

APPLICATION NUMBER: 2024/00668/FUL

Ward:	Culcheth, Glazebury and Croft
Date Registered:	09 December 2024
Case Officer:	Viv Pearson
Applicant:	Philip Brown Associates Limited
Location:	Spring Lane Nurseries, Warrington, WA3 7AS
Proposal:	Change of use of land to use as residential caravan site for 5 gypsy/traveller families, each with two caravans including no more than one static caravan/mobile home, together with the laying of hardstanding and erection of communal amenity building.
Recommendation:	Refuse

CONDITIONS AND/OR REASONS:

- The proposed development by virtue of the introduction of a new permanent building, siting of caravans, car parking and associated surfacing is inappropriate development, which is by definition harmful to the Green Belt and would detract from its openness and conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt. No very special circumstances exist to outweigh the harm caused and as such, the proposal is contrary to Policy GB1 (Green Belt) of the Warrington Local Plan (2023) and the NPPF.
- It has not been demonstrated that adequate drainage would be provided on the site or that the proposal would not increase the risk of flooding on the site and in the local area. It has also not been demonstrated that the proposed caravans would not be adversely impacted by flooding either on the site, at the entrance to the site or on the highway adjacent to the entrance.

As such the proposal does not comply with Policy ENV2 of the Warrington Local Plan.
- The proposed development will be located in an area of potentially poor air quality and odours given the close proximity to the M62 motorway and a chicken farm. Insufficient consideration of air quality impacts /odours or assessment has been submitted with the application, therefore it has not been demonstrated that the proposal would provide an acceptable and/or safe habitable environment, and as such the proposal is contrary to Policy ENV8 of the Warrington Local Plan and the NPPF.
- The proposed development will be located in a DEFRA Noise Mapped Area where day and night-time noise levels are up to 70db(A) due to the proximity to the M62 motorway. No noise impact assessment has been submitted with the application.

Insufficient consideration or analysis of the impacts from noise have been submitted with the application, therefore it has not been demonstrated that the proposal would provide an acceptable and/or safe habitable environment for the intended occupiers of the site, as such the proposal is contrary to Policy ENV8 and DEV3 of the Warrington Local Plan and the NPPF.
- In line with current Council standards on appraising sustainability, the site would not meet the full range of criteria, especially in terms of access to more sustainable modes of transport.

As such, the site is considered to be in a less than sustainable location and would conflict with Policy DC1 and would not provide an acceptable living environment for future occupiers or be well placed to access the full range of key local services as required Part 5 (a), (b) and (g) of Policy DEV3 of the Warrington Local Plan.
- It has not been demonstrated how the proposal would meet the statutory requirements to provide Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) either on site or at a BNG registered location. As such the proposal is contrary to Policy DC4 of the Local Plan and the NPPF.

INFORMATIVES

- The proposal would not improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area nor does it comply with the development plan and therefore does not comprise sustainable development. There were no amendments to the scheme, or conditions which could reasonably have been imposed, which could have made the development acceptable and it was therefore not possible to approve the application. The Local Planning Authority has therefore implemented the requirement of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

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- This decision has been based on the following submitted information and plans received by the Council on the 9th December 2024.

Spring Lane Nurseries Location Plan

Spring Lane Nurseries Block Plan

Spring Lane Nurseries Site Layout Plan

Spring Lane Nurseries Floor Plan and Elevations

Spring Lane Nurseries Proposed Parking Plan

Spring Lane Nurseries Design & Access Statement

Supporting information

Supplementary Planning Statement

Statement on implications of NPPF changes

Arbtech Preliminary Ecological Assessment

Arbtech BNG Assessment

BNG Metric

Flood Risk Statement

EA Flood Map for Planning 01/12/2024

Flood Risk Statement

Other

Appeal Decision Shadowbrook Lane

DELEGATED DECISION	
With respect to the Authority, is the applicant and/or agent one of the following:	NO
(a) a member of staff	
(b) an elected member	
(c) related to a member of staff	
(d) related to an elected member	
Parish Council objection/Ward Cllr call-in within 21 days	NO
Is the application submitted by the Council/on council owned land/other Council interest.	NO

OFFICER'S REPORT

1. APPLICATION SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application site consists of the southern portion of a larger site within the same ownership, as indicated by the submitted blue line boundary, located to the east of Spring Lane and just to the north of the M62 motorway embankment. The application site is a former horticultural nursery and yard. Prior to 2015, the northern half adjacent to the application site contained planted woodland however this has since been removed and this area appears to have been used for grazing since. The application site comprises some 0.42ha of relatively flat terrain which has an area of hardstanding / gravel near to the entrance gates on Spring Lane.

The site is enclosed primarily by fencing and hedging and there is a row of trees towards the boundary with the M62 embankment. Views into the site from Spring Lane are partially screened by this hedging. There appear to be two derelict structures on the site and the remains of a greenhouse / structure associated with the former use as a nursery. The submitted Design and Access Statement states that the site is currently in use as a commercial yard with existing buildings and hardstanding.

The site is located to the south of the Green Belt settlement village of Croft and the area around the site is characterised by open fields in either agricultural or grazing use associated with local farms which form sporadic groups of buildings in the surrounding landscape.

The site is within the Green Belt as defined under Policy GB1 of Warrington's Local Plan and parts of the site around the entrance and adjacent to the M62 embankment are within EA Flood Zone 2 and 3. WBC mapping also identifies part of the site and Spring Lane as being at high risk of surface water flooding. The larger land parcel which includes the application site is also identified in Warrington's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2024 (SHLAA) as site 1635. The site is not situated on potentially contaminated land and there are no historic assets or protected trees on the site.

2. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

The proposal seeks a change of use of land to use as a residential caravan site for 5 gypsy/traveller families, each with up to two touring caravans and no more than one static caravan/mobile home, together with the laying of hardstanding and erection of a communal amenity building and internal access road.

