

[REDACTED]

From: Roberts, John
Sent: 09 March 2023 09:14
To: localplan@york.gov.uk
Subject: FW: Local Plan Consultation.
Attachments: City of York Local Plan2.pdf

John Roberts | Strategic Planning Policy Officer

t: [REDACTED] | e: [REDACTED]

City of York Council | **Strategic Planning Policy**

Directorate of Place | West Offices, Station Rise | York YO1 6GA

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From: Mark Warters [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 March 2023 11:49
To: Roberts, John [REDACTED]
Subject: Local Plan Consultation.

This email originated from outside of the organisation. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Morning John,

I would like to submit the attached into the latest Local Plan consultation.

Can you advise/facilitate please?

Thanks,
Mark.

Regards,

Cllr. Mark Warters.

T: [REDACTED]

City of York Local Plan Proposed Main Modifications Consultation (February 2023)

I write as Ward Councillor for The Osbaldwick & Derwent Ward and on behalf of Osbaldwick Parish Council and Murton Parish Council on matters of direct relevance to both Parishes.

This submission is in relation to the following documents available as part of this consultation;

EX/CYC/88 - Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment.

PMM 26 - Osbaldwick Gypsy and Traveller Site (Policies Map North).

I shall also be referring to these documents in the Inspection Library;

EX/INS/43 - Email from Inspectors to Council 16/11/22

EX/CYC/121a - Provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. Dec. 2022

Preamble.

1.1 On the 28th July 2022, morning and afternoon session of the City of York Local Plan Inquiry examined the policies regarding Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in some depth.

1.2 York Traveller's Trust and myself were present and raised significant concerns with various aspects of EX/CYC/88.

1.3 With regard to specific concerns expressed in July as to the ability of CYC to be able to accommodate extra Gypsy Caravan pitches on existing CYC sites it appears from the Inspector's email of the 16th December 2022 EX/INS/43 to CYC that the Inspectors have similar concerns.

1.4 CYC replied to the Inspectors EX/INS/43 with a document titled Provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople December 2022 (EX/CYC/121a)

1.5 It is my contention that CYC in paragraphs 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 of EX/CYC/121a are quite cynically misleading the Inspectors as to the capacity of the Osbaldwick and Clifton sites to provide extra pitches.

1.6 I will seek to prove my contention in this submission drawing upon official council documents and public statements of policy that were made when CYC sought HCA funding for an earlier expansion of the Osbaldwick site in 2013.

1.7 I also contend that because it is too politically sensitive to actually identify sensible stand alone sites for this provision that CYC have made the cynical decision not to identify new sites in the Local Plan and are seeking to deceive the Inspection process in this way.

1.8 Failure to identify sufficient provision of credible Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites renders the Local Plan 'unsound' and not 'legally compliant'.

Existing Site Provision.

2.1 The June 2022 EX/CYC/88 document clearly detailed the needs assessment and also detailed the three CYC Sites in York and the current level of provision at those sites. All three are at capacity as would have been defined in the 'Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites' Good Practise Guide 2008 U.K. Government (withdrawn 1st Sept. 2015) the James St. Site can not physically accommodate any further pitches, the Clifton site can not accommodate any further pitches without compromising the settled dynamic of the site and it would not be 'good practise' to do so. The Osbaldwick site can not accommodate any further pitches without completely going back on previous assurances made as to 18 pitches being the limit of the site and many other assurances made ten years ago which I will expand on further.

2.2 To suggest that the Clifton Site and Osbaldwick Site can accommodate extra pitches is thoroughly misleading and so easily exposed as misleading that making such a suggestion by CYC highlights the desperation not to identify stand alone new sites which will have to come at some point in the future.

Existing Site Capacity for Expansion.

3.1 In September 2012 CYC submitted a bid for Homes and Communities Agency administered funding from the

Government 'Traveller Pitch Fund' to expand the Osbaldwick Site which then accommodated 12 pitches.

