



## The Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Duty requires public bodies to have **due regard** to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

### Protected Characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (elimination of discrimination only)
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

**Due Regard** means consciously thinking about the three aims of the Duty as part of the process of decision-making. For example:

- How they act as employers
- How they develop, evaluate and review policy
- How they design, deliver and evaluate services
- How they commission and procure from others

**Advancing equality of opportunity** involves considering the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people because of their protected characteristics
- Meet the needs of people with protected characteristics
- Encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is low

**Fostering good relations** involves tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people who share a protected characteristic and others.

**Complying with the Equality Duty may involve treating some people better** than others, as far as this is allowed in discrimination law. This could mean making use of an exception or positive action provisions in order to provide a service in a way that is appropriate for people who share a protected characteristic.

### Officers should:

**Keep an adequate record showing** that the equality duties and relevant questions have been actively considered.

**Be rigorous in both inquiring and** reporting to members the outcome of the assessment and the legal duties.

**Final approval of a proposal, can only happen after the completion of an equality impact assessment. It is unlawful to adopt a proposal contingent on an equality impact assessment**



|                                 |  |                            |                           |
|---------------------------------|--|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Title of the Assessment:</b> | <b>The Stables and Greenacres Gypsy and Traveller sites</b>  | <b>Date of Assessment:</b> | 04/10/2017<br>And ongoing |
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**Stage 1 - Setting out the nature of the proposal and potential outcomes.**

|   |
|---|
| <b>Stage 1 – Aims and Objectives</b>  |
| <p><b>1.1 What are the objectives of the proposal under consideration?</b></p> <p>The Council is considering making some changes to The Stables and Greenacres Gypsy and Traveller sites.</p> <p>The preferred option at the moment is for the council to buy The Stables and Greenacres sites, along with some land as close to the existing sites as possible, build a new council-run Gypsy and Traveller site and close the Greenacres and The Stables sites.</p>   |
| <p><b>1.2 Why is this being done?</b></p> <p>Central Bedfordshire has 40 Gypsy and Traveller sites. Some are owned and managed privately and some are owned and managed by the Council.</p> <p>The majority of these sites are well run and are well integrated into the local community with very few issues. There are two sites, however, with several ongoing issues that need to be addressed.</p> <p>The Stables and Greenacres are located in Billington, Bedfordshire. These sites are privately owned. The issues include breaches of planning permissions, absence of licensing, unsafe infrastructure (sewage, clean water to site and electricity supplies), anti-social behaviour, crime and a recent history of modern day slavery.</p> <p>The Council originally refused the planning application for these sites but planning permission was granted from the Planning Inspectorate on appeal in 2003.</p> <p>The planning conditions that the Planning Inspector attached to the sites are not robust enough to enable the Council to take enforcement action against breaches. The Council cannot regulate the sites using the usual planning powers and over time this has led to several issues.</p> <p>Enforcement is also complicated because it is unclear who owns the land now and there is no definitive list of who is entitled to live on the sites. Originally, the whole site was owned by one person. Since then, land and plots have been sub-divided and sold on and many of the ownership transfers have not been officially registered.</p> <p>Several plots do not have the necessary planning permissions and licenses. The Council has identified that there are more people living on the sites than is permitted. The original permissions granted across the two sites were for 56 pitches / plots. In January 2017, there were 96 pitches / plots.</p> <p>The sites are designated for Gypsy and Traveller residents only. However, mobile homes and caravans are being rented out as affordable housing and there are now a number of people living on the site, who are not Gypsy and Travellers, having responded in good faith to rental adverts.</p> |



In addition to these planning issues and breaches, the sites do not have the necessary infrastructure in place to support the permitted caravans / mobile homes. Over a number of years, there have been on-going issues with insufficient sewage infrastructure, inadequate supplies of clean water and electricity and the additional numbers on the sites are compounding these problems.

These issues present both a health and safety risk to residents as well as ongoing (and often expensive) action from the utility companies and other agencies.

**1.3 What will be the impact on staff or customers?**

The Council understands and fully acknowledges that the new site option would have a significant impact on the residents of both Greenacres and The Stables Gypsy and Traveller sites and in the surrounding area. The consultation with residents will help the Council better understand the potential impacts.

**1.4 How does this proposal contribute or relate to other Council initiatives?**

Relevant Strategic Objectives:

***Protecting the Vulnerable; Improving Wellbeing***

We will protect the vulnerable, be they children or adults, ensuring that they are not exploited, abused, or suffering as a result of neglect or lack of support. We will also work to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents.