The applicant owns an existing traveller site adjoining 57 Gorsey Lane in Warrington and this development is sought as a Gypsy and Traveller site to provide accommodation for the applicant's adult family members and their children who live in the area, as the Gorsey Lane site has become overcrowded. As such the proposal is regarded as seeking a number of permanent pitches, as opposed to transit pitches, however, the submitted information does not differentiate between permanent and transit pitches. The applicant states on the application form that the proposal is self-build. A certificate A has been filed with the application.

Details of the proposed development are as follows;

Pitches

5no pitches each containing a mobile home /trailer pitch approximately 11.5m in length and 4.5m wide, a touring caravan pitch 6.6m in length by 3m wide and 2no standard 5.5m long parking spaces positioned adjacent to the access road. It is unclear from the submitted site layout plan where a possible second touring caravan pitch would be accommodated, however it is assumed it would be immediately adjacent to the single pitch as shown.

No details have been provided as to the size, volume or height of the mobile homes or touring caravans, therefore an assumption has been made that the height of the mobile homes would not exceed 3m and that the touring caravans are a standard size.

Amenity building

Following removal of existing structures, a building is also proposed, and this is indicated towards the south boundary of the site in roughly the same area as a derelict structure, thought to possibly be a greenhouse.

The proposed community building would be single storey and of a solid construction and would be 12m in length and 6m wide (i.e. 72m² of floorspace), with a maximum pitched roof height of 4.4m. The building would contain a dining / sitting area, a kitchen, a utility room and a bathroom. The principal elevation would contain an entrance door and three double windows with windows and a patio door in a side elevation, two windows in the other side elevation and one single paned window in the rear elevation. Proposed materials consist of red facing brick and dark grey roof tiles with openings in white upvc.

Highways

The submitted site layout plan indicates that the proposal would utilise the existing entrance on Spring Lane and create an internal access road and turning area within an existing area of hardstanding which it is also proposed to extend north to the site boundary.

Landscaping and enclosures

It is proposed to retain existing trees and hedging and also to separate the site from the open field area to the north by the addition of a post & rail fence and additional proposed hedging.

Services

No bin or recycling area is shown however there would be ample space to accommodate these within the site. It is also proposed that the development will not be connected to the main sewers and waster will be dealt with on site by a package sewage treatment system.

3. AMENDED PLANS

No amended plans were sought.

4. LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

General Public

The application was publicised by 5 neighbour notification letters and a Site Notice.

There have been 42 letters of objection received as a result of the publicity given to the application and an objection submitted by County Planning Ltd, on behalf of a group of local residents. Individual objections based on material planning grounds, have been collectively summarised below;

Green Belt

- Inappropriate development in the Green Belt
- Impact on openness of the Green Belt
- Visual intrusion / encroaching into the Green Belt
- No very special circumstances to justify this development

Visual Amenity

- Over-development of the site

Residential amenity

- Concerns regarding the spacing between pitches which should be at least 6m
- Potential litter, tipping and waste detrimental to amenity of the area
- No details as to arrangements for waste and refuse location or collection
- Negative impact on the amenity of the village
- Poor air quality for potential residents of the site due to proximity to M62
- Poor living conditions and amenity for potential residents of the site due to noise from proximity to M62

Highways

- Concerns regarding increased traffic and highway safety as Spring Lane is narrow and there are no pavements
- Entrance to the site situated on a sharp bend on a narrow country lane resulting in difficulty for on-coming traffic
- Concerns regarding the size of the expected vehicles and difficulty manoeuvring towed caravans in and out of the site

Crime and anti-social behaviour

- Intimidating and disrespectful behaviours from the traveller community towards local residents
- Uninsured traveller's vehicles speeding along Spring Lane
- Concerns regarding security affecting existing resident's properties
- Fear of crime and anti-social behaviour

Flooding

- The site is in Flood Zone 3 and liable to flooding after heavy rain / storms
- The site is unsuitable due to flooding
- The hardstanding that has been introduced to the site has resulted in increased surface water run-off and exacerbated flooding in the area
- Construction of a bank/berm near entrance contributes to flooding on the lane
- Submitted Flood Risk Assessment is misleading regarding impact of flooding on caravans as it says they are raised off the ground, would this be acceptable for any other type of development?

Other

- Already unauthorised caravans on the site
- The proposed new building looks more like a bungalow than a community building
- Potential over-use or intensification of the site if approved
- Unacceptable location and insufficient infrastructure in the village to support the proposal, there are no shops, doctors or dentists
- 90 houses already granted permission in the area and the school is oversubscribed
- Site is not near local facilities, therefore is an unsustainable location
- Beneath power lines and adjacent to a substation, possibly hazardous location
- Concerns about treatment of waste water
- Concerns regarding ownership of the northern part of the site and that it would become part of the traveller site
- Will the northern land parcel become a designated Gypsy & Traveller site?
- Unlawful commercial activity and unloading of material occurred at the site in January 2025
- Traveller community have previously left sites in a mess
- Inaccuracies in Supplementary Planning Statement which states 4 Gypsy households with 1 mobile home each
- Flagrant disregard so far, shown by owner of planning regulations and restrictions
- odour concerns

Ward Councillors

No comments were received.

Parish Council

Parish Council have objected for the following reasons:

Green Belt

- The development is in the Green Belt
- The site has not been identified in the Local Plan as a traveller site

Flooding

- Spring Lane is prone to flooding and there have been issues in the past around the access to the site and as far as the junction with Mill House Lane
- Increase in hard surfacing will make this situation worse
- There is a stream in a culvert 25 feet from the site which may become blocked at times

5. CONSULTEEES

WBC Planning Policy

An up-to-date assessment of Gypsy and Traveller provision has been provided.

WBC Transport Development Control – No objection, subject to conditions

Highways commented that the proposal is essentially for a small residential development however the location is not ideal in terms of connectivity or sustainability.

If the proposal were to be approved, Highways recommended that five conditions be applied to any permission.