3.2 The bid was successful and a total of £763,500 (HCA £423,500 CYC £340,000) allocated to expand the site which of course gained planning permission from CYC (13/02704/GRG3). (Annex A CYC Investment bid to HCA September 2012)

3.3 The proposal to expand put the site in the spotlight just when the issue of loose grazing horses associated with this site had made local and national headlines with numerous instances of shocking road traffic accidents on local roads leading to dead horses, injured motorists and written off vehicles as well as considerable damage to crops during the many instances of trespass. These concerns actually made it to Parliament via the York Outer MP where a change in the law made the offence of 'Fly grazing' illegal under The Control of Horses Bill 2014-15.

3.4 The approved planning application for the site made much of the provision of what was intended to be secure grazing land with the external metal security fencing supplemented with stock proof fencing, field structures, water supplies all set within an area of native species hedgerow planting and complementing the wildflower planting on the grass banks within the pitch layouts.

3.5 Many of these aspects were included in an attempt to demonstrate to the HCA that CYC were going to solve the problem of stray horses associated with this site, many of these aspects despite being conditioned in the 13/02704/GRG3 have never been implemented and have recently been reported to CYC Planning Enforcement being within the ten year timescale for enforcement action.

3.6 PMM26 together with EX/CYC/121a seek to utilise the land designated for grazing to support the 2013 expansion of the site to 18 pitches, use of this land for extra pitches is completely unacceptable. The HCA grant was conditional on a host of factors and supposed improvements put forward by CYC the most high profile being this grazing land.

3.7 The 2012/13 HCA grant process also put the spotlight very firmly on the lack of CYC 'management' of the site, there are reams of correspondence in relation to these factors and 'management' has certainly not improved in the intervening years to the detriment of the tenants living on the site and surrounding communities, indeed the York Travellers Trust have frequently referred to this site as being "the most deprived in North Yorkshire" and with good reason. Appreciating that such matters are not within the remit of the Local Plan Examination process I can not leave the subject without highlighting the recent removal of 100ton of dumped fridges/freezers to the rear of the site at a cost to CYC of £50,000 in disposal costs and renovation of the adjacent farming land contaminated from the burning of these 'fridge mountains' to remove the gases prior to scrap trading.

3.8 The Osbaldwick Site was originally run under the auspices of Ryedale DC until Local Government reorganisation in 1996, the site has been a problem ever since CYC assumed control. (Annex B Murton Parish Council letter 1997)

3.9 During the 2012/13 period of considerable public objection to the proposal to expand the Osbaldwick Site many verbal assurances were given in many forums as to CYC committing NOT to be seeking to expand the Osbaldwick Site further, the best written assurance I have retained is that from the former Chief Executive of CYC in February 2013. The assurance in the letter as to only proposing to increase the site by 6 additional pitches is clear as is reference to the then Housing Officer's view "that when looking at best practise, from a management perspective, you would not bring forward proposals for a site larger than what is being proposed" (Annex C CYC Chief Executive letter 14th February 2013)

3.10 So in 2013 from a 'management perspective' no doubt drawing on the 2008 Government Guide to Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites CYC were quite clear that from a management perspective they would not seek to expand this site beyond the 18 pitches following the expansion.

3.11 Now in 2023 CYC are seeking to throw all that reasoning away, throw all the assurances made to the HCA away and are seeking to mislead the Local Plan Inspectors as to the capacity of the Osbaldwick site to accommodate further pitches.

3.12. The CYC Cabinet agenda of the 5th November 2013 dealt with the sign off of funding for the Osbaldwick expansion and reiterated the importance of the grazing land that CYC now seek to develop pitches on but it also contained an important reference to the Clifton site.

(Annex D City of York Council Cabinet agenda 5th November 2013.)

Para 14. "When considering the size and location of the current sites, it was clear that the extension of the Osbaldwick site provides the best option, the other sites are landlocked and their size prohibits further development. In addition to this the number of pitches on the Clifton & James Street sites are already at a level where, when considering best practise you would not increase the number of pitches on these sites"

So in 2023 CYC are willing to go against 'best practise' and suggest shoehorning an extra 6 pitches on at Clifton.

I am sure the Inspectors will recall both the York Travellers Trust and my comments in relation to the physical capacity of both the Osbaldwick and Clifton sites last July, comments made with good reason as they mirrored what CYC have been saying for many years before CYC realised there was a problem with the Local Plan examination.

Conclusion.

