



Development Strategy Task Force (2009/10)

Notes and papers of the meetings held between September 2009 and 7 April 2010



Development Strategy Task Force (2009/10)

Introduction

The Development Strategy Task Force was established by the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) in September 2009 and is responsible for considering all “non-strategic” matters in relation to the Local Development Framework, Housing Strategy and Local Transport Plan policy preparation and making recommendations.

Whilst meetings of the Development Strategy Task Force are not open to public we aim to publish all of the notes and recommendations of the Task Force meetings and in some cases the reports received at those meetings. This paper includes all of the notes of meetings held between September 2009 and April 2010. There are also some reports relating to the gypsy and traveller development plan document and the site allocations development plan document.

The terms of reference for the Task Force state that reports on progress will be provided for information purposes. These reports are also available on the Council’s website.

Agenda Item: 3

- Meeting:** Development Strategy Task Force
- Date:** 15 September 2009
- Subject:** The Planning Obligations Strategy Supplementary Planning Document for North Central Bedfordshire, formerly the Mid Bedfordshire area.
- Report of:** Richard Fox, Head of Development Plans
- Summary:** The report seeks the views of Members on the amendments to the Planning Obligations Strategy for consultation, prior to the adoption of the Supplementary Planning Document alongside the adoption of the Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document for North Central Bedfordshire.
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- Contact Officer:** Pru Khimasia
- Public/Exempt:** Public
- Wards Affected:** The Wards in Central Bedfordshire North
- Function of:** Executive

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. That the Members of the Development Strategy Task Force:**
 - (a) consider the alterations to the Planning Obligations Strategy and**
 - (b) approve the document for public consultation.**

Introduction

1. Planning obligations are primarily intended to make acceptable those developments that would otherwise be unacceptable in planning terms. In accordance with national planning policy contained in Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development, local planning authorities are required to ensure that new development is planned to be sustainable. Where communities continue to grow, many require additional infrastructure, services and facilities such as schools, play space, bus services, health care etc. to ensure that growth in those communities is fully sustainable.

2. The Planning Obligations Strategy Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) sets out proposals for an improved approach to negotiating and securing planning obligations associated with new development in Central Bedfordshire in the north area. A similar document is being produced in Central Bedfordshire for the south area.
3. Planning obligations are legal agreements negotiated between local planning authorities and persons with an interest in a piece of land. Obligations can be secured through unilateral undertakings by developers. A planning obligation can also take the form of a commitment made by a landowner under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act in conjunction with the granting of planning permission.

What is the status of the current document?

4. The SPD was first published in draft for formal consultation in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (2006) in July 2007. Comments received upon the draft SPD were fully considered by Mid Bedfordshire District Council's Local Development Framework (LDF) Task Force on 24th January 2008. Following revisions to take account of comments received through consultation the final SPD was approved by the Mid Bedfordshire District Council Executive on 20th February 2008. Since its adoption, it has been used on a regular basis by Development Control in the north.
5. It should be noted that this SPD will only cover the north (former Mid Bedfordshire) part of Central Bedfordshire. Work will begin shortly on a combined Planning Obligations Strategy for the whole of Central Bedfordshire. However before this combined SPD is completed it is considered prudent to adopt this document on an interim basis to avoid a policy vacuum.

Why review the document now?

6. The SPD was prepared and adopted in the context of the Mid Bedfordshire Adopted Local Plan (2005). However this Local Plan will be largely superseded by the Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document, and therefore any SPD based on the Local Plan will also be superseded.
7. The intention to prepare this SPD has been included within the Council's Local Development Scheme and the SPD provides guidance upon how the Council will deliver Policy CS2 of the Core Strategy.
8. Additionally, since the original SPD was adopted the unitary authority has been created, amalgamating the County Council with Mid and South Bedfordshire District Councils.

9. As well as the updates to ensure that the SPD reflects those changes mentioned above, there are some other changes that have also been added to the document. All the changes can be summarised as follows:
 1. Where appropriate references to the Council have been changed to Central Bedfordshire Council.
 2. Where references to legacy authorities need to remain unchanged, the word “former” has been added.
 3. References to the Adopted Local Plan have been replaced by references to the relevant part of the Core Strategy.
 4. The text has been updated to ensure all policy references are up to date.
 5. The information on Community Infrastructure Levy has been updated to include a reflection of the recent DCLG guidance.
 6. Bedfordshire PCT is now referred to as NHS Bedfordshire.
 7. Under primary health care, the VAT charge has been removed, as finance have confirmed that VAT is not chargeable in planning contribution agreements. Removing this charge ensures consistency within the Strategy, as VAT is not charged on the other contributions.
 8. The addendum to Annex 1 showing amendments to the education requirements have been incorporated into the background paper.
 9. Sections on open space, green infrastructure and allotments has been updated make reference to the Open Space, Sports and Recreation Needs Assessment Technical Report (2008).
10. All changes are shown as track changes in the main strategy document in Appendix A and the accompanying Background Paper in Appendix B.
11. In order to satisfy the requirements of LDF Regulations, it will be necessary for Officers to publish these small amendments for comment for a four week period. This is proposed to take place as soon as possible after Task Force. We will notify those people who were previously involved in the production of this document of the consultation and the changes will be available for anyone, including all Members, to comment on.

Next Steps

12. Officers will, following consultation on this document, prepare a report for Executive, seeking approval to adopt this Planning Obligations Strategy at the same time as the Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Documents. Officers aim to do this in November.
13. In the south, Officers are preparing a report for the Joint Committee seeking sign off of their draft strategy. Although there will be two separate strategies for the unitary authority for a short time, apart from the differences in the evidence base, the strategies in the south and north will both be similar.
14. The Task Force will be asked to consider the combined Planning Obligations Strategy for the whole of Central Bedfordshire around March next year.

Conclusion

15. Members are asked to consider the amendments to the existing Planning Obligations Strategy and approve the amended document for consultation purposes.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS
<p>Council Priorities:</p> <p>The Local Development Framework is a fundamental part of the Council's key aim to manage growth effectively and the Planning Obligations Strategy contributes to this aim.</p>
<p>Financial:</p> <p>This is a limited review so will incur minimal production costs. An adopted SPD can secure considerable finance towards essential infrastructure provision. This would be much more difficult without a Planning Obligations Strategy SPD.</p>
<p>Legal:</p> <p>The Planning Obligations Strategy is part of the statutory development plan for the area.</p>
<p>Risk Management:</p> <p>None</p>
<p>Staffing (including Trades Unions):</p> <p>None</p>

Equalities/Human Rights:

None

Community Safety:

None

Sustainability:

The Local Development Framework embraces sustainable development as its overarching aim and has and will continue to be subject to a sustainability appraisal.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Planning Obligations Strategy

Appendix B – Planning Obligations Background Paper

Agenda Item: **4**

Meeting: Development Strategy Task Force
Date: 15 September 2009
Subject: The Design Guide For Central Bedfordshire
Report of: Fiona Webb (Team Leader Design & Heritage)
Mark Saccoccio (Team Leader LDF – South Area)
Summary: This report provides Members with an update on progress of the preparation of the Design Guide for Central Bedfordshire and seeks Members endorsement to undertake public consultation on the draft Guide.

Contact Officer: Fiona Webb
Mark Saccoccio
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Council

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. that the
 - (a) Need for a Design Guide covering Central Bedfordshire be recognised.
 - (b) Development Strategy Task Force endorses public consultation on the draft Design Guide for Central Bedfordshire.

Introduction & Background

1. Central Bedfordshire is committed to the preparation of a design guide that will underpin the Council's commitment to maintaining and improving the quality of the built environment and promoting sustainable development and healthy communities. The Design Guide will reinforce the Government's commitment to place making, good design and achieving carbon neutrality.
2. When adopted, the supplementary planning document (SPD) will ensure that there is a consistent approach to dealing with design matters across the whole of Central Bedfordshire and will provide a comprehensive suite of design documents that will supersede those presently in use by the authority.

3. The scope of the new Design Guide is broader than the previous guidance documents in that the main guide addresses not only the principles of good design and place making but also covers a wider range of development, including street and highway design. One of the aims is to achieve sustainable development and construction.
4. Its purpose is to set out recognised design principles which can help guide development across the authority appropriate to local context. It does not seek to be prescriptive but to set parameters for creative solutions.

Design Guide – Form & Content

5. The documents comprises the Main Document together with a suite of 7 supplements that will provide more detailed guidance on specific development types as follows:-
 - New Residential Development – Design Supplement 1
 - Larger Footprint Buildings – Design Supplement 2
 - Town Centre and Infill Development – Design Supplement 3
 - Residential Alterations and Extensions – Design Supplement 4
 - The Historic Environment – Design Supplement 5
 - Shopfronts and Signage – Design Supplement 6
 - Movement, Streets and Places – Design Supplement 7
6. The preparation of Design Supplement 7 - Movement, Streets and Places, was agreed by the former Mid Bedfordshire LDF Task Force on 23rd April 2009. This Supplement addresses Members concerns for the need for detailed highways guidance. This supplement incorporates and updates the former draft Bedfordshire County Council highways guidance.

Proposed Timetable

7. The objective is for Central Bedfordshire to have a Design Guide SPD adopted by April 2010. In order to achieve this and subject to endorsement by the Member Steering Group (MSG), consultation is likely to take the following format:-

Milestone	Date
Report to Joint Committee Members Steering Group	1 September 09
Workshop for Members Room 14, Chicksands (a.m.), 11.30 a.m. – 1.00 p.m.	10 September 09
Report to Development Strategy Task Force	15 September 09
Launch of Public Consultation for 6 weeks	Early October 09
Stakeholder event	Early October 09
Reassess Draft document in light of comments	End November/ December
Report to Development Strategy Task Force	December 09 date tbc
Report to Executive for approval <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - notify agenda item to Democratic Services - draft report - final report 	12 January 2010 9 December 09 18 December 09
Report to Joint Committee with Luton <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Member Steering Group 	29 January 2010 12 January 2010

Way Forward

8. A Member workshop is to be held on 10th September to which the Member Steering Group is invited. The intention of the morning is to inform Members of the draft context of the Guide and its application.
9. A copy of the Design Guide and Supplements is on the Council's intranet at the following link:

<http://intranet.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/directorates-service-areas/sustainable-communities/development-management/draft-design-guide.aspx>.

Hard copies of the Design Guide have been sent to Members who have requested a copy.

9. Following this workshop it is proposed to go out to public consultation in October 2009 for a six week period. This will be advertised in the press and on the Council's website and will include a stakeholder seminar to launch the event. The Council will invite agents, developers, amenity bodies, town and parish Council's to the stakeholder seminar launch event. A copy of the Design Guide will be available on the Council's website together with an on-line survey questionnaire. Following the public consultation period comments received will be reviewed and considered and any necessary changes be made to the Design Guide. Comments received will be reported to Executive together with recommended changes. It is anticipated that the Design Guide will be reported to Executive for adoption in January 2010.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

Supports Council vision "to improve the quality of all in Central Bedfordshire, and enhance the unique character of our communities and our environment".

Financial:

The financial implications of creating this document are being borne in their entirety by Central Bedfordshire Council.

Legal:

The Design Guide for Central Bedfordshire will be used as technical guidance in the determination of planning applications.

Risk Management:

None

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

Staff training is an important focus in the preparation of the Design Guide.

Equalities/Human Rights:

The Design Guide supports Life Time Homes, accessibility for all, creating places for all.