WBC Environment Protection – Objection

Environmental Protection were consulted in respect of air quality, noise, lighting and potentially contaminated land. Comments have been received which identified that, expected noise levels on the site would be in excess of recommended levels for residential development.

It was noted that no air quality assessment has been submitted to support the application, therefore the impacts on the development cannot be assessed.

Further detail is included in the relevant section below.

WBC Tree & Landscaping

No comments have been received.

WBC Flood Risk (LLFA) – Objection

WBC Flood Risk team acting as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) commented that the submitted material in relation to flood risk was incorrect or insufficient. No site drainage information or information to demonstrate the permeability of the proposed pitch surfacing materials has been provided to demonstrate that this would be appropriate.

The LLFA responded that, until the above issues/concerns have been addressed and the proposals are in accordance with the requirements set out in Policy ENV2 within the Warrington Local Plan (Adopted December 2023), it is recommended that the application is refused.

WBC Private Sector Housing (Caravan Licencing) – No objection, subject to conditions

No objection was raised in principle to the proposal, subject to criteria required by a site licence application and site licence conditions, such as there being a 6m separation distance between caravans and restriction on the number of caravans per pitch i.e. 10 on 5 family pitches.

Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) – No objection, subject to conditions

GMEU responded that the submitted Appraisal of the site found some limited ecological interest. A number of precautionary measures in respect of wildlife which may be present on the site were recommended. Further details are included in the relevant section below.

6. RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

There is no planning site history for the application site. The table below contains the planning history of the nearest developments and the planning enforcement history of the site.

Planning Reference	Description of Development	Decision	Date of Decision
2022/41976	The proposed installation of a telecommunications base station comprising a 25m lattice mast supporting 6 no antenna together with 2 no ground based cabinets and ancillary development. (just to the north of the application site)	Prior Approval is Required and Granted	16/09/2022
95/33229	Outline application for 1 no detached dwelling. (to north of the application site fronting onto Spring Lane)	Refused	24/05/1995
77/5279	Change of use of agricultural land to recreational use in conjunction with proposed riding school. (land to the rear of application site)	Approved with Conditions	25/01/1978

Planning Enforcement Reference	Description of Breach	Decision	Date of Decision
ENF/2309836	Change of use - Storage & Siting of caravans for residential use.	pending	
ENF/22/09227	Shipping containers on former spring lane nurseries site	Case closed. Breach rectified.	14/09/2022
ENF/222/09219	Removal of trees	Case closed. No breach found.	04/04/2022

7. PLANNING POLICY

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the Local Authority to make its determination in accordance with the Development Plan unless material planning considerations support a different decision being taken. Whilst third party representations are regarded as material planning considerations (assuming that they raise town planning matters) the primary consideration, irrespective of the source or number of third party representations received, remains the extent to which planning proposals comply with the Development Plan. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) supports this legislative position and its contents are a material consideration in determining the application.

Revised National Planning Policy Framework December 2024 (NPPF)

The Revised National Planning Policy Framework (2024) confirms that decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development where proposals accord with an up-to-date development plan. Paragraph 7 of the document states that the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This is balanced by Paragraph 9 which states that plans, policies and decisions need to guide development towards sustainable solutions whilst also taking local circumstances into account, so that they reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.

The adopted Warrington Local Plan (2023) is considered to be entirely consistent with the NPPF and therefore, in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2024) referenced above, references in this report largely reflect the content of the Local Plan. Where there are other specific, relevant, material issues raised in the NPPF these will be discussed within the Assessment below.

As stated above, the NPPF re-iterates that planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan, in the case of Warrington, refers to the Warrington Local Plan 2021/22-2038/39 (also referred to as the Local Plan or WLP).

Relevant Policies in the Warrington Local Plan 2021/22 - 2038/39

- DC1 Warrington's Places
- DC4 Ecological Network
- DC6 Quality of Place
- DEV1 Housing Delivery
- DEV2 Meeting Housing Needs
- DEV3 Gypsy & Traveller and Travelling Show People Provision
- ENV2 Flood Risk and Water Management
- ENV3 Safeguarding of Minerals Resources

Supplementary Planning Documents

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) provide further detailed guidance on the policies contained within the development plan. They do not form part of the development plan but are material considerations in determining the application. Where some of the following documents pre-date the adoption of the Local Plan they can still be utilised in so far as materially relevant:

WBC House Extension Guidelines SPD (June 2021)
WBC Design and Construction SPD (2016)
WBC Environmental Protection (2024)
WBC Standards for Parking in New Development SPD (2015)
WBC Design Guide (2024)

Other

WBC Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2024 (SHLAA)
Technical Housing Standards (March 2015)
Section 7A of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (Biodiversity Net Gain)
Approved Document M: access to and use of buildings (Building Regulations)
Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) (December 2023)

8. EQUALITY ACT (2010)

In determining this application, the Local Planning Authority has considered the requirements under S149 of the Equality Act 2010. It is considered that the application has no differential impacts. It is considered that an assessment under the Public Sector Equality Duty (the PSED) pursuant to section 149 Equality Act 2010 is required. This requires that in the exercise of its functions, the Council must have due regard to the need to:

- a. *eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by [the 2010 Act];*
- b. *advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;*
- c. *foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.*

Additionally, s.149(3) of the 2010 Act provides that when having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not, such due regard involves the need to:

- a. *remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;*
- b. *take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;*
- c. *encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.*

Compliance with the PSED may involve treating some people more fairly than others albeit not so as to permit conduct prohibited under the 2010 Act (s.149(6)).

Among the 'protected characteristics' defined in the 2010 Act are race, age and disability. Under section 9 of the Equality Act 2010, race is given to include colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins. Given that the application involves an assessment of the needs of persons falling within the definition of section 9 of the 2010 Act, it is considered that the PSED is engaged and the decision must be proportionate to achieving legitimate planning aims.

