G Hyde and P Gruen joined the meeting at 10.50 am and 11.07 am respectively, during the consideration of this item.
- 2 Councillor T Murray and Neil Evans, Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods, left the meeting at 11.26 am, during the consideration of this item.)

75 Budget Analysis for the Housing Revenue Account and General Fund 2010/11

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods updated the Board regarding the key variances and the outturn figures for 2010/11 in respect of both the HRA and the Directorate General Fund for Period 7 (end of October 2010) and Period 8 (end of November 2010).

In attendance at the meeting, and responding to Members' queries and comments, were:-

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to be held on Monday, 17th January, 2011

- John Statham, Strategic Landlord Manager, Environment and Neighbourhoods.
- Richard Ellis, Head of Finance, Environment and Neighbourhoods.
- Stephen Boyle, Chief Regeneration Officer, Environment and Neighbourhoods.

In brief summary, the main points of discussion were:-

- Rent arrears and how the Council and ALMOs would respond in 2011/12, especially following the introduction of the new Universal Benefit.

The officers indicated that this was very much a current, live issue as the HRA situation was assessed. The ALMOs currently worked under a performance incentive regime in terms of rent collection on behalf of the Council. In addition, the Council was liaising with other local authorities regarding best practice methods, but it was accepted that this was an issue in the current economic climate, and ALMOs needed advice and support from the Council.

RESOLVED – That the report be received and noted.

76 Response to the Board's Inquiry into Integrated Offender Management

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods submitted a report responding to the recommendations contained in the Board's 2009/10 Inquiry into Integrated Offender Management.

Present at the meeting, and responding to Members' queries and comments, were:-

- Stephen Boyle, Chief Regeneration Officer, Environment and Neighbourhoods
- Jim Willson, Chief Officer (Drugs and Alcohol), Environment and Neighbourhoods

In brief summary, the main points of discussion were:-

- Recommendation 5 – That the Leeds Strategic IOM Board and the West Yorkshire Criminal Justice Board give consideration to the development of a local dedicated IOM Court in order to best utilise partnership resources.

Although this was being looked at and would, from a partnership perspective, be a useful move, the suggestion had not found favour

with the Crown Prosecution Service, principally on cost grounds it was believed.

- Recommendation 10 – That the Safer Leeds Partnership Executive leads on developing existing communication frameworks to help further raise the profile of offender management amongst local communities, etc.

It was noted that an update report would be submitted to the Board during 2011/12.

- Reference was also made to the Government's recent Green Paper, entitled 'Breaking the Cycle', which may impact on some of the Board's recommendations.

RESOLVED – That, subject to the above comments, the report be received and noted.

77 Monitoring Report on the Recommendations of the Worklessness Inquiry

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods submitted a report updating the Board regarding progress on the implementation of the recommendations contained in its 2009/10 Inquiry into Worklessness.

Present at the meeting, and responding to Members' queries and comments were:-

- Stephen Boyle, Chief Regeneration Officer, Environment and Neighbourhoods
- Sue Wynne, Head of Regeneration, Environment and Neighbourhoods

In brief summary, the main points of discussion were:-

- Recommendation 3 – Review of outreach provision and Jobshop services.

It was reported that this review should be completed by the end of January 2011. Some positive action had already taken place with a Jobshop at the new Harehills Joint Service Centre (JSC), the relocation of the Chapeltown Jobshop to the new Chapeltown JSC, and the establishment of a pilot outreach project at the Youth Service Centre in the Burmantofts and Richmond Hill Ward.

The point was made that, in all cases, Local Members needed to be kept informed of developments, and any positive news on the jobs front.

- It was hoped that the development of the Government's Single Work Programme would help in terms of encouraging all partners – the Department for Work and Pensions, Jobcentre Plus, Connexions, local colleges and private contractors – to work together in a co-ordinated manner to tackle worklessness.
- In respect of the above, the Council had recently been successful in obtaining ERDF (European Regional Development Fund) funding of £1m for the establishment of Employment Leeds, and an official launch was being planned.

RESOLVED –

- a) That the report be received and noted, and a further update report be submitted to the Board during 2011/12.
- b) That the Board place on record its recognition and appreciation for all the hard work and dedication of Sue Wynne in the performance of her duties.

78 The Future of Council Housing - Strategic Governance Board and Shared Service Centre

Further to Minute Nos. 59 and 60, 23rd November 2010, the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods submitted a report regarding the draft Terms of Reference of the proposed new Strategic Governance Board, and the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted the draft Terms of Reference for the Board's proposed Inquiry into the establishment of a Shared Service Centre.

RESOLVED –

- a) That the report be received and noted.
- b) That Board Members respond individually to the Board's Principal Scrutiny Adviser with any comments on the Terms of Reference of the Strategic Governance Board, and the Principal Scrutiny Adviser report any comments back to the Board.
- c) That the Terms of Reference for the Inquiry into the proposed Shared Service Centre be approved, and a Working Group be established to take forward the Inquiry, open to all Board Members, but to include the Chair and Councillor R Grahame.

(NB: Councillor G Hyde declared a personal interest in this item in his capacity as an ALMO Director.)

79 Work Programme

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted the Board's current work programme, updated to reflect decisions taken at previous meetings, together with minutes of the Executive Board meeting held on 15th December 2010, and a relevant extract from the Council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1st December 2010 to 31st March 2011.

The Board agreed:-

- a) to defer consideration of the proposed report on the Vision for Leeds, Leeds Strategic Plan and Business Plan priorities from 17th January to 14th February 2011;
- b) to bring forward the currently unscheduled report on vacant housing into the 2010/11 work programme, to include reference to assistance and encouragement for tenants to downsize from family-size accommodation if their circumstances have changed;
- c) to include an update report on the current refuse collection situation on 17th January 2011 agenda.

RESOLVED – That, subject to the above amendments, the Board's work programme be approved.

80 Dates and Times of Future Meetings

Monday, 17th January 2011.

Monday, 14th February 2011.

Monday, 14th March 2011.

Monday, 11th April 2011.

All at 10.00 am (Pre-Meetings at 9.30 am).

2.5 Communications about the changes began with a press release and radio interviews on 1st October, and following this, a newsletter and new calendars were mailed to residents. The first collections using the new collection routes took place on Monday 25th October.

3.0 Main Issues

3.1 *Communication of the Change*

3.1.1 The timing of the initial mail-out – to ensure that residents received information prior to their first collection, but not so far ahead that the information was forgotten – was important for the implementation of the routes. Whilst the vast majority of residents received this information ‘just in time’ as planned, a small minority received the information after the 25th October, which affected some collections in the first week.

3.1.2 However, the information received was, by and large, accurate. To date we have only found around 1,000 households (out of the approximately 330,000 in Leeds) where the wrong information was sent, and this was rectified within a few days of the error being noticed.

3.1.3 Officers decided to take a different approach to communications in the areas where student populations are high, i.e. Headingley, Hyde Park and Woodhouse and parts of Kirkstall. Instead of sending calendars in the mail to these areas, officers endeavoured to place stickers directly onto the bins. Residents were not directly sent calendars, just the newsletter and a notice asking them to contact us if they wanted a calendar.

3.1.4 A special hotline and email address was set up for Elected Members to escalate any problems as a priority. Collections and dates were available on Leeds.gov.uk website

3.2 *Collections*

3.2.1 Given the scale of the implementation, we expected that there would be at least a six week ‘bedding in’ period, to allow for familiarisation of the routes and to identify any anomalies. The section below breaks the period down into phases. These correspond broadly to:

- Weeks 1 to 3 – An initial 3 week bedding in period;
- Weeks 4 to 5 – a period of consolidation and stabilisation;
- Week 6 – a period of disruption due to severe weather;
- Weeks 7 to 8 – a period of further improvement and stabilisation up to Christmas;
- Week 9 – the Christmas period;
- Weeks 10 and 11 – Post-Christmas catch up.

3.3 *Weeks 1 to 3 (w/c 25th Oct to 8th Nov)*

3.3.1 The number of hours failing rose steadily across the first two weeks. This was in line with our expectations given the cycle of collections in the city. For example in the first few days, many residents had waited less than a week for a black bin collection (because of the change in day), and many residents with scheduled recycling collections had also recently had a collection. As we progressed through the first week, so the longer residents had waited for a collection, the heavier the loads, and therefore the more difficult the rounds. Because the green bin cycle is over a four

week period in most areas, this phenomena continued across the first three weeks of collections.

- 3.3.2 Whilst the level of failure rose initially, in week three the number of back-up vehicles was increased and collections stabilised. Localised collection issues were being resolved, such as the addition of a smaller vehicle into the Headingley area.
- 3.3.3 Prior to the implementation of the routes extra resources were draft into the contact centre to help with the expected increase in calls. This resource coped well in the first week, answering over 80% of calls offered. Contact from residents was significantly higher than usual from the outset, with around a third of calls from residents asking about their new collection date.
- 3.3.4 Weeks two and three saw call levels continue to rise which put additional strain on resources within Customer Services. Call answer rates fell to around 60% during this period, and extra staff were recruited to help with this increased demand.
- 3.3.5 By the end of week three, calls asking about collection days were falling, and calls reporting missed bins had reached a plateau. As with collections above, customer contact appeared to be stabilising.
- 3.3.6 However, challenges remained. The service was still experiencing some difficulties with high-rise collections and assisted collections, especially 'unofficial' ones which were not recorded on our central database, presented difficulties. Residents also began to report multiple misses of their collections, and measures were introduced to quickly escalate these where they were reported.
- 3.4 ***Weeks 4 to 5 (w/c 15th Nov to 22nd Nov)***
- 3.5 Week four showed a marked improvement on the previous week. The level of failure was falling and, with increased back up resource in place, a recovery plan to retrieve outstanding refuse collections more than 48 hours old was in place.
- 3.6 Customer contact continued to fall over this period, and answer rates improved to over 80%.
- 3.7 However, towards the end of this period the weather began to deteriorate. As early as the 27th November the severe weather was affecting collections, and the failure rate rose markedly.
- 3.8 ***Week 6 (w/c 29th Nov)***
- 3.9 Week 6 was characterised by the severe weather conditions. Whilst the service was affected in the early part of the week, weather conditions on the 2nd and 3rd December meant that the service was suspended.
- 3.10 The poor weather not only disrupted scheduled collections. They also significantly delayed our back-up plans, and curtailed our ability to deal with any issues that arose, e.g. households where collections had been missed for a number of weeks.
- 3.11 Given the severe weather the decision was taken to suspend garden waste collections, to allow this resource to be used to concentrate on black and green bin collections. A press release was issued to the media on Tuesday 30th November.
- 3.12 Very few customer contacts were received during this period reflecting customers understanding of the disruption caused by the weather.