***Creating Stronger Communities***

We will work to build stronger local communities, providing a greater sense of place and participation in local affairs and services. This will help create greater resilience and reduce social isolation.

***A More Efficient and Responsive Council***

We will continue to be focused on cost effectiveness and efficiency in all that we do, and for this to be recognised by our residents.

**1.5 In which ways does the proposal support Central Bedfordshire’s legal duty to:**

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

Over a number of years, the deteriorating position on the sites has impacted not just the residents on the sites, but also the village of Billington and surrounding areas. The lack of essential infrastructure at the site has led to water supply problems for the village of Billington. This is because some people on the sites have illegally tapped into the water supply, leading to water pressure problems in the village which Anglian Water has had to address. Private domestic electricity supplies have also been accessed by some people on the sites, running up significant bills for the occupiers of the private homes concerned.

The field adjacent to the sites has had ongoing issues with sewage being emptied and piped onto it. The Environment Agency has visited the sites to ensure the clean water supply is not being contaminated and continues to monitor the situation.



Bedfordshire and Thames Valley Police forces have been able to track significant volumes of crimes to the sites and reports of anti-social behaviour continue to be a concern. There are also very serious safeguarding concerns about the sites. There have been three police operations involving arrests in relation to modern day slavery.

Local authorities are required to intervene to stop torture, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment as soon as they become aware of it, even if a private individual is carrying it out.

**1.6 Is it possible that this proposal could damage relations amongst groups of people with different protected characteristics or contribute to inequality by treating some members of the community less favourably such as people of different ages, men or women, people from black and minority ethnic communities, disabled people, carers, people with different religions or beliefs, new and expectant mothers, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities?**

Gypsies and Irish Travellers are recognised racial groups under the terms of the Equality Act 2010. An initial screening of the proposal has highlighted that there are a range of vulnerable residents living on the site who might benefit from the proposal in terms of having the opportunity to live on a well managed and monitored council owned site that will improve their safety and wellbeing. However there is also a risk that vulnerable people who are not eligible to live on a Gypsy and Traveller site will need to look for alternative accommodation. There is significant demand for affordable housing in the area and the council will need to understand its responsibilities in relation to this group of people.

Consideration will need to be given to the Human Rights Act in terms of the Right to Respect for Private and Family Life: this is the right that people have to enjoy living in their home without public authorities intruding or preventing them from entering it or living in it. The Right may be restricted, provided such interference has a proper legal basis, is necessary in a democratic society and pursues one of the following recognised legitimate aims such as:

- public safety
- the economic wellbeing of the country
- the prevention of disorder or crime
- the protection of health or morals
- the protection of the rights and freedoms of others

Any action that is taken needs to be proportionate.

If the ongoing antisocial behaviour is not addressed, it is anticipated that community relations will continue to worsen.

**Stage 2 - Consideration of national and local research, data and consultation findings in order to understand the potential impacts of the proposal.**

**Stage 2 - Consideration of Relevant Data and Consultation**

**In completing this section it will be helpful to consider:**

- **Publicity** – Do people know that the service exists?
- **Access** – Who is using the service? / Who should be using the service? Why aren't they?
- **Appropriateness** – Does the service meet people's needs and improve outcomes?



- **Service support needs** – Is further training and development required for employees?
  - **Partnership working** – Are partners aware of and implementing equality requirements?
  - **Contracts & monitoring** – Is equality built into the contract and are outcomes monitored?
- 2.1. Examples of relevant evidence sources are listed below. Please tick which evidence sources are being used in this assessment and provide a summary for each protected characteristic in sections 2.2 and 2.3.**

| Internal desktop research           |   |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Place survey / Customer satisfaction data | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Demographic Profiles – Census & ONS |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Local Needs Analysis                      | Service Monitoring / Performance Information                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Other local research                      |   |

| Third party guidance and examples   |                              |   |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | National / Regional Research | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Analysis of service outcomes for different groups |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Best Practice / Guidance     | Benchmarking with other organisations   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Inspection Reports           |   |

| Public consultation related activities |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>    | Consultation with Service Users  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consultation with Community / Voluntary Sector |
| <input type="checkbox"/>               | Consultation with Staff  | Customer Feedback / Complaints   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>    | Data about the physical environment e.g. housing market, employment, education and training provision, transport, spatial planning and public spaces |  |

| Consulting Members, stakeholders and specialists |                                      |  |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/>                         | Elected Members                      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expert views of stakeholders representing diverse groups |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                         | Specialist staff / service expertise |  |