Human Rights Act 1998

Article 8 of the Human Rights Act 1998 states that:

1. *Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence.*
2. *There shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right except such as is in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the country, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.*

9. ASSESSMENT

A site visit was carried out and the site was viewed from Spring Lane. The key issues are the principle of development in the Green Belt and the impact in terms of residential amenity to nearby occupiers and in relation to visual amenity and the appearance and character of the area. Part of the site is also located in Flood Zone 2 and 3 and close to a motorway, therefore the environmental impacts of this location in terms of flood risk and residential amenity for potential future occupiers are also key material considerations. Whether the proposal meets an identified need for specific Gypsy and Traveller Sites is also a material consideration in the determination of this application.

Principle of Development

In assessing whether the principle of development would be acceptable or not, regard should be given to the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in December 2024. In this instance, the Framework should be read in conjunction with the Government’s planning policy for traveller sites, and its planning policy for waste.

Policy DEV2 of the Local Plan states that the Council should provide residential development for a mix of different housing sizes and types. This is consistent with housing policy contained in paragraph 63 of the NPPF, which requires Local Planning Authorities to assess and plan for housing needed for different groups in the community, including travellers, and refers to guidance in the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) 2024, which sets out how travellers’ housing needs should be assessed. In relation to housing need, Paragraph 63 of the Framework, under Section 5 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes, states that;

Within this context of establishing need, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies. These groups should include (but are not limited to) those who require affordable housing (including Social Rent); families with children; looked after children ²⁶; older people (including those who require retirement housing, housing - with-care and care homes); students; people with disabilities; service families; travellers ²⁷; people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes ²⁸.

Relevant Footnotes

The applicant has also indicated that an element of the proposal is self-build therefore Footnote 27 and 28 of the NPPF included below and Annex 1 would be material considerations in assessing this application, except that, *self build* only applies to dwellings and the proposal is for a community building.

27 Planning Policy for Traveller Sites sets out how travellers’ housing needs should be assessed for those covered by the definition in Annex 1 of that document.

28 Under section 1 of the Self Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015, local authorities are required to keep a register of those seeking to acquire serviced plots in the area for their own self-build and custom house building. They are also subject to duties under sections 2 and 2A of that Act to have regard to this and to give enough suitable development permissions to meet the identified demand. Self and custom-build properties could provide market or affordable housing.

Meeting identified Need for Gypsy and Traveller Sites

The starting point here, is therefore to establish whether or not there is a need for a Gypsy and Traveller pitches in the borough. National planning policy (Planning Policy for Traveller Sites - MHCLG, 2024) requires local planning authorities to make an assessment of the accommodation needs for Gypsy & Travellers (G&T) and Travelling Showpeople (TS) and to meet that need through the identification of land for sites. As part of the review for the current Local Plan, the Council commissioned a joint Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) in association with Cheshire West & Chester Council, Cheshire East Council and Halton Borough Council, in order to identify an up-to-date position on the level of the need for travellers. This assessment was completed in August 2018 and informed Policy DEV3 of the Local Plan.

Policy DEV3 of the Warrington Local Plan (based on the 2018 GTAA and the consents that had been granted since its publication and up to the submission of the Plan for examination) identified that provision should be made between 2021 and 2032 for a minimum of an additional:

- a. 2 permanent pitches for Gypsies and Travellers;
- b. 5 permanent plots for Travelling Showpeople; and
- c. 5-10 transit pitches for Gypsies and Travellers

The availability of sites for Gypsy and Traveller’s is required to be updated every year, and until recently, WBC analysis showed there had been a shortfall. This position takes into account the definition of Gypsies and Travellers as amended by the Government in Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) in December 2024, as set out below and which expressly includes those who had permanently ceased travelling as a result of, amongst other things, disability or old age. PPTS Annex 1 Glossary - For the purposes of this planning policy “gypsies and travellers” means:

Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family’s or dependants’ educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, and all other persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or of living in a caravan, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.

For clarity, this amendment to Government policy means that there is a requirement, once again to assess accommodation needs for Gypsies & Travellers who do not meet the definition above, as well as those who do. In addition, the December 2024 amendments to the NPPF were accompanied by some consequential amendments to the PPTS and a further amendment to the definition of gypsies and travellers (contained in Annex 1 of the PPTS) to broaden the scope further to include *all other persons with a cultural tradition of nomadism or of living in a caravan**.

Current position in relation to meeting identified need for Gypsy and Traveller Sites

A recent decision in respect of Manor Park, Fir Tree Close – application reference 2023/01271/FUL which was granted on appeal on the 13th March 2025 has resulted in there now being adequate provision within the Borough for Gypsy & Travellers, see Table 2 below. An updated WBC Gypsy & Traveller Statement has been produced. All tables included below are taken from this updated WBC Policy Position Statement.

Table 1: Summary of Gypsy & Traveller accommodation needs from the date of the GTAA (2018)

Requirement for Travellers Accommodation for period 2017 – 2032 (GTAA 2018)			
Type of Provision	Total Need	Years 0-5 (2017-2022)	Years 6-15 (2022-2032)
Gypsy & Travellers (Pitches)	15 (14+1)*	5	10
Transit Provision (Pitches)	5-10 (10-12 caravans)	5-10	

These figures took account of consents granted at Two Acres Caravan Park in Higher Walton and Pennington Lane in Collins Green (2016/28173 and 2017/29852, respectively). However, it does not take account of more recent consents that have been granted. A further five consents (Fir Tree Close, Cartridge Lane, Penkford Lane and Sandy Lane West) have subsequently gained planning permission to provide an additional 26 Gypsy & Traveller pitches.

Table 2 below confirms the number and size of authorised sites as of 13th March 2025.