- 3.13 ***Week 7 to 8 (w/c 6th Dec to 13th Dec)***
- 3.14 Snow and ice continued to affect the collection service into week seven. Whilst many of the major routes had thawed, many minor routes remained difficult to access and the level of failure stayed stubbornly high.
- 3.15 Weather conditions continued to be challenging across the period with the severe cold causing delays to the vehicles in the mornings, and icy pavements slowing productivity for the crews.
- 3.16 However, as the thaw continued, the level of failure fell significantly.
- 3.17 As the weather improved the number of calls to customer services increased markedly. This was due to the number of failures due to poor weather in the previous week, and customers being concerned that collections did not fail for two weeks in a row, given the proximity of Christmas.
- 3.18 ***Week 9 (w/c 19th Dec)***
- 3.19 The first collections to the amended Christmas schedule began on Sunday 19th December.
- 3.20 A letter to residents advising of Christmas collection schedule was distributed via Royal Mail in w/c 13th December. Unfortunately, even though all deadlines were met for Royal Mail distribution, some residents received the letter later than their first rescheduled collection day.
- 3.21 The non-arrival of letters meant that the service had to put in place contingency arrangements to back-up collections where possible. Crews were instructed to complete to the Christmas timetable and, if they finished early because of low presentation, to revert to the previous day's collections. Where possible collection crews also 'pulled out' bins from properties to ensure a collection was made.
- 3.22 As the week progressed, and letters arrived with customers so presentation increased.
- 3.23 Customer contact in week 9 was predictably very high, given the failure of Christmas collection letters to arrive on time, and increased anxiety over missed collections so close to Christmas.
- 3.24 ***Week 10 to 11 (w/c 26th Dec to 3rd Jan)***
- 3.25 The last two weeks have seen a period of recovery since Christmas. The failure of some letters to arrive meant that higher than normal levels of waste were presented in the week following Christmas. Poor weather on several days over the period also continued to have an impact with ice, and some further snow, causing some disruption.
- 3.26 Increased resources have been deployed to clear the backlog, including extra collection staff and a one-off collection on Sunday 9th January to recover known misses, primarily from Friday and Saturday collections on the 7th and 8th.

3.27 The level of customer contact has fallen over the last two weeks, reflecting an improving position in terms of recovery collections. The further resources in the contact centre continue to help to deal with calls, but also to make sure that emails are responded to in a timely manner.

4.0 Looking Ahead

4.1.1 Collections

- 4.2 A project team, including the Trade Unions and working with Crews, have completed a review of collection routes in the Central Region (13 rounds). This identified streets or sets of properties that need to be removed from the daily collection schedule onto an additional scheduled vehicle, with further additional scheduled support on a Monday and Friday. We implemented these revised rounds in week commencing 20th December. No collection schedules will change from the residents' point of view.
- 4.3 Where there are indications that crew performance may be an issue crews are being jointly questioned by the Trade Unions and senior managers through a dedicated 'performance team'. This is resulting in improvements, but will be closely monitored and further action taken if required.
- 4.4 A decision to stand down garden waste collections until January was made before Christmas. This allowed extra resource to ensure that collections were made in the run up to the Christmas period and the period following, and to deal with any weather related disruption. A press release was issued on 17th December.
- 4.5 Regular two-way communications with the crews throughout the process of implementation have taken place. These have flagged up several areas where improvements could be made, including improving the maps provided and providing A-Z lists of routes (rather than in 'run order'). We have taken these suggestions on board and implemented them fully.
- 4.6 The familiarisation of crews with the routes has obviously been one of the biggest challenges in implementation. The level of 'unofficial' wheel-outs and the number of properties where collection arrangements are not clear, or that are difficult to find, has been higher than expected.
- 4.7 The recovery of any long-standing collection issues and collections from vulnerable people ('wheel-outs') continue to be our priority. All reported missed wheel-outs are added as a task to the crews' sheets, and checked that they are recorded on our central database.
- 4.8 Two dedicated crews are in place to recover any collections that have had more than two scheduled collections missed. Any collections missed regularly are escalated to the manager and communicated to the crew to ensure that they are collected on the next scheduled collection day.
- 4.9 Garden Waste collections will restart in week commencing 17th January.

5.0 Conclusions

- 5.1 The redesign of Leeds refuse and recycling collection routes is the largest change to refuse and recycling services in Leeds for at least 10 years. Whilst we fully expected some teething problems, caused by familiarity issues and anomalies in the routes, it is clear that these have not been resolved as quickly as we would have expected. However, the back-up arrangements now in place are resulting in most missed collections being recovered within 24 hours.
- 5.2 The report above shows that, prior to the onset of severe weather, the service was improving. We originally estimated that, because of shift patterns and cycles of collections, there would be a six week period of implementation and familiarisation. Unfortunately, the fifth and sixth weeks coincided with a period of severe weather which significantly affected collections, and had a knock-on effect on back-up arrangements.
- 5.3 The steps we are now taking, in terms of reviewing the routes, and dealing with any performance issues, will lead to an improvement in services as we continue into the year ahead.

6.0 Recommendations

- 6.1 That Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods) note the contents of this report.

7.0 Background Papers

- 7.1 None



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Tel:2474557

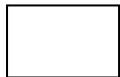
Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods)

Date: 17th January 2011

Subject: Inquiry to Review Gypsies & Travellers Site Provision within Leeds – Draft Report

Electoral Wards Affected: All



Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods) has now completed its inquiry to review gypsies and travellers site provision within Leeds. The Board is now in a position to report on its findings and its conclusions and recommendations resulting from the evidence gathered.
- 1.2 A copy of the draft final report along with a summary of the evidence considered during the inquiry will be circulated shortly for consideration at today's meeting.

2.0 Consultation

- 2.1 Scrutiny Board Procedure Rule 14.2 states that "where a Scrutiny Board is considering making specific recommendations it shall invite advice from the appropriate Director(s) prior to finalising its recommendations. The detail of that advice shall be reported to the Scrutiny Board and considered before the report is finalised. The Director shall consult with the appropriate Executive Member before providing any such advice."
- 2.2 The appropriate Directors have been consulted and any comments or advice that is received will be presented to the Board meeting today.

3.0 Recommendations

3.1 The Board is requested to:-

- (i) Agree the Board's final report and recommendations.
- (ii) Request that a formal response to the recommendations is produced in line with normal procedures for scrutiny inquiry reports as set out in Scrutiny Procedure Rule 15.1.



Leeds
CITY COUNCIL

Review of Gypsies and Travellers Site Provision within Leeds

Scrutiny Inquiry Report

Evidence



Introduction

1. We were asked in September 2010 by the Executive Board Member with portfolio responsibility for Neighbourhoods and Housing to undertake an inquiry to review the Council's policy concerning gypsies and travellers site provision within Leeds. This will be the third scrutiny inquiry the Council has conducted
2. Since the last Scrutiny Board inquiry in 2004/05 there continued to be a high number of unauthorised encampments within Leeds particularly during the summer months. Some of these encampments cause considerable local difficulties both in terms of management and impact on local events, the environment and the community as a whole.
3. At the same time the Council and other agencies continue to incur significant costs in what are often cyclical evictions of gypsies and travellers from one unauthorised encampment to the next.
4. We welcomed the opportunity to review the Council's policy with regard to gypsies and travellers site provision within Leeds and have identified a number of positive proposals that if accepted could contribute significantly to easing the current cycle of evictions of gypsies and travellers from unauthorised sites within Leeds.
5. However, we undertook this inquiry without knowledge of the Government's intentions as to whether it will announce further powers to local authorities and the police in relation to unauthorised encampments or issue guidance "in favour" of gypsies and travellers. Any such announcement will need to be taken account of and could affect the Council's legal position and the recommendations contained in our report.
6. We are very grateful to everyone who gave their time to participate in this inquiry and for their commitment in helping us to understand and review this matter.

Scope of the Inquiry

7. At its meeting on 13th September 2010, the Board agreed to undertake an Inquiry into the Council's policy on gypsies and travellers and to consider
 - the Council's approach to tackling unauthorised encampments and the provision of permanent sites for gypsies and travellers within Leeds.
 - whether provision is required and its likely effect upon unauthorised encampments
 - what criteria might be applied in the event that a need is

Evidence



identified for selecting a site or sites.

8. We established a working group which met on several occasions and received evidence on the
- national and local position.
 - legal framework.
 - new Government initiatives that are being proposed that may support or encourage the Board to recommend a particular course of action.
 - Council's current policy on providing sites for gypsies and travellers.
 - extent and nature of unauthorised encampments in Leeds and the region
 - relevant housing, planning and equality legislation.
 - social, economic and environmental impact of unauthorised and authorised encampments on local communities.
 - Council's policy on tackling unauthorised encampments on its land.
 - need to see how other authorities and the region deal with the issue of unauthorised encampments.
 - direct and indirect costs of removing unauthorised encampments of gypsies and travellers within the city compared with the full capital and revenue costs of providing a permanent site or sites.
 - need to identify whether a distinction can be made

between transient gypsies and travellers and those who remain within Leeds throughout the year.

- the need to determine a view if authorised sites are proved to be more cost effective than undertaking continued enforcement action as to whether a number of smaller permanent sites would be more appropriate than a single large site.

Evidence



Current Permanent Site Provision for Gypsies and Travellers

9. We were advised that since the repeal of the Caravan Sites Act 1968 there is no duty on local authorities to provide sites for gypsies and travellers.
10. The Council has one site for gypsies and travellers at Cottingley Springs which provides 41 pitches. It is located in Farnley and Wortley Ward. This site is full based on the current configuration and turnover is low with most families making their long-term home at the site. There is a waiting list.
11. There is no transit site in Leeds for gypsies and travellers who are passing through Leeds and need to stay for a few days or overnight. They therefore choose to make unauthorised encampments.
12. We were informed that the Housing Act 2004 places a duty on local authorities to carry out an assessment of the accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers, travelling show people and new age travellers and to make reasonable provision for these groups through the planning process. This duty is commensurate with the obligation placed on local authorities to consider and make reasonable provision of housing for the settled population.
13. We were advised that the last assessment of the accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers was carried out in May 2008 with the publication of the West Yorkshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA). This report was commissioned by the West Yorkshire Housing Partnership and the work undertaken by the Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research at Sheffield Hallam University. It concluded that there was unmet housing need across the sub-region and that Leeds needed a further 48 pitches for gypsies and travellers. It was proposed that these be made available between 2008 and 2015.
14. Whilst this report was never adopted by this authority reference is made to it in the Council's Core Planning and Housing Strategies and was a useful starting point for discussion as to what the unmet demand might currently be.
- ### **Unauthorised Encampments**
15. We spent a considerable amount of time identifying the scale of the problem with regard to unauthorised encampments. Unauthorised encampments are defined as the encampment of

Evidence

caravans and/or other vehicles on land without the landowner or occupier's consent and constituting trespass. Unauthorised encampments range from a couple of vehicles to groups of caravans.

16. From April 2010 to 5th October 2010 there have been 54 encampments in Leeds. 42 of these have been on council owned land and the remaining 12 on privately owned land. Appendix 1 to this report lists in more detail the unauthorised encampments since April 2010 giving details on exact site and ward, and whether court action or police action was used in order to remove the encampment.

17. The table below illustrates the number of encampments experienced within Leeds over the past 5 years.

Year	Public	Private	Total No Encampments	Number of Caravans
09/10	39	33	72 (-54)	614
Avg Days to Resolve	12	24.78		
08/09	69	57	126 (+67)	1164
Avg Days to Resolve	7.1	9.3		
07/08	38	21	59 (+8)	360
Avg Days to Resolve	10.3	16.4		
06/07	27	24	51 (+9)	370
Avg Days to Resolve	12.7	24.5		
05/06	28	14	42	Figures Not available
Avg Days to Resolve	16.9	16	350	2508

18. We were advised that the Council was not able to simply eject travellers, their caravans and other vehicles from Council owned land. The Council, before any other considerations, was obliged to undertake welfare assessments to understand better the housing, medical, educational and other needs of the families involved. Following this assessment the Council must consider whether to immediately evict, whether to tolerate the encampment or part of it and for how long, and finally must consider whether an alternative site can be identified. In order to remove the gypsies and travellers, the Council was required to apply for a court order.

19. In some cases the gypsies and travellers move on within a short period of time without the Council having obtained a court order. When court proceedings are taken it is normal for the gypsies and travellers to move on as soon as a court order was obtained. However in a number of cases where possession proceedings had been instituted, they had sought to defend the claim as they were legally entitled to do by citing public law defences.

20. Since April 2010 until 5th October 2010 the Council has proceeded to court 27 times in order to seek possession of land. The gypsies and

Evidence



travellers have defended the claim on three occasions and whilst the Council had been successful in gaining possession of the land each time, defence action had led to longer encampments and therefore a greater impact on the local environment and community.