*Please bear in mind that whilst sections of the community will have common interests and concerns, views and issues vary within groups. E.g. women have differing needs and concerns depending on age, ethnic origin, disability etc*

**Lack of local knowledge or data is not a justification for assuming there is not a negative impact on some groups of people. Further research may be required.**

**2.2. Summary of Existing Data and Consultation Findings: - Service Delivery  
Considering the impact on Customers/Residents**

- **Age:** e.g. Under 16 yrs / 16-19 yrs / 20-29 yrs / 30-44 yrs / 45-59 yrs / 60-64 yrs / 65-74 yrs / 75+

**Gypsies and Travellers House of Commons Briefing Paper 08083 28 September 2017**  
The population has a **young age profile**; in the 2011 Census the median age of Gypsies and Irish Travellers in England and Wales was 26 years compared to the national median of 39 years.

Gypsies and Irish Travellers below 20 years of age accounted for 39% of the ethnic group compared to 24% in this age group for the overall population of England and Wales.

45% of Gypsy or Irish Traveller households had **dependent children** in 2011, well above the



average for the whole of England and Wales (29%). This is consistent with the younger age profile of the ethnic group.

The 2011 Census also found that, of those aged between 16 and 64 and resident in England and Wales, nearly 60% of economically inactive Gypsies and Irish Travellers were either **looking after the home or family** (31%) or were **long-term sick or disabled** (28%).

In comparison 41% of all economically inactive residents in England and Wales were inactive for this reason (21% were looking after the home or family and 20% were long-term sick or disabled).

Only 5% of Gypsies and Irish Travellers in the age group 16-64 were retired. The average for all residents was 21%.

The age profile of people living on the 2 sites concerned is not currently known.

**- Disability:** *e.g. Physical impairment / Sensory impairment / Mental health condition / Learning disability or difficulty / Long-standing illness or health condition / Severe disfigurement*

**Gypsies and Travellers House of Commons Briefing Paper 08083 28 September 2017**  
42% of English Gypsies are **affected by a long-term condition**, as opposed to 18% of the general population.

Gypsies and Travellers have the poorest self-reported health and higher levels of stress, anxiety and depression.

Poor living conditions and environmental factors are the single most influential contributing factor to the poor health status of Gypsies and Travellers, including stress.

The disability and health profile of people living on the 2 sites concerned is not currently known.

**- Carers:** *A person of any age who provides unpaid support to family or friends who could not manage without this help due to illness, disability, mental ill-health or a substance misuse problem*

**Gypsies and Travellers House of Commons Briefing Paper 08083 28 September 2017**  
Gypsies and Travellers **provide more unpaid care** than any other ethnic minority.

It is not known to what extent people with caring responsibilities are living on the 2 sites concerned.

**- Gender Reassignment:** *People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process (or part of a process) to reassign their sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex*

Not identified.

**- Pregnancy and Maternity:** *e.g. pregnant women / women who have given birth & women who are breastfeeding (26 week time limit then protected by sex discrimination provisions)*

**Gypsies and Travellers House of Commons Briefing Paper 08083 28 September 2017**

There is evidence of **higher rates of stillbirth, infant mortality and maternal death**.

It is not known to what extent pregnant or new mothers are living on the 2 sites concerned.

- **Race:** e.g. Asian or Asian British / Black or Black British / Chinese / Gypsies and Travellers / Mixed Heritage / White British / White Irish / White Other

**Equality Act 2010 Code of Practice**

The Act defines ‘race’ as including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins. There are two essential characteristics which an ethnic group must have: a long shared history and a cultural tradition of its own. In addition, an ethnic group may have one or more of the following characteristics: a common language; a common literature; a common religion or common geographical origin; or being a minority or an oppressed group. A racial group is a group of people who have or share a colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins.

**Gypsies and Travellers House of Commons Briefing Paper 08083 28 September 2017**

The *Equality Act 2010* protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. Romany Gypsies, Scottish Travellers and Irish Travellers have been declared by the courts to be protected as “races” under the Act.

**Outcomes**

Gypsies and Travellers **experience some of the worst outcomes of any group**, across a wide range of social indicators. The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has published a number of reports highlighting the multiple inequalities experienced by Gypsies and Travellers. An EHRC review in 2015 concluded that the life chances of Gypsies and Travellers had declined since the Commission’s previous review in 2010. The contributory factors are complex and often inter-related, but may include deprivation, social exclusion and discrimination.