Community Safety:

Addressed in the Design Guide. Community Safety Team have been fully involved in the preparation of the Guide and support the guidance.

Sustainability:

Addressed in the Design Guide as an integral part of place making and an essential consideration in the determination of applications for new development.

Appendices:

Copies of the draft Design guide and its seven supplements will be circulated will be circulated to Members for consideration before their meeting.

Development Strategy Task Force

Recommendations of the meeting held on 15 September 2009 from 3pm
in Committee Room 2, Council Offices, Dunstable



Present: Councillor Snelling (Chairman)
Councillors Aldis, Brown (Substitute for Councillor Gale), Gammons, C Turner

Other Members in attendance: Councillors Bastable and Nicols

Apologies: Councillors Barker, Gale and Williams

1. TASK FORCE GUIDANCE AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 1.1 The Development Strategy Task Force received a set of draft terms of reference and guidance on the way that it could operate. Members considered that whilst meetings would not normally be held in public there might be occasions where they would wish to hold meetings in public to gather evidence on some of the issues on the agenda (for example the Task Force might wish to seek public involvement on site allocations). It was considered important that Members and officers should be able to consider some issues in private, it may be necessary to schedule agendas to permit both public and private sessions.
- 1.2 The Task Force considered that clarification should be provided in the communication protocol amending terminology which referred to "we", there should be more clarity as to who this referred to.

Recommendations

That the following recommendations be provided to the Overview and Scrutiny Officer:

1. That the Terms of Reference and guidance document for the Development Strategy Task Force be approved by the Task Force for consideration by the Sustainable Communities OSC subject to the following amendments:
 - (a) paragraph 4.1 be amended to read "agendas and reports will normally be distributed to Members of the Task Force at least 5 clear working days before the meeting."
 - (b) All references to the Sustainable Communities OSC "confirming" recommendations of the Task Force be amended to read "consider".
2. That the communication protocol be amended to provide clarity around terminology as outlined at paragraph 1.2 above

2. PLANNING OBLIGATIONS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

- 2.1. The Task Force received the revised Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which it was proposed be adopted by Central Bedfordshire Council on an interim basis to cover the north (former mid-Bedfordshire) area of Central Bedfordshire.

It was noted that this document would be received by the Executive at its meeting in November 2009.

- 2.2. The Task Force discussed various aspects of the SPD and noted that a full Central Bedfordshire wide review of the SPD will be resubmitted to the Task Force to consider the substance of the document in Spring 2010. The Task Force discussed the following aspects of the SPD, which should be considered during this future review:
- derived standard charges to provide additional early years educational needs arising from proposed developments;
 - thresholds for gathering developer contributions;

Recommended

That the revised Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document be approved by the Development Strategy Task Force and the Head of Development Plans be advised to undertake further consultation as appropriate.

3. THE DESIGN GUIDE FOR CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE

- 3.1. The Task Force received the Design Guide for Central Bedfordshire and seven design supplements which outlined more detailed guidance on specific development types.
- 3.2. The Task Force noted that guidance relating to road widths and community safety had been included in the design guide, which would provide guidance to developers alleviating concerns and encouraging good design quality. The guide would incorporate designs from both the former mid-Bedfordshire and south Bedfordshire areas and aimed to preserve the unique character of these areas whilst also providing flexibility to enable modern design where appropriate.
- 3.3. The Task Force raised concerns regarding gaps in the design guide for further images and were reassured by officers that these would be filled prior to consultation being undertaken.

Recommended

That the draft Design Guide for Central Bedfordshire be approved by the Development Strategy Task Force and the Team Leader for Design and Heritage be advised to undertake further public consultation on the draft Design Guide subject to the following amendments:

- (a) the blanks and empty spaces currently located in the document being filled as appropriate;
- (b) the final paragraph of section 6.09.04 (Garages) in Design Supplement seven being amended to read as follows "garages which are designed below the minimum stated here will not be counted as a parking space."

Development Strategy Task Force

Notes of the meeting held on 12 October 2009



- Present: Councillor Snelling (Chairman)
Councillors Aldis, Barker (Substitute for Councillor Johnstone) Birt, Gale, Graham (Substitute for Councillor C Turner), Gammons, Kane, Williams
- Other Members in attendance: Councillors Bastable, Dalgarno, Jones, Lockey and Shadbolt
- Apology: Councillor C Turner

1.0 Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared.

2.0 Site Allocations Development Plan Document

2.1 The task force received an introduction from officers regarding the allocation of sites for additional housing and employment in the north part of Central Bedfordshire (the former Mid-Bedfordshire area). The task force were told that the Council was required to find sites for 17,950 new homes and 17,000 new jobs between 2001 and 2026.

2.2 The task force was asked to consider the proposals for different potential sites throughout Central Bedfordshire and provide their comments on which sites they felt should be supported. The final decision on which sites would be recommended for development would rest with full Council and a full and comprehensive consultation would take place in public following the Council's final decision.

2.3 The task force debated proposals in a number of wards and raised the following issues in summary:-

Ampthill: Problems relating to access, the design of streets and infrastructure requirements.

Arlesey: Access roads, additional car parking and greenbelt between Arlesey and Stotfold.

Biggleswade: Problems relating to access from major transport routes, noise disturbance and impacts on businesses.

Cranfield: Planning applications which had been rejected previously and problems relating to transport, accessibility and continuing operations in the area.

Flitwick: Coalescence with Ampthill

Marston Moretaine: Problems relating to infrastructure and access.

Sandy:	Problems relating to the flood plain
Shefford:	Issues relating to infrastructure and access to sites.
Stotfold:	Problems relating to infrastructure and facilities in the area and previous consultation responses.
Wixams:	The potential development of NIRAH, congestion problems and the Marston Vale area. Issue of coalescence with Houghton Conquest.

2.4 The Task Force noted that it would make its final recommendations regarding the sites that it felt should be supported at subsequent meetings.

Agreed

1. That officers be requested to carry out the following actions prior to the next meeting of the task force:
 - a. invite representatives from the following Town and Parish Councils to attend the next meeting:
 - Biggleswade;
 - Cranfield;
 - Shefford;
 - Stotfold; and
 - Houghton Conquest.
 - b. provide Members of the task force with further information on previous consultation undertaken including details of Town and Parish Councils that have supported proposals previously.
 - c. circulate further maps to members of the task force detailing all of the proposed sites within the local areas that have previously been proposed so as comparisons in the scores attributed to those sites could be drawn.

Development Strategy Task Force

Notes of the meeting held on 19 October 2009

Present:	Councillor Snelling (Chairman) Councillors Aldis, Birt, Brown (Substitute for Cllr C Turner) Gale, Gammons, Kane and Williams
Other Members in attendance:	Councillors Barker, Drinkwater, Graham, Gurney, Matthews, Shadbolt, Street, T Turner and Vickers
Others in attendance:	Representative of Stotfold Town Council
Apology:	Councillor C Turner

1.0 Declaration of Interest

Councillor Gurney declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the business to be transacted relating to the site allocations in Everton. The nature of this interest related to Councillor Gurney currently residing on one of the sites proposed for development. Cllr Gurney withdrew from the meeting during the discussion of the proposed sites in Everton.

2.0 Site Allocations Development Plan Document

2.1 The Chairman commented that an invite had been provided to representatives of specific Town and Parish Councils as discussed at the previous meeting. It was the intention to discuss proposals for some sites at subsequent meetings and provide further invitations to representatives of Town and Parish Councils to attend prior to any final recommendations being made.

2.2 The task force debated proposals in a number of wards and raised the following issues in summary:-

Arlesey: Development next to the rail line.

Biggleswade: Previous levels of development, issues relating to the flood plain, infrastructure requirements relating to a relief road and current problems relating to access from major transport routes.

Blunham: The requirement to address local needs.

Cranfield: Previous levels of development, proximity of sites to the airfield, problems relating to infrastructure and development on agricultural land.

Dunton: No specific issues were raised.

Everton: The proximity of land to a school and lack of amenities in the local area.

Potton: No specific issues were raised.

Stotfold: Preference to preserve land next to the river and between Stotfold and Arlesey.

Wrestlingworth & Cocakayne Hatley: No specific issues were raised.

- 2.3 The task force noted that it would make its final recommendations regarding the sites that it felt should be supported at subsequent meetings.

Agreed

1. **That officers be requested to carry out the following actions prior to the next meeting of the task force:-**
 - (a) **invite representatives of all appropriate Town and Parish Councils to attend the next meeting.**
 - (b) **prepare an agenda for Members of the task force for the meeting on 23 October**
2. **That Officers be requested to consider the difference between the site selection criteria for gypsy and traveller sites and housing/ employment allocations on Greenfield sites to see how they differ and how a site might still get proposed on a greenfield site.**

Development Strategy Task Force

Notes of the meeting held on 23 October 2009

- Present: Councillor Snelling (Chairman)
Councillors Aldis, Brown (Substitute for Councillor C Turner) Birt, Gale, Gammons, Kane and Williams
- Other Members in attendance: Councillors Barker, Clarke, Graham, Gurney, Lockey, Matthews, Maudlin, Nicols and T Turner
- Others in attendance: Representatives of the Town and Parish Councils of Arlesey, Blunham, Clophill, Everton, Henlow, Houghton Conquest, Langford, Meppershall, Moggerhanger, Potton, Sandy, Shefford, Silsoe and Stondon
- Apology: Councillor C Turner

1.0 Declaration of Interest

Councillor Gurney declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the business to be transacted relating to the site allocations in Everton. The nature of this interest related to Councillor Gurney currently residing on one of the sites proposed for development. Cllr Gurney withdrew from the meeting during the discussion of the proposed sites in Everton.

2.0 Site Allocations Development Plan Document

- 2.1 Councillor Snelling introduced the process for the meeting and thanked representatives of the Town and Parish Councils for attending to speak on behalf of their areas. It was noted that the task force was not a decision making body and would not be deciding which sites should be allocated for housing or employment development. The task force would consider each of the proposed sites and subsequently recommend which of those sites within each area they felt should be supported for development. Its recommendations regarding supported sites would be referred to a meeting of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee before being presented to a meeting of the Executive and full Council. The decision as to which sites should be put forward for development would be taken by full Council, following which a full public consultation would be undertaken.
- 2.2 It was noted that all Town and Parish Councils and members of the public would have a further opportunity to inform proposals during that consultation period.
- 2.3 A lengthy debate took place regarding the individual sites proposed in each area during which the task force heard from representatives of individual Town and Parish Councils and ward Members representing those areas. The task force then considered which of the sites they wished to recommend be supported for further development.