21. In the same period April 2010 until 5th October 2010 we understand the West Yorkshire Police have used their powers under section 61 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (CJPOA) on 6 occasions. Section 61 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 (power of the Police to direct persons to leave land and remove vehicles in circumstances where there are more than 6 vehicles on land or persons are causing damage/disruption); Section 62(A) of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 (power of the Police to direct persons to leave land where there is available accommodation for caravans on a relevant caravan site. This power cannot be used as there are no suitable pitches available).
22. Although there is a protocol concerning the use of section 61 between the Council and West Yorkshire Police, this power can only be exercised by the Police in specific circumstances. Without alternative sites to direct travellers to, the Police are often reluctant to use their powers. Additionally the Police are mindful of the potential impact in terms of civil disturbance of moving by force a large encampment and will also need to consider the potential safeguarding issues arising from arresting parents who refuse to leave the site. It should be noted that it is only in Leeds that section 61 tends to be used by West Yorkshire Police. Force policy is to avoid the use of this power but in Leeds it has been seen as a relevant tactical tool in certain situations. (See recommendation 11)
23. The legal and departmental costs for the period between 2003 to 2010 are estimated to be over £1,994,000. The table below gives a breakdown over this period. These costs do not include those of the West Yorkshire Police which we believe will be substantial.

Evidence

Costs of Unauthorised Encampments

	Total costs £	of which, Legal costs £
2003/04	143,560	-
2004/05	232,518	-
2005/06	240,885	24,837
2006/07	135,091	11,203
2007/08	259,806	15,504
2008/09	266,353	42,670
2009/10	335,995	15,073
2010/11	329,853*	*estimated cost to date
Total 2003-2010	1,944,061	

24. We have seen encampments this summer 2010 on other high profile sites where community events are scheduled: for example at Fearnville Leisure Centre where the Gipton Gala was due to take place and at Garforth where similarly the Garforth Gala had been arranged for the weekend after the Travellers arrived. These particular encampments caused a great deal of local anxiety and anger as people living in the area felt that their long established community events were threatened by the presence of encampments. We know that these encampments do have an impact on community cohesion.

25. We have also been informed that this summer the size of encampments in some instances being significantly

larger than in previous years.

At the encampment at Fearnville, there were over 57 caravans recorded at one stage and anecdotal evidence that there were for short periods even more present. The size of encampments increases community tensions and the environmental impact and also makes managing the impact of the site far more difficult.

Additionally it makes it less likely that the police are able to use their powers under the CJPOA as controlling any eviction becomes difficult. The police would need to deploy significant resources and would have concerns for the safeguarding of children should their parents be arrested as part of the eviction.

26. Officers have reported to us some instances where unauthorised encampments led to significant environmental damage. The Council's Highways and Environmental Enforcement team work with the Gypsy and Traveller team to monitor activity such as fly-tipping at or near encampments and in some instances this monitoring has led to prosecutions. The Highways and Environmental Enforcement team does not record ethnicity in relation to successful prosecutions and often there is no evidence as to who has undertaken such activity when in close proximity to

Evidence



encampments. However, during 2010 there have been 5 successful prosecutions for fly-tipping related to encampments or the immediate locality and there are several cases still being processed. The fly-tipping ranges from the unsightly through to dangerous tipping of asbestos waste.

27. Unauthorised encampments also often generate 'household' rubbish and other waste, including human and horse waste. In some instances, the travellers are tidy and little if any waste needs clearing when they leave. In other instances, there is significant cost in terms of both resources required and amount of waste generated at sites. At Spinkwell Lane recreation ground the cleaning of the site alone cost nearly £53,000 and it is not uncommon for costs into thousands of pounds which relate to cleaning of the sites once vacated. While the Council will provide skips and portaloos where travellers are tolerated, or where the court process will be lengthy, it can still be difficult to contain the impact on the environment in such instances. The impact of rubbish and human waste on the locality causes a great deal of anger and community tension especially when the encampment is on a site normally used for recreational activity.

28. We heard that along with the costs of cleaning up unauthorised sites, there are other associated costs. For example, in many cases the authority will either repair security or introduce new security measures to try and prevent further occupation. There have been examples of sports fields having to be re-sown and drained following damage by vehicles: Copperfields and Sprinkwell Lane recreation ground were examples of where this occurred.

29. There are also unquantifiable costs to specific local communities where unauthorised encampments have occurred. For example, East Leeds ARL club being unable to play games, and undertake training sessions, for young people, due to the encampment and damage at Copperfields in 2009. Other examples would be encampments in parks which created a deterrent to people utilising the area for social activity.

30. It is entirely usual for travellers to pass through Leeds, unauthorised encampments can, and do, occur at any time during the year but there is always a concentration during the summer months – the 'travelling season' with this

Evidence



increasing in conjunction with horse fairs and other events.

31. However, we know that there are approximately twelve families who tend to remain in the Leeds area throughout the year. The families are closely related to each other and officers approximate that there are 25 adults with 38 children in these groups and between 20 and 25 caravans. Additionally there are 6 families who have doubled- up with relations at Cottingley Springs. Should these arrangements break-down, then this group of 16 adults and 12 children would also be likely to remain travelling within the Leeds area as they have historically done.
32. From April 2010 to 5th October 2010 these twelve 'Leeds' families have been present on just over half of all unauthorised encampments (30 of the 54), including all the larger encampments
33. We understand that three of these local families who are currently travelling together are the families who have defended proceedings repeatedly. One of these families was part of the family on the Spinkwell Lane encampment. They instruct the same local solicitors who have developed a specialism in gypsies and travellers law.
34. We took the view looking at the overall picture that the number of unauthorised encampments in Leeds continues to remain high. Whilst court proceedings continue to be taken by the Council to remove these unauthorised encampments specific families are defending proceedings repeatedly which result in further costs to the Council. In addition we have encampments on high profile sites with the numbers of families and caravans increasing in size. This creates a great deal of anger and community tension especially when the encampment is on a site normally used for recreational activity.
35. We have heard from GATE and representatives from the road side gypsies that a key reason for unauthorised encampments is the lack of permanent sites in the city.
36. We know that further permanent sites will not eradicate unauthorised encampments and incidents of unauthorised encampments will still require robust and co-ordinated management.
37. However, we consider the current policy of the Council in moving what are regarded as "Leeds" gypsies and travellers around the city from one unauthorised encampment to the next to be probably

Evidence



untenable and that a new approach must be developed to try and address this issue. This was the view of a number of Members who gave evidence to the Board and some of our own Board Members

38. It is scrutiny's view that as a first step in changing the Council's approach to this problem Leeds could establish negotiated stopping sites like Cheshire Council West, Bristol and Chester Council. We were told about Cheshire Council West's Good Neighbourhood Code that gypsies and travellers must sign up to when using these sites. The negotiated stopping sites are for very short term stays of a few days to a few weeks. They are located in Cheshire on unused bus lanes or roads (hard standing) away from residential properties. Cheshire Council provided a temporary water supply, toilets and collect refuse and these services are paid for by the gypsies and travellers using the stopping site. Cheshire Council West also provides free vouchers to the gypsies and travellers to enable them to use shower facilities at the local Sports Centre.
39. This approach in our view would ease the pressure on the number of unauthorised encampments. It would also be a useful tool to assist enforcement, as this would

allow the Police to take advantage of Section 62A of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994. The police would be able to direct them to a suitable pitch. Failure to comply would be an arrestable offence and vehicles could be seized and removed. The police would then have to apply to the magistrates Court for an order if the gypsies and travellers failed to leave in accordance with the direction. In addition we were advised by Cheshire West that this approach has improved relationships between gypsies and travellers, the local community and elected members and has also improved intelligence regarding the dynamics and make up of gypsy and traveller families. We noted that this power is available where there is a suitable pitch on a relevant caravan site which is situated in the Council's area. However, we also noted that it will depend on the nature of any transit site whether the pitch is "suitable" and so whether this power can be used by the police.

40. If this was successful the Council might then consider the development of one or two permanent transit sites where gypsies and travellers could spend up to 13 weeks.
41. We are aware that the development of negotiated stopping sites and transit sites

Evidence



would not be without difficulties. We are aware of the mixed experiences of some authorities where transit sites have become, by default, permanent sites. The Environment and Neighbourhoods Directorate would have to ensure that sites were properly managed and all appropriate legal safeguards established prior to operation. These sites by their transitory nature do carry a high resource implication, notably for enforcement and through the need to ensure site security, to ensure that the utilities on site are not abused and that there are adequate staffing resources in place to manage this. Clearly we are concerned at the pressures on the Council's budget at the present.

42. We appreciate that there will be difficulties in identifying suitable locations for negotiated stopping sites and transit sites and that they do require planning consent and public consultation.
43. It would necessitate the Council being much more pro active and positive in explaining to the media and communities why it was looking at a new direction in trying to deal with this continuing problem.
44. However, this approach we believe could have a positive effect in helping to build on relationships once negotiated

stopping sites and transit sites had been introduced as the first step in identifying land for small gypsy and traveller permanent sites in the city.

45. National policy and guidance has not, and probably cannot, create or secure locally sustainable solutions. However, locally agreed solutions are likely to be supported by anticipated national 'light touch' policy and are more likely to result in sustainable local cohesion, although at the time of producing this report the full details and proposals behind this have not yet been issued by the Government.

Recommendation 1

That the Executive Board consider providing negotiated stopping sites and transit sites for gypsies and travellers in Leeds for very short term encampments and commission the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods to undertake further work with a view to introducing a pilot scheme and reporting back to the Executive Board.

"Leeds Families" Gypsies and Travellers

46. We then referred to the twelve families who tend to remain in the Leeds area throughout the

Evidence



year. We know that from April 2010 to date these twelve 'Leeds' families have been present on just over half of all unauthorised encampments (30 of the 54), including all the larger encampments.

47. We support the principle of trying to identify a number of additional pitches for the 12 "Leeds families" (25 caravans) along with the introduction of negotiated stopping sites and transit sites.

48. We noted that GATE and the majority of roadside gypsies and travellers favour the establishment of small permanent sites in the city of between 4 to 8 caravans.

49. We recognised that identifying small suitable permanent sites for gypsies and travellers in the city will be difficult and expensive to achieve. It would also require the development of a criteria that could be applied in the event that a need is identified for selecting a site or sites.

Recommendation 2

That the Executive Board consider the principle of providing an additional 25 permanent pitches for 25 caravans in the city to accommodate "Leeds families" of gypsies and travellers and request the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods to undertake further work based on national guidance to identify costs, and sources of funding and to develop a criteria for consulting and identifying suitable sites during operation of the pilot in recommendation 1.

West Yorkshire and City Region Context

50. We noted that of the five West Yorkshire authorities Wakefield, Bradford and Leeds have permanent provision for Gypsy and Traveller families. Bradford has 47 pitches over two sites and Wakefield has 38 pitches and one emergency pitch.

51. Calderdale and Kirklees have no provision and report very few unauthorised encampments. Wakefield confirmed that they had 48 unauthorised encampments during 2009/2010 with roughly half of these occurring on public land. Wakefield has been looking to identify new sites but have met considerable opposition to any proposed locations. None of

Evidence



the West Yorkshire authorities have transit provision.

currently a waiting list of 18 applicants.

52. We are strongly of the view that any such development by Leeds in providing additional provision for gypsies and travellers in terms of both recommendations 1 and 2 would have to be done as part of the wider City Region picture.

54. We learned that turnover at Cottingley Springs is very infrequent and it is not uncommon for long periods of time to pass with no vacancies occurring.

