



# WOLVEY PARISH COUNCIL

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Mr R Back  
Forward Planning Team  
Rugby Borough Council  
Evreux Way  
RUGBY  
CV21 2RR

Dear Mr Back,

Following the meeting held in Rugby on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, Wolvey Parish Council has discussed and reviewed the Rugby Borough Council Core Strategy Preferred Options Paper.

The Parish Council notes that, as a result of Government guidance contained in Circular 01/2006, the provision of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation is included within the Core Strategy. The Preferred Options Paper identifies broad locations for Gypsy and Traveller sites and Wolvey has been identified as a potential location. The parish council would like to make the following comments in relation to a proposed Gypsy & Travellers site in Wolvey, and asks that they are taken into consideration:

- Wolvey has grown in an ad-hoc basis over centuries, and is surrounded by Green Belt. As identified in the Wolvey Parish Plan its residents “have a desire to retain the village identity and the high value placed on open spaces and the Greenbelt”
- Wolvey Parish Plan identifies brownfield sites and infilling as the preferred areas for development. This does not support the Gypsy & Travellers requirement for Greenfield pitches.
- As a response to a Housing Needs Survey carried out in 2008, the Parish Council has already identified two possible exception sites for housing development, which we strongly urge are prioritised for affordable housing.
- The close proximity of Wolvey to Bulkington and its former illegal Gypsy & Travellers encampment has left a legacy of suspicion and mistrust among villagers. When in existence the number of police-

reported incidents increased significantly; people in local hostelrys were intimidated; litter and rubbish increased.

- Wolvey Parish already meets the challenges of a large transient community due to Gamecock Barracks, Bramcote. Children from the army barracks attend Wolvey school.

### ***Wolvey School:***

Government recommendations are that sites should be dispersed to reduce the burden on local services. However, ten of the borough's current 14 Gypsy & travellers sites are located within the Ansty and Shilton area. Children from Ansty & Shilton attend Wolvey school which means that Wolvey already accommodates the majority of primary school children from the Gypsy & Travellers community within Rugby borough.

Wolvey Parish Plan identified that, despite an Ofsted report which highlighted many outstanding features, a significant number of Wolvey residents perceive Wolvey school as failing. This is because of the large proportion (greater than 50%) of pupils who come from transient communities (either from travelling or military backgrounds). A significant number of Wolvey parents, therefore, choose to send their children to other schools.

Any additional sites, and consequent increase in numbers, will make it even more difficult for Wolvey School to change perceptions and attract pupils from local settled backgrounds. The village school is becoming more and more marginalised and seemingly irrelevant to the local community. Further increases in the numbers of pupils from transient backgrounds will not improve integration between the two communities but will instead serve to alienate them further by effectively creating a 'school for travellers'.

As the majority of children who attend Wolvey school do not live in Wolvey, this causes an already unacceptable burden on local residents due to inconsiderate parking and consequent noise and disruption. The consequent carbon footprint of numerous school journeys also needs to be considered.

### ***Identification of possible sites:***

The parish council has considered whether there are any potentially suitable sites for Gypsy and Traveller pitches in Wolvey. In trying to identify sites the following recommended criteria were used:

1.
  - *There is good access to local services such as a local shop and school;*
  - *Sites should have reasonable access to the public transport network*
  - *There is satisfactory room for onsite parking, turning and servicing of vehicles;*
  - *Vehicular access onto the site from the public highway is appropriate;*
  - *If screening required, suitable landscaping and planting should be provided;*

## 2. Ideal national standards

	IDEAL MAXIMUM ACCESS DISTANCE STANDARDS
RAIL STATION	800m
BUS STOP	400m
SECONDARY SCHOOL	1600m
PRIMARY SCHOOL	400m
LOCAL SHOP	800m
GP SURGERY	800m

The first examination was within the rough boundaries of the village. No sites were found that met all or part of the criteria. Of particular concern was the impact on immediate residences, and sites could not easily be screened from view. Also the land identified for development is in the immediate vicinity of housing and would impact heavily on these residences.

We then looked at the areas along bus routes which are basically Coventry to Nuneaton:

- a. Starting from the Square, travelling towards Shilton there is highly productive arable land much lower than road level and not easily screened. There is then a toxic dump followed by a caravan site, the Five Ways Fishery then private paddocks and residences. This is followed by a dangerous road junction known as Five Ways. Four or five weeks of the year gypsies/travellers do park here and they have been model travellers. The site is left in a clean and tidy condition. The road after this, towards Shilton, was considered unsuitable because of the road's high location above surrounding fields and the difficulty to screen any caravans parked.
- b. Again starting from the Square towards Bulkington, we could not identify any suitable pitch sites. From the village boundary to Bazzard Road are fishing lakes. Along Bazzard Road are military fields and barracks, a Golf Driving Range and Golf Club.

From the junction of Bazzard Road towards Bulkington are a series of S-bends, a farm and residential buildings opposite which is a rare breeds farm. The road from this point begins to elevate for the bridge over the M69 motorway. The fields either side are considerably lower than the road, making screening almost impossible.

We then looked at areas off the bus routes. Travelling towards Hinckley, this was a similar exercise - the only site we could identify was very close to the M69 motorway junction (an area known as the 'triangle') i.e. the site used for storage of materials and plant during the recent island alterations. This does not contain water or sewage facilities, has no storage buildings although its size would provide adequate parking and repair facilities

Much of the land beyond the village boundaries would be beyond the recommended distances to services identified above, thus rendering sites unsustainable.

**Conclusion:**

The Parish Council has studiously examined the Parish Boundaries for possible locations of pitches. Given potential adverse environmental impacts, screening difficulties and the unsustainable nature of other areas of land, the parish council cannot recommend any other than the single site and this is likely to be a prohibitive in cost to implement and maintain and is not provided with any public transport facilities.

***The ODPM Circular 01/2006 Planning for Gypsy & Travellers Caravan Sites states that issues of sustainability are important and should consider “the promotion of peaceful and integrated co-existence between the site and the local community” Fortunately, under the current situation relations within Wolvey remain relatively stable and calm. However, there must be a “tipping point” beyond which these relations will become unacceptably strained. The parish council believes that any further introductions of new travellers sites within the area will impose an unacceptable impact on the local community and will be socially and economically unsustainable.***

Wolvey Parish Council, therefore, requests that you withdraw Wolvey from the Core Strategy as a possible pitch location.

Yours sincerely,

Margaret Cartwright  
Parish Clerk