Agreed to recommended to the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee: -

That it is the view of the task force that development on the following sites should be supported (see attached):-

Site Proposals Supported by the Development Strategy Task Force:-

Name of area	Supported Site(s)	Detail of Proposal
Amphill	H052	Development of 150+ dwellings
	H203	Development of 40 dwellings and long stay car park
	H083	Development of approximately 270-360 dwellings
	E64	B1 Business use (1ha)
	E68	B1 Business use
Arlesey	H293/E12a (incorporates H048, H156, H165 and E12)	Mixed use development of 1000+ dwellings, community facilities and 10ha of employment. The task force also commented that support of this site related to the development of a new relief road.
Biggleswade	H210	Development of between 60 dwellings
	H098	Development of 65 dwellings
	H347	Development of 330 dwellings. The task force noted that this development would occur at the end of the plan period, after the relief road associated with the development on land to the east of Biggleswade was in place.
	E67	Development of 15ha of employment
Blunham	H091	Development of 36 dwellings
Brogborough	E15	Development of 8ha of employment. The task force also commented that support for this site was

		provided with the caveat that no development took place in the northern tip of the site due to its proximity to the housing development.
Clifton	H206	Development of 50 dwellings. The task force also commented that access issues related to this site needed to be addressed in development.
	H261	Development of 50 dwellings
Clophill	H042	Development of 12-15 dwellings
	H157	Development of 10 dwellings
Cranfield	H104	Development of 20-25 dwellings
	H040	Development of 100 dwellings and doctors surgery
	H133	Development of 25-35 dwellings. The task force supported allocation of a total of approximately 160 dwellings in Cranfield.
	E82	Development of 10ha of employment
Dunton	H192	Development of 10-15 dwellings. The task force commented that the preference for this development should be bungalows.
Everton	H246	Development of 8 dwellings
	H244	Development of 7 new dwellings and 1 renovation
Flitwick	H077/E62	Development of 475-500 dwellings and 0.6ha of commercial development
	H113	Mixed use development of 85 dwellings, employment, retail and leisure use with transport interchange.

Gravenhurst	H270	Development of 7-8 dwellings
Henlow	H135	Development of 15-25 dwellings. This was the preferred site for development in Henlow but the task force resolved to revisit this site if necessary.
Houghton Conquest	None	It was considered that due to the development to the north (Wixams) no further sites should be supported for development in Houghton Conquest.
Langford	H164	Development of 44 sheltered homes for the elderly with cemetery, it was commented that this development was strongly supported for sheltered accommodation and a cemetery.
	H160	Development of 5 dwellings
	H123	Development of approximately 30 dwellings along the frontage of the site. The task force commented that this site would only be required if there were not enough sites elsewhere.
Lidlington	H081	Development of approximately 45 dwellings
Marston Moretaine	E09	Mixed use development of approximately 100 dwellings and 7ha of employment. The task force commented that this site was also supported as a 'reserve' site for a further 320 homes which would only be developed if other developments at the Wixams were not developed on time.
Maulden	H218	Development of 60 dwellings
	E18	Development of 1.8ha of employment. The task force commented that this site should be recommended as a reserve.
Meppershall	H174	Development of 68 dwellings, cemetery, GP surgery, community hall and playing field
Moggerhanger	H154	Development of 17 dwellings. The task force additionally commented that concerns relating to traffic and access to the site needed to be addressed and that an appropriate number of

		affordable homes needed to be provided.
Potton	H356	Development of approximately 50 dwellings
	H237	Development of approximately 60 dwellings
	H075/H199 (combined proposal)	Development of 150 dwellings, B1 employment and community facilities
Sandy	H240/H276	Mixed use development of 65 dwellings
	H295	Development of 77 dwellings
	E38	Development of 10ha of employment
Shefford	H163	Development of 59 dwellings
	H055	Development of 135 dwellings. The task force commented there may be a need to revisit sites in Shefford as no decision was made on site H019/H171 regarding the 2ha of employment land, which is required.
Shillington	H006	Development of 24 dwellings. The task force also commented that matters relating to access to the site needed to be resolved as part of the development.
Silsoe	H106	Development of 380 dwellings with B1 business use
Stondon	H079	Development of 70 dwellings, B1 (office/ light industrial) use and community facility. The task force also commented that matters relating to access to the site and sewage needed to be resolved as part of the development.
	H176	Development of 13 dwellings

Stotfold	H260	Development of 85 dwellings.
	H129	Development of 8 or 9 dwellings
	E25	Development of 1.8ha of employment
Wixams	H278/ E14	Mixed use development of approximately 1,000+ dwellings, employment, education and community facilities.
Wrestlingworth & Cockayne Hatley	H090	Development of 21 dwellings. The task force commented in relation to this site that if there were enough rural development sites then this one should be removed from development.

Agenda Item: 4

Meeting: LDF Task Force
Date: 7 December 2009
Subject: Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document: Short listing of sites
Report of: Richard Fox, Head of Development Plan
Summary: This report seeks the views of the Task Force on the suggested short list of sites, following the application of the site criteria (as agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 1 September 2009).

Contact Officer: Pru Khimasia
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: The Wards in Central Bedfordshire North
Function of: Executive

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Members of the LDF Task Force:

- (a) Consider and recommend that Overview and Scrutiny Committee agree the minor changes that have been made to some of the criteria.**
- (b) Consider and recommend to Overview and Scrutiny Committee upon the preferred sites to meet permanent Gypsy and Traveller accommodation need to 2016.**
- (c) Consider and recommend to Overview and Scrutiny Committee a preferred site to meet transit Gypsy and Traveller accommodation need to 2011 and beyond.**

Introduction

- 4.1 Following the Mid Bedfordshire LDF Task Force on 12 February 2009 and Mid Bedfordshire Executive on 18 March 2009, Officers were instructed to undertake a further site search for the Gypsy and Traveller DPD. Members wanted existing sites that had been considered through the DPD process to be reviewed together with a further site search.
- 4.2 The purpose of this new site search and review is to fulfil our increased requirement to accommodate Gypsy and Traveller pitches in accordance with Policy H3 of the East of England Plan to 2016. In the former Mid Bedfordshire area, this equates to 40 Gypsy and Traveller pitches, a transit site and a Travelling Showpeople site¹.
- 4.3 It should be noted that if the Council does not allocate sufficient sites for Gypsy and Traveller need, the Planning Inspector, at the Public Examination of the Gypsy and Traveller DPD is likely to find the document “unsound”. This could result in either the Inspector requiring the Council to begin the site search process again or the Inspector allocating sites from those previously considered by the Council. The Inspector’s Report is binding, so there will be no further opportunities for Members to influence the outcome of the DPD following receipt of this Report.

Background

The statutory duty to provide new Gypsy and Traveller sites

¹ This Task Force report regarding a site search review does not include a review of the shortlisted Travelling Showpeople site proposed at Kennel Farm, Biggleswade, which accommodates sufficient Travelling Showpeople pitches to meet the need to 2016. The site has been shown significant support from the Showman’s Guild. In addition, during the Preferred Sites consultation, 34 out of a total 1851 survey/comments received concerned this site; 71% of the 34 comments were opposed to it being developed as a Showpeople site. Of the people who submitted comments in opposition key points mentioned were the impact the site would have on the road network in relation to additional traffic (particularly with regard to large vehicles and machinery), the cost of altering the current road layout and creating proper access to the site.

- 4.4 Local authorities are required by Government, through the Housing Act 2004, to assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers alongside the settled population. Local authorities are also required by the Act to develop a strategy that addresses any unmet need that is identified. That strategy is the Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document (DPD). The Council's progress on meeting this statutory duty is regularly and rigorously monitored by Central Government.

The practical reasons for making Gypsy and Traveller provision

- 4.5 Aside from this statutory duty, there are practical reasons for making provision. If insufficient authorised sites are provided, unauthorised camping is likely to continue. The problems associated with unauthorised sites, such as the costs of taking enforcement action, the tension that exists between Gypsies and Travellers and the settled community and the social exclusion experienced by Gypsies and Travellers will also continue. The aim of this process is to reduce the occurrence of unauthorised sites by making sufficient new provision for Gypsies and Travellers in the District. This will also make it easier to take robust enforcement action against unauthorised sites. Not making sufficient allocations would also lead to applications being granted permission on appeal to meet the identified need.

How many pitches do we need to accommodate?

Permanent Gypsy and Traveller Pitches

- 4.6 In Central Bedfordshire North (the former Mid Bedfordshire area) there is a requirement to provide 30 pitches² up to 2011, of which 3 have already been provided, leaving a residual figure of 27. The requirement for Central Bedfordshire South (the former South Bedfordshire area) is 50 pitches of which 31 have already been provided.
- 4.7 These requirements are set out in the recently Adopted Policy H3 of the East of England Plan. Beyond 2011, Policy H3 recommends the application of a 3% compound rate to calculate longer term growth. Looking ahead to 2016, this represents an increase from 2011 of approximately 13 pitches in Central Bedfordshire North.

² A pitch is the space required to accommodate one household and their caravans, parking space, an amenity building, drying space for clothes/ small garden area, a lockable shed and enough room for the turning of vehicles. In the East of England the average household size for Gypsies is 1.7 caravans. However, this will vary from area to area and according to family need.

- 4.8 Members of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny on 1 September agreed that during the short listing of sites for Gypsies and Travellers sufficient pitch number allocation should be made to comply with the Regional Plan requirements up to 2016. 40 pitches (27 combined with 13) are therefore needed to be planned for in Gypsy and Traveller DPD in the north area of Central Bedfordshire. The task Force when looking for sites may consider that it has an opportunity to allocate more than the minimum requirement of 40 pitches to 2016 in order to provide for any further need beyond 2016.

Transit Gypsy and Traveller Pitches

- 4.9 The East of England Plan also makes a separate recommendation of 10 transit pitches across the whole of Bedfordshire and Luton to 2011. The East of England Plan policy does not specify the location of these pitches or how they should be split between the three authorities.
- 4.10 A transit site is intended for short term use by Gypsies and Travellers in transit. These would be best placed along strategic road networks. The site itself is permanent, while its residents are temporary, with a maximum period of stay imposed, usually by the site manager. Such sites are provided with basic amenities and services such as boundary fencing, hardstandings, water supply, toilet and washing facilities, waste disposal and (possibly) electricity.
- 4.11 There is a lack of a clear methodology for calculating transit need at a local level. This has been acknowledged by EERA. As such, it is considered that the appropriate way forward would be to ensure that transit provision is made across the former County area making provision in both the north and south of the County. This can be achieved by a simple split of the level of need.
- 4.12 Therefore it is proposed that, working on the assumption that as a minimum 5 pitches will be provided in the north of the county and 5 in the South, 5 pitches should be accommodated in Central Bedfordshire South and the Luton area, 2 in Central Bedfordshire North and 3 in Bedford Borough. This would enable the delivery of transit pitches within the 3 LDF documents. That would mean 2 transit pitches to be accommodated through this Gypsy and Traveller DPD.

How have Officers shortlisted sites?

- 4.13 On 1 September 2009, Members of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed a set of criteria and scoring system against which new and previously considered sites would be considered. These criteria have been applied to 109 sites and the result of this work is being presented to Members.
- 4.14 In looking at the site options for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation, the following matters were considered.
1. The Sequential Test, as agreed by Mid Bedfordshire LDF Task Force in December 2007, and in accordance with government guidance;
 2. Government guidance in Circular 01/2006 and other related guidance documents; and
 3. Technical planning constraints.
- 4.15 Information to determine the scores was collected for some criteria from Accession Software, an accessibility and resource audit held by the authority. Other information was collected from external sources, such as Anglian Water. All the scores have been weighted so certain criteria have been awarded higher scores than others. The overall scores will guide Members on the suitability of the sites.
- 4.16 It should be noted that in making the assessments, some of the scoring and criteria had to be amended slightly because their practical application raised some issues:
- The scores suggested for “sites located near un-neighbourly uses” were amended to include an additional threshold of 0.25 to 0.5 miles which scored 3.
 - In addition, under Agricultural Land Classification and Flood Risk, some middle scores, between two scores, had to be added to the assessment due to some sites sitting between categories.