55. We were surprised to learn that each pitch can accommodate 3 or 4 caravans and on average there are three caravans to each pitch. The site is landscaped and is designed in a cul-de-sac style with one entrance/exit for vehicles. There is CCTV at the entrance to the site. Each pitch contains a brick built utility facility comprising of a kitchen and a bathroom. On Site B, this facility also includes a living area. Cottingley Springs B site was refurbished through a government grant to meet the growing needs of the families living on site. Historically the plots were very small and could not provide families with the necessary space to live comfortably. After a large redevelopment programme, the plot sizes were increased and additional outside green space was provided. Site A has remained the same since being built due to the limitation in space although a modernisation programme has been completed for internal works, again funded by grant from central government.

Recommendation 3

That subject to recommendations 1 and 2 the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods seeks to develop this pilot in the context of a wider strategic approach through the City Region and other appropriate bodies.

Cottingley Springs Site

53. A number of us visited the Cottingley Springs site during our inquiry. This one permanent site is located in the Farnley & Wortley ward. The site, which is split into two areas, contains a total of 41 pitches: 20 in Site A and 21 at Site B. Historically the site was larger: at one point there were 55 pitches. However the site was very difficult to manage and there were several unoccupied pitches due to both the condition of the site and some tensions between residents. The site is fully occupied on its current configuration. There is

Evidence



56. The cost of running Cottingley Springs is outlined in Appendix 2 which shows costs over the past 8 years. The weekly rental cost for a pitch at Cottingley Springs is currently £98.12 with an additional charge of £23.76 for each additional caravan. This charge has been effective since April 2007. Housing benefit can be claimed for the rental charge. In 2009/2010 £233,254 was received as income (largely rents) and it is estimated that this will be around £254,000 in 2010/11.

57. We were advised that historically there have been problems between families living at Cottingley Springs and with the behaviour of individuals but this situation had improved in recent years. Although eviction remains an option as part of the license agreement, the service works hard to prevent behaviour escalating to the point of taking action to gain possession of the pitch. The last eviction of a family from Cottingley Springs we understand was in 2000.

58. We were informed that as a consequence of that eviction some of the Leeds gypsies and travellers would not wish to go to Cottingley Springs. We understand that some of the Cottingley Springs residents would also not wish to see those families return to this site.

59. However, we consider that there could be better use made of the existing location that would enable the provision of several additional caravans.

60. The average costs of providing a pitch is set out in Appendix 3.

61. We understand that the potential cost of increasing pitch provision at the council's Cottingley Springs site would be in the order of £92,802 per unit. A report by Corporate Property Management dated 20th December 2010 is attached as Appendix 4 which provides the details.

Recommendation 4

That irrespective of recommendations 1 and 2 the Executive Board commission a review of the Cottingley Springs site to ascertain whether better use of the site could be made that would allow the provision of additional pitches and identify how this could be funded by January 2012.

62. During our deliberations we received a copy of the licence agreement in use at Cottingley Springs. We thought it appropriate for this to be reviewed and updated where necessary.

Evidence



Recommendation 5

That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods with the Chief Officer Legal Licensing and Registration undertake a review of the current licence in use at Cottingley Springs site to update it and incorporate current legislative changes (including the provisions of the Mobile Homes Act 1983 in future tenancy agreements).

63. We believe that the Council should develop and adopt a Good Neighbourhood Code as Cheshire West and Bristol have done which requires all gypsies and travellers using any negotiated stopping site, transit site or permanent site operated by the Council to sign up to.

Recommendation 6

That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods Development and adopt a Good Neighbourhood Code which would operate alongside any licence or tenancy agreement which would require all gypsies and travellers using sites operated by the Council to sign up to before being allowed to use these facilities.

64. While the site has improved in terms of behaviour and fewer incidents it is nevertheless the case that at times the residents' unwillingness to engage with the authorities to tackle anti-social behaviour does limit improvements to the management of the site. For example, the service does on occasion receive complaints from neighbouring landowners and sees evidence of vandalism but struggles to get any witness to come forward.

65. We understand that there are informal discussions with residents and an emerging residents group.

66. We believe that this is an area where a stronger residents group with formal meetings would potentially improve management of the site and indeed improve the living conditions of the residents. It could also help to engage more with the local community.

Recommendation 7

That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods continues to develop a strong residents group on the Cottingley Springs site that could be the catalyst to engage more with the local community and that this formal arrangement should be established by June 2011.

Private Sites

67. We heard from a Member representing the Morley Borough Independents that planning approval had recently been granted for 3 permanent caravans on a private site in Gildersome without objection from the community.
68. We are aware of 'lease and self build' schemes which are being worked up in other local authorities and that 'social purpose' management is increasingly evident across the country. There are a number of families in Leeds, to GATE's knowledge, who have the will and resources to buy their own land and build sites given the advice and support of the local planning authority.
69. We accept that appropriately sited new private pitches can significantly contribute to local cohesion and citizenship particularly when early dialogue with local settled communities is facilitated. We noted research conducted by JRF (Richardson 2007) that illustrated the way in which initial local opposition to new sites rapidly declines once small sites are established and local relationships begin to form.

Recommendation 8

That in accordance with the Local Development Framework Policy the Acting Director of City Development continue to encourage and support development of private gypsy and traveller site provision in the city which are appropriate, in keeping with the area and meet the necessary planning requirements.

Education and Health Issues

70. We recognised early in our deliberations that the Council has a duty to those who are homeless and in priority need. Some of those who are homeless may have a cultural aversion to living in traditional bricks and mortar type accommodation which will need to be taken in to account when considering an offer of suitable accommodation. We acknowledged that Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers both fall within an ethnic group and are covered by the Equality Act 2010, which continues the principles of, and supersedes, the Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended).
71. We recognised the potential vulnerability of travellers as a group and the endangerment of their cultural lifestyle. We know that as a cultural group gypsies

Evidence



and travellers have an earlier mortality rate than most groups and that education and health is poor.

72. We received information from the Gypsy Roma Traveller Achievement Service which provides support to the children living at Cottingley Springs including transport to mainstream schools and a mobile nursery van.

73. We were concerned that some gypsy and traveller girls around aged 11 or 12 years of age seem to cease main stream education as they leave primary school and move to home school. We were assured by GATE and the road side gypsies themselves that this was no longer the case. We remain unconvinced and would recommend that some further work be undertaken in this respect.

Recommendation 9

That the Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) be asked to undertake a specific investigation on the national and local position of gypsy and traveller girls school attendance and educational achievements at 11 years and above.

74. We were surprised to learn that historically there were outreach services provided by NHS

Leeds but these have now been withdrawn.

Recommendation 10

That the Primary Care Trust and Director of Children's Services be asked to submit a report to Scrutiny Board (Health) on the services that have been withdrawn from gypsies and travellers and the alternative arrangements that have been instigated to protect this vulnerable group.

75. That with regard to section 61 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 and the joint protocol between the West Yorkshire Police and the Council on its use we were concerned that this was not always applied uniformly across the force and that on occasion local ward members were not notified in accordance with that protocol.

Recommendation 11

That the West Yorkshire Police be asked to ensure that the protocol between the Police and the Council is applied uniformly by Divisional Commanders across the city and that ward members are always informed of unauthorised encampments and when this power is to be used.

Evidence



Information Pack

76. We were informed by some residents that they would have found an information pack useful where gypsies and travellers make unauthorised encampments on private land.

Recommendation 12

That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods be asked to review and expand the information pack for use by residents and Members where unauthorised encampments occur on private land.

77. We note that a positive approach to our review would reduce the risk of legal challenge in the courts by recognising the unmet demand from gypsies and travellers for site provision and implementing a change in policy that in the long term would reduce the number of unauthorised encampments by at least a half.

78. We have identified that the Council has spent over £1.988,000 over several years in moving gypsies and travellers from unauthorised encampments in the city whilst not taking advantage of Government grants to provide the necessary sites. These grants are currently not available. This expenditure will

continue if changes are not made to the present policy.

79. Clearly the costs of introducing negotiated stopping sites, transit sites for very short term encampments and permanent small sites for gypsies and travellers will be expensive and will need to be fully costed.

80. As with all policy decisions the allocation of limited financial resources will need to be considered. The Executive Board will need to balance the demand for social housing and a growing waiting list against the needs of a small transient gypsy and traveller community.

81. We do feel that it is important, before the Executive Board Member or the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods decide on the best course of action as a result of our inquiry that they do contact the appropriate Government Department for clarification of their intentions or proposals for dealing with gypsies and travellers and also guidance that will be issued to the Planning Inspectorate as to who to deal with planning appeals for sites identified as having potential for site provision.

82. Some of our comments and conclusions drawn in the report and the emphasis put on some of them are not necessarily

Evidence



supported by all Members of the Board. This should be borne in mind when decisions are reached.

83. We would also suggest that clarification is sought from the Acting Director of City Development and from the Government on the potential impact or otherwise, the formation of Neighbourhood plans could have if the local view was to make comment about the provision of gypsy and traveller sites in either a positive or negative light.

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Evidence



Monitoring arrangements

Standard arrangements for monitoring the outcome of the Board's recommendations will apply.

The decision-makers to whom the recommendations are addressed will be asked to submit a formal response to the recommendations, including an action plan and timetable, normally within two months.

Following this the Scrutiny Board will determine any further detailed monitoring, over and above the standard quarterly monitoring of all scrutiny recommendations.

Reports and Publications Submitted

Report of the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods on the current situation regarding unauthorised encampments compared with the Scrutiny Board inquiry held in 2004/05

Inquiry Report of Scrutiny Board (Neighbourhoods and Housing) on gypsy and travellers sites published in April 2005

Report of the Scrutiny Support Manager to Executive Board on 18 May 2005 concerning recommendations 1 and 2 of the Board's final inquiry report

Report of the Local Government Association, Gypsy and Traveller Task Group, June 2006

Report of the Chief Officer Legal Licensing and Registration setting out the legal background to unauthorised encampments and the Council's legal obligations and powers - 20 October 2010

Report of the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods setting out current position regarding unauthorised sites, the position with permanent provision and legal position in relation to the accommodation needs of the travelling community - 20 October 2010

Cottingley Springs Update - 13 October 2010

Map of the sites at Cottingley Springs and land surrounding the sites owned by the Council

Map showing unauthorised encampments in the last 12 months

Information about Leeds Gypsy and Traveller Exchange (GATE) including their Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association

Evidence



Reports and Publications Submitted (continued)

Confidential joint report of the Chief Officer Legal Licensing and Registration and the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods considered by Leader Management Team on 15 July 2010

Paper providing information on the average number of caravans per residential pitch across the Leeds City Region and other regions in the country

Report of the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods providing additional information requested by the Scrutiny Board relating to further information requested by the Board including unauthorised encampments in Leeds since 2007-15 November 2010

Department of Communities and Local Government circular designing gypsy and traveller sites - May 2008

A briefing note submitted by the Chief Officer Legal Licensing and Registration concerning legal costs of unauthorised encampments and application for Costs order

Gypsy Roma Traveller data of pupils in school provided by the Manager of the Gypsy Roma Traveller Achievement Service, November 2010

National Association of Teachers and Travellers and other Professions (NATT) final report and impact study 2009/10 provided by the Director of Equality and Entitlement, Education Leeds, Final report and impact study (2009 -10)

Improving the outcomes for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils and the research brief provided by the Department for Education - October 2010

Briefing note by the Chief Officer Legal Licensing and Registration on a legal case Manchester City Council V Pinnock

Briefing note by the Chief Officer Legal Licensing and Registration Cottingley Springs licence agreement

Report of the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods on costings for new pitches at Cottingley Springs and information from other Authorities in the South East and South West of the country regarding the provision of pitches and consultation

Briefing note by the Chief Officer Legal Licensing and Registration on the current unauthorised encampment on private land