Sites with Permanent Permission at time of GTAA (2018)		
Gypsy & Traveller sites	Number of Pitches	Date of Consent
Land adjacent to 57 Gorsey Lane	2	27/10/2003
Pennington Lane (to the west of Toll Bar Cottage)	4	31/07/2017
Smithfield Caravan Park	2	05/11/1999
Two Acre Caravan Park	20	21/09/2017
Woodend Farm	1	27/06/2016
Total	29	
Sites that received Permanent Permission since publication of GTAA (2018)		
The Stables, Fir Tree Close, Stretton	5	21/05/2019
Grappenhall Lodge, Cartridge Ln (2019/34676)	6	08/11/2019
Former Timber Yard, Penkford Lane, Burtonwood (2020/36470)	2	26/06/2020
Brook Hse, Sandy Lane West, Orford (2021/40005)	8	07/03/2022
Manor Pk (formerly the Stables), Fir Tree Close, Stretton	5	13/03/2025
Total	26	

Table 3 - Summary of Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Needs from the date of the GTAA (2018), including those whose status is unknown and that don't meet the planning definition

Summary of G&T Need for Travellers Accommodation for period 2017 – 2032 (GTAA 2018)				
Type of Provision (Pitches)		Gypsy & Travellers (Meet planning definition)*	Gypsy & Travellers (unknown need that may meet planning definition)**	Gypsy & Travellers (Do not meet planning definition)***
Current Need	Households on unauthorised sites	4	2	1
Concealed /doubled-up/over-crowded households	5	3	0	
Total	9	5	1	
Future Need	5 Year need from older teenager	1	0	0
New household formation	4	4	3	
Total	5	4	3	
Overall Need	Total	14	9	4
Grand Total	27			

Transit Provision		5-10 (10-12 caravans)
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In calculating need, the Council recognises that a number of approaches may be taken, for example, a pro-rata method which calculates the required provision on an equal rate over the 15 year plan period, (Method A), or alternatively, an approach which considered immediate and residual need (Method B) and lastly Method C which considers only residual need up to 2031/32. This is summarised below and explained in Table 4.

- *If the pro-rata approach (Method A) is used the requirement in Policy A of the PPTS to identify and maintain a rolling 5-year supply of specific deliverable sites would require the LPA to be able to demonstrate that 23.4 pitches would be provided by 2029/30 (ie. 5 years from this year 2025).*
- *If Method B is used the requirement in Policy A of the PPTS to identify / maintain a rolling 5-year supply of specific deliverable sites would require the LPA to be able to demonstrate that 25.32 pitches would be provided by 2029/30.*
- *If Method C is used the requirement in Policy A of the PPTS to identify and maintain a rolling 5-year supply of specific deliverable sites would require the LPA to be able to demonstrate that 25.3 pitches would be provided by 2029/30.*

Table 4: Summary of methods of calculating the 5-Year supply of Gypsy & Traveller accommodation needs from the date of the GTAA (2018) including those whose status is unknown and those that don't meet the planning definition.

Summary of methods of calculating the 5-Year supply of Gypsy & Traveller accommodation needs															
	Year of coverage of GTAA (2018)														
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Calendar Year	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32
Method															
A	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8
													23.4		
B	15	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86
													25.32		
C								21	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86
													25.3		

The planning consents that have been granted since the GTAA was published have provided 26 pitches. Hence, with Method A the current 5-year supply requirement is exceeded by 2.6 pitches; whilst with Methods B and C the current 5-year supply requirement is exceeded by 0.68 and 0.7 pitches, respectively. In summary the Council can currently demonstrate a 5-year supply; there is a need for one further pitch to be provided up to 2032; an unknown need for pitches for the remainder of the Plan period up to 2038/39; and potentially a further unknown need from the December 2024 further change to the definition (although it has yet to be established if there would be any need generated from this recent change to the definition). In addition, there is still an unmet need for a Transit site of between 5-10 pitches up to 2032. This proposal does not contribute to the need for transit sites.

Therefore, this scheme is not required in order to demonstrate a 5-year supply but would contribute to meeting the remaining need to 2032.

Impact on Green Belt

Policy GB1 of the Warrington Local Plan states that development proposals within the Green Belt will be subject to Green Belt policies set out in national planning policy (NPPF). *In accordance with the NPPF planning permission will not be granted for inappropriate development within the Green Belt, except in 'very special circumstances'.*

The NPPF identifies that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. Paragraphs 154 and 155 of the NPPF set out various forms of development which are not necessarily deemed to represent inappropriate development, however the construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate development within the Green Belt, unless the buildings meet one of the exceptions listed under paragraph 155. Material changes in the use of land and engineering operations may not be regarded as inappropriate, providing openness is preserved and the change of use does not conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt. Paragraph 153 of the NPPF states that;

When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt including harm to its openness. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations

It should be noted that recent changes have been made to the revised NPPF (Dec 2024) in regard to development in the Green Belt, specifically to Paragraph 154 and 155 which are relevant to this application. The format of the wording in Paragraph 154 (below) has been amended and paragraph 155 introduces a new concept of *grey belt land*. The definition of *grey belt land* is given in Annex 2 of the revised NPPF as;

Grey belt: For the purposes of plan making and decision making, grey belt is defined as land in the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of the purposes (a), (b) or (d) in paragraph 143. Grey belt excludes land where the application of the policies relating to the areas or assets in footnote 7 (other than Green Belt) would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development.

Paragraph 154 of the NPPF states that; Development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of the following exceptions apply;

- (a) buildings for agriculture and forestry;*
- (b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use), including buildings for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;*
- (c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;*
- (d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;*
- (e) limited infilling in villages;*
- (f) limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and*
- (g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, (including a material change of use to residential or mixed use including residential), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.:*
- (h) Other forms of development provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are:*
 - i. mineral extraction;*
 - ii. engineering operations;*
 - iii. local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location;*
 - iv. the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction;*
 - v. material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds); and*
 - vi. development, including buildings, brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.*

NPPF Paragraph 155 states that;

The development of homes, commercial and other development in the Green Belt should also not be regarded as inappropriate where all the following apply:

- a. The development would utilise grey belt land and would not fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan;*
- b. There is a demonstrable unmet need for the type of development proposed ;*
- c. The development would be in a sustainable location, with particular reference to [paragraphs 110 and 115 of this Framework] 57 ; and*
- d. Where applicable the development proposed meets the ‘Golden Rules’ requirements set out in paragraphs 156-157 below.*