- 4.17 For countryside and nature conservation, the criteria were amended slightly following discussions with the Regional Planning and Environment team:
- The Green Infrastructure (GI) criteria was deleted, as the advice was that Gypsy and Traveller sites are unlikely to be at odds with GI, bearing in mind sites are low rise and low density and can be easily landscaped to soften their impact. The Environment Team have recommended that following shortlisting, they will reconsider the sites and recommend any mitigation if necessary.
 - The Wildlife Trust advised that the impact on any Wildlife Species has been judged according to whether the site is located in a County Wildlife Site or not. Judgment on what is and is not possible to mitigate will have to be done once a survey is done to determine what is present at each shortlisted site.
 - The Regional and Environment team also recommended a minor wording changes to the criteria “is the site located in an area of nature designation?” so it reads “is the site located in an area of nature designation value”, and the scores were shortened to Yes (0) or No (10).
 - In addition, the criteria and scores for “is the site located in an area of landscape designation?” has also had a minor wording change to “is the site located in an area of high landscape sensitivity?” and the scores also shortened to Yes (0) or No (10).
- 4.18 This culminated in a list of 25 criteria. The results of each of these criteria were scored and the scores of each tallied in order to give a total score for each site, which is shown in the attached Appendix 1.

What are the results of the scoring?

Highest Scoring Sites

- 4.19 The highest scoring sites are collated in Table 1. This Table lists 24 sites that best meet the sequential test and government guidance, and are least affected by planning constraints. The site plans and scores for the sites collated in Table 1 can be found in Appendix 2.

4.20 The site area is given for each of these sites but no recommendation in terms of pitch numbers has been made at this stage. In general, 200 to 300 square metres is the average size for a pitch, though this is not stated in government guidance. This would accommodate on average 2 caravans, in accordance with the guidance on what comprises a pitch, taken from the DCLG Good Practice Guide: Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites (2008). More caravans would be best accommodated on a larger pitch.

Table 1: Highest Scoring Sites

Site Ref	Site Name	Score	Site Area (Sqm)
97	Land North of Arlesey Road, Stotfold	141	4581
69	Land North of Arlesey Rd, Stotfold (larger parcel)	138	270060
95	Land North of West Drive, Arlesey	129	16203
5	Land between the A421 and Woburn Rd junction, Marston Moretaine	126	7562
38	Land East of A6001, Hitchin Rd and opposite Henlow Camp (RAF)	122	25399
18	Land South of Silsoe Rd. Wardhedges	121	38636
78	Land West of Hitchin Rd and South of A507, Stotfold	120	220546
16	Land North of Gardner's Farm, Greenfield	119	102364
4	Beancroft Rd, North of Charity Farm. Nr Marston Moretaine	118	5852
13	Land at junction between Flitton Hill and Ampthill Rd. Flitton	118	175338
6	Land W Thomas Johnson School, Lidlington	117	6781
17	Land South of Greenfield Rd, Flitton	115	15900
48	Land S Dunton Lane, Biggleswade	112	103223
63 & 64	Land N Biggleswade Rd and E Sutton Rd, Dunton	111	513333
94	Land North of Flitton	111	12470
73	Land at junction N A507, W Hitchin Rd. Stotfold	111	7478

Table 1 Continued.

Site Ref	Site Name	Score	Site Area
23	Land E of Haynes Playing Field	111	61883
3	High St junction land S of Lodge Rd. Cranfield	111	7681
40	Land N Chambers Way, Biggleswade	111	76539
54	Land N of Bury Hill +W of Sutton Rd. E of Potton	109	111149
37	Land S Clifton + E of New Rd	109	27286
12	Land E of Silsoe Rd and E of Longview Farm. Maulden	107	43709
60	Church Field Holding, E Biggleswade Rd, Sutton	106.5	277524
61	Sutton Storage Compound, S of Sutton	106	2045

4.21 In addition to undeveloped parcels of land, some well located, authorised Gypsy and Traveller sites (with high scores) are being recommended for extension, to enable existing sites to accommodate more pitches. In the case of Potton, no more pitches are being proposed but the extension of this site would enable the reconfiguration of the existing site which is currently overcrowded. These are shown in Table 2. The site plans and scores for the sites collated in Table 2 can also be found in Appendix 2.

Table 2: Extension of Existing Sites

Site Reference	Site Name	Score	Site Area/ Pitch Numbers
86/87/91	Oak Tree Nursery, Adjacent to Magpie Farm (and 2 plots), Upper Caldecote	118	9670 / 5
89	Land between Common Road and Myers Road, South of Gypsy and Traveller Site, Potton	106	2320 / 0
TOTAL PITCHES			5

Other Sites Worth Consideration

- 4.22 There are also lower scoring sites that the Task Force may wish to give further consideration for their potential as permanent Gypsy and Traveller sites. These are listed in Table 3. This Table also shows the pitch numbers for each site.
- 4.23 These sites do not all score highly on the sequential test, or the government guidance (with the exception of Arlesey) but they are existing Gypsy and Traveller sites, with temporary consent where Members may consider there is merit in making their use permanent.
- 4.24 Their permanent allocation of these sites would enable the authority to meet some of its need quickly and effectively. It would avoid the displacement of families residing on them and be cost effective as they do not need to be developed or serviced, therefore offering social and resource benefits. Some of the sites have existed for a number of years and the families are embedded in local life, for example, the children resident on them attend local schools.

The site plans and scores for the sites collated in Table 3 can also be found in Appendix 2.

Table 3: Other Sites Worth Consideration

Site Ref	Site Name	Score	Site Area/ Pitch Numbers
99	Land at the rear of 197 Hitchin Road, Arlesey	127	4
80	1 Old Acres, Barton Road, Pulloxhill	93	8
83, 84 & 85	2, 2a and 3 Woodside Caravan Park, Hatch, Sandy	113	3
90	Hermitage Lane, Hillside Farm off Westoning Road, Greenfield	70	1232 / 2
TOTAL PITCHES			17

Transit Site Options

4.25 In addition to permanent Gypsy and Traveller accommodation, the following sites, shown in Table 4, are options for a transit site of two pitches. These have been suggested as they are located along the road network, enabling easy access.

The site plans and scores for the sites collated in Table 4 can also be found in Appendix 2.

Table 4: Transit Site

Site Ref	Site Name	Score	Site Area (sqm)
1	Land North of Cranfield Rd, North of Leys Farm. Cranfield	96	7104
33	Land by junction to A507(N)+ Shefford Rd (E). Shefford	111	2320

Contingency Sites

4.26 Members may wish to include a set of site options (from Table 1 or Table 2) as a contingency within the Preferred Sites consultation document. This means including sites that can accommodate more than the 40 pitches required. This would enable the Council to:

- Accommodate more pitches to meet the accommodation need beyond 2016; and/or
- Include additional sites, in case the preferred sites consultation flags up any issues that the site criteria fails to pick up, making any of the preferred sites unsuitable.

Including a contingency would avoid the need for any additional preferred sites consultation.

Next Steps

- 4.27 Members need to consider the list of sites and agree an initial shortlist. This shortlist can then be taken forward to the next Task Force meeting on 14 December 2009 where Town and Parish Council representatives can be asked to present evidence on the suitability of these sites. At the end of the meeting on 14 December, Task Force will need to conclude with what sites they will recommend to OSC on 4 January 2009. Following the confirmation of OSC on the shortlisted sites, the Preferred Sites consultation document will be published for a 6 week period for public comment.
- 4.28 The up to date timescales for the DPD are as follows:

STAGE IN DPD PROCESS	ESTIMATED DATE
Period of consultation, following short listing of sites by Task Force and Overview and Scrutiny Committee	January - March 2010
Preparation of the Draft Submission Development Plan Document.	March - July 2010
Task Force approval of the Draft Submission Development Plan Document.	August 2010
Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee approval of the Draft Submission Development Plan Document.	End August 2010
Executive & Council approval of the Draft Submission Development Plan Document.	September 2010
A statutory period of six weeks of public consultation will take place offering members of the public an opportunity to comment on the Draft Submission Development Plan Document.	October – November 2010
The Council submit the Draft Submission DPD to the Secretary of State.	February 2011
The Gypsy and Traveller DPD will be subject to an Examination in Public in front of an independent Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State.	Spring 2011*
The Planning Inspector publishes the binding report making final recommendations.	Summer 2011*
Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document Formally Adopted	Autumn 2011*

* Subject to the Planning Inspectorate's timescales.

Conclusions / Recommendations

4.29 Members are asked to:

- a) Consider and recommend that Overview and Scrutiny Committee agree the minor changes that have been made to some of the criteria;
- b) Consider and recommend to Overview and Scrutiny Committee upon the preferred sites to meet permanent Gypsy and Traveller accommodation need to 2016; and
- c) Consider and recommend to Overview and Scrutiny Committee a preferred site to meet transit Gypsy and Traveller accommodation need to 2011 and beyond.

Due to their size the appendices to this report are not included but are available on request to the Overview and Scrutiny Team (0300 300 8301).

Development Strategy Task Force

Notes of meeting held on 7 December 2009

Present:	Councillor Snelling (Chairman) Councillors Aldis, Birt, Gale, Williams, Shadbolt, C Turner, Kane and Gammons.
Other Members in attendance:	Councillors: Street, Matthews, Bastable, Young, Dalgarno, J Lawrence, Barker, Jamieson, A Turner, Gibson, Chapman, Maudlin, Brown, Nicols, Gurney, Lockey, Mustoe and Baker.

2.0 Notes of previous meetings

The notes of the previous meeting were not available today but will be circulated at a later date. The notes do not affect this meeting.

3.0 Declaration of Interest

There were no personal and prejudicial interests declared

4.0 Design in Central Bedfordshire. A guide for development.

Mark Saccoccio introduced the Design Guide saying 22 responses had been received during the recent public consultation, all supporting the guide. Mark was seeking the Task Force's endorsement of the report. After a brief discussion regarding using the guide as a material consideration in refusing a planning application, the Task Force endorsed the guide for approval by the Executive as a Supplementary Planning Document.

5.0 Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document: Short listing of sites.

5.1 Councillor Snelling set out the timetable for the process:

Monday 7th December -Task Force to recommend a provisional list.

Monday 14th December – Task Force, Town and Parish Councils to be invited to give their views on the sites.

Recommend a short list to Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Monday 4th January – Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider the shortlist and make their recommendation for publication in the Preferred Site consultation.

Cllr Snelling confirmed that 40 pitches needed to be agreed to 2016.

- 5.2 There was a general discussion regarding the location of existing sites and the order of discussing the site options – need to take into account the proximity of existing sites when looking at proposed sites.
- 5.3 Councillor Alan Shadbolt clarified that Task Force was not a decision making body and so can only make recommendations. All proposed sites will need to go through the planning process for approval.
- 5.4 Cllr Snelling presented to the Task Force his recommended shortlist of sites as a starting point for discussion, following deliberation of the scores and consideration of the sites on the Members Bus Tour, the previous Friday. The sites on this shortlist were debated by Members and the following is a summary of the issues raised.

Site no. 80
Pulloxhill (Barton Road)

- Concern about surrounding area being untidy. Should be a condition of planning approval that surrounding area be kept tidy. Officers advised that a Section 215 notice can be served for site clearance.
- Need to be able to enforce restriction on number of pitches.