Information from GATE and Written submission by Councillor M Dobson

Press cuttings on gypsies and travellers for the period April to December 2010 (18 positive cuttings, 34 negative, and 24 neutral)

Evidence



Dates of Scrutiny

13 September 2010, Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods)
29 September 2010, Gypsies and Travellers Working Group
11 October 2010, Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods) – Terms of Reference
20 October 2010, Gypsies and Travellers Working Group
1 November 2010, Gypsies and Travellers Working Group
8 November 2010, Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods)
15 November 2010, Gypsies and Travellers Working Group
29 November 2010, Gypsies and Travellers Working Group
2 December 2010, Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods)
13 December 2010, Gypsies and Travellers Working Group
6 January 2011, Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods)
17 January 2011, Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods)

A number of Members visited Cottingley Springs site during the course of the Board's inquiry

Witnesses Heard

Cllr Peter Gruen, Executive Board Member for Neighbourhoods and Housing
Cllr John Leslie Carter, Conservative Group Spokesperson
Councillor David Blackburn, Green Party Spokesperson
Councillor Ralph Pryke, Liberal Democrat Group Spokesperson
Councillor Tom Leadley, Morley Borough Independents Spokesperson
Chief Superintendent Mark Milson, West Yorkshire Police Divisional Commander (City & Holbeck)
Chief Inspector Jim McNeil, West Yorkshire Police, Leeds Community Safety
PC 3218 David Stephens, West Yorkshire Police, Leeds Community Safety
Mr R Powell, Senior Research Fellow of the Centre for Economic and Social Research at Sheffield Hallam University
Ms Helen Jones, Chief Executive of Leeds GATE
Ms Eileen Lowther, Chair of Leeds GATE
Ms Kim Maloney, Vice Chair of Leeds GATE
Ms Maddy Connors, Representing roadside gypsies and travellers
Mr James Connors, Representing roadside gypsies and travellers
Mr Michael Maloney, Representing roadside gypsies and travellers
Ms Michelle McGill, Chair of New Wortley Residents Association
Mr Steven Carey, Chief Revenues and Benefits Officer
Ms Bridget Emery, Head of Housing Strategy and Solutions
Ms K Murray, Travellers Service Manager
Mr Gareth Self, Liaison Officer
Mr Ian Spafford, Head of Community Services & Litigation
Ms Karen Blackmore, Team Leader, General Litigation Team
Local Residents in the city

Unauthorised Encampments in Leeds
from April 2010 to date.

Appendix 1



Leeds
CITY COUNCIL

Site Name	Number of Vans	Ward	Owner	Start Date	End Date	Duration Days	Court Proceedings	'Leeds' family
Armley Park	16	Armley	LCC	12-Apr-10	22-Apr-10	10	Yes Section 61 Refused	Yes
Wok Inn	2	City & Hunslet	Private	16-Apr-10	20-Apr-10	4	Yes	Yes
Cambridge Road	22	Hyde Park & Woodhouse	LCC	23-Apr-10	06-May-10	14	Yes Section 61 Refused	Yes
Stainton Lane	2	Rothwell	LCC	22-Apr-10	30-Apr-10	8	Yes	No
Thorpe Park	9	Temple Newsham	Private	22-Apr-10	23-Apr-10	1	No	Yes
Armley Park	9	Armley	LCC	23-Apr-10	24-Apr-10	1	No	Yes
Limewood Approach	6	Killingbeck and Seacroft	Private	26-Apr-10	29-Apr-10	3	Yes	No
WOK Inn	1	City & Hunslet	Private	06-May-10	10-May-10	4	Yes	No
Hook Moor Cottage	9	Kippax & Methley	LCC	06-May-10	24-May-10	18	No	No
Cartmel Drive	16	Temple Newsham	LCC	11-May-10	13-May-10	3	Yes	Yes
BHS, Kirkstall Road	7	Kirkstall	Private	10-May-10	24-May-10	14	Yes	No
Copperfield College	18	Burmantofts & Richmond Hill	LCC	13-May-10	13-May-10	1	Section 61 Used	Yes
Thorpe Road	18	Middleton Park	LCC	14-May-10	15-Jun-10	31	Yes Section 61 Refused	Yes
Hudson Way	3	Wetherby	LCC	19-May-10	24-May-10	5	No	No
Fearnville Sports Ground	57	Gipton & Harehills	LCC	24-May-10	05-Jul-10	41	Yes Section 61 Refused	Yes
Pheonix Way	35	Kippax & Methley	LCC	01-Jun-10	22-Jun-10	21	Yes Section 61 Refused	No
Spenn Common Lane	6	Wetherby	LCC	07-Jun-10	15-Jun-10	8	No	No
Woodlea Approach	1	Guisley & Rawdon	LCC	11-Jun-10	14-Jun-10	3	No	No

Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods) - Final Inquiry Report -
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Appendix 1



Site Name	No. Caravans	Ward	Owner	Start Date	End Date	Duration Days	Court Proceedings	
Ninelands Lane	7	Garforth & Swillington	LCC	28-Jun-10	30-Jun-10	2	Yes - Abridged Section 61 Refused	No
Greenhill Lane	5	Farnley & Wortley	LCC	29-Jun-10	30-Jun-10	1	Section 61	No
Oak Road	30	Armley	LCC	30-Jun-10	01-Jul-10	1	Section 61	Yes
Ash Lane	39	Garforth & Swillington	LCC	30-Jun-10	15-Jul-10	15	Yes Section 61 Refused	No
Wykebeck Valley Road	8	Killingbeck and Seacroft	LCC	05-Jul-10	14-Jul-10	9	Yes Section 61 Refused	Yes
Cambridge Road	8	Hyde Park & Woodhouse	LCC	05-Jul-10	06-Jul-10	1	Section 61 Used	Yes
Whitehouse Lane	14	Garforth & Swillington	LCC	06-Jul-10	08-Jul-10	2	No	No
Phoenix Avenue	6	Kippax & Methley	LCC	08-Jul-10	13-Jul-10	5	No	No
Wok In	3	City & Hunslet	Private	08-Jul-10	12-Jul-10	4	No	Yes
Temple Newsam	18	Temple Newsham	LCC	14-Jul-10	16-Jul-10	2	Yes	No
Century Way	24	Kippax & Methley	Private	15-Jul-10	16-Jul-10	1	No	Yes
Cross Green Approach	26	Burmantofts & Richmond Hill	LCC	16-Jul-10	30-Jul-10	14	Yes	Yes
Ramshead Approach	4	Killingbeck and Seacroft	LCC	16-Jul-10	19-Jul-10	3	No	No
Rothwell Haigh	3	Rothwell	LCC	16-Jul-10	20-Jul-10	4	No	No
Phoenix Way	10	Kippax & Methley	LCC	16-Jul-10	02-Aug-10	17	Yes	Yes
King Alfreds Approach	7	Moortown	LCC	26-Jul-10	02-Aug-10	7	Yes	No
Spenn Common Lane	10	Wetherby	LCC	27-Jul-10	02-Aug-10	6	Yes	No
Carlisle Road, Royal Armouries	18	City & Hunslet	LCC	30-Jul-10	10-Aug-10	11	Yes	Yes
Cambridge Road	15	Hyde Park & Woodhouse	LCC	05-Aug-10	06-Aug-10	1	Existing order in place	Yes
Soldiers Field	7	Roundhay	LCC	06-Aug-10	16-Aug-10	10	Yes	No

Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods) - Final Inquiry Report -
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Appendix 1



Site Name	No. Caravans	Ward	Owner	Start Date	End Date	Duration Days	Court Proceedings	
Wellington Road, Armley Gyratory	23	Armley	LCC	06-Aug-10	19-Aug-10	13	Yes	Yes
Victoria School Playing Fields	8	Burmantofts & Richmond Hill	LCC	09-Aug-10	19-Aug-10	10	Yes	No
Spinkwell Lane	3	Ardsley & Robin Hood	LCC	10-Aug-10	19-Aug-10	9	Yes	No
Ramshead Approach	5	Killingbeck and Seacroft	LCC	16-Aug-10	27-Aug-10	11	Yes	No
Moorfield Road	25	Armley	LCC	19-Aug-10	20-Aug-10	1	Section 61 Used	Yes
Bridgefield Pub	2	Burmantofts & Richmond Hill	Private	20-Aug-10	06-Sep-10	17	Yes	Yes
Beckett Street	2	Burmantofts & Richmond Hill	LCC	23-Aug-10	27-Aug-10	4	No	Yes
Wortley Towers	25	Farnley & Wortley	LCC	23-Aug-10	01-Sep-10	9	Yes	Yes
Wykebeck Valley Road	40	Gipton & Harehills	LCC	01-Sep-10	06-Sep-10	5	Yes - Abridged time	Yes
Cambridge Road	35	Hyde Park & Woodhouse	LCC	06-Sep-10	08-Sep-10	2	Section 61	Yes
Becketts Park	50	Weetwood	LCC	09-Sep-10	10-Sep-10	1	Yes - Abridged time.	Yes
Willow Road	32	Hyde Park & Woodhouse	LCC	10-Sep-10	21-Sep-10	11	Yes	Yes
Pack Horse Pub	3	Farnley & Wortley	Private	21-Sep-10	23-Sep-10	2	Bailiffs Instructed	Yes
Viaduct Road	20	Armley	Private	22-Sep-10	27-Sep-10	5	Yes	Yes
Wallace Arnold	16	Beeston & Holbeck	Private	23-Sep-10	18-Oct-10	25	Yes	Yes
Harry Ramsdens	5	Guisley & Rawdon	Private	05-Oct-10	07-Oct-10	2	Yes	No

Appendix 2



Costs of Cottingley Springs

<u>Costs</u>	<u>2002/03</u>	<u>2003/04</u>	<u>2004/05</u>	<u>2005/06</u>	<u>2006/07</u>	<u>2007/08</u>	<u>2008/09</u>	<u>2009/10</u>	<u>2010/11</u>	<u>Total</u>
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Staffing - assume	29,472	50,125	63,610	74,522	68,659	52,118	52,261	59,659	62,588	513,013
Premises Costs	89,878	90,721	34,632	40,083	43,191	115,128	89,853	103,292	122,990	729,768
Supplies & Services	1,269	5,098	3,519	1,400	1,518	1,062	660	1,945	3,668	20,139
Fuel/Transport	3,156	4,295	2,735	4,302	5,050	3,177	2,807	2,241	3,632	31,394
Overheads	-	1,942	6,091	10,786	12,813	14,543	8,152	9,248	9,176	72,750
Receipts										
	-190,168	-203,307	-187,376	-185,147	-218,662	-226,790	-231,903	-233,254	-253,980	-1,930,587
Total Costs	- 66,393	- 51,128	- 76,790	- 54,054	- 87,433	- 40,762	- 78,169	- 56,869	- 51,926	- 563,523

Appendix 3



2009/10 GTSG PROGRAMME - AVERAGE COST PER PITCH - NEW/ADDITIONAL/REFURB NEW PITCHES

Region	Grant	Total pitches on site	New/ additional pitches	New/ additional/ refurb	Grant per pitch	
South West	£77,250	5	5	New	£15,450	
Yorkshire & Humberside	£43,986	2	2	New	£21,993	
East of England	£326,155	9	9	New	£36,239	
North East	£512,549	6	6	New	£85,425	
Yorkshire & Humberside	£1,160,000	10	10	New	£116,000	
North East	£583,009	5	5	New	£116,602	
East Midlands	£475,000	4	4	New	£118,750	
South West	£956,856	8	8	New	£119,607	
South West	£839,051	7	7	New	£119,864	
North West	£1,541,000	12	12	New	£128,417	
East Midlands	£2,891,102	20	20	New	£144,555	Rejected by Secretary of State
South East	£1,163,100	8	8	New	£145,388	Rejected by Secretary of State
South West	£1,455,355	10	10	New	£145,536	Rejected by Secretary of State
South East	£2,609,000	18	10	New	£144,944	Rejected by Secretary of State
ADDITIONAL PITCHES						