4.1 With many years experience of the difficulties that CYC have had in trying to 'manage' the Osbaldwick site, with many of the assurances given to the HCA ten years ago on providing a site office and permanent management presence ignored and/or forgotten by CYC along with many of the unimplemented planning conditions from 13/02704/GRG3 this is the last site in the U.K. that should be held up by a local authority as a candidate for future expansion.

I fully support the points made by York Travellers Trust as to this site and to the unsuitability of adding pitches at Clifton as well.

I hope the information provided gives the Inspectors a more accurate picture of the situation than EX/CYC/121a and the proposed modification to the GB Boundary in PMM26 is rejected in favour of the 2018 boundary as submitted and CYC Policy H5 is found unsound in particular regard of H5a.



**Home and Communities Agency
Gypsy and Traveller Investment Bid: Round 1
September 2012**

Request for investment:

To develop **6 additional pitches** to expand the existing site from 12 to 18 pitches and enhance facilities on the **Osbaldwick site, York**.

Lead bid name & local authority

City of York Council is the existing site owner, and manage and developing organisation.

The Council is an existing investment partner and has a strong working relationship with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), as well as a track record in making successful bids for funding and delivering schemes on time and within budget, including the recent Lilbourne Drive development through the LA New Build Programme. The Council is also set up on the Investment Management System (IMS).

City of York Council owns and manages 3 Travellers sites, geographically spread across the City, totalling 55 pitches. Levels of satisfaction with the management of the sites is high and relationships between travellers and the Council are good, as determined through satisfaction surveys.

Site address: Osbaldwick Travellers Site, Outgang Lane, York, YO10 5EW

Site type: Permanent

Profile of existing site:

There are 12 pitches on this, the smallest of the city's sites, and each has a hard standing with amenity block and includes, electricity, running water, toilet and bathing facilities, kitchen and living space. Many of the pitches have two caravans on the pitch to accommodate extended families due to the shortfall of provision across the City. There is no shared amenity space for children, limited space for turning and parking large vehicles, no site office or space for grazing animals.



Summary of Proposal:

City of York Council is leading on a Gypsy & Traveller Strategy for the City, bringing together a wide range of statutory and voluntary agencies, as well as community groups, including Travellers themselves, in an attempt to address the inequalities and improve the outcomes of this significantly marginalised minority ethnic group within the City. Meeting their accommodation needs is a key part of this work and is fundamental in enabling members of the community to engage in employment, education and training and support the work of health services in improving their health outcomes. The Council and its partners are committed to this partnership working and Strategic approach for the City.

The site is compact, yet surrounded on three sides by open fields and as well as the identified need for additional pitches on the site, the travellers already in situ would benefit from the site being expanded to allow space for additional parking and turning, amenity space and for grazing animals.



The site is compact and there is limited amenity space and space for parking and turning large vehicles. The site is surrounded on three sides by open fields and adjacent to an industrial site. There is no room for grazing animals, and as a result some of the residents are either tethering horses on the roadside or breaching the land owner's fence and grazing the horses without permission. This is a

source of great frustration for the landowner due to littering and damage to his crops, to the travellers who are desperate for space to graze their animals and to the Council's officers who manage these difficult relationships between the parties. Local Councillors and the York outer MP have also been engaged in this debate and this situation and horses on the roadside is a significant issue for them also.



One of the more significant issues we have in the City is with horses being tethered on the roadside. This has resulted in several cases of injury and damage to vehicles and people and death for the horses involved in collisions, within recent years. One solution to this issue is to offer grazing land as part of this scheme.

The extension of the site would include the following, with the exception of the new amenity blocks, the facilities would have a wider benefit to all existing residents on the site as well as the new households moving on:

- 6 new pitches, to include amenity block with hard standing, water and electricity supply with own meter
- Land for horses to graze

- Amenity space for the travellers to play, exercise and socialise
- Increased space for turning vehicles

Demand

During 2008/9 the North Yorkshire Councils commissioned a Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessment. The report concluded there is a shortfall of 36 pitches across the City and the Council is committed to addressing this shortfall.

