

**SWYDDFA CYMORTH Y CABINET
CABINET SUPPORT OFFICE**



Fy Nghyf / My Ref: CM33202
Eich Cyf / Your ref: Scrutiny/Correspondence/
Cllr McGarry

Dyddiad / Date: 14 January 2016

Councillor Mary McGarry
Chair, Community & Adult Scrutiny Committee
Scrutiny Services
Room 263
County Hall
Cardiff
CF10 4UW

Annwyl / Dear Mary

**Pre-Decision Scrutiny of the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation
Assessment and Site Assessment Criteria**

We are writing in response to your letter dated 08 January 2016, concerning the above.

Thank you for your comments. We have set out below a response to each of your recommendations and requests for information:

Recommendation – to include additional wording to explain the reasoning behind concluding there are 17 overcrowded pitches

This conclusion takes into account advice contained in paragraphs 194 to 200 of Welsh Government guidance on “Undertaking Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments” and is derived from an analysis of the survey forms. This guidance states that overcrowding exists where family numbers have grown to the extent that there is now insufficient space for the family within its mobile home accommodation and insufficient space on the pitch or site for a mobile home. Questions B2 and B3 of the survey form address this issue and ask respondents whether is there enough sleeping areas for all residents and is there room on the pitch to safely station additional trailers to prevent overcrowding. Where respondents answered no to both of these questions they were included in the 17 overcrowded pitches identified in the assessment. As recommended we confirm this explanation will be included in the final assessment report.

ATEBWCH I / PLEASE REPLY TO: Swyddfa Cymorth Y Cabinet / Cabinet Support Office,
Ystafell / Room 514, Neuadd y Sir / County Hall,
Glanfa'r Iwerydd / Atlantic Wharf, Caerdydd / Cardiff,
CF10 4UW Ffon / Tel (029) 2087 2479

Recommendation – to include additional wording to explain the reasoning behind including both 16 new households over the next five years and 23 new households over the next five years in the total unmet need

These conclusions take into account advice contained in paragraphs 201 to 210 of Welsh Government guidance on “Undertaking Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments”. The figure of 23 new households over the next five years is the current known demand identified through information contained in the questionnaire responses, through the waiting list, caravan count and partnership working with Local Authorities in the region. The figure of 16 new households over the next five years is a calculation as per the Welsh Government guideline that assumes a 2.25% rise per year. It is the following calculation:

Current Residential Supply	= 92
Current residential demand	= 48
Total	= 140

2.25% accumulative rise for 5 years = 11.77%

140 * 11.77% = **156 (an increase of 16)**

Given this the figures relate to different sources of growth in this five year period and as set out in Welsh Government guidance it is appropriate to include them both within that period. As recommended we confirm this explanation will be included in the final assessment report.

Recommendation – to check use of wording ‘contaminated land’ in the site assessment criteria and whether the Planning Inspector would require this to be changed to ‘land contamination’

In order to accord with the LDP Inspectors recommendation we confirm that the wording in the site assessment criteria will be changed from ‘contaminated land’ to ‘land contamination’ as recommended.

Request for information – clarification on the occupation levels allowed on the local authority site pitches and the difference between overcrowding and over occupancy

The methodology for calculating overcrowding on pitches is set out in our response to the first recommendation above and we confirm this explanation will be included in the assessment report. For the purposes of the assessment over occupancy relates more to the number of vehicles on the pitch which can be safely accommodated as some pitches are big enough for more than one caravan and some are not, whereas overcrowding relates to the bed spaces within the pitch.

Request of information – indication of the weighting that will be applied to the various site assessment criteria when determining site suitability

In terms of weightings we consider that it is better to look at the findings of the assessment in the round rather than saying some criteria are more important than others. In this respect it is important to note that Welsh Government do not suggest weightings in their guidance and such weightings could also lead to the methodology being challenged.

Request for information – an explanation of how the views of statutory providers will be included in the assessment of sites

The assessment process over the next 6 months will be guided by a Steering Group which will include representatives from education and health and their input will be sought when assessing the sites and making appropriate recommendations to Cabinet.

Request for information – details of the consultation process that will be followed with ward councillors and local communities regarding proposed sites

As set out at the meeting in the first instance the findings and recommendations of the assessment process will need to be considered by Cabinet in July 2016. Prior to Cabinet local ward Councillors will be consulted on the contents of the report. Formal consultations as part of the planning application process will include local communities with the precise details to be confirmed as part of the cabinet process in July.

Request for information – details of the issues identified by the Rover Way coastal erosion report and the actions being taken to address these.

The issue of coastal erosion and the Rover Way site is recognised. In order to identify appropriate coastal defence solutions for the wider Pengam Green area the Council is undertaking a feasibility study of the coastal defences along the Pengam Green stretch of the coastline which includes the Rover Way site. It is anticipated that this report will take 18 months to complete and when complete the Council will need to review how the findings affect the existing Rover Way site

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yn gwyir,
Yours sincerely,



**Councillor / Y Cynghorydd Susan Elsmore
Cabinet Member for Health, Housing & Wellbeing
Aelod Cabinet dros lechyd, Tai a Lles**



**Councillor / Y Cynghorydd Ramesh Patel
Cabinet Member for Transport, Planning & Sustainability
Aelod Cabinet dros Drafnidiaeth, Cynllunio a Chynladwyedd**

cc. Andrew Gregory
Stuart Williams
Claire Deguara

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Heather Warren
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Jane Thomas
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