Appendix 3



Region	Grant	Total pitches on site	New/ additional pitches	New/ additional/ refurb	Grant per pitch
East of England	£279,786	18	2	Additional	£15,544
North West	£278,362	15	2	Additional	£18,557
South West	£418,163	19	2	Additional	£22,009
East of England	£475,000	21	3	Additional	£22,619
North East	£935,007	22	1	Additional	£42,500
West Midlands	£999,600	23	5	Additional	£43,461
East Midlands	£1,248,571	21	2	Additional	£59,456
Yorkshire & Humberside	£1,214,139	20	10	Additional	£60,707
West Midlands	£1,063,000	16	1	Additional	£66,438
East of England	£1,101,051	16	1	Additional	£68,816
South East	£358,072	5	1	Additional	£71,614

REFURBISHED PITCHES

Region	Grant	Total pitches on site	New/ additional pitches	New/ additional/ refurb	Grant per pitch
South East	£106,130	10	0	Refurb	£10,613
South East	£371,728	16	0	Refurb	£23,233
Yorkshire & Humberside	£740,000	10	0	Refurb	£74,000
South East	£850,000	10	0	Refurb	£85,000

Appendix 4



SEE ATTACHED DOCUMENT FROM CORPORATE PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

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Report

**Potential expansion of the Councils existing travellers facility
at**

PROPERTY

Cottingley Springs Travellers Site

CLIENT

Environments & Neighbourhoods

PREPARED BY

Paul Quarmby – Corporate Property Management

20th December 2010



CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Summary

3.0 Costs

4.0 Planning Comment

5.0 Site Plans

SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Scrutiny Board are currently undertaking an inquiry into the provision of gypsies and travellers sites in the City.

One of the issues they want to explore further is providing more pitches for travelling families at the existing site at Cottingley Springs.

This will involve landscaping, laying hardstanding (to accommodate two caravans and a vehicle to each additional pitch), connection to the water supply, electricity and sewerage, the building of facility units (bathroom, toilet, kitchen, dining/living area) and any additional roads within the site.

CPM is requested to carryout an urgent Feasibility Study to look at expanding the capacity of the site and to provide budget costings for the work.

This information is required by 20th December 2010 as a report is required for Scrutiny Board at the beginning of January 2011.

Copies of all available drawings and a copy of the Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites Good Practice Guide have been forwarded separately for information.

1.1 LIMITATIONS

Paul Quarmby visited site with Gareth Self , Travellers Services, on the 15th December 2010, examined existing drawings and noted the Good Practice Guide on provision for travellers.

This report is submitted on the understanding that this is a quick appraisal of the site and for its possible expansion.

No ground investigation has been undertaken, no discussion in respect of the diversion of the existing watercourse or its history and liability to flooding has taken place.

Discussion with Planners has taken place but without a scheme drawing it is difficult for full consideration to be given.

No discussion with, or submission to, LEDA has been Made.

Budget prices are provided using £/ M2 Rate prices and are for guidance only, in line with the requirements of an initial site appraisal.

A more detailed & full Feasibility Study providing potential site layouts and full discussion with relevant statutory providers & planners can be provided by the commissioning of the SDA, a Fee would be chargeable for such a Study.

SECTION 2

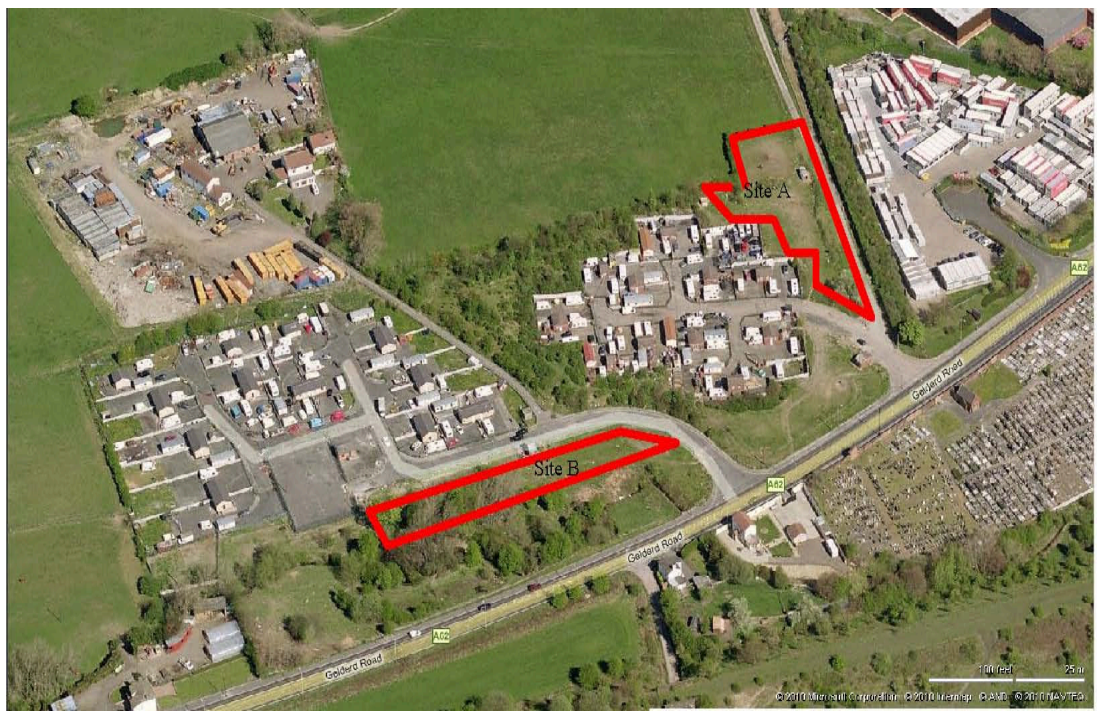
SUMMARY

2 Summary

Utilising the plans provided and extrapolating data in respect of the existing plots and facilities provided it appears that 14No additional Pitches might be provided at Cottingley Springs.

The cost of providing such additional accommodation would be in the region of £1,299,229.50 this equates to £92,802.00 per pitch.

The new accommodation, it is theorised, can be provided in two areas, 6No Pitches on site A , on a strip of land adjacent to the access road to the neighbouring farm & secondly 8No pitches on site B on a strip of land between the site access road and the stream adjacent to main road.



However, from discussion with LCC Planners and with reference to the guidance published on Traveller & Gypsy sites further development on this site may be opposed, the current thinking being that a number of small site integrated into the community around Leeds would be more beneficial.

Comment from LCC Planner

'Whilst the preferred approach does not explicitly support the extension of the site it does not necessarily dismiss it either. The preferred approach is to have a number of smaller sites across Leeds which is the option that came out from consultation. The strategy is in draft at the current time' .

See also Planning Comment Section 4

Development of the Cottingley site

With regard to development at the Cottingley Springs site it would be more cost effective to build on Site B as access, mains drainage and services exist within reasonable distance of the potential pitches and may support development, Site A requiring a new access road, drainage and services.

We would recommend that outline plans be produced and checks with LEDA, the service boards, mains drainage and Environment in respect of potential flooding from the adjacent stream be undertaken.

SECTION 3
BUDGET COSTS

Cottingley Springs Travellers Site

UNITS

Description	No	Qty	Rate	Cost
Utility Units	Pair	1.0 No	£53,000.00	£53,000.00
Hardstanding	2.0	245.0	£76	£37,240.00
Boundary fences / walls	2.0	45.0	£125	£11,250.00
Gates	2.0	1.0	£150	£300.00
Foul Unit drainage inspection chambers	2.0	10.0	£50	£1,000.00
Surface water Unit drainage inspection chambers	2.0	1.0	£500	£1,000.00
Surface water Unit drainage inspection chambers	2.0	10.0	£50	£1,000.00
Surface water Unit drainage inspection chambers	2.0	1.0	£500	£1,000.00
Electrical Supply x2				£1,000.00
4No Power, Hook ups x2				£960.00
Water connection x2				£2,000.00
Total unit cost x2				£109,750.00
14 Units on site				£768,250.00

SERVICES & ACCESS

Roadway

Site A	Main access road	100.0	5.5	£73	£40,150.00
	Pathways				

Site B not required

Drainage

Site A	In New Roadway				
	Foul Mains drainage	1.0	100.0	£84	£8,400.00
	Inspection chambers	4.0	1.0	£1,500	£6,000.00
	Surface Water	1.0	100.0	£84	£8,400.00
Site B	In Existing Roadway				
	Improve existing Mains drainage	1.0	180.0	£84	£15,120.00
	Inspection chambers	5.0	1.0	£1,500	£7,500.00
	Stream on site				
	Diversion / culvert Unit				£10,000.00
	Water Main Site A	100.0		£70	£7,000.00
	Site B	180.0		£70	£12,600.00
	Electrical Main Site A	100.0		£45	£4,500.00
	Site B	180.0		£45	£8,100.00
	Total Site costs				£127,770.00

Stage 1 checks					£10,000.00
Planning					£2,500.00
Building Control					£2,000.00
	14 Units				£768,250.00
	Service & Access				£127,770.00
					£896,020.00

Prelims	0.2				£152,323.40
Contingencies	0.1				£89,602.00
SDA Fees @ 18%	0.2				£161,283.60

Total Inc **£1,299,229.00**

14No Units / = 1No **£92,802.07 Per unit**

SECTION 4

PLANNERS COMMENTS

For deciding a planning application for an extension to Cottingley Springs, first regard would need to be given to policy of the Unitary Development Plan Review (UDPR) which is the development plan for Leeds. Policy H16 says:

THE CITY COUNCIL WILL CONTINUE TO SEARCH FOR SUITABLE PERMANENT, TEMPORARY STOPPING AND TRANSIT SITES TO PROVIDE ACCOMMODATION FOR TRAVELLERS AND TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE, AND WILL ENCOURAGE SUITABLE PRIVATE SITES TO BE ADVANCED, IN ORDER TO PROVIDE A BALANCED DISTRIBUTION THROUGHOUT THE DISTRICT WHICH WILL SUPPLEMENT EXISTING PROVISION IN SOUTH WEST LEEDS.

SUITABLE SITES WILL NEED TO BE:

- i. ACCEPTABLE TO THE TRAVELLERS' COMMUNITY ITSELF;**
- ii. WITHIN EASY REACH OF COMMUNITY AND OTHER FACILITIES;**
- iii. IN LOCATIONS WHERE THE ENVIRONMENT PROVIDES ACCEPTABLE LIVING CONDITIONS, AND WHERE THE DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT HAVE UNACCEPTABLE ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES.**

SITES FOR TRAVELLERS WILL NOT NORMALLY BE ACCEPTABLE IN THE GREEN BELT, ON PLAYING FIELDS AND OTHER SITES IDENTIFIED FOR GREENSPACE PURPOSES, ON THE BEST AND MOST VERSATILE AGRICULTURAL LAND, AND WHERE THEY WOULD RESULT IN DETRIMENTAL IMPACT ON A SITE OF OF NATURE CONSERVATION INTEREST PROTECTED UNDER POLICY N50.

Further expansion of Cottingley Springs might meet criteria i, ii, and iii. The first is not straightforward because there is not one single Travellers community. Some parts of the community do not believe that expansion of Cottingley Springs acceptable. Regarding ii. the site is somewhat remote, but it would be expected that residents of the existing site have established means of accessing services and facilities. Given the existing site, iii could probably be satisfied.