The starting point as set out in the Local Plan, NPPF and the PTTS is therefore that the proposed development would be inappropriate and harmful to the Green Belt. Policy E: Traveller site in Green Belt of the PPTS (2024) supports this position as it states in paragraph 16 that; *Inappropriate development is harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved, except in very special circumstances. Traveller sites (temporary or permanent) in the Green Belt are inappropriate development unless the exceptions set out in chapter 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework apply.*

Impact on openness of the Green Belt

The fundamental aims of Green Belt policy in the NPPF is to keep land permanently open in order to preserve the essential characteristics of Green Belt which are openness and permanence; to prevent urban sprawl of large built up areas and to prevent towns merging into one another, to safeguard the countryside from encroachment and to preserve the setting of historic towns, and to encourage urban regeneration by recycling existing site. The NPPF states that inappropriate development is, by definition harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in *very special circumstances*.

The application site is situated outside of the Inset and Green Belt settlement village of Croft as identified in the Local Plan and as such, the impacts of the development on the permanence and openness of the Green Belt must be considered.

In addition to the 5no mobile homes and which are usually larger than touring caravans, touring caravans, fencing, hard surfacing and other domestic paraphernalia and the occupier’s parked cars, the proposal would introduce a single storey pitched roofed building of a permanent nature. This building would have a volume in excess of circa 200m³ and would be of a solid construction. No calculations have been submitted in terms of floorspace or volumes for the proposed building or for those of the existing structure which it may be intended to replace. The comparative scale and potential impact of this element of the proposal is therefore not possible assess. Whilst it is accepted that there are, or have been some structures on the site, in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, it is considered that these structures were of a

temporary nature.

In assessing the proposal against Paragraph 154 of the NPPF, in regard to the proposed ancillary building, it would not meet exception d) shown below, as it would not be in the same use as the existing structure.

d). the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;

Where parts of the site may be regarded as previously developed land (PDL) and the proposed building would fall within exception g, the existing structures on the site, which have not been described in the application, are regarded as being of a temporary nature. No evidence has been presented to show that they are permanent buildings. In relation to the second part of g - the proposed development would also have to, not result in substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

(g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, (including a material change of use to residential or mixed use including residential), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

If the site is considered to be previously developed land, it could fall to be assessed under (g), however, given the number of proposed mobile homes and caravans, the erection of a new permanent building and the increased areas of hard standing, it is considered that the proposal would cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt by introducing new built forms and a degree of urbanisation which is not currently present. It is therefore considered that the proposal does not meet any of the exceptions listed above, and notwithstanding a discrepancy in the number of proposed pitches set out in the submitted Design & Access Statement, (4no pitches) this document acknowledges that the proposed development would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt and no evidence to justify *very special circumstances* has been put forward. To conclude, the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, contrary to Policy GB1.

Grey belt land

In regard to grey belt land, as described in NPPF Paragraph 155, the Council has not formed a view on this specifically in respect of this site, however with reference to the Local Plan Evidence Base - Green Belt Assessment, the site is included under reference No.1635 and does not make a strong contribution to the Green Belt or the purposes of including land within it. Therefore, it very well may meet the definition of grey belt land in respect of (a), however as demonstrated in the section of this report above, there is not an unmet need for Gypsy and Traveller sites in the Borough and the site is also considered to be in a less than sustainable location. The proposal would not therefore satisfy (b) or (c) of NPPF paragraph 155 and is therefore regarded as inappropriate development.

Gypsy & Traveller and Travelling Show People Provision

Policy DEV3 of the Local Plan states that in relation to proposals for new sites;

Where there is an identified need or a demand for the provision of transit and permanent pitches for Gypsy or Traveller use or plots for Travelling Showpeople, proposals will be favourably considered where they satisfy other relevant policies of the Plan and meet the following criteria:

- a. The proposed site is suitable for use as a Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showperson's site and can provide an acceptable living environment for future occupiers;*
- b. The site is not subject to physical constraints or other environmental issues that cannot be mitigated to an acceptable level, or that would impact upon the health, safety or general wellbeing of residents on the site;*
- c. The site is or can be well integrated within the local townscape in a manner in-keeping with the local character, using boundary treatments and screening materials which are sympathetic to the existing urban/rural form;*
- d. Be compatible with surrounding land uses particularly with regards to residential amenity; e. The site has good access to the highway network and adequate provision is made for the parking, manoeuvring and storage of all vehicles associated with the use of the site;*
- f. The site is served, or could readily be provided with, electricity, mains water, drainage, sewage and waste disposal facilities; and for permanent sites*
- g. The proposed site is or can be made accessible to key local services such as primary schools, GPs, shops and other community facilities.*

Setting aside the principle of development and the impact on the Green Belt, Policy DEV3 sets out criteria to assess whether a proposed Gypsy and Traveller site would be suitable. The criteria includes whether the site can provide an acceptable living environment for future occupiers and would be compatible with surrounding land uses, particularly with regards to residential amenity, services and accessibility. Related to this criteria, Policy ENV8 requires that all development is located and designed so as not to result in a harmful or cumulative impact on the natural and built environment, on the general levels of amenity of neighbouring occupiers or on the living conditions of proposed future occupiers.

In this particular instance, a number of concerns are raised in regard to the above criteria such as the site not located in a particularly sustainable place and some distance from local amenities such as schools, shops and bus stops, there are no pavements or footpaths along Spring Lane and for some distance up to New Lane in Croft, Spring Lane is unlit by public streetlighting, adding to the sense that the site would largely be car dependent. In addition, there are concerns in relation to the highway network, in terms of the ease of access and manoeuvring, however the greater concerns are raised by environmental issues which will be set out in more detail in the following sections.

It is considered that the site is constrained by physical factors, some of which cannot be mitigated against, such as the physical presence of the motorway and its embankment. These issues relate to flooding, air quality and noise and are considered to be significant constraints that would impact upon the health, safety and general wellbeing of residents on the site. These issues are described in more detail in the relevant sections in this report however are incompatible with

the criteria listed above. The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to Policy DEV3 (a) and (b) of the Local Plan.