Site no. 83
Hatch (Woodside Caravan Park)

- Hatch has temporary permission until 2011.
- Long history at Hatch, including enforcement action.
- Concerns raised about flood risk. Officers reported that the flood risk has been addressed to the satisfaction of the Environment Agency.
- Close proximity to two other large sites..
- Hatch is a very small Hamlet cannot support more pitches.
- Site is well run by present owner but concerns were raised about what would happen if he leaves.
- The Planning Inspector in his assessment of a planning application said site was not

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> suitable. Concerns were about consistency of scoring system. Other Members stated they thought the scoring system superb and should be used countrywide Benefits in terms of delivery of authorising suitable existing sites rather than finding new sites.
<p>Site no. 90 Greenfield (Hermitage Lane)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small site, established for 45 years, with families living in poor conditions. low scoring and needs services but well-established and deliverable.
<p>Site no. 99 Arlesey</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arlesey Town Council supported this site over other sites previously proposed. Issues with access and speeds on road. Need to be addressed through the planning application.
<p>Site no. 92 Seddington Long Lake Meadow</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This site was suggested for inclusion by Members as an unauthorised, tolerated site that can be authorised by a certificate of lawful development.
<p>Site no 86/87/91 Oak Tree Nursery and Magpie Farm, Upper Caldecote</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extension to existing site. Prefer lower numbers of pitches.
<p>Site no. 1 Cranfield Land North of Cranfield Road, north of Leys Farm.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suitable for 2 or 3 permanent pitches - a small family unit, not a transit site. Officers reported that representatives of Gypsy organisations say too small for transit site. Some concerns raised over scoring. There are better alternatives. Gypsies prefer to be in the East. High landscape area. Area used for dumping rubbish, would benefit from being gated and used as a permanent site.
<p>Site no.18 Wardhedges (south of Silsoe Road)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small village no facilities. Unsafe access, speeding on road. Site not flat, lower part water logged. 1 mile to nearest bus stop. Issues over scoring.

- No electricity, water or gas nearby. A stream on 2 sides of site. Officers reported that highways, Anglian Water and electricity providers had been consulted.
- Concern over contamination.
- Query the benefits of a few large well run sites over several small sites.
- Large well screened sites have no more impact than smaller sites.
- Suggestion site could take 10 pitches.
- How will sites be managed in future?
- Screening would look out of place in open area.
- Concern over ability to restrict the number of pitches where space to expand is available.
- Officers reported that sites can be well marked out with boundaries so expansion into surrounding area should not be a problem.

Site no. 37
Clifton
(Land south of Clifton and east of New Road)

- Issues over restricting numbers of pitches. Chairman emphasised that there would be clearly fenced boundaries.
- Need to check access to A507, mitigation to improve access may be needed. Suitable site other than access problems, Development Management would need to sort issues at Planning application stage.

Site no.38
Henlow
(opposite RAF camp)

- Small site opposite RAF Camp.
- Chairman read out an email from Cllr Rita Drinkwater, raising issues with Doctors surgery being full, open area near airbase, prone to flooding.
- Totally against too near school.

Site no. 48
Biggleswade
(Dunton Lane)

- Biggleswade already has 19 to 20 pitches.
- Issues with scoring. East side of (old MBDC) district has too many sites already.
- Close proximity to other sites.

Site 63/64
Dunton
(Land north of Biggleswade)

- Vast piece of land.
- Concern over close proximity to other sites.

Road)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other preferable sites in Sutton. • Would only use part of the site.
Site 60 Sutton (Church Field Holding, East of Biggleswade Road)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vast piece of land. • Concern over close proximity to Potton site. • Ideal site but too close to Potton site. • Cllr Chapman forwarded comments from Cllr Anita Lewis that the site would swamp Sutton.
Site 61 Sutton (Storage Compound)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for site as a transit site.
Site no. 69 Stotfold (north of Arlesey Road)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area already designated as part of new leisure centre development for Stotfold for which permission has been granted. Improvements are due to start next year. • Site in wrong place at entrance to town. • Suggestion to expand site at Arlesey instead of this site.
Site no.94 Flitton (Land north of Flitton)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too steep. • Prone to soil erosion. • Contradictions on scoring.
Site no. 5 Marston Moretaine (Land between A421 and Woburn Rd Junction)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideal site but no break between site and houses. • Already screened. • Suggest 4 pitches. • Release pressure on the East of the District. • Provide some gap at the north east of site to enable some separation from houses.
Site no. 33 Shefford (Land north of junction at the A507 and East Shefford Rd)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have agreed Sutton Storage Compound for transit accommodation so do not need an additional site. • Site has been identified for its employment potential through work on the Site Allocations Development Plan Document.

5.5 Following discussion on the sites the Task Force made its final recommendations regarding the sites that it felt should be supported at subsequent meetings.

Site no.	Site address	Parish
80	1 Old Acres, Barton Road, Pulloxhill	Pulloxhill
83	Woodside Caravan Park, Hatch, Sandy	Northill
90	Hermitage Lane, Hillside Farm off Westoning Road, Greenfield	Flitton and Greenfield
99	Land rear of 197 Hitchin Road, Arlesey	Arlesey
92	Long Lake Meadow, Seddington	Sandy
86/87/91	Oak Tree Nursery & Magpie Farm, Upper Caldecote	Northill
1	Land north of Cranfield Road, North of Leys Farm, Cranfield	Cranfield
5	Land between the A421 and Woburn Road junction, Marston Moretaine	Marston Moretaine
48	Land south of Dunton Lane, Biggleswade	Biggleswade
37	Land south of Clifton and east of New Road, Clifton	Clifton
89	Land between Common Road and Myers Road, South of Gypsy and Traveller site, Potton	Potton
61	Sutton Storage Compound, south of Sutton (potential transit site)	Sutton

- 5.6 There was further discussion regarding the number of pitches on sites. It was decided not to confirm the number of pitches on each site to allow flexibility should some of the sites be removed at a later date. The sites at Clifton, Biggleswade and Arlesey could take more pitches if necessary. Officers agreed to investigate whether more pitches could be committed on the Arlesey site with the site owner.
- 5.7 The task force agreed that officers should let all Town and Parish Councils and Members have a list of the recommended list of sites by the end of today so they able to prepare for 14 December.
- 5.8 Task force and officers congratulated Cllr Snelling on his Chairing of the meeting.

Agenda Item: 5

Meeting: LDF Task Force
Date: 14 December 2009
Subject: Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document: Short listing of sites
Report of: Richard Fox, Head of Development Plan
Summary: This report seeks the views of the Task Force on the suggested short list of sites, as determined by Task Force on 7 December 2009, following the presentation of views by Town and Parish Councils.

Contact Officer: Pru Khimasia
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: The Wards in Central Bedfordshire North
Function of: Executive

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Members of the LDF Task Force:

- (a) Consider the comments of the Town and Parish Councils and recommend to Overview and Scrutiny Committee the preferred sites to meet permanent Gypsy and Traveller accommodation need to 2016.**
- (b) Consider the comments of the Town and Parish Councils and recommend to Overview and Scrutiny Committee the preferred site to meet transit Gypsy and Traveller accommodation need to 2011 and beyond.**

Introduction

- 4.1 Following the Bus Tour on 4 December 2009 and the subsequent Development Strategy Task Force on 7 December 2009 Members of the Task Force shortlisted a set of sites to accommodate 40 Gypsy and Traveller pitches and 2 transit pitches.
- 4.2 At the meeting on 14 December 2009 Members will hear from Town and Parish Council representatives who have been asked to present evidence on the suitability of the shortlisted sites.
- 4.3 The sites shortlisted by Members are:

Site no.	Site address	Parish
83	Woodside Caravan Park, Hatch, Sandy	Northhill
86/87/91	Oak Tree Nursery & Magpie Farm, Upper Caldecote	Northhill
92	Long Lake Meadow, Seddington	Sandy
99	Land rear of 197 Hitchin Road, Arlesey	Arlesey
48	Land south of Dunton Lane, Biggleswade	Biggleswade
89	Land between Common Road and Myers Road, South of Gypsy and Traveller site, Potton	Potton
37	Land south of Clifton and east of New Road, Clifton	Clifton
80	1 Old Acres, Barton Road, Pulloxhill	Pulloxhill
90	Hermitage Lane, Hillside Farm off Westoning Road, Greenfield	Flitton and Greenfield
1	Land north of Cranfield Road, North of Leys Farm, Cranfield	Cranfield
5	Land between the A421 and Woburn Road junction, Marston Moretaine	Marston Moretaine
61	Sutton Storage Compound, south of Sutton (potential transit site)	Sutton

Site plans attached at the end of this report.

- 4.4 At the end of the meeting, Task Force will need to conclude with what sites they will recommend to OSC on 4 January 2009. If sites they have already shortlisted are considered unsuitable following evidence presented to Members by the Town and Parish Councils, Members will have to revisit the sites and include alternative site options, in order to meet our requirement for 40 permanent pitches and 2 transit pitches.

Next Steps

- 4.5 Following the consideration by the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the shortlisted sites, the Preferred Sites consultation document will be published for a 6 week period for public comment.
- 4.6 The up to date timescales for the DPD are as follows:

STAGE IN DPD PROCESS	ESTIMATED DATE
Period of consultation, following short listing of sites by Task Force and Overview and Scrutiny Committee	January - March 2010
Preparation of the Draft Submission Development Plan Document.	March - July 2010
Task Force approval of the Draft Submission Development Plan Document.	August 2010
Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee approval of the Draft Submission Development Plan Document.	End August 2010
Executive & Council approval of the Draft Submission Development Plan Document.	September 2010
A statutory period of six weeks of public consultation will take place offering members of the public an opportunity to comment on the Draft Submission Development Plan Document.	October – November 2010
The Council submit the Draft Submission DPD to the Secretary of State.	February 2011
The Gypsy and Traveller DPD will be subject to an Examination in Public in front of an independent Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State.	Spring 2011*
The Planning Inspector publishes the binding report making final recommendations.	Summer 2011*
Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document Formally Adopted	Autumn 2011*

* Subject to the Planning Inspectorate's timescales.

Conclusions / Recommendations

4.7 Members are asked to:

- a) Consider the comments of the Town and Parish Councils and recommend to Overview and Scrutiny Committee the preferred sites to meet permanent Gypsy and Traveller accommodation need to 2016.
- b) Consider the comments of the Town and Parish Councils and recommend to Overview and Scrutiny Committee the preferred site to meet transit Gypsy and Traveller accommodation need to 2011 and beyond.

Due to their size the appendices to this report are not included but are available on request to the Overview and Scrutiny Team (0300 300 8301).