A more exacting part of the policy is that sites will not normally be acceptable in the green belt. Cottingley Springs is washed over by the green belt. Unless the extension is onto the adjacent employment site (which is not in the green belt), development would have to demonstrate very special circumstances. Such circumstances could include the recognised need for Gypsy and Traveller Pitches in Leeds (West Yorkshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) 2008), the problems with unauthorized encampments and lack of alternative options for sites in locations not in the green belt.

A more up-to-date position on Gypsy and Traveller accommodation is provided by Leeds' Core Strategy Preferred Approach which was published for consultation October 2009. It was written in the context of the West Yorkshire GTAA 2008 (although number of pitches required in Leeds was not quoted). Of options consulted upon in an earlier stage of the Core Strategy, the Preferred Approach is to go with a locational preference for Gypsy and Traveller sites as follows:

- Small residential sites of no more than 12 pitches distributed around Leeds

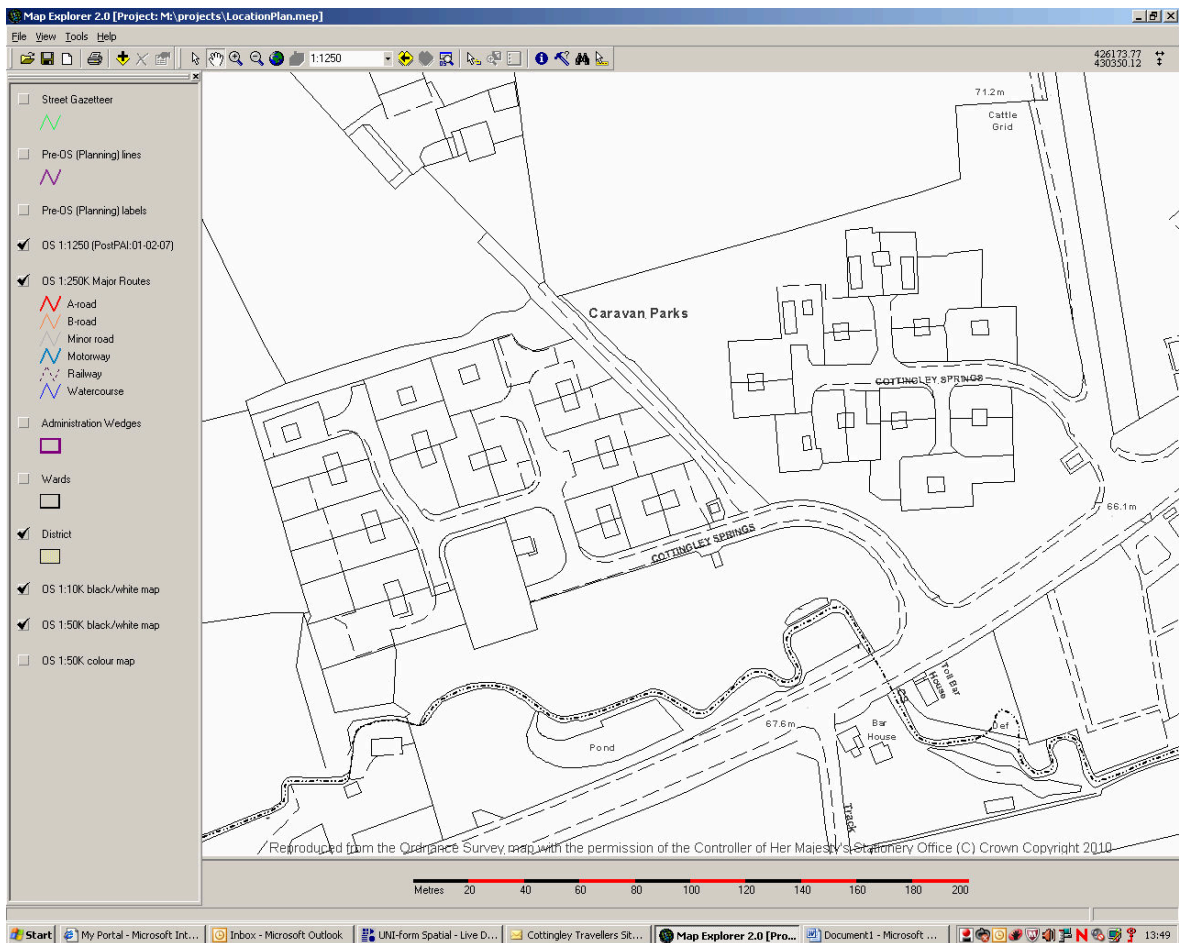
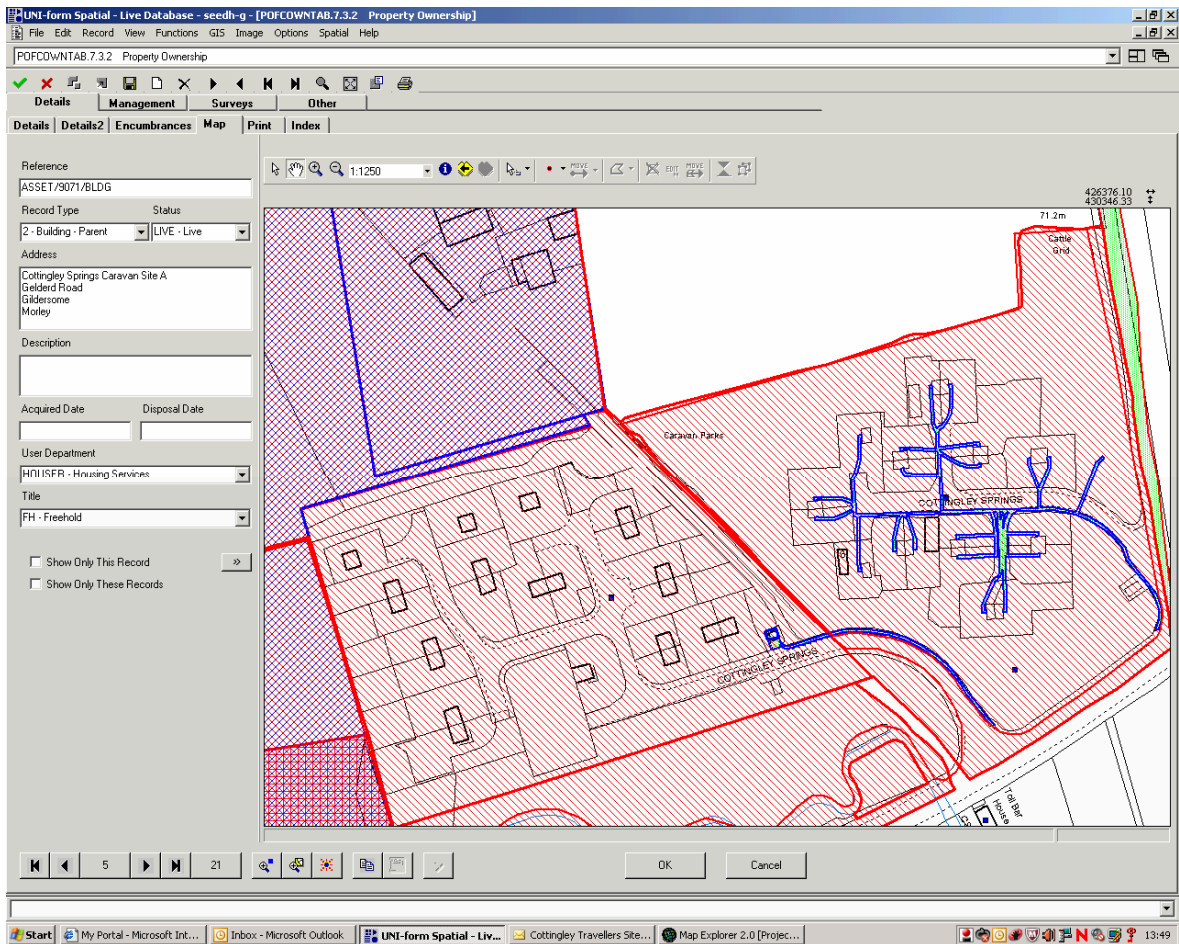
linked to existing infrastructure

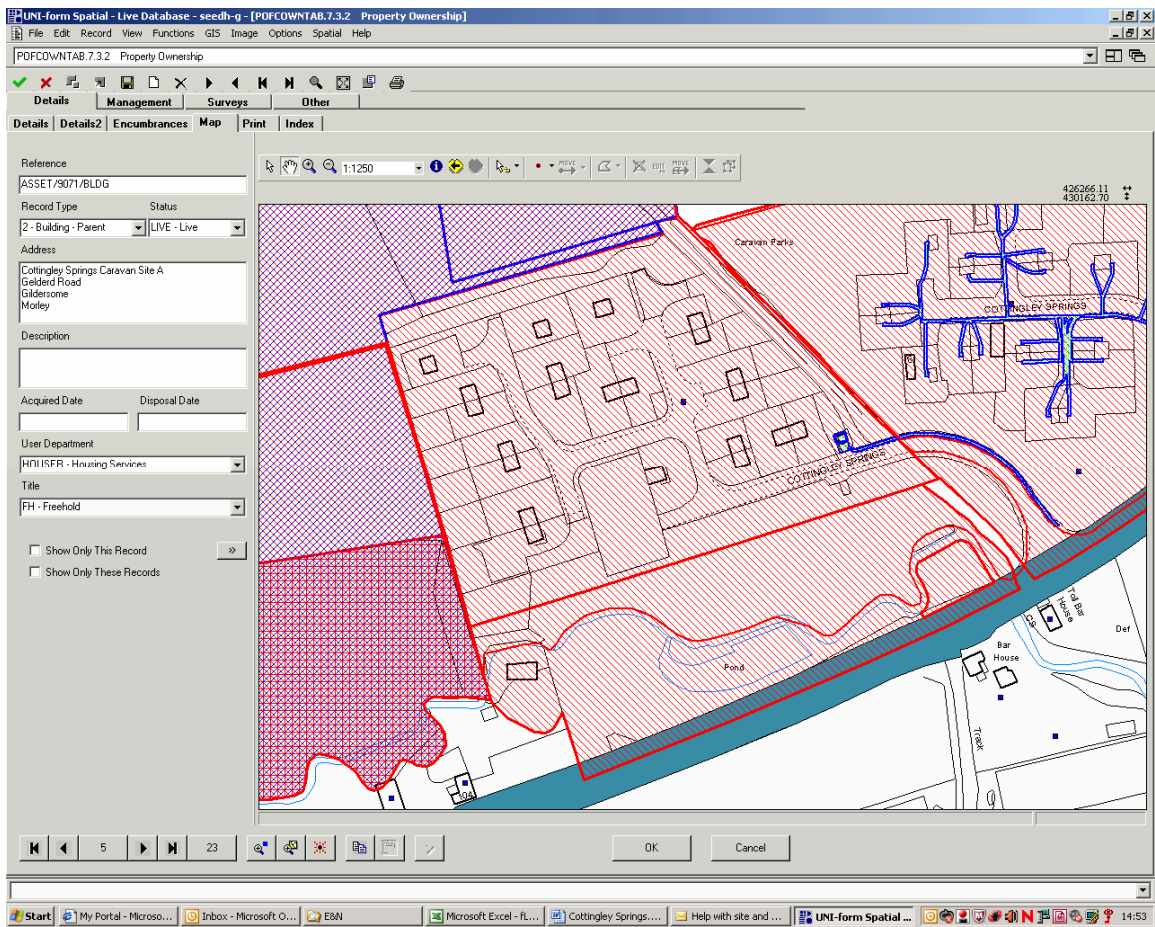
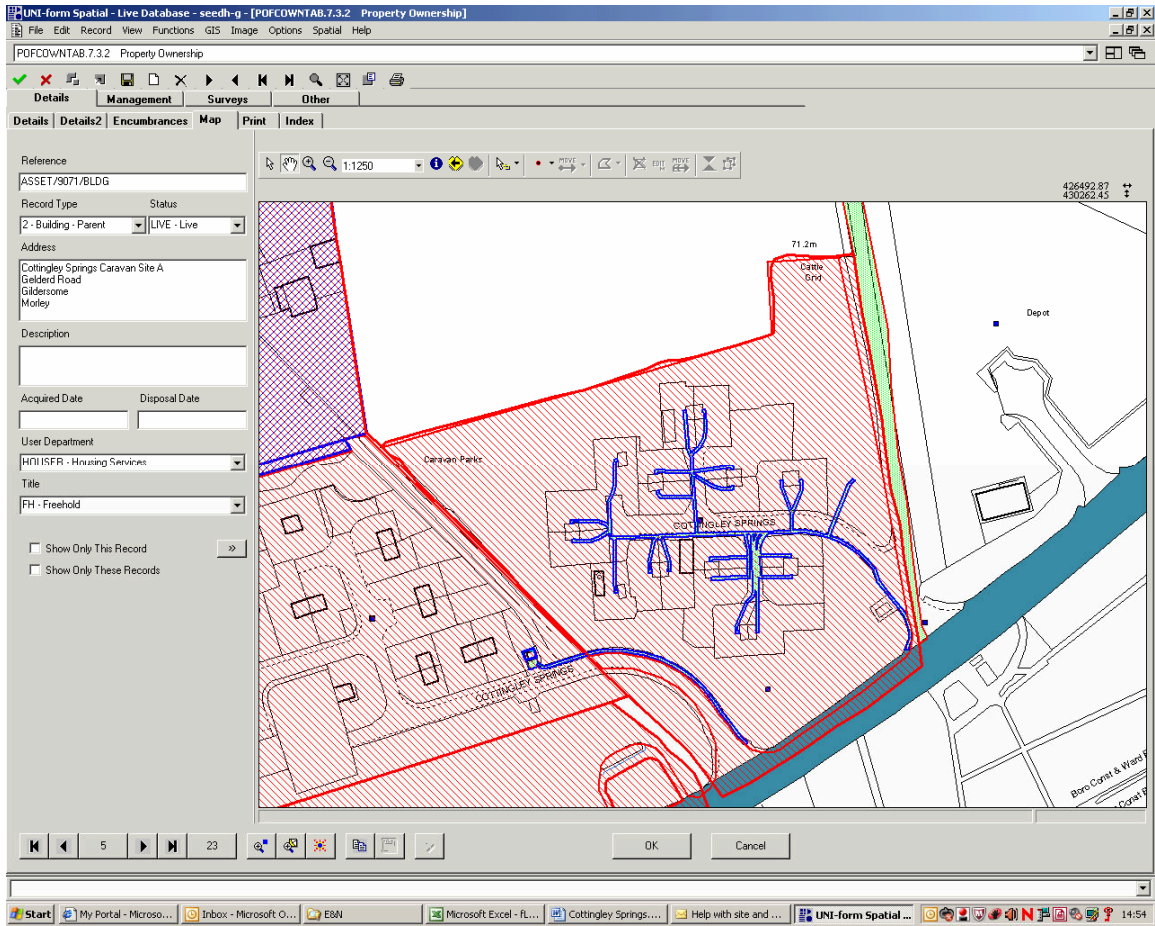
It should be noted that the Core Strategy has not yet been completed, so it doesn't have the same status as the UDPR.