**Racial discrimination**

Gypsies and Travellers continue to face high levels of racial discrimination, contributing to and exacerbating the inequalities they experience.

**Accommodation**

Many Gypsies and Travellers now live in settled accommodation and do not travel, or do not travel all of the time, but nonetheless consider travelling to be part of their identity. At the 2011 Census, the majority (76%) of Gypsies and Irish Travellers in England and Wales lived in bricks-and-mortar accommodation, and 24% lived in a caravan or other mobile or temporary structure.

Unauthorised sites are frequently a source of tension between the travelling and settled communities. Public bodies have a range of powers to deal with illegal and unauthorised encampments.

Shelter’s *Good practice briefing on Gypsies and Travellers* (2007) provides an overview of some of the **difficulties settled Gypsies and Travellers can face in accessing suitable housing** and sustaining tenancies, including: invisibility, discrimination, distrust of public authorities, low levels of literacy, isolation from family support networks, and neighbourhood tensions.

**Planning**

A **shortage of permanent and transit Gypsy and Traveller sites** continues to be a pressing issue, which results in unauthorised encampments, weakened community cohesion and local authority expenditure on eviction and clearing up illegal sites. (Chartered Institute of Housing, *Managing and delivering Gypsy and Traveller sites: negotiating conflict* by De Montfort University, and Joseph Rowntree Foundation, December 2016)

**Environmental conditions on sites**

A number of studies have raised **concerns about environmental conditions** on some Traveller sites, including: the poor location of sites (for example, under motorways, next to sewage works or on poor quality land); health hazards (such as contamination by vermin); decayed sewage and water fittings; poor-quality utility rooms; and failings in fire safety.

A research report published by the National Inclusion Health Board (NIHB) in January 2016 on the Impact of insecure accommodation and the living environment on Gypsies’ and Travellers’ health also highlighted concerns about poor living environments on some Traveller sites and their negative impact on health outcomes

**Health needs**

A number of studies have identified the **poor health experiences** of Gypsy and Traveller groups compared with the general population, including higher rates of mortality, morbidity and long-term health conditions, low child immunisation levels, and a higher prevalence of anxiety and depression. A range of factors, such as poor accommodation, discrimination, poor health literacy, and a lack of cultural awareness and understanding by health professionals of Gypsy and Traveller health and social needs, are thought to create barriers to accessing healthcare.

The National Inclusion Health Board has called for more joined up working by local authorities, the NHS and responsible health agencies, and local public health services to improve the health outcomes of Gypsies and Travellers. It also emphasised the importance of building community cohesion in order to develop a healthy and sustainable environment for the Traveller community.

**Education**

Children from Gypsy and Traveller communities attain and progress significantly below the national average throughout compulsory education. In 2016, 18% of pupils from Irish Traveller backgrounds and 9% from Gypsy and Roma backgrounds attained 5 GCSEs (or equivalents) at grades A\* to C, compared to 57% of pupils in England. Gypsy and Traveller pupils also have a high rate of school exclusions and report high levels of bullying and racial abuse.

**Employment**

The 2011 Census found that Gypsy or Irish Traveller was the ethnic group with the lowest employment rates and highest levels of economic inactivity. Of those who were economically active, Gypsies and Irish Travellers were more likely to be unemployed (20%) and self-employed (25%) than the general population in England and Wales. Inactive Gypsies and Travellers were significantly less likely to be students or retired than the general population.

**Census Data 2011**

Central Bedfordshire is a unitary authority serving a growing population of around 274,000

Gypsies and Travellers account for 0.2% of the Central Bedfordshire population (478 people) which is slightly above the England and Wales average of 0.1%.

**Central Bedfordshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2016**

Local authorities are required to ensure they comply with national requirements with regard to provision to meet the needs of Gypsy and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. Requirements are set out within the Housing Act (1985), NPPF (2012), Planning Practice Guidance (2014), Planning Policy for Traveller Sites(PPTS) (2015) and the Housing and Planning Act (2016)

A previous Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) study was undertaken in December 2014 which identified that Central Bedfordshire was required to allocate 136 pitches to meet identified needs for the period 2011 to 2031. However, an update to the PPTS in 2015



changed the definition of Travellers for planning purposes. A new GTAA was therefore commissioned by the Council to inform the new Local Plan. The study identifies the need within Central Bedfordshire for Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites for the plan period 2015 to 2035.