In addition the Council currently holds a waiting list of approximately 18 households seeking a Travellers site pitch. These G&T households are either living on unauthorised sites or living on pitches allocated to family members, which can lead to overcrowding on the pitches and sites. At any one time we have at least one household living on an unauthorised site. A number of families in York have also moved into bricks and mortar housing over the years, partly as a result of lack of pitch provision and low rates of turnover.

Financial Information

	Cost
Total scheme costs and level and source of other funding provided (including LA free land)	£628k
Grant required	£342k
Additional match funding from CYC	£286k

Deliverability and Timescales:

Activity	Timescales
Informal support given by some travellers on the site to the principle of expanding number of pitches, no opposition expressed	Jun 2012
Meeting with planning department re application in principle -support given to pursue pre planning	Sep 2012
Landowners confirmed interest in selling land	Aug 2012
Pre planning application submitted	12 Sep 2012
Response due	2 Oct 2012
Formal Executive member support in principle sought	18 Sept 2012
HCA bid submitted	28 Sep 2012
*Consultations with key stakeholders	Nov 2012-

	Jan 2013
Full Planning Approval obtained	Jan 2013
Draft Specification	Feb 2013
Put out to tender assess tenders and award contract	Mar/Apl 2013
Start on site	May 2013
Potential completion date	Oct 2013

Details of planned and completed consultation with local communities (guidance included in the Framework)

Due to sensitivities in extending accommodation provision for G&T within the City consultation has not been carried out to date. However, the landowners have been approached and parties have formally expressed an interest in selling to the Council. The land is therefore available for purchase.

There have been initial discussions with colleagues in the planning team and they have encouraged the submission of a pre planning application. Having reviewed potential available sites they are in agreement that this is more likely to receive planning consent. The outcome of the pre planning application will be known soon after the bid submission deadline.

A report was submitted on the proposal to a private cabinet/council management team meeting on 18 September and was given unanimous support from members and chief officers alike.

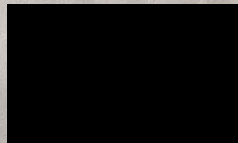
*Stakeholders to be consulted through a range of methods will include online on the Council's website, on site for the Travellers, drop in events and attendance at ward and parish council meetings and involve:

Cabinet, Ward and Parish Councillors from Osbaldwick, Heworth Without, Murton, Holtby and Heslington, local residents, Travellers Trust, Travellers on the site, police, schools and health services.

Equality Statement:

A recommendation of York's Fairness Commission 2012 is to urgently address the city's housing and accommodation needs including the identified need for additional pitches. York's draft Equality Scheme 2012-2016 has incorporated analysis from the 2008/09 Gypsy & Traveller needs assessment and York's Fairness Commission report to identify one of the areas our equality work should focus on is to meet the housing needs of the Gypsy & Traveller community to narrow the gap in equality outcomes.

MURTON PARISH COUNCIL



Cllr D Horton
Chairman, Housing Committee
City of York Council
Guildhall
YORK YO1 1QN

19 March 1997

Dear Sir

Travellers' Site, Osbaldwick

I am writing to you regarding this Parish's concerns regarding the above site, an official visit of which was recently attended by our Chairman.

The last time he visited the site, which was near the end of Ryedale's involvement about 18 months ago, the site was relatively tidy. There were 13 caravans on the site (2 were sharing a site - an extended family with health problems apparently); there were neither sheds nor livestock and relatively little litter. On this occasion, there were 15 or 16 caravans (one off the site), huts, hens, extensive litter, sump oil in the drains, neglected septic tank, etc.

In addition, we have had several reports/complaints of bonfires on the public bridleway on Outgang Lane (Bad Bargain Lane end), loose horses or horses tethered on the surrounding road verges, often on very short tethers but still at times allowing them onto pavements and even the road - which is extremely dangerous for the horses, let alone pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, particularly after dark or on some of these foggy nights we have had recently. There have also been reports of vehicles parked on the lane, and (some not taxed) pulling out of the road end and further sheds and caravans appearing in surrounding fields - eg, a caravan is now on the road off to the left of Outgang Lane, towards the sewage works.

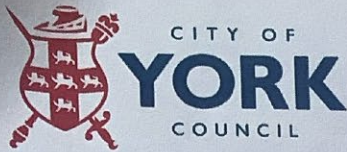
I enclose for your information a copy of the original tenancy agreement of this site. As you can see, several of the items reported are in clear contravention of the terms therein.