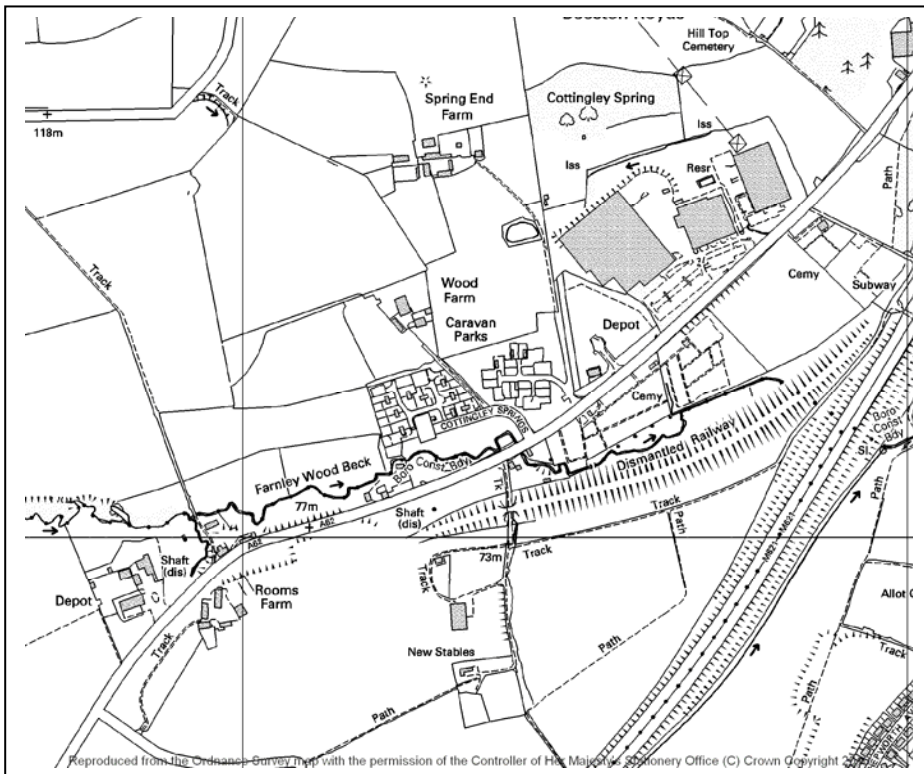
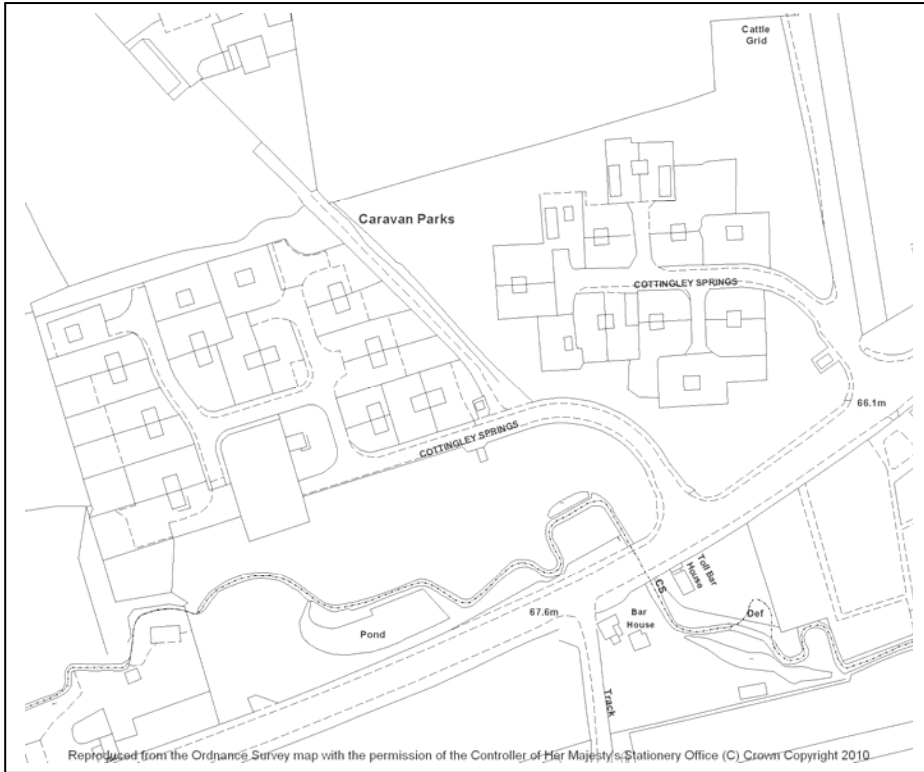
In conclusion, the biggest planning concern about expanding Cottingley Springs would be the Green Belt issue. This would have to be assessed and judged in more detail. Apart from that, expansion would not be explicitly contrary to either UDPR or Core Strategy Preferred Approach (CSPA) policy, but it would not sit comfortably with the intention of the CSPA to prefer smaller sited distributed around Leeds.

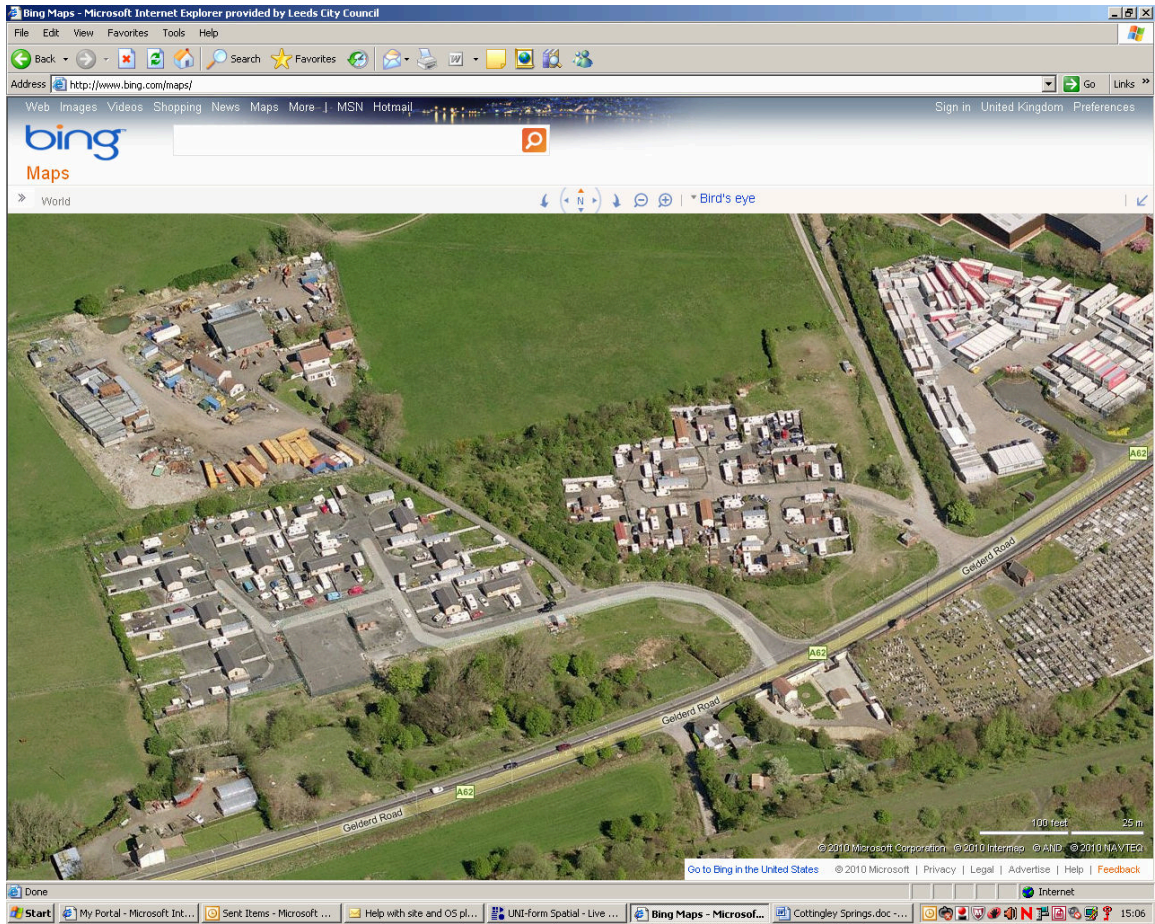
SECTION 5

SITE PLANS









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