Marshfield Community Council

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Head of Planning

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3 May 2018

Dear Sir

**Planning Application Observations**

**MCC 868**

**Conex 18/0113**

**PROPOSAL:** Siting of1NO static caravan, 2NO touring caravans and 1NO day / utility room for residential use by a Gypsy / Traveller family and new means of enclosure

**SITE:** Ty Mawr Lane Stables, Ty Mawr Lane, Cardiff CF3 2YF

There are currently 122 authorised gypsy traveller sites with 1003 reported caravans in Wales from a survey conducted in January 2018. The Government has established a new framework of housing and planning systems designed to increase site provision to meet the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers, reducing the number of unauthorised sites and promoting good relations with the settled community. Sites, whether public or private, should be identified having regard to highways, environmental keeping and, local infrastructure considerations.

In addressing this challenge it is important to ensure that these sites:

* Are sustainable, safe and easy to manage and maintain
* Are of a decent standard, equitable to that which would be expected for social housing in the settled community
* Support harmonious relations between Gypsies and Travellers and the settled community.

After communicating with the local community by means of a public Planning Meeting and social media streams, the Council reinforces the concerns of the local residents on the unsuitability of this application.

Marshfield Community Council (MCC) considers that this application is both inappropriate and unsuitable in this area on the following grounds :-

1. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 sets a framework for local authorities across Wales to ensure the ‘sustainable development principle’ (meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs) is met. Section 4 of the Act puts in place a number of well-being goals which authorities are to seek to achieve in order to meet this principle. These goals include achieving ‘a Wales of cohesive communities’. The established community has made it clear they do not want community cohesion forced upon them. Newport City Council has not been active in promoting any broader strategies to improve community cohesion. **Government ‘statement of fact’ re-enforces the fear that a degree of unlawful activity can be associated with some traveller sites, this does nothing to ensure community cohesion as it outlines particular behaviour traits that the established community are very much concerned about.** **Based on past experiences with traveller sites highlights further problems that the established community are concerned about, the prospect of dangerous dogs roaming is of grave concern, especially to the immediate neighbouring families, farmers and those using the lane with young children.**
2. Welsh Government guidance states any site must be sustainable, offering scope to manage an integrated coexistence with the local community.  This will include consideration of noise and possible disturbance to Gypsy and Travellers living on the site, and possible noise and disturbance to the wider community, in particular from movement of Gypsy and Traveller vehicles. The proposal for the above named site at Ty Mawr Lane does not take this into consideration. Commercial vehicles would be entering and leaving the site at all hours, including into the night, this is common practice and can be witnessed at other traveller sites within the local Cardiff area.
3. This proposed site is in close proximity to a high pressure gas pipe line belonging to Wales & West Utilities. One of the caravans will be within approx 15 meters of the pipeline, and the septic tank and soak away appears to be directly over the pipe line. There are stringent Health & Safety conditions that must be put in place prior to any excavation work carried out near this pipe line. The proposals for this site would cause a risk of possible damage to the pipeline and make maintenance and emergency access more difficult. It would also be difficult to monitor compliance with the associated regulations and requirements..

1. This site is outside the settlement area, and is situated within the Gwent Levels. A highly important and sensitive area for the protection and conservation of the landscape, rare insects and flora. A traveller site at this location would in no way be in keeping with the local environment, it is a quiet rural lane comprising of a mix of old well established detached farm houses and buildings.
2. The Gwent Levels constitute the lowlands between Cardiff and Chepstow and are drained by an ordered network of drainage ditches. The site is within the SSSI 0341 (St Brides) boundary. They are an example of one of the most extensive areas of reclaimed wet pasture in Great Britain which includes the