Instances and complaints of this sort have risen sharply over the past few months and it is believed that the site is being badly neglected by the council in terms of management, maintenance and health and safety. It is feared that if the situation is not brought firmly into hand very soon, the site will become unmanageable. We would be grateful if you could, therefore, as a matter of urgency, let us know what your short and long term plans are for this site, if possible before our next Parish Council meeting which takes place on 8 April. Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours sincerely

F Himsworth (Mrs)
Clerk to Murton Parish Council

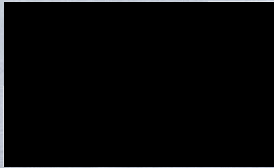
cc S Terry
J Moreley
Osbalwick Parish Council



Office of the Chief Executive

City of York Council
The Guildhall
York
YO1 9QN

Cllr. M. Warters



Thursday 14th February 2013

Dear Cllr Warters,

Potential expansion of Osbaldwick Travellers site

Thank you for your recent letter setting out your concerns regarding the proposed expansion of Osbaldwick travellers site.

I note your concerns regarding any planning application for the extension of the site being cleared prior to the Local Plan proposals. Having discussed the proposals with Mr Waddington and what was said at the meeting, I can assure you that we do not intend to provide all 36 additional pitches identified in the Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Need Assessment on this site. Our proposals are to increase the site by 6 additional pitches.

I also understand that Mr Waddington set out that when looking at best practice, from a management perspective, you would not bring forward proposals for a site larger than what is being proposed.

In relation to you being seriously misled at the meeting, Mr Waddington was not aware when you met that we had received formal notification from the HCA that our bid had been successful, if he had been, he would have stated this.

The following day when Mr Waddington became aware that formal notification had been received, he emailed you to apologise for unintentionally misleading you. Mr Waddington was not aware of your submission of an FOI request to the HCA and this had no bearing on his email to you.

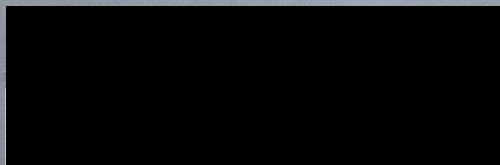
I also understand that Mr Waddington provided details of the level of funding that we had bid for from the HCA.

With regards to wasting your time, I am sorry that you feel that starting a dialogue with you as part of the wider consultation is a waste of your time. The purpose of the meeting was to bring you up to speed as Ward Councillor, with our proposals. I understand that you subsequently invited the Parish Councillors and other residents, not Mr Waddington.

Whilst I acknowledge that the bid to the HCA was made prior to consultation with yourself and Ward Councillors, our clear intention, as set out in the bid, is to fully engage with yourself as Ward Councillor and Parish Councillors as part of the development and design of any works. Full consultation will also take place as part of any planning application.

I can assure you that officers are not secretly working with Cabinet Members, with a fait accompli being presented to Ward and Parish Councillors. We want to work with you and your Parish colleagues to ensure the delivery of a scheme which provides much needed accommodation to one of our most marginalised communities that does not negatively impact on the local community.

Yours sincerely

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area of the letter.

Kersten England
Chief Executive



Cabinet

5 November 2013

Report of the Cabinet Member for Health, Housing & Adult Social Services

Travellers site provision – Extension of Osbaldwick Site.

Summary

1. To request approval and part funding, which combined with the Homes & Communities Agency funding will support the extension of the Osbaldwick Travellers site. The development will incorporate 6 additional pitches, grazing land for horses and amenity space.

Background

2. City of York Council owns and manages 3 Travellers sites, with support and management being provided by Support Workers based at Ordnance Lane Hostel. The sites are geographically located across the City and total 56 pitches. The Osbaldwick Site is the smallest of the three sites with 12 pitches. Each pitch has a hard standing with amenity block and includes modern amenities i.e. electricity, running water, toilet and bathing facilities, kitchen and living space. These expectations are based on the Governments good practice guidelines.
3. Overcrowding on the pitches is an issue with many of the pitches having at least two caravans/ mobile homes to accommodate extended families including both young children and elderly relatives who are living longer in the community due to increased access to health services and due to the shortfall of provision across the City.
4. Within the site there is no amenity space for children, limited space for turning and parking large vehicles, no site office/ community facility or space for grazing horses. The site is compact, yet sited on two sides by farmers fields. The site has existed since

the mid 1980s and was transferred from Ryedale DC in 1996 when York became a unitary authority.