Development Strategy Task Force

Notes of meeting held on 14th December 2009

Present:	Councillor Peter Snelling (Chairman) Councillors Nigel Aldis, Lewis Birt, Dennis Gale, Peter Williams, Alan Shadbolt, Christine Turner, John Kane and Ruth Gammons
Others Members in attendance	Councillors Tom Nicols, Caroline Mauldin, Tricia Turner, Jane Lawrence, David Lawrence, Ian Dalgarno, Ken Matthews, Alan Bastable, Anthony Brown, Tony Rogers, Mike Gibson, Roger Baker, Doreen Gurney, Anita Lewis, John Lewis, John Street, Angela Barker, Howard Lockey, Nigel Young, Andrew Turner
Apologies	Cllr Mustoe.
3.0	Declaration of Interest
	There were no personal and prejudicial interests declared.
4.0	Public Involvement
	Cllr Snelling explained that each Town and Parish representative will have five minutes to give their views on the site proposed for their Parish. Members will then have chance to ask any questions. He reminded the meeting that they were able to discuss planning related issues only.
4.1	Task Force received evidence and views from invited representatives from Town and Parish Councils regarding the short-listing of Gypsy and Traveller sites. The following is a summary of the issues raised.
Site no 86/87/91 Oak Tree Nursery & Magpie Farm Upper Caldecote	Northhill Parish Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only Parish with two shortlisted sites. • Other sites in close proximity. • Outside Settlement Envelope. • Site bordered by agricultural land. • In attractive open countryside. • Traffic to nearby visitor attractions go past site. • Not clear on amount of land to be used. • New plots would need a condition preventing business use. • Upper Caldecote is only a large village. • Lack of facilities –Drs, shops and schools.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too dangerous to walk or cycle to Biggleswade. • Poor public transport. • History of retrospective planning applications. • Not setting good example to settled community. • Preference for small sites this one already has five families another four pitches will make it too large. • Out of proportion to the village of Upper Caldecote.
Members' questions and comments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most villages have limited access to schools. The council is under an obligation to make sure children living some distance away can reach a school. • Queried numbers of people quoted by the Parish Council as living on the site
Site No 83 Woodside Caravan Park , Hatch	<p>Northhill Parish Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northhill has two shortlisted sites this one only 2 miles from the Upper Caldecote site. • Hatch is a small hamlet. • Local bad feeling regarding problems with unauthorised sites in the past and large amounts of Council money spent to evict illegal "back-site". • Temporary planning permission granted to 3 pitches in "front site" until 2011 Inspector said this should not set a precedent for allowing full permission. • Category 3 low on list of suitability. • Ground raised to reduce flood risk, making structures and lighting more prominent. • Lack of footpaths and dangerous road would force the use of cars to reach facilities. • Concern that as "back site" is owned by Gypsies, if "front site" is made permanent the "back site" will be used for unauthorised sites. • Concern that if site is expanded later, the settled population of Hatch will be outnumbered.
Members' questions and comments	No questions.
Site no 86/87/91 Oak Tree Nursery & Magpie Farm Upper Caldecote	<p>Old Warden Parish Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreed with Mrs Halls' comments. • Wanted clarification on what a pitch comprises of. • Wanted clarification of size of sites. • Queried the number of people living on the site at present. • Need to do risk analysis and agree actions. • Want Council to avoid this issue being dealt with by planning appeal. • Need to safeguard settled community.

Members' questions and comments	<p>Chair: Unauthorised sites cost money to clear, having authorised sites gives the council more scope to prevent unauthorised sites.</p> <p>Cllr Aldis: Asked officers to clarify the size of a pitch. Officers reported that according to some published guidance a pitch is on average in the eastern region 1.7 caravans and ranges from 200-400 sqm. It is up to Members to decide the size of a pitch. Working on a maximum of 2 caravans to a pitch.</p> <p>Cllr T Nicols: There is no precise definition of a pitch size. A pitch can contain a 20 metre turning circle, 1 large caravan, 1 utility i.e. washroom, waste disposal, truck and/or car plus a mobile caravan. 200 sqm not sufficient, ideally require 300 to 400sqm.</p>
Site no. 92 Long Meadow Seddington (Sandy)	<p>Sandy Town Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient time to arrange a meeting of Town Council. • Surprised and object to the inclusion of this site. • Unauthorised privately owned site, had requested the Council to take enforcement action in the past. • Outside Settlement Envelope. • Object to any expansion of site, as transient population would outnumber settled population of Seddington. • In flood plain. • Sandy already has two large Gypsy sites plus two adjacent to the town. • Site too far away from local services and facilities. • Dangerous access direct from A1.
Members' questions and comments	No questions.
Site no. 99 Land rear of 197 Hitchin Road Arlesey.	<p>Arlesey Parish Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports the site providing there are no more than four pitches. • 60mph road needs to be restricted to 40mph.
Members' questions and comments	<p>Chair: The temporary sites will still need to go through the planning process to become permanent sites, highways issues will be dealt with during that planning process.</p>
Site no.48	Biggleswade Town Council.

<p>Land south of Dunton Lane, Biggleswade</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biggleswade already has an overcrowded Showpeople site, for which an additional site is being provided in Biggleswade to cope with the overspill. • Biggleswade also has two existing Gypsy and Traveller pitches on a site at Langford Road. • As such, there would be a total of 20 pitches in Biggleswade with the allocation of this site • Dunton Lane is prime farm land and a long way from the town and facilities. • Queries scoring for the site. • No objection to the Showpeople, they have been part of the town for over 100 years. • Showpeople sites take up a lot of room. • Biggleswade has a large number of sites in close proximity.
<p>Members' questions and comments</p>	<p>The point was raised that well run, well screened sites become unnoticed i.e. the site at Langford Road.</p>
<p>Site no. 89 Land between Common Rd and Myers Rd, South of Gypsy and Traveller site. Potton.</p>	<p>Cllr Snelling reminded the meeting that this was an extension to an overcrowded site with no new additional pitches.</p> <p>Potton.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Myers Rd site has been there many years. • Any additional pitches would be a burden on the town. • Considers that sites should be spread across the whole Council area. • Considers the transit site proposed for Sutton sensible.
<p>Members' questions and comments</p>	<p>There was a discussion regarding the benefits of privately managed sites over Council run sites.</p> <p>It was noted that on a large housing development built close to the Potton Gypsy site all the dwellings had sold and on a smaller development close by the site had been acquired by a housing association, and are occupied.</p>
<p>Site no. 37 Land south of Clifton and east of New Rd, Clifton.</p>	<p>Clifton Parish Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commented that Gypsy sites should follow same planning process as housing developments. • This site was excluded from the LDF Site Allocation process and does not consider it should be shortlisted for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation either. • Felt Parishes should have been able to see the scoring of the sites prior to the meeting.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not clear on number of pitches proposed. • Site some distance outside village. • DCLG good practice guide states should have easy access to schools. • Lower school is full. • Henlow Middle school too far to walk. • Samuel Whitbread Upper a 20-30 min walk. • Pushes Clifton closer to Henlow. • Hazardous getting out from New Road onto A507 Bypass 2 fatal accidents have occurred here. • Single carriage road due to on street parking. • Few public facilities in Clifton. • Site slopes • Surface water run off – need a balancing pond. • Noise disturbance from bypass • Sewer is privately owned.
Members' questions and comments	<p>Discussion about improving access to the A507 – Members suggested that a no right turn could be created at this access from New Road onto the A507.</p> <p>Asked the Parish Council if they could made an alternative suggestions for the site in Clifton. None were given.</p> <p>The question was raised as to who will pay for infrastructure. Officers replied there is Government money available.</p>
Site no. 80 1 Old Acres, Barton Rd Pulloxhill	<p>No representation by Parish Council was given as the parish council did not attend the meeting.</p>
Site no. 90 Hermitage Lane, Hillside Farm off Westoning Road Greenfield	<p>Flitton & Greenfield Parish Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 site of 2 pitches, longstanding site on outskirts of village. • Not ideal but no objection.
Members' questions and comments.	<p>No questions</p>
Site no. 1 Land north of Cranfield Rd, North of Leys Farm, Cranfield	<p>Cranfield Parish Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parish Council supports the use of criteria – provides clear objective assessment. • Cannot understand how this low scoring site has been proposed above higher scoring sites. • Close to Technology Park and Airfield runway. • No footpath or street lights, causing a hazard for pedestrians. • Primary school over a mile away. • Area of high landscape value.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council not adhering to own criteria i.e: • Site should be nearer existing services. • No safe access to nearby facilities. • Noise disturbance from airfield - which is to extend flying hours. • Site is close to industrial area. • Isolated location. • Offering a spread of sites across the Council area was not a criteria in the site search • Agrees rubbish dumping needs clearing up but not an excuse for change of use.
Members' questions and comments.	Cllr Snelling asked whether a transit site would be preferable. Sue Clark thought not and she understood the Gypsy representatives thought it unsuitable as a transit site. Members queried the scoring on this site.
Site no 5 Land between the A421 and Woburn Rd Junction, Marston Moretaine.	<p>Comments of an informal Marston Moretaine Parish Council meeting on 9th December.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No one field separation. • Possibility of a large scale incinerator being sited near site will increase lorries on what will be the downgraded A421. • Entrance not suitable from A421. • Access through village dangerous. • Shape of site unsuitable. • Area close to site of Great Crested Newts • Bridleway runs through site. • Close to Gypsy and Traveller site at Kempston Harwick. • Not on usual Gypsy and Traveller route. • Land very wet, close to flood plain. • Will blight the gateway to village. • Lower school full. • Detrimental to housing site proposed close by.
Members' questions and comments.	No questions
Site no. 61 Sutton Storage Compound, south of Sutton (possible transit site)	<p>Cllr Snelling read an email from Sutton Parish Council</p> <p>Unfortunately no-one from Sutton Parish Council will be able to attend the meeting on Monday 14th December. However the Parish Council wish to raise the following points regarding the proposed site (No 61) within Sutton Parish.</p> <p>1. The site has no access to water or sewage disposal.</p>

	<p>2. It is immediately between two dangerous un-sighted bends (much sharper than shown on the simplified map) and this road is the main 'rat run' for high speed traffic during the morning and evening rush hour. Any slow moving lorry and caravan combinations moving on and off this site would cause a serious hazard to traffic at any time of day, but particularly at these times.</p> <p>3. The S bends and crossroad at Clay End, Sutton are not suitable large Lorry/trailer/caravan combinations. It is already an accident black spot and the likely increase in slow moving traffic can only make the problem worse.</p> <p>4. Although designated a 'potential transit site' who is going to supervise it and stop it becoming a permanent site, thus necessitating yet another 'transit site' and so on and so on.</p> <p>If the existing site at Potton is to be extended southwards on land between Myers Rd. and Common Rd. a transit site could be incorporated which would have all the necessary facilities and would be easier to supervise. Even if the Potton site is not extended, a transit pitch could be incorporated in the existing site.</p>
Members' questions and comments.	No Questions
4.2	Cllr Snelling closed this part of the meeting and thanked all the representatives for coming and speaking.
Break	
2.0	Notes of previous meeting.
	Members agreed the notes of the 7 th December 2009 Task Force meeting, previously circulated.
5.0	Task Force Recommendations.
	Members were asked to consider in light of the evidence they have received which sites they wish to support in their recommendation to Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
Site no. 80 1 Old Acres, Barton Rd Pulloxhill	No discussion.

<p>Site No 83 Woodside Caravan Park Hatch</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern about size of site dominating Hatch. • Queries about inaccurate scoring. • No Inspectors have ever agreed this should be a permanent site. • No public transport • Would have urbanising effect on village. • Concern that reason for granting temporary permission is no longer a problem. • Concern over misuse of land behind the 3 front pitches. • Unfair to allow retrospective planning permission after spending large amounts of money to evict gypsies. Sends wrong signal to other settled residents, should treat everyone the same. • Officers clarified the discrepancies in scoring. • Council has obligation to provide access to schools for pupils. • Interest in comment that large sites can be well run, as in Sandy. • Privately managed sites are better run.
<p>Site no. 90 Hermitage Lane, Hillside Farm off Westoning Road Greenfield</p>	<p>No discussion</p>
<p>Site no. 99 Land rear of 197 Hitchin Road Arlesey.</p>	<p>No discussion</p>
<p>Site no. 92 Long Lake Meadow Seddington (Sandy)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern over issues raised since last meeting. • Fears that the site is not lived on by Gypsies and Travellers. • Have applied for a Lawful Development Certificate. • Concerns that they want to build a house. • Highways have issues with access from A1. • Officers reported that site is in a flood plain so the Environment Agency does not support the site.
<p>Site no 86/87/91 Oak Tree Nursery & Magpie</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand by 4 pitches.