Due to the new definition within the 2015 PPTS, the need for Gypsy and Traveller provision within Central Bedfordshire has substantially reduced by 48% from 136 pitches to 71 pitches.

Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) states: Local planning authorities should set pitch targets for Gypsies and Travellers and plot targets for Travelling Showpeople, which address the likely permanent and transit site accommodation needs of Travellers in their area, working collaboratively with neighbouring local planning authorities.

Local Authorities also now have a duty to ensure a 5 year land supply to meet the identified needs for Traveller sites. However, 'Planning Policy for Traveller Sites' also states: Where there is no identified need, criteria - based policies should be included to provide a basis for decisions in case applications nevertheless come forward. Criteria - based policies should be fair and should facilitate the traditional and nomadic life of Travellers, while respecting the interests of the settled community.

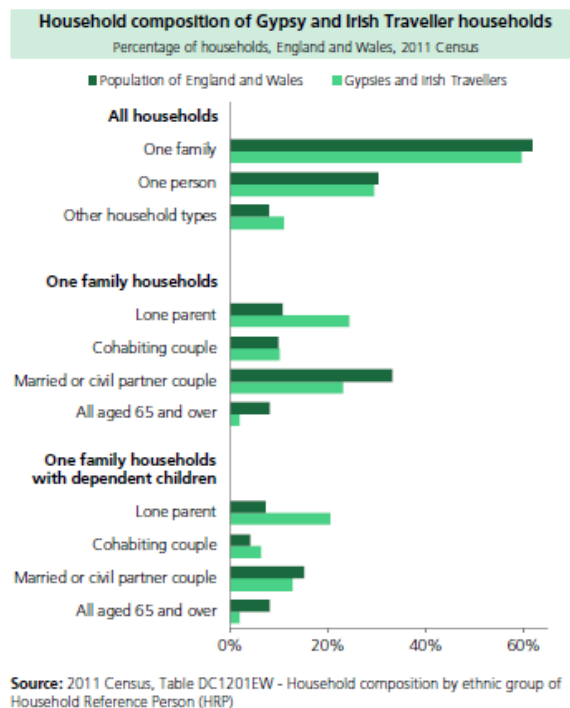
**- Religion or Belief:** e.g. *Buddhist / Christian / Hindu / Jewish / Muslim / Sikh / No religion / Other*

None identified

**- Sex:** e.g. *Women / Girls / Men / Boys*

**Gypsies and Travellers House of Commons Briefing Paper 08083 28 September 2017**

The most common family household type was 'lone parent' at 24%, compared with 11% of all households in England and Wales. The second most common household type was 'married or same-sex civil partnership couple' at 23%, which was less than the 33% recorded for the population as a whole.



The household composition of people living on the 2 sites concerned is not known.

- **Sexual Orientation:** *e.g. Lesbians / Gay men / Bisexuals / Heterosexuals*

None identified

- **Other:** *e.g. Human Rights, Poverty / Social Class / Deprivation, Looked After Children, Offenders, Cohesion, Marriage and Civil Partnership*

**1) Compulsory Purchase Orders:**

Decisions of public bodies to force owners to sell their land under Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs) in order to enable a new development can be contentious. The Human Rights Act 1998, Convention rights Article 1 of the First Protocol provides that no natural or legal person "shall be deprived of his possessions except in the public interest and subject to the conditions provided for by law". Individuals also have a right under Article 8 to respect for their private and family life and their homes.

CPO's must be able to demonstrate that there are rational grounds to conclude that a substantial public interest exists which outweighs the landowner's rights. A fair balance must be struck between the public interest, and an individual's right to the peaceful enjoyment of his possessions. Any interference with that right must be necessary and proportionate.

A Compulsory Purchase Order should not be made unless there is 'a compelling case in the public interest'. Consideration should be given to:

- The problems with the estate that necessitate its redevelopment
- What other options have been considered and discounted
- Ensuring full consultation has taken place with owners and occupiers
- Details of the new housing that will be built and the form of tenure
- Details of the funding for the project
- Details of the planning permission for the new development.
- The benefits of the new development
- How existing council or housing association tenants will be dealt with, what assistance will be given to private tenants to find new accommodation, and what assistance will be provided to owner occupiers to find new homes

The courts have not suggested that the option followed must be the 'least intrusive' of those available, but the question of whether a less intrusive option is available will always be relevant to the question of whether the case is in fact 'compelling'.