5. The 2011 census records that 269 people identify as Gypsy or Irish Traveller in York Unitary Authority. This is 0.1% of York's population. Regionally and nationally Gypsy and Irish Travellers account for 0.1% of the population.
6. In 2008/9 the North Yorkshire Strategic Housing Board commissioned a Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessment (GTNA). The report concluded by 2015, a projected shortfall of 36 pitches across the City. A refresh of this research is currently being commissioned and a report is expected later this year, to inform the Council's Local Plan. The Area Assessment will take into account the North Yorkshire context and is being undertaken by the same consultants.
7. The Council currently holds a waiting list of approximately 24 households seeking a York Travellers site pitch. Information directly from Travellers has also highlighted that there are some families who have moved into traditional housing, due to a shortfall in pitches, who would like to move back onto sites.
8. York Travellers Trust is a support charity, set up to work with the Gypsy & Traveller community in York, to provide support and advice, empowering individuals and the community to make the most of their opportunities. They estimate that they support approximately 350 gypsy and traveller families in York and predict that there is a future need for 50 pitches in the next five years. Part of this estimation is taken from their own impression of concealed households, members of the family, mostly grown up children, needing independent accommodation.
9. **Population Growth - Communities and Local Government (CLG)** estimate that the Gypsy & Traveller population will grow by 3-4% per annum. These are the children of Gypsy & Travellers who are predicted to need pitches in the future. Calculations based on 3% growth rate which places population growth for:

Years 1 to 5 - 2 families
Years 6 to 10 - 4 families
Years 11 to 15 - 5 families

This results in a population growth over the Local Plan period (2015-2030) of 11 families. Each of these families will require a pitch.

10. All of this evidence and assumptions will be tested as part of the GTNA refresh during Autumn 2013. The Council is committed to working towards addressing this identified shortfall in pitch and site numbers.
11. In 2011 the government announced, through the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), a programme of 'Traveller Pitch Funding' of £60M. Initially the HCA accepted schemes valued at £47m in January 2012 and subsequently announced a further round during July 2012.
12. Following officer discussions with the Cabinet Member for Health, Housing & Adult Social Services during September 2012 the Council submitted a bid for HCA funding to support the development. The bid was for match funding totalling £342k of the anticipated scheme costs of £628k, based on indicative costs from our framework Quantity Surveyor. This was on the basis of the Council funding the remaining balance. The HCA advised the council that the bid had been successful in December 2012.

Why extend the Osbaldwick site?

13. When determining how to meet the shortfall in the number of pitches required across the city, consideration was given to a number of sites identified by the planning service. The sites identified were all assessed using agreed criteria and found, in planning terms to be unsuitable for development as a travellers site. Further consideration has been given to the possibility of extending the other two sites the council owns.
14. When considering the size and location of the current sites, it was clear that the extension of the Osbaldwick site provides the best option, the other sites are landlocked and their size prohibits further development. In addition to this the number of pitches on the Clifton & James Street sites are already at a level where, when considering best practice you would not increase the number of pitches on these sites, whereas the Osbaldwick site has the least number of pitches and is surrounding by undeveloped land. The identified land has now been designated in the draft Local Plan for the provision of Gypsy

15. The proposal to extend the Osbaldwick site was considered at Planning Committee on the 24th October 2013. After a full debate the application to extend the site was approved.