Farm Upper Caldecote	
Site no. 1 Land north of Cranfield Rd, North of Leys Farm, Cranfield	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher scoring sites should be looked at. • Cranfield Technology Park “Jewel in Bedfordshire’s crown.” • Concern Gypsy site at entrance will put off future businesses.
Site no. 37 Land south of Clifton and east of New Rd, Clifton.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School full • Private sewer • Possible contaminated land as previous RAF base. • Land designated for 100 houses close by. • Large site could take more pitches. • Road problems need improving. • Problems with road will need addressing even without Gypsy and Traveller site.
Site no.48 Land south of Dunton Lane, Biggleswade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map misleading site closer to Dunton than it appears. • Road will become “rat run” once Land East of Biggleswade development built. • Close to industrial area. • Would require careful landscaping – ask Ward Members for advice on positioning of site. • Will require recommendations to how site managed. • Should be restricted to 6 pitches.
Site no 5 Land between the A421 and Woburn Rd Junction, Marston Moretaine.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues with Great Crested Newts • No right turn into site. • Site wrong shape, too narrow at one end. • Bridleway crosses site. • No one field separation. • Could be problem getting number of pitches on to site, due to shape.
Site no. 89 Land between Common Rd and Myers Rd, South of Gypsy and Traveller site. Potton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconfiguration of crowded site not additional pitches. • No discussion
5.1	Following discussion on the sites the Task Force made its final recommendations regarding the sites that it felt should be recommended to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4

	January 2010.			
	Site no.	Site address	Parish	Suggested No of Pitches
	80	1 Old Acres, Barton Road, Pulloxhill	Pulloxhill	8
	83	Woodside Caravan Park, Hatch, Sandy	Northill	3
	90	Hermitage Lane, Hillside Farm off Westoning Road, Greenfield	Flitton and Greenfield	2
	99	Land rear of 197 Hitchin Road, Arlesey	Arlesey	4
	92	Long Lake Meadow, Seddington	Sandy	1
	86/87/91	Oak Tree Nursery & Magpie Farm, Upper Caldecote	Northill	4
	5	Land between the A421 and Woburn Road junction, Marston Moretaine	Marston Moretaine	2
	48	Land south of Dunton Lane, Biggleswade	Biggleswade	8
	37	Land south of Clifton and east of New Road, Clifton	Clifton	8
	89	Land between Common Road and Myers Road, South of Gypsy and Traveller site, Potton	Potton	0
	61	Sutton Storage Compound, south of Sutton (potential transit site)	Sutton	2
5.2	Meeting ended at 13:20.			

Development Strategy Task Force

Notes of the meeting held on 14 January 2010

- Present: Councillor Snelling (Chairman)
Councillors Aldis, Birt, Gammons, Kane, Shadbolt and Williams
- Other Members in attendance: Councillors Bastable and Jamieson
- Officers in attendance: Paul Cook (Head of Transport Strategy), Geraldine Davies (Principal Strategic Transport Officer), Ben King (Principal Strategic Transport Officer), Jonathon Partridge (Overview and Scrutiny Officer) and Calum Clements (Performance Improvement Manager)
- Apologies: Councillors Gale and C Turner

1.0 Notes of the Previous Meetings

The Task force discussed the proposed sites for gypsy and traveller sites supported by Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee following consideration by the task force and agreed the notes of the meetings held on 7 December and 14 December.

2.0 Local Transport Plan 3

2.1 Paul Cook provided a presentation which gave Members an overview of the Local Transport Plan (LTP), key transport issues, the proposed contents of the LTP and the proposed timetable for the development of the LTP. The presentation outlined various considerations to be taken into account during the development of LTP3, which included pressures on funding and examples of best practice. The task force noted the intention to produce two parts to LTP3, a strategic plan up to 2021 and a delivery plan for works to take place over the next 3 – 4 years.

2.2 The Task Force discussed the presentation and raised comments as follows:-

2.2.1 Increasing patronage on some transport schemes such as park and ride or cycling would require a cultural change on behalf of local residents.

2.2.2 The importance of developing sustainable transport that anticipated future infrastructure demands that would result from new housing developments.

2.2.3 The importance of ensuring that both planning and transport considerations are taken into account during the process of planning new developments. A Member requested that the highways design guide be circulated to Members of the task force so that it could be applied by Members during Development Management Meetings.

Copies of the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide can be retrieved from the following link:-

<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/planning/ldf/central-bedfordshire-design-guide.aspx>

- 2.2.4 It was necessary to ensure that in the future problems relating to the design of roads in residential areas, which prevented ease of access to larger vehicles or emergency services were addressed at the planning stage.
- 2.2.5 The importance of having policies in place as a mechanism of enforcing planning considerations in relation to highways.
- 2.2.6 Development in the areas of Dunstable/Houghton Regis; Leighton Linlade; Biggleswade/Sandy; and Arlesey/ Stotfold should be considered a priority within the LTP3.
- 2.2.7 It was necessary to develop a clear set of guidelines for the construction of cycle paths and cycle-ways in Central Bedfordshire.

Recommendations:-

1. **That in drafting the Local Transport Plan officers should:-**
 - (i) **promote the development of sustainable transport ensuring that any planned transport infrastructure takes into account increasing demands resulting from new housing developments.**
 - (ii) **outline how planning and highways services would collaborate to ensure that considerations in relation to both were submitted at the planning stage of new developments. Highways considerations should include the accessibility of larger vehicles to new residential developments such as emergency vehicles.**
 - (iii) **prioritise the development of transport infrastructure in Dunstable/Houghton Regis, Leighton Linlade, Biggleswade/Sandy, Arlesey/Stotfold**
2. **That officers be asked to consider how effective guidelines could be developed in regard to highways, cycle-paths and cycle ways to provide a means of enforcement on new infrastructure developments**

Development Strategy Task Force

Notes of the meeting held on 8 February 2010 in Meeting Room 15, Priory House, Chicksands, Shefford

- Present: Councillor Snelling (Chairman)
Councillors Aldis, Birt, Gale, Shadbolt, C Turner and Williams
- Other Members in attendance: Councillors Bastable, Brown, Graham and Nicols
- Officers in attendance: Jim Tombe (Local Transport Plan Team Leader), Ben King (Principal Strategic Transport Officer), Geraldine Davies (Principal Strategic Transport Officer) and Jonathon Partridge (Overview and Scrutiny Officer)
- Apology: Councillor Gammons

1. Notes of the Previous Meeting

The Task force received and agreed the notes of the meeting held on 14 January 2010.

2. Local Transport Plan 3

- 2.1 The Principal Strategic Transport Officer provided a presentation which gave Members a recap of the presentation received at their previous meeting as well as more detailed information on journey purpose strategies; the key drivers of strategy development; local *area* transport plans and consultation.
- 2.2 Members were invited to comment throughout the presentation and raise any issues as they felt needed to be considered during the development of the Local Transport Plan (LTP). Members raised and discussed the following issues:
- 2.2.1 Some projects identified in LTP2 would carry over into LTP3 as they were yet to be delivered. It was commented that there would need to be a clear analysis of those projects that were yet to be delivered to ensure they were still relevant and that they were still a priority in light of reduced levels of regional funding. The Task Force would be asked to comment on those projects that were considered to be a priority for development under LTP3.
- 2.2.2 A review of employment provision would be undertaken by officers to identify the top trip generators and journeys so that these can be influenced in LTP3.
- 2.2.3 The importance of engaging with other public transport providers such as train operating companies to identify any opportunities for collaboration to identify alternative means of sustainable transport. It was also suggested that the Council needed to consider any other national transport programmes that could be encouraged locally to develop alternative means of transport, such as national cycling initiatives.
- 2.2.4 The benefit of collaborating with partners and service providers, such as

hospitals and health services, to ensure that transport planning was carried out in a joined-up manner. It was also important that transport plans took into account new housing developments and the demand for sustainable transport routes in these areas and access for commuters.

2.2.5 The importance of considering a wide range of means of transport as alternatives to the car, including cycling, walking and park and ride schemes. Alternative means of transport needed to be fit for purpose and take into account in the local context. It was commented that much of the Central Bedfordshire area was set in a rural context and appropriate means of transport in the rural areas would be different to that in much of the urban area. The problems of walking to school in some rural areas were used as an example and it was stressed that the LTP would need to take into account the practicalities of travel in these areas.

2.2.6 A 'personal travel survey' would be undertaken to provide a detailed evidence base for the LTP that would enable officers to understand local trends. Officers would also take into account the information contained in the parish plans where this provided a means of reliable and representative information.

2.3 During the presentation Members were asked to provide input to a number of key questions, set by officers, which would support the development of Local Transport Plan 3. These questions were as follows:-

(1) Would Members like to prioritise the national goals identified in the Department for Transport (DfT) guide 'Delivering a Sustainable Transport System' (2008) in Central Bedfordshire?

Members did not feel that the five national goals should be prioritised above local goals and service demands. Promoting equality of opportunity for younger and older people was suggested as a key local priority for Central Bedfordshire that was also identified in the DfT guide

(2) Do Members feel that we should include additional indicators in the LTP to monitor investment in transport locally?

Members did not propose any additional indicators for the LTP in order to monitor investment in transport locally.

(3) Are you happy with the proposed roll out of the Local Area Transport Plans?

The Task Force supported the proposed roll out of Local Area Transport Plans (LaTPs) for 2012/13 and 2013/14 but raised concerns regarding the timeliness of developing plans for Houghton Regis. It was also commented that the LaTP for Marston Vale may require prioritisation if a project was undertaken with Covanta in the area. Members also requested that a more detailed explanation of what constituted "rural areas" for 2012/13 be provided to the Task Force.

(4) Are you happy with the level of public consultation proposed?

The Task Force were supportive of the level of public consultation proposed but requested that officers ensure an appropriate period of time was allowed for consultation with the Town and Parish Councils and that consultation materials were written in a 'readable' fashion. An appropriate mechanism should also be put in place to ensure that feedback was provided to respondents on what measures the Council has taken as a result of feedback to the consultation.

(5) Is there anybody else we should be talking to as part of the public consultation?

Members recommended that the following additional stakeholders or locations should be included in the consultation process:

- GP surgeries
- Libraries
- Older People
- Schools (as part of citizenship)

Recommended:-

1. **That it is the view of the Task Force the national goals in the Department for Transport guide 'Delivering a Sustainable Transport System' (2008) should not be prioritised above local priorities and demands for services locally.**
2. **That the proposed roll out of Local Area Transport Plans (LaTPs) for 2012/13 and 2013/14 be supported but officers be requested to consider any issues regarding the timeliness of LaTPs for Houghton Regis and Marston Vale areas.**
3. **That the proposed level of public consultation on LTP3 be supported but officers be requested to ensure there was an appropriate mechanism for providing respondents with feedback to the issues that they raise as part of the consultation.**
4. **That officers be asked to consider widening the public consultation to include GP surgeries, libraries, older people and schools.**
5. **That officers be requested to submit further information on the LaTPs to a future meeting of the Task Force.**

Development Strategy Task Force

Notes of the meeting held on 8 March 2010



Present:	Councillor Snelling (Chairman) Councillors Aldis, Brown (Substitute for Councillor Birt), Gale, Gammons, Graham (Substitute for Councillor Williams) and Shadbolt
Officers in attendance:	J Tombe (Local Transport Plan Team Leader), G Davies (Principal Strategic Transport Officer) and J Partridge (Overview and Scrutiny Officer)
Others in attendance	Councillors Bastable and Young Chris Ferrary and Katherine Evans (Steer Davies Gleave)
Apologies:	Councillors Barker, Birt, Graham, Kane and Williams

1.0 Notes of the Previous Meeting

The Task Force received and agreed the notes of the meeting held on 8 February 2010.