**2) The Housing Act 1996**

The Act places a requirement on the Council to secure that displaced occupiers will be provided with residential accommodation as Section 40 Land Compensation Act 1973, and also uses the word 'suitable'. There could be a need to assess occupiers to see how adverse they are to "bricks and mortar" accommodation. Under the 1996 Act the accommodation offered should be suitable and take account of the needs of a traveller whose culture / human rights could be impinged by living in a house as opposed to a caravan.

The 1996 Act allows local authorities to prioritise / allocate banding or rank. Consideration will

need to be given to whether some occupiers who would be evicted, in normal circumstances, may not be assessed as priority or have a high enough rank to be allocated accommodation.

### 3) Human Rights Act

**Right to Liberty and Security:** it is absolutely forbidden to subject any person to torture or to any treatment or punishment that is inhuman or degrading. This includes:

Torture – deliberate infliction of severe pain/suffering, to punish, intimidate, or obtain information.  
 Inhuman treatment – treatment which causes serious physical and/or mental pain or suffering.  
 Degrading treatment – treatment arousing feelings of fear, anguish and inferiority capable of humiliating and debasing the victim

Local authorities are required to intervene to stop torture, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment as soon as they become aware of it, even if a private individual is carrying it out.

**Prohibition of Slavery and Forced Labour:** everyone has an absolute right not to be held in slavery or servitude or be required to perform forced or compulsory labour. A public authority must intervene to stop slavery, servitude or forced or compulsory labour as soon as aware of it.

**Right to Respect for Private and Family Life:** the right to enjoy living in their home without public authorities intruding or preventing them from entering it or living in it.

This Right may be restricted, provided such interference has a proper legal basis, is necessary in a democratic society and pursues one of the following recognised legitimate aims such as:

- public safety
- the economic wellbeing of the country
- the prevention of disorder or crime
- the protection of health or morals
- the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

Interference must be necessary (not just reasonable) and should not do more than is needed to achieve the aim desired. Any action that is taken needs to be proportionate.

**Prohibition of Discrimination:** the right to protection from discrimination in relation to all the other rights guaranteed under the Convention.

### 4) HM Government Report of the Inter-Departmental Ministerial Group on Modern Slavery

Modern Slavery remains a largely hidden crime and it is challenging accurately to assess its prevalence. Victims are often unable to report their suffering or may feel too traumatised to do so even when the opportunity arises. Professionals may not always identify modern slavery when they encounter it.

The threat from modern slavery is broken down into four key sub-threats. Assessed by level of harm, these are: the trafficking of minors into conditions of sexual, labour or criminal exploitation; the sexual exploitation of adults; the trafficking of adults into conditions of labour exploitation; and new and emerging threats.

Current intelligence indicates a significant proportion of modern slavery crimes are perpetrated by individuals and small, often familial networks. Offenders predominantly target victims with whom they share a cultural, ethnic or national background, although recent intelligence suggests

that groups are expanding their victim pools to encompass other nationalities.

Force and threats of violence against both victims and their families are used by offenders alongside other coercive practices to exert control and maintain conditions of exploitation. Debts incurred as a result of transit are also used as a form of control, whilst wages well below the costs of the food and accommodation provided by offenders continue the cycle of debt bondage

**5) Northumbria Police – Modern Day Slavery Risk Factors**

Anyone regardless of age, gender, ethnicity and sexuality, can be at risk of modern slavery. However, traffickers or modern slavery facilitators often target vulnerable individuals as they are easier to coerce. Particularly vulnerable groups include:

- Poor people
- Homeless people / Missing from Homes
- Alcoholics / Drug addicts
- People who lack education
- Children brought up in social care
- Mentally and /or physically ill people
- Victims of domestic violence
- Illegal immigrants
- Former victims of modern slavery and human trafficking

**Spotting the signs**

General Indicators Trafficking victims are often lured into another country by false promises and so may not easily trust others. They may:

- Be fearful of police/ authorities
- Be fearful of the trafficker, believing their lives or family members lives are at risk if they escape
- Exhibit signs of physical and psychological trauma e.g. anxiety, lack of memory of recent events bruising, untreated conditions
- Be fearful of telling others about their situation
- Be unaware they have been trafficked and believe they are simply in a bad job
- Have limited freedom of movement
- Be unpaid or paid very little
- Have limited access to medical care
- Seem to be in debt to someone
- Have no passport or mention that someone else is holding their passport
- Be regularly moved to avoid detection

**6) Central Bedfordshire Housing Strategy 2016 – 2021**

The under delivery of housing is a national issue. Nationally 243,000 new homes are needed per year to meet the housing shortage. Whilst the Council does not seek to control the market, it wants to facilitate the creation of a ‘mixed economy’ where a range of agencies can work separately, and sometimes together, to deliver shared priorities set out in this strategy document. Key housing challenges include:

- How to ensure delivery of affordable housing to attract and retain key workers and people employed in central Bedfordshire.
- How to maximize the delivery of a range of affordable housing types and tenures and what



are the delivery options.