In regards to sustainability issues, the Council's SA Report that supported the Local Plan identified the key sustainability issues through a scoping exercise. Eighteen SA objectives were established, as a result of the scoping process. "*Reduce the need to travel, especially by car, improve choice and the use of more sustainable modes*" was identified as one of these objectives. The criteria for assessing this objective have now been used to assess the accessibility of sites in the WBC Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) to bring it in line with current standards on determining accessibility. The criteria are based on access to a GP; Primary School; Secondary School; regular bus service and a train station (see [SA Report for the UPSVLP \(2021\)](#) - Appendix A (Site Appraisal Framework) (Page 233).

If the application site is assessed against these criteria it would not meet any of the criteria to achieve a significant positive effect. In addition, when assessed against the criteria for achieving a positive effect it would only just meet three of the five criteria, with the other two criteria likely to have a negative effect on reducing the need to travel, especially by car, improving choice and the use of more sustainable transport modes. Meaning that overall the site would not be accessible to the full range of key local services as required by Part 5(g) of Policy DEV3. Taken together with the lack of provision for pedestrians and a distance of 1.1m (1.76km) to the nearest primary school in Croft, the site is considered to conflict with Policy DEV3 (g).

Overall, whilst the site could likely meet some criteria set out above, it would fail to provide an acceptable living environment for future occupiers, predominantly due to physical and environmental constraints and the proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to Policy DEV3 of the Local Plan.

Flood Risk

The Council will only support development proposals where the risk of flooding has been fully assessed, understood and justified, with the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures where necessary.

The entrance to the site is covered by EA Flood Zone 2 with the area immediately to the south also within EA Flood Zone 3, i.e. the highest risk. This part of Spring Lane is recognised locally as being at an increased risk of flooding and is therefore also vulnerable to the impacts of Climate Heating. Surface water flooding was witnessed by the case officer during a site visit on December 19th 2024 when the entrance gates on Spring Lane and an area within the site behind the entrance gates was flooded, with water flowing from the site onto the road. Due to the location of the site at the bottom of the motorway embankment, it is further considered that the topography contributes to the level of on-site flooding as when the ground is saturated, water from the motorway and embankment may flow downhill towards the site and then pool at what appears to be the lowest point on Spring Lane in the vicinity of the site entrance.

The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment which has been reviewed by Warrington's Flood Risk team and found to contain inaccurate information and fails to adequately assess the risk from flooding or to consider any means of prevention, protection or resilience other than to offer that the mobile homes would be raised off the ground above the level of floodwater. In addition no information in regard to drainage of the site has been put forward. A proposed finished floor level has not been provided for the proposed ancillary building which from the submitted plans would contain kitchen and bathroom facilities and would be located in an area where flooding was observed.

Annex 3 of the NPPF categorises caravans, mobile homes and park homes as being highly vulnerable to the impacts of flooding whilst the Government's Planning Policy Paper for Traveller Sites (PPTS), sets out in section 3. Plan-making: Policy B Planning for traveller sites, that sites which are located in areas of high flood risk are unsuitable. See paragraph g below;

g) do not locate sites in areas at high risk of flooding, including functional floodplains, given the particular vulnerability of caravans.

Given the combination of the location, the topography, the vulnerability of the proposal and the high level of flood risk, it is considered that the site is entirely unsuitable for the type of development proposed. In the event of a flood, standard advice for residential properties, is to turn off gas, electricity and water supplies. If a flood were to occur, which is likely during winter months or as a result of an intense summer rainfall events, it is envisaged that the occupiers could be severely impacted and possibly left without electricity or use of the ancillary building, which would result in the occupiers having to find alternative accommodation.

The proposal is therefore unacceptable in terms of flood risk and as such, is contrary to Policy ENV2 of the Local Plan and the NPPF and guidance contained within Planning Policy Paper for traveller sites.

Environment and Amenity Protection

Policy ENV8 requires that all development is located and designed so as not to result in a harmful or adverse cumulative impact on the natural and built environment, and/or general levels of amenity.

The proposal will be visible from the streetscene in passing along Spring Lane. Due to the distance to the nearest neighbouring residential property, there is no issue in regard to privacy or potential loss of light.

It is noted that a high number of objections have been received which raised concerns in respect of the management of waste, recycling, litter and general amenity of the area. Bearing in mind these concerns, the proposed development is relatively small, comprising only 5 traveller families and therefore, in terms of impact, it is considered that any potentially harmful impacts arising from the proposal, could be adequately controlled by planning conditions attached to any approval.

In relation to the standard of residential amenity for the proposed occupiers, setting aside the principle of development within the Green Belt, Policy DEV3 sets out criteria to assess whether a proposed Gypsy and Traveller site would be favourably considered. The criteria includes whether the site can provide an acceptable living environment for future

occupiers and would be compatible with surrounding land uses, particularly with regards to residential amenity.

In regard to the location, the site is close to the M62 and would therefore be subject to potentially poor air quality from traffic emissions and traffic noise where daytime noise levels are in excess of 70-75dB(A) and night time noise levels are up to 70dB(A) according to the noise mapping data (DEFRA). No detailed air quality assessment has been submitted with the application or noise impact assessment to show there would not be any adverse impacts on the proposed future occupants of the site. In addition, impacts are likely to be greater as caravans are thin walled structures and more susceptible acoustically than traditional brick buildings. Ventilation also cannot typically be closed making caravans and mobile homes more vulnerable to gases, fumes and the effects of poor air quality. There may also be an issue in relation to air quality and odours associated with a large chicken farm, for free-range egg production located nearby on Spring Lane, however no assessment has been done in terms of this neighbouring use.

