

KESWICK & INTWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

From the Clerk: Phillip Brooks

7 Lindford Drive

Eaton

Norwich NR4 6LT

Tel: 01603 250639

e-mail:keswick.intwood@btinternet.com

<http://keswick-intwoodpc.norfolkparishes.gov.uk/>

3rd November 2008

Planning Policy Team
South Norfolk Council
Swan Lane
Long Stratton
Norwich NR15 2XE

Dear Sirs

Gypsy and Traveller Development Planning Document.

1. This letter contains the comments of the Keswick and Intwood Parish Council. We have not used the prescribed form because it restricts the scope of comment we wish to make. The issue for the Parish Council raised by the Planning Document is not whether the sites themselves reach South Norfolk Council's Test of Soundness but whether the arguments for the sites themselves are convincing. Our conclusion is that they are not.

2. Specifically, attention is drawn to the final paragraph on page 12 of the Document:

We intend that any permanent sites which gain planning permission would be fixed in area and number of pitches, with no future expansion of that site. In addition, no future permanent or transit sites would be allowed in the vicinity of the permitted site.

If this test is applied to the site for which planning permission has already been approved at Harford park-and-ride, the A47 corridor, A11 corridor and A11 transit sites would all be rejected on the grounds that they are fairly and reasonably within the vicinity of the Harford site.

3. Moreover, whilst the relevance of sites being located along different "corridors" is recognised although not evidenced in the Planning Document, the close proximity of the proposed sites raises legitimate questions of control and management, including the

elimination of possible overspill. Furthermore, the Parish Council notes in particular that the proposed Thickthorn transit site will have eight pitches. If the hard standing areas proposed (at Thickthorn) match those at Harford, there will be provision for some 32 caravans. That is excessive. Whilst the Document states that the site would be securely fenced and would only be used to accommodate travellers passing through, the Parish Council is reasonably concerned about the potential temptation for those passing through to negotiate use (or force the use) of the facilities at Harford. The Planning Document offers absolutely no confidence that such situations will be properly managed.

4. Apart from the points detailed above, there are other general concerns about the sites themselves:

- access to the A11 is potentially dangerous at both locations and especially the Transit Site at Thickthorn. Here the roundabout is best described as busy and at worst dangerous. This situation can only be exacerbated by adding transit traveller's vehicles to the traffic mix
- being so close to major roads and possible sources of land contamination they are not appropriate for families and especially those with young children and pets
- there is little or no provision for services including shopping, schools and medical services; and
- such sites are not a pleasing introduction for tourists entering Norfolk.

5. In summary the Parish Council therefore believes that the select sites are inappropriate because:

- the concept of corridor sites is not adequately evidenced
- they are too closely grouped to meet South Norfolk Council's own guidelines that sites should not be in the same vicinity
- there is nothing convincing about proper and effective management of the sites, especially regarding likely overspill and possible improper use of the Harford facilities
- the locations are not suitable for living in terms of the close proximity to traffic and other hazards (including contaminated land); and
- they do not enhance "first impressions" for visitors to Norfolk.

6. The Parish Council looks forward to receiving South Norfolk Council's observations on these points.

Yours sincerely

Phillip Brooks