**7) Central Bedfordshire Draft Local Plan 2015 – 2035**

Local Plans are required to set pitch targets for Gypsy and Travellers and plot targets for Travelling Showpeople which addresses the likely accommodation needs in the area, based on local evidence. The Plan is required to:

- Identify a five year supply of specific deliverable sites and other, developable sites to accommodate growth for years 6-10 and where possible 11-15;
- Ensure the number of pitches and plots reflect the size and location of a site, and the size of the surrounding population; and
- Protect local amenity and the environment

**2.3. Summary of Existing Data and Consultation Findings – Employment  
Considering the impact on Employees**

- **Age:** e.g. 16-19 / 20-29 / 30-39 / 40-49 / 50-59 / 60+ **Not Applicable (N/A)**

- **Disability:** e.g. Physical impairment / Sensory impairment / Mental health condition / Learning disability or difficulty / Long-standing illness or health condition / Severe disfigurement **(N/A)**

- **Carers:** e.g. parent / guardian / foster carer / person caring for an adult who is a spouse, partner, civil partner, relative or person who lives at the same address **(N/A)**

- **Gender Reassignment:** People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process (or part of a process) to reassign their sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex **(N/A)**

- **Pregnancy and Maternity:** e.g. Pregnancy / Compulsory maternity leave / Ordinary maternity leave / Additional maternity leave **(N/A)**

- **Race:** e.g. Asian or Asian British / Black or Black British / Chinese / Gypsies and Travellers / Mixed Heritage / White British / White Irish / White Other **(N/A)**

- **Religion or Belief:** e.g. Buddhist / Christian / Hindu / Jewish / Muslim / Sikh / No religion / Other **(N/A)**

- **Sex:** Women / Men **(N/A)**

- **Sexual Orientation:** e.g. Lesbians / Gay men / Bisexuals / Heterosexuals **(N/A)**

- **Other:** e.g. Human Rights, Poverty / Social Class / Deprivation, Looked After Children, Offenders, Cohesion, Marriage and Civil Partnership **(N/A)**

**2.4. To what extent are vulnerable groups more affected by this proposal compared to the population or workforce as a whole?**

The proposal directly impacts on people from Gypsy and Traveller communities and people renting affordable accommodation. It will therefore be important to identify the level of assistance that will be provided to identify alternative accommodation if the CPO proposal is approved.

**2.5 To what extent do current procedures and working practices address the above issues and help to promote equality of opportunity?**

Consultation was open from 22 August to 14 November 2017.

- Online questionnaire
- Paper questionnaire with freepost address, posted and hand delivered to sites
- Confidential telephone line for people living on the Stables or Greenacres
- Meeting with 6 residents on 9 October

The consultation was supported by a targeted communications campaign with promotion via social media, email bulletins and the website.

**Summary of Public Consultation**

- 382 residents participated in the consultation by completing the survey.
- 80% (301) were local residents, including 25% (96) who live within a mile of the two sites.
- An additional 5% (17) responded as residents of either Greenacres or The Stables.

**Council’s Preferred Option - Proposal to buy Greenacres & The Stables**

- 54% of respondents agreed with the proposal to buy the two sites and build a council-managed site near to the current location. 42% disagreed with the proposal
- Local residents (within 1 mile) were even more supportive (57%)
- Crime and anti-social behaviour was a frequently occurring theme with many respondents concerned about the current levels of crime and anti-social behaviour emanating from the two sites, with further concerns that this proposal to move the sites will not solve the problem. Whilst this topic was a frequent theme, there was disagreement among respondents about the most suitable solution
- These comments were more frequent from residents living nearer to the sites, with 60% coming from residents of Billington, Leighton Linlade or Stanbridge indicating the specific problems associated with these sites which are leading to a breakdown in community cohesion.
- 5 (30%) of Greenacres / The Stables residents agreed and 10 (59%) disagreed with the preferred option
- Comments indicated a desire from site residents to keep and own their own homes – citing a settled and close community with children at school as reasons for this. There was an acknowledgement and willingness from several residents to work with the council to resolve current issues