WBC Environmental Protection noted that; *the Design and Access Statement about amenity and how no adverse impacts will result from this development however no consideration has been given to protecting the proposed future occupants in terms of noise and given the extremely significantly elevated noise levels in the area and the lightweight construction of the proposed dwellings then this development is likely to lead to significant adverse impacts on both health and amenity with little or no possible or practical mitigation being available to protect future occupiers against noise.*

Overall, there is a lack of supporting evidence to demonstrate that this location could be acceptable for a residential use and the environmental factors described above have the potential to have significant adverse impacts on health and amenity. The site would fail to provide safe or suitable living conditions for the proposed occupiers and is therefore contrary to Policy ENV8 of the Local Plan.

Ecology

The Council will work to protect, conserve and secure a measurable net gain for biodiversity across the Plan Area. Where development is permitted, the Council will consider the use of conditions or planning obligations to ensure the protection and enhancement of the site's nature conservation interest and/or to provide appropriate compensatory measures.

Whilst the addition of mobile homes and touring caravans at the site would not result in permanent development on the site, the addition of more hardstanding and a building would result in a loss of over 80m² of undeveloped land.

Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) responded that the site had some limited ecological interest and recommended a number of precautionary measures and a Construction Environmental Management Plan for Biodiversity should the application be approved. Enhancement measures should also be conditioned. It was noted that an invasive species, namely Himalayan Balsam was found on the site. A planning condition was recommended to be attached to any consent in order to control and manage the removal of this species from the site.

In relation to BNG, GMEU commented that the current plans would result in a loss of 43% and that the submitted metric does not appear to have been completed correctly. As a result of these errors, it is not currently possible to assess the number of units which would be required to comply with BNG requirements. It may be possible to enhance the adjacent land to obtain credits however this option would need to be legally secured for a period of 30 years and registered on the Biodiversity Gain Sites Register.

Overall, whilst the application has not provided the correct information, the site has the potential to achieve ecological enhancements in accordance with Policy DC4 and which could meet post development BNG requirements, therefore ecology has not been given as a reason for refusal in this instance.

Visual amenity

Policy DC6 of Warrington's Adopted Local Plan states that: *high quality design is fundamental to making places more attractive, sustainable, safe and accessible and should be at the core of all development proposals. Proposals should reinforce local distinctiveness; harmonise with the scale and character of existing buildings, be visually attractive as a result of good design and maximise water and energy efficiency.*

The proposal will be visible from the streetscene in passing along Spring Lane however due to hedgerows and the topography would be largely screened from views from other directions. On balance, the presence of built development, mobile homes and domestic items would have an impact in terms of the visual amenity of the area and would detract from the rural character of the area, however whilst it is accepted that there would be some impact, enhancements and additional planting could be secured by conditions which would mitigate those impacts. It is therefore considered that the impacts would not be sufficient reason to justify a refusal on those grounds alone. The proposal would not unduly conflict with Policy DC6 of the Local Plan.

Mineral Safeguarding Area - Sand and Gravel

Policy ENV3 (Safeguarding of Minerals Resources) requires the consideration of a proposed developments impact on the borough's mineral resources. The policy designates safeguarding areas where non-mineral development will only be granted if compliance with specific criteria is demonstrated. The criteria includes a specific list of developments that are exempt from the mineral safeguarding policy due to the limited impact that would arise. In respect of this application, it is considered the proposal constitutes development that is exempt from the safeguarding policy as it would result in a change of use of land and only limited built development which would not fundamentally change the scale and character of the site/use. On this basis the proposal complies with Policy ENV3 (Safeguarding of Minerals Resources).

Highways

In accordance with Policy INF1 the Council will expect development to be located in sustainable and accessible locations, or in locations that can be made sustainable and accessible.

Highways commented that the site was not ideal in terms of connectivity or sustainability and that the existing access would require upgrading and a permeable surface laid out for at least 10m from the road. A greater set back of the gates than 5m would be required for vans and trailers.

No objections were raised by WBC highways, subject to conditions however a number of limitations and concerns were identified which have been summarised below;

- *The site has an extant commercial use. Residential use would normally be expected to represent a reduction in trip numbers and less onerous servicing. In this instance it is likely there would be more vans and trailers/caravans than most residential developments.*
- *The gates are set back approximately 2/3 metres from edge of carriageway and open inwards. The access is in poor condition and not effectively bound material.*
- *Visibility has not been demonstrated but appears adequate for speeds around 30mph. There is a posted speed limit of 30mph both sides of the site.*
- *The site is around 600m from the nearest bus route and substantial residential development.*
- *No cycle or electric vehicle charging provision is proposed. No detail of refuse management is provided.*

If the application were to be recommended for approval, conditions would need to be applied to ensure there were no adverse impacts in terms of the highway network.

10.CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the above assessment, there is not an unmet need for Gypsy & Traveller sites within the Borough and therefore the proposal conflicts with the principle of development. The proposal is also inappropriate development in the Green Belt and no very special circumstances exist that would outweigh the harm identified to the Green Belt.

The site is constrained by physical factors which it is considered make it unsuitable for a residential development of this nature, comprising a communal ancillary building and vulnerable caravans, as Spring Lane, particularly in the area of the entrance to the site and within the site, is prone to regular instances of surface water flooding. In addition to flood risk, due to the location, within close proximity to the M62 and a chicken farm, the air quality and noise levels are considered to be such, as would have an unacceptable and continuously adverse impact on the living conditions of the proposed occupiers. The site is considered to be in an unsuitable location in terms of accessibility and sustainability and there are also concerns regarding the suitability and safety of the access on Spring Lane, predominantly due to flooding.

Overall, it is considered that the proposed development is inappropriate development in the Green Belt, would fail to provide an acceptable standard of residential amenity for the proposed residents and is also fundamentally unsuitable for a Gypsy and Traveller site. As such the proposal is contrary to Policy DC1, GB1, DEV3, ENV2 and ENV8 of Warrington's Local Plan and

Accordingly, the application is recommended for REFUSAL.

Date Report Completed:	18/03/2025	Viv Pearson
Date Agreed by Section Head:	19/3/25	gary earnshaw