2.0 Freight Strategy for Central Bedfordshire

2.1 The Group received a presentation from officers of Steer Davies Gleave, independent transport advisors that had been appointed to assist the Council in developing a Freight Strategy for Central Bedfordshire. The presentation sought the views of Members on various objectives, policies and initiatives and outlined matters relating to:-

- Transport policy;
- Managing road freight;
- Providing freight facilities;
- Servicing and deliveries;
- Providing appropriate and accessible information;
- Alternative modes of freight transport.

2.2 Throughout the presentation Members of the Task Force raised the following comments, which officers said they would consider as part of developing the Freight Strategy:-

- (1) The importance of the Council and partners carrying out enforcement action effectively, particularly regarding the use of the Designated Road Freight Network (DRFN). The Task Force asked officers to consider methods by which private freight companies that operate in Central Bedfordshire could be encouraged to use the DRFN and enhance environmental standards.

- (2) The difficulty of enforcing weight restrictions and the need to consider whether current weight restrictions in Central Bedfordshire were being enforced appropriately.
- (3) It was unrealistic to expect that freight and logistics needs arising from spatial planning policies in Central Bedfordshire could be met without affecting the quality of life for local residents. The objectives recommended for inclusion in the Freight Strategy were unrealistic and needed to be refined to make them achievable.
- (4) The importance of promoting the free-movement of freight transport. The Freight Strategy should minimise freight traffic congestion, which increases the environmental impact of freight traffic. Whilst minimising the negative environmental impacts of freight traffic and operations in local communities is a complex problem solutions needed to be developed to promote this in Central Bedfordshire.
- (5) Figures quoted by officers relating to 140 trucks per hour moving through Central Bedfordshire were unrealistic and needed to be reviewed.
- (6) The importance of maintaining a co-ordinated approach to the development of a 'hub and spoke' network across Central Bedfordshire, routes should be set up on a logical and not an ad-hoc basis.
- (7) The importance of an effective approach to infrastructure planning to ensure that infrastructure is provided in a timely way in relation to growth areas.
- (8) The Council should consider more frequently using powers available to fine drivers who do not use the DRFN. These powers provided a short-term measure to encourage use of the DRFN prior to the implementation of Local Transport Plan 3. This would also provide a means of enforcing the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in some towns such as Dunstable.
- (9) The importance of maintaining an effective partnership between the Council and local freight operators to ensure that priorities in the Freight Strategy were shared and focused on local needs.
- (10) The importance of ensuring that freight movements, which may increase as a result of future developments (for example Center Parcs and the waste facility currently proposed by Covanta) were taken into account in developing plans for the future freight network.
- (11) Opportunities to extend the use of the rail freight network should be investigated with National Rail. Members commented it was unfeasible to consider using Harlington as a rail hub for freight traffic although opportunities to enhance convenience through the use of the rail network should be promoted.

Recommended that the Freight Strategy needed to provide a greater level of detail regarding its application locally in Central Bedfordshire. Members were critical that the objectives and policies did not show how the strategy would work in practice and requested that this information be provided prior to the Freight Strategy being adopted

as part of LTP3.

3.0 Work Programme 2009 - 2010

The Task Force **noted** the work programme for 2009 – 2010 and requested that clarification be sought on the feasibility of an item on Flitwick Town Centre being presented to a future meeting.

Development Strategy Task Force



Notes of the meeting held on 7 April 2010

Present:	Councillor Snelling (Chairman) Councillors Birt, Gale, Gammons, C Turner and Shadbolt
Officers in attendance:	John Lucas (Housing Strategy Team Leader), Andrew Pates (Housing Development Officer) and J Partridge (Overview and Scrutiny Officer)
Others in attendance	Councillors Bastable, Nicols, Rawcliffe, Sparrow, Wells and Young and Cheryl Powell (Overview and Scrutiny Officer)
Apologies:	Councillors Aldis, Barker, Kane and Williams

1.0 Notes of the Previous Meeting

The Task Force received and agreed the notes of the meeting held on 8 March 2010. It was noted that a further presentation had been requested on the Freight Strategy for Central Bedfordshire.

2.0 Development Strategy Task Force Terms of Reference

Resolved that the Terms of Reference for the Task Force be amended at paragraph 5.1 to read as follows:

"Four-monthly reports on progress and the work programme of the Task Force will be made available via the Council's Overview and Scrutiny website for information purposes. This is in addition to copies of the notes of meetings and the recommendations of the Task Force also being provided on the website."

3.0 Housing Strategy for Central Bedfordshire

- 3.1 The Housing Strategy Team Leader stated that the report provided Members with the current draft of the Housing Strategy, the outcomes of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and feedback from a key stakeholder consultation event undertaken on 15 January 2010. The purpose of the item was to outline to Members the key strategic objectives in the draft Housing Strategy and invite comment prior to the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting on 18 May 2010 and approval by the Executive on 8 June 2010.
- 3.2 The Task Force was informed that there was no statutory duty to produce a Housing Strategy but it provided a guide for affordable housing levels in the area and with the production of a SHMA it provided the authority with a stronger evidence base on which to base its policy decisions in relation to housing. The Housing Strategy had links to the Homelessness Strategy and the Private Sector Renewal Strategy, which were currently being developed by the Council. Included in the development of the Housing Strategy was an action plan.
- 3.3 Members discussed a number of issues in detail and raised the following comments relating to the draft Housing Strategy:-
- The document was unacceptable in its current form and needed to be reformatted prior to further publication. Officers needed to ensure the document was written in

plain English throughout and that abbreviations were removed or explained.

- The appropriateness of the figures contained in the stock condition summary relating to non-decent homes standards needed to be reviewed if it was intended to use them as a means of identifying which wards were in greatest need of Council funding to raise them to decent homes standard. The Council needed to ensure that funding to improve insulation was diverted to those homes with the greatest level of need where residents could not themselves afford insulation.
- The need to ensure the Council addressed issues relating to social integration resulting from strong levels of in-migration and the volume of international migrants as well as out-migration throughout the sub-region as identified in the SHMA.
- The importance of providing a full range of housing options and support services to meet the needs and aspiration of older households, particularly relating to the level of extra-care housing (a type of specialised housing that provides independence and choice to adults with varying care needs and enables them to remain in their own home).
- The importance of delivering an appropriate mix of high and low density dwellings throughout Central Bedfordshire and ensuring that high density dwellings were appropriately designed.
- The housing strategy should provide an appropriate level of detail regarding the Council's approach to the provision of affordable housing.
- The importance of the Council pursuing an effective and proactive strategy towards the management of empty dwellings in Central Bedfordshire.
- The need to ensure the Housing Strategy advocated a vision for a mix of housing types relevant to the needs of local residents and industry within the area and also takes into account future demands resulting from trends of in-migration.
- The strategy should refer throughout to the provision of accessible 'quality' homes and links with the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide.

3.4 Regarding key strategic objective 1 the reference to assessing the accommodation needs of Gypsy and Travellers needed to be amended to reflect recent discussions by the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the total number of sites required up to 2016. The total number of affordable housing units delivered in 2009/10 in Central Bedfordshire also needed to be amended to read 213.

3.5 With specific reference to key strategic objective 3 the reference to the commissioning date for the updated desktop stock condition projection needed to be amended to November 2009.

Recommended to the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee that the key strategic objectives outlined in the Housing Strategy be supported.

Response to Member comments at the Development Strategy Task Force on 07 April 2010.

Development Strategy Task Force Comments	Response and amendments made
<p>1. The document was unacceptable in its current form and needed to be reformatted prior to further publication. Officers needed to ensure the document was written in plain English throughout and that abbreviations were removed or explained.</p>	<p>The Housing Strategy has been drafted in line with the corporate template and in line with other strategies e.g. The Homelessness Strategy.</p>
<p>2. The appropriateness of the figures contained in the stock condition summary relating to non-decent homes standards needed to be reviewed if it was intended to use them as a means of identifying which wards were in greatest need of Council funding to raise them to decent homes standard. The Council needed to ensure that funding to improve insulation was diverted to those homes with the greatest level of need where residents could not themselves afford insulation.</p>	<p>The stock condition figures for all of CBC have been removed and a comparison of the average CBC figure and national figure has been included in the strategy.</p>
<p>3. The need to ensure the Council addressed issues relating to social integration resulting from strong levels of in-migration and the volume of international migrants as well as out-migration throughout the sub-region as identified in the SHMA.</p>	<p>Housing issues in terms of delivery to meet need have been incorporated into Housing Strategy. The needs as identified in the SHMA are incorporated in housing delivery and HMO licensing. Incorporated under Key Strategic Priorities 1 and 2.</p>
<p>4. The importance of providing a full range of housing options and support services to meet the needs and aspiration of older households, particularly relating to the level of extra-care housing (a type of specialised housing that provides independence and choice to adults with varying care needs and enables them to remain in their own home).</p>	<p>Incorporated in Key Strategic Priority 1, 5 and 6 incorporates the delivery and the needs which will be identified and focussed on.</p>
<p>5. The importance of delivering an appropriate mix of high and low density dwellings throughout Central Bedfordshire and ensuring that high density dwellings were appropriately designed.</p>	<p>Key Strategic Priority 1 states the need to identify the correct mix of housing to meet areas needs.</p>

<p>6. The housing strategy should provide an appropriate level of detail regarding the Council's approach to the provision of affordable housing.</p>	<p>Key Strategic Priority 1 has incorporated this with</p>
<p>7. The importance of the Council pursuing an effective and proactive strategy towards the management of empty dwellings in Central Bedfordshire.</p>	<p>Key Strategic Priority 2 has incorporated Empty Homes and the measures to bring them back into use.</p>
<p>8. The need to ensure the Housing Strategy advocated a vision for a mix of housing types relevant to the needs of local residents and industry within the area and also takes into account future demands resulting from trends of in-migration.</p>	<p>Key Strategic Priority 1 states the need for a mix of types and tenures to meet all housing needs.</p>
<p>9. The strategy should refer throughout to the provision of accessible 'quality' homes and links with the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide.</p>	<p>The Central Bedfordshire Design Guide has been incorporated under Key Strategic Priority 1 to ensure delivery is sustainable and meets the characteristics and needs of CBC.</p>
<p>10. Regarding key strategic objective 1 the reference to assessing the accommodation needs of Gypsy and Travellers needed to be amended to reflect recent discussions by the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the total number of sites required up to 2016. The total number of affordable housing units delivered in 2009/10 in Central Bedfordshire also needed to be amended to read 213</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporated under Key Strategic Priority 1. • Meet LDF targets for new Gypsy and Traveller site provision. In North Central Bedfordshire develop 40 additional pitches by 2016. • In 2008/09: 935 new homes with 218 affordable homes. • In 2009/10: 711 new homes with 270 affordable homes.
<p>11. With specific reference to key strategic objective 3 the reference to the commissioning date for the updated desktop stock condition projection needed to be amended to November 2009.</p>	<p>Amended to November 2009</p>



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Za Informacija

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