Somerset Levels, Romney Marsh and the Pevensey Levels, and is the largest

area of its kind in Wales. Together these Levels systems constitute a national series of sites, each with its own special features. The Gwent Levels reens are rich in plant species and communities, many of which are rare or absent in other Levels systems. This is due to the variety of reen types and their management regimes and the timing of the management which results in a staggered programme across the Levels. The regular maintenance of some reens provides conditions for submerged species such as hairlike pondweed Potamogeton trichoides and openwater emergents such as arrowhead Sagittaria sagittifolia an opportunity to flourish. The aquatic invertebrate fauna is very diverse and the Gwent Levels compares well with similar areas in Britain. Many nationally rare or notable species are present such as Haliplus mucronatus and Hydrophilus piceus. The area is important in the Welsh context for its snails and dragonflies and includes the species Physa heterostropha and Brachytron pratense respectively. The large number of hedgerows adds to the diversity of the area and together with the main reen banks provide a habitat for nationally important assemblages of terrestrial invertebrates such as Pipunculus fonsecai and Tomosvaryella minima. The reens in the St Brides area support a number of interesting plant species most notably thread-leaved water-crowfoot Ranunculus trichophyllus and small pondweed Potamogeton berchtoldii. Reen bank and green lane habitats in this area are also important for relict meadow plant species such as the regionally notable grass vetchling Lathyrus nissolia and common meadow-rue Thalictrum flavum. The St Brides area also supports rich invertebrate communities with a number of nationally notable and notable marshland species, e.g. the true fly Chrysogaster macquarti and the beetle Hydaticus transversalis. It is the only area on the Gwent Levels where the rare fly Stenomicra cogani has been recorded. It is imperative that the water quality of the reens is preserved as any contamination of the water will be detrimental to the ecology of the area. This site is surrounded by reens, and it is considered that they would be at risk with this proposed operation. Past experiences relating to reens within close proximity to established traveller sites evidence a larger amount of flytipping. Flytipping is not only unsightly but is already an issue within our community, requiring additional resources from Natural Resources Wales and the Community Council in keeping them clear.

1. The site is situated within the countryside and falls within the Green Wedge as defined by Newport Local Development Plan (LDP). MCC does not consider that this development would respect the landscape and character of the immediate surrounding area in line with SP5 of the LDP. Neither would it comply with the Green Wedge Policy SP7 as the development would prejudice the open nature of the land by its high fencing and screening.
2. The site lies within an archeologically sensitive area, a landscape of outstanding historic interest as defined within the Register of Landscapes of Historic Interest in Wales and as such in line with Policy CE4 shall be protected, conserved and enhanced. It is not felt that this development will comply with any of these requirements.
3. No Phase 1 Habitat Survey has been completed and submitted by the applicant.
4. The site is situated on a flood plain, and it is considered that it does not fit the criteria of Section 6.2 of TAN15 (i) and (ii). TAN15 also identifies that residential caravans are highly vulnerable to flooding in this area, again this makes this application an unsuitable development. It may also be worth noting that the reens on the South side of Ty Mawr Lane regularly flood at High Tide and when heavy rain falls making the road impassable. This would impact on access for emergency vehicles. The field to the East of Ty Mawr Stables bordering onto Ty Mawr Lane is regularly flooded, with water standing to a not insignificant depth in the field.
5. In setting their policies, local planning authorities should have regard to the potential for noise and other disturbance from the movement of vehicles to and from the site, the stationing of vehicles on the site, and on-site business activities. Ty Mawr Lane, is a single track lane, it forms part of the National Cycle Path and is well used by walkers, dog walkers, children and cyclists. The lane is too narrow for two cars to pass each other and has very few passing places. The lane is also the only access to a number of public footpaths and one of the local golfclubs. Any further increase in vehicles will exacerbate this existing hazard. The grass verges between the tarmac and the reens are soft and have sunk owing to the heavy vehicle usage. In some sections of the lane there is a not insubstantial difference in the level between the verge and the tarmac where a vehicle leaving the tarmac surface could end up in the reen or suffer damage to the vehicle. Again this would be exacerbated by additional traffic, particularly large vehicles.
6. The sustainability of the site would be poor.

a) Marshfield does not have a regular bus service (the DART bus can be booked the day before for certain journeys from Marshfield Road and St Mellons Road).

b) The nearest regular bus service would be approx. 2 miles away, and there is no train service.

c) Marshfield does not have a surgery, the nearest being at Dyffryn or St Mellons.

d) There is one village shop that incorporates a Pharmacy and Post Office

e) The village school is over subscribed

f) The drainage system throughout the village is old and already functioning at their full capacity with the result that the drains over flow in rainy weather.

1. From the details in the ”Design and Access Statement:

a) The type of vehicles listed appear to indicate that they would be used to carry out a business. This appears to cast some doubt as to whether this application would be for a residential site as stated.

b) The 20 year ownership of the land appears to be incorrect. On the 10th

November 2009, planning application connex 09/1163, was registered showing the applicant as a Mr Carl Evans. Although MCC made No observations at the time of the application MCC did registered concerns regarding a possible future change of use.

1. The LDP does not identify a shortage of available Gypsy /Traveller sites in the Newport Area.

It is in consideration of all the above points that MCC considers the application to be unsuitable and should be refused.

Yours faithfully

G C Thomas

Clerk

http://www.marshfieldcommunitycouncil.org