The Proposal

16. To develop 6 additional pitches to expand the site from 12 to 18 pitches and enhance facilities on the Osbaldwick site for the benefit of the Gypsy and Traveller community.
17. There have been detailed negotiations with the owners of the adjacent fields and we have agreed in principle to the purchase of one area of land and legal agreement has been reached with one of the adjacent land owners to purchase the required land subject to agreement for the funding and planning approval.
18. Architects have been appointed and have developed a scheme (see Annex 1) which meets with Governments best practice standards. As outlined above this incorporates the 6 additional pitches, grazing land for horses, for which we will charge a fee and amenity space for play away from the vehicular access. Through working up this more developed scheme, it has been identified that the potential cost of the overall development will be higher than originally anticipated by our Quantity Surveyor framework contractor. Work is ongoing to review the scheme in light of this increase in costs. All costs will, over the lifetime of the scheme be funded from HCA grant and borrowing secured against the rental income.
19. A specification is being developed and will, subject to Cabinet agreement, be submitted for tender. Contractors will be encouraged to not only consider traditional methods of construction but also pre fabricated options to ensure that the development costs are kept to ensure value for money.
20. The new pitches when built will be to a higher specification than the existing amenity blocks, with improved space standards including being wheelchair accessible and adaptable in order to enable a household to remain living independently for longer. Furthermore, the size of the plots will also be larger to reflect the Governments best practice standards Designing Gypsy and Travellers sites: Good practice guide (2008). The rents charged for the new pitches and existing pitches on the sites in future will reflect the enhanced space standards on the new pitches and levels of amenities across the site.

Consultation

21. During summer 2012 initial discussions took place with residents of the Osbaldwick site to gauge their views on the prospect of extending the site. The response was mainly positive due to issues of overcrowding on the existing pitches which are smaller in size than current good practice recommendations. Amenity blocks will be increasing in size from 18m sq to 30m sq and the overall pitch size from approximately 260sqm to 400sqm.
22. A number of discussions have taken place on the site since then, including a planning for real exercise with an architect, to engage the travelling community in the location of the pitches, grazing land and amenity space and take account of any current issues they have with the site and future needs and aspirations. This gave all residents the opportunity to feed into the process more broadly. In addition the Support Workers have provided regular updates as to progress with the scheme and a specific newsletter/ briefing paper has also been provided to the residents. The travelling community have also been notified that the planning application has been made and encouraged to respond accordingly.
23. The redevelopment of the site has also been discussed with the York Travellers Trust who are in support of the scheme, due to the shortfall in provision across the city.
24. There have also been a number of meetings with the wider community, Chief Officers of the Council have attended meetings with Ward, Parish Councils and the MP for Outer York in relation to concerns and objections raised in connection with the redevelopment of the site.
25. It is fair to say that the proposal to extend the existing site has not met with universal agreement. Concerns have been raised with regards to the management of the existing site and the need for additional pitches.
26. In response to the concerns council officers have provided details of management actions that have been taken where breaches of the licence agreement have taken place and details of how the council manages not only Osbaldwick but also Clifton & James Street sites.
27. Site visits have also taken place with the HCA as a result of the concerns raised by the MP through the formal channels within

government. The most recent visit by the HCA was on the 1st October when they confirmed that they are happy with the site management in place and the opportunities that the extension will bring for closer interaction with the travellers.

Options

28. Option 1- To agree the release of funding to support the extension of the Osbaldwick Travellers Site.
29. Option 2- To not agree the release of funding.

Analysis

30. **Option 1-** Will allow us to deliver a partly grant funded scheme, supported by the HCA, to contribute towards the shortfall in pitches across the city; reduce overcrowding on existing pitches and sites across the city; offer, albeit limited grazing land for horses owned by the Gypsies and Travellers on the site Approval and successful delivery of the scheme will further strengthen our partnership with the travelling community.

31. Cabinet will recall that it approved the Gypsy Roma Traveller Strategy in July 2013 which set out our clear commitment to work in partnership with the travelling community:

"improve equalities and lifelong outcomes and opportunities for York's Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community"

32. The delivery of additional pitches is a key element of meeting this vision.

33. **Option 2-** Failure to agree to part fund the scheme will result in; a lack of new provision in the city and failure to, in part, address the identified shortfall of 36 pitches and provision will not be made for horses to graze.

34. The council will also miss the opportunity to play a leadership role in meeting one of the key priorities within the recently adopted strategy to 'improve accommodation supply and standard.

