

Hearing Document 6 – Merton Sites and Policies Plan, Main Matter 3: Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

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Ambition Dance Group Event – October 2011

The table below relates to Merton Council’s Accommodation Needs assessment of Gypsies and travellers in Merton (2013) (document reference **SP5.61**)

SP5.61 summarises the research carried out at the Ambition Group dance event organised by the council in October 2011. **SP5.61** paragraph 4.2 (page 15) summarises that:

- 138 people attended the Ambition Dance Group event in October 2011
- 49 questionnaires were completed
- Of the 49 completed questionnaires, 36 respondents identified themselves as a member of the Gypsy and Traveller community
- Of the 36 respondents from the Gypsy and Traveller community, 19 identified themselves as Merton residents
- Of the 19 respondents who identified themselves as Merton residents, 13 provided verifiable Merton addresses (all bricks and mortar)

The table below presents the information in Appendix 1 (between page 22 and 33 of SP5.61) by each of the 19 respondents who identified themselves as Merton residents (whereas the information published in **SP5.61** Appendix 1 is presented by each of the questions / issues asked at the Ambition Dance Event). It is divided into two tables: owner occupiers and non-owner occupiers.

The purpose of this table is to illustrate more clearly how the information in **SP5.61** Appendix 1 was used to inform the council’s identified pitch requirement set out in **SP5.61 section 7** for a total of 4 socially rented pitches and 2 privately owned pitches over the 10 year plan period.

- For additional clarity, the table highlights (in grey) the respondents who were considered to having a need for a caravan pitch in Merton, aligning with the last column of each table.
- The research carried out at this Ambition Dance Event contributed need of 3 socially rented pitches and 2 owner occupied pitches to the council’s assessment

Table H6.1 Non-owner-occupier responses – Ambition Dance Event October 2011

Respondent's unique survey number	Verifiable address in Merton?	Ever lived on a site?	Other household that need own home?	Benefits/problems of site (Tables 2.1 & 2.2)	Benefits/problems of bricks & mortar (Tables 2.3 & 2.4)	Importance rating of living on site (Table 2.5)	Reasons for rating (Table 2.6)	Reason for not living on site (Table 2.7)	Considered as contributing to 10-year pitch need?
4	No	Yes	No	You can get kicked out, it's not stable	Warmth, proper housing	Don't Know	Evictions		No
6	Yes	No	No	Living our Romany ways of life and feel happy with our people and my father lived our Romany way and I would if I could		Essential		Lack of sites	Yes
8	Yes	Yes		Problems we do not get treated like valued community members.		Very Important	Because people get the wrong idea about us because of bad publicity		No
14 & 16 & 19	Yes	No		Family community spirit		Very Important / Important		Travelling family – parents had nowhere to pull into – 60 years ago. Lived in bricks & mortar for sometime. Not had the opportunity to – limited sites & land	Yes
15	No	Yes	No	Strong community					No
21	Yes	No	No			Don't Know			No
27	No	Yes	No	The sense of community is a benefit and the harassment a problem	More acceptable. Isolated.	Very Important	It's our way of life and we should be able to live how we choose		No
29	No	Yes		Ignorant people	Better thought of if in a house	Essential	People are racist		No
31	No	Yes		Discrimination. My freedom	Better way of life	Very Important	It's our own way of life. People don't get		No

							us.		
39	Yes	Yes	No	On a site you are with your community. Only positive is a house is warmer.		Essential	Because of the community	Due to husband's ill health, need disabled unit	No
43 & 49	Yes	No	No	To live my way of life, my culture. There is also no site.	Close to shops and schools. Problems – neighbours don't accept us, separated from family and no freedom.	Essential	For many reasons – family culture, the Romany way of life. Site provisions are needed for our ethnic minority.	There isn't none	Yes
45	No	Yes		You can live on a site and live our own way of life		Very Important		Not enough sites to live on	No

Table H6.2. Owner-Occupier responses – Ambition Dance Event October 2011

Respondent's unique survey number	Verifiable address in Merton?	Ever lived on a site?	Other household that need own home?	Benefits/problems of site (Tables 2.1 & 2.2)	Benefits/problems of bricks & mortar (Tables 2.3 & 2.4)	Importance rating of living on site (Table 2.5)	Reasons for rating (Table 2.6)	Reason for not living on site (Table 2.7)	Considered as contributing to 10-year pitch need?
9	Yes	Yes	Yes	Small plots. Need bigger plots for family all to live on together				Because you can't stop nowhere.	Yes
13	Yes	Yes	No	All good. Not enough of them.	Stuck where we are at	Essential	So they can be with their family and community		No
30	Yes	Yes	No	The prejudice people	Better way of living	Very Important	It is our community and people don't understand us		No
46	Yes	Yes	No	Because living on a site we can live our own way.	Because you are not treated the same, as when we are amongst our own people	Very Important		Lack of sites	Yes

2. Brickfield Road Caravan site residents (redacted notes – December 2012)

Table H6.3 below contains the redacted notes of the research conducted with Brickfield Road residents in December 2012, originally contained in **SP5.61** Appendix 2 (pages 34-37 of SP5.61). Information including gender of respondents, size of household, number, gender, age and location of children and other potentially identifying characteristics (including pitch-related information) have all been redacted from these notes as such information may contribute to being able to identify households or individuals.

Additional information extracted from specific responses below

- three households said that they had lived on site for c40 years
- one household said that they had lived on site for +15 years
- one household said that they would need an additional pitch for a family member
- Four households said that they had serious illnesses (including cardiac illness and cancer)
- One household: Council stated the intention to look at the future need of children living on site, but respondents did not raise any need for their children to additional plots, and instead told that they would pass on council's letter of introduction to families with children on site.