Council Plan

35. This strategy links in with the following themes in the Council Plan:

- Build Strong Communities – The development of the additional pitches will alleviate some of the tensions caused by the overcrowding of existing sites. The improvements in the environment will enable all agencies to work closer with the travelling community to deliver on the priorities set out within the Gypsy, Roma & Travellers Strategy.
- Protect vulnerable people – Gypsies and Travellers are one of the largest distinct ethnic groups in York and their traditions and history can be traced across hundreds of years. Yet, significant evidence points to the fact that they are the most marginalised and disadvantaged of all minority groups, across a range of indicators. Reducing the level of overcrowding within the site will have a positive impact on the individual residents health & wellbeing and help agencies to more actively work with individuals to address some of the problems this community encounters.

Implications:

36. The implications arising from this report are:

- **Financial:**
- The estimated cost of the proposal is £763.5k of which £423.5k is anticipated to be funded by grant with the remainder funded from prudential borrowing.
- The new 6 pitches will provide a net surplus of between £20k and £38k over the 20 year period which will be sufficient for the council to borrow £340k over a 20 year period. The terms of borrowing and repayments will be agreed by the Director of Customer and Business Support Services.
- In reaching the net revenue income, consideration has been given to additional costs associated with managing a larger site and provision for bad debts.
- Indicative scheme costs were sought from our Quantity Surveyor Framework Partner prior to the submission of the bid to the HCA for funding. Following working up of a detailed scheme, and negotiation with the land owner, the anticipated cost of the scheme has increased by £135k (the actual scheme cost will be determined via competitive tender). Given the

projected increase in costs from the indicative costs following the working up of a detailed scheme, discussion is ongoing with the HCA to consider opportunities for a greater level of match funding to reflect the anticipated scheme costs.

- **Human Resources (HR):** None
- **Equalities** – Community Impact Assessment completed
- **Legal-** The Authority has a general power, under s120 Local Government Act 1972, to acquire land by agreement for the benefit, improvement, or development of its area. There is also a specific power, under s24 Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960, to acquire land to provide a site for caravans.
- **Crime and Disorder** – None
- **Information Technology (IT)** – None
- **Property** –Planning permission- ref: 13/02704/GRG3
- **Other-** None

Risk Management

37. The direct risks associated with this report are minimal. However, there are clearly community concerns with regards to this proposal. To alleviate these concerns it is critical the ongoing dialog with both the travelling community and the wider community is facilitated.

Recommendations

38. Cabinet are recommended to approve:
- Option 1- To approve financial support for the extension of the Osbaldwick Travellers Site.
 - That Cabinet recommend to Council a capital budget of £763.5k to be funded from external grant of £423.5k and prudential borrowing of £340k.

- That Cabinet/Council note the prudential borrowing will be repayable from additional rental income and that the terms of the borrowing and repayments will be agreed by the Director of Customer & Business Support Services.

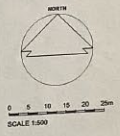
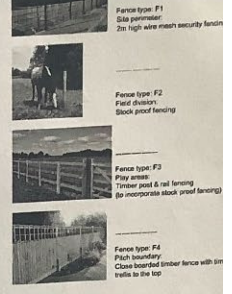
Reason: To ensure that the council plays an active role in meeting the long term accommodation needs of the travelling community.

Contact Details

Author:	Cabinet Member and Chief Officer Responsible for the report:		
Kate Grandfield Supported Housing Manager Tel [REDACTED]	Cllr Tracey Simpson-Laing, Cabinet Member for Health, Housing and Adult Social Services Steve Waddington Assistant Director – Housing & Community Safety.		
	Report Approved	√	Date 11 October 2013
Specialist Implications Officer(s) None			
Wards Affected: Osbaldwick			
For further information please contact the authors of the report			

Annexes:

Annex 1: Proposed scheme plan



1.1	AMENDMENTS TO THIS LAYOUT	10/08/13	1.000	1.000
1.2	TS	11/02/13	1.000	1.000
PLANNING				
 DSP architects		DSP Architects Ltd 3 Redwood Lane York YO20 4EJ Tel: +44(0)1904 481111 Fax: +44(0)1904 481112 Email: info@dsparchitects.co.uk www.dsparchitects.co.uk		
		CITY OF YORK COUNCIL		
OSBALDWICK TRAVELLERS SITE				
Proposed Expansion Site Plan				
Scale	1:500	Sheet No	3383	Rev
			(05) 02	A