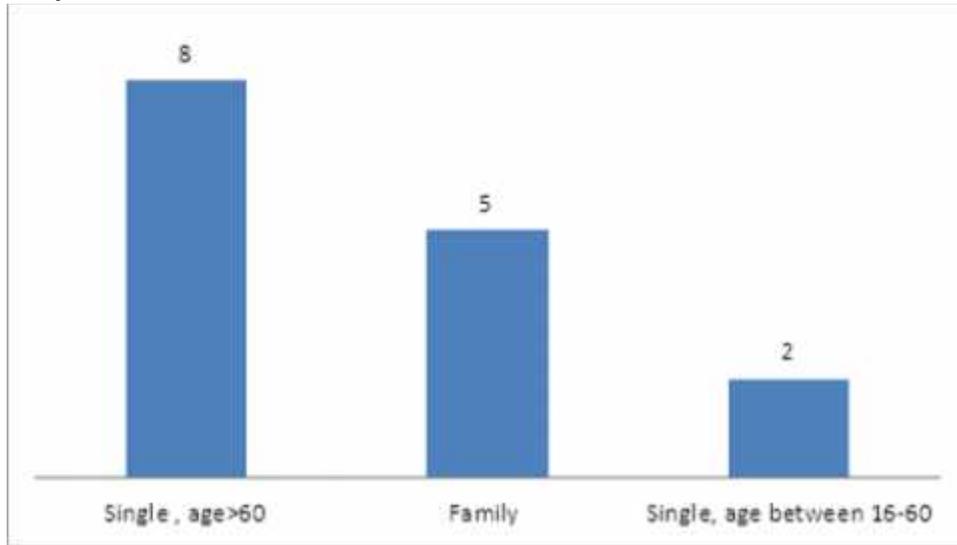
Table H6.3 - Interview Notes (redacted) – December 2012	Need
Children all moved into bricks & mortar housing. "This is a hard life and this way of life is dying out". "My heating bill is so high" "I would not want to move into a house."	None
Feels boxed in by the blocks of flats. Complained about other residents parking cars in front of pitch, so road is completely blocked most of the time. Complained about living under the pylon, and said that suffered from illness. Do not want to stay on site and would like to move into a bungalow. On the Housing Register. Would not move onto another site. Would consider a small site for the immediate family.	Bricks & Mortar
In hospital.	None
Merton Priory Homes have never met XXX.	None
"The flats are blocking the sunlight. If living in house, the building of those blocks would not be allowed to happen. I used to use gas bottles but they froze during winter. I tried putting hot water over it but then the hosepipe froze as well. Now I have central heating but I can't really afford it as it costs £10 a day". "We all rent our caravans. I have 2 rent accounts, one for the caravan which costs £195 a week, and the other is the £80 license fee". "I want to move to another borough, such as [district in Surrey] which has more open space and nearer the countryside. I do not want to stay in Merton." "We don't all speak and I only speak to some of them. I prefer to live on another site, with around 6 plots, but would move into a house with spaces around it."	Out-of-borough / Bricks & Mortar
Have asked council officers what needed to do to move from this site into a house (severe health issues).	Bricks & Mortar
Need ground floor accommodation. Like living on site as have family around. Will only consider moving if given a house. Relatives	Relative may

prefer to live on site.	need separate pitch
“If you have houses to offer, then a lot of people of this site would be interested. Nobody wants to live like this”. “Find me a house to move into then come back”.	Bricks & Mortar
Being evicted	None
All children moved off site.	None
Currently in a care home (registered disabled).	None
Don't need more pitches but need more land on this site. There is a big strip of land - why can't we use it? Parking to our entrance is also a big problem. “People are allowed to double park as there are no parking restrictions on our access road, so if there is a fire on site fire engines would not be able to get through”.	None
Have no children.	None
Have moved into a flat.	
Have health issues but quite happy living here. As for the future, said that might consider moving into bricks and mortar housing, but for now is okay and does not want to think about the future.	Bricks & Mortar

3. Households type and age on Brickfield Road (Document SP5.61 pages 34 and 35 (Appendix 2))

This graph does not constitute new evidence. It is an illustration of the evidence presented in SP5.61 Appendix II (pages 34-35), “Site Residents” heading (p34) and the table of Brickfield resident ages (p.35)

Graph H6.4



It should be noted, as mention in SP5.61 Appendix II (page 34) “Site Residents” heading (second paragraph) that out of five family households, two have dependent children.



COMMUNITY AND HOUSING DEPARTMENT

Simon Williams – Director

Residents
Brickfield Road Caravan Site
Wimbledon
London SW19 8UJ



Housing Strategy
London Borough of Merton
Merton Civic Centre
London Road
Morden SM4 5DX

Direct Line: 020 8545 3619
Fax:

My Ref :
Please Ask For: Angela Chu
Your Ref:

Date: 4th December 2012

Dear Residents,

Future Requirements of Caravan Pitches in Merton

Having completed a 'call for sites' exercise recently to identify available land for developments in Merton, the Council is now planning to allocate sites for different purposes, including the development of new housing and caravan pitches based on evidence of future needs

In order to fully understand the future accommodation need of residents of the Brickfield Road Caravan Site, the council would like to come and hold a short interview with each household on site. The meeting will be informal and should take no more than 10-15 minutes.

The aim is to gather information about the number of additional caravan pitches that will be required in Merton over the next 10 years, so the council could decide if land would need to be set aside for the development of more caravan pitches.

If you are willing to take part in the interview, please let Jackie Murphy of Merton Priory Homes or myself know of a suitable date and time for us to come to you.

Jackie can be contacted on 0300 500 3000, and my direct line is 020 8545 3619.

Yours sincerely

Angela Chu
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