**Discontinuance and Injunction**

- 51% of respondents agreed with the Central Bedfordshire Council view that the ‘Discontinuance and Injunction’ option would not be a suitable solution. 37% disagreed
- 25% of Greenacres / The Stables residents supported the council’s view and 31% disagreed

**Summary of meeting with 6 residents**

The residents on site who attended the meeting explained that they did not support the Councils preferred option and that they felt settled and did not want to sell their land and lose their homes. Residents confirmed their support for working with the Council on resolving issues on the sites and maintaining longer term improvements. A number of suggestions were put forward by site residents including the creation of a Residents Association to address the issues raised through the consultation.



**Summary of telephone calls**

In total 16 residents contacted the Council on the dedicated consultation phone line, some making repeat contact to follow up on issues raised. The majority of callers (11) identified themselves as land owners on The Stables and Greenacres, 2 callers were their nominated representatives and 2 callers were non-G&T residents living on site. One caller was a resident of Billington.

The majority of people who contacted the phone line confirmed that they were not in favour of the Council's preferred option. The main issues raised related to land ownership, planning permissions, utility connections and homelessness.

**2.5. Are there any gaps in data or consultation findings?**

There is not a detailed analysis currently available of the characteristics of people living on the sites.

Although attempts were made to use a variety of consultation methods in order to engage the residents living on the sites, including face to face, telephone and written communications, responses have only been received from a small proportion of people living on the sites.

**2.6. What action will be taken to obtain this information?**

If the Council considered moving towards Discontinuance and Injunction or CPO in the future, then Education, Health and Welfare checks would need to be undertaken.

**Stage 3 - Providing an overview of impacts and potential discrimination.**

| Stage 3 – Assessing Positive & Negative Impacts |         |        |                 |    |   |
|---|---------|--------|-----------------|----|---|
| Analysis of Impacts                             | Impact? |        | Discrimination? |    | Summary of impacts and reasons  |
|   | (+ve)   | (- ve) | YES             | NO |   |
| <b>3.1 Age</b>                                  | √       | √      |                 |    | Gypsies and Travellers are more likely to have dependent children. Living on a site with improved infrastructure could have positive impacts. Residents on the sites want to keep and own their own homes – citing a settled and close community with children at school. Any displacement of residents could cause disruption to support networks. |
| <b>3.2 Disability</b>                           | √       | √      |                 |    | Gypsies and Travellers are more likely to be affected by a long-term condition. Living on a site with improved infrastructure could have positive impacts, but any displacement of residents could cause disruption to support networks.  |
| <b>3.3 Carers</b>                               | √       | √      |                 |    | Gypsies and Travellers are more   |

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|  |   |   |   |   | likely to be providing unpaid care. Living on a site with improved infrastructure could have positive impacts, but any displacement of residents could cause disruption to support networks.   |
| <b>3.4 Gender Reassignment</b>   | - | - | - | - | None identified  |
| <b>3.5 Pregnancy &amp; Maternity</b>   | √ | √ |   |   | Gypsies and Travellers are more likely to experience higher rates of stillbirth, infant mortality and maternal death. Living on a site with improved infrastructure could have positive impacts, but any displacement of residents could cause disruption to support networks.   |
| <b>3.6 Race</b>  | √ | √ |   |   | Gypsies and Travellers experience some of the worst outcomes of any group, across a wide range of social indicators including housing need. Living on a site with improved infrastructure could have positive impacts. Site residents do not support the Councils preferred option, they feel settled and do not want to sell their land and lose their homes. |
| <b>3.7 Religion / Belief</b>   | - | - | - | - | None identified  |
| <b>3.8 Sex</b>   | √ | √ |   |   | The most common Gypsy and Traveller family household type identified in the Census was 'lone parent'. Living on a site with improved infrastructure could have positive impacts, but any displacement of residents could cause disruption to support networks.   |
| <b>3.9 Sexual Orientation</b>  | - | - | - | - | None identified  |
| <b>3.10 Other e.g. Human Rights, Poverty / Social Class / Deprivation, Looked After Children, Offenders, Cohesion Marriage and Civil Partnership</b> | √ | √ |   |   | <p>The question of whether a less intrusive option is available will always be relevant to the question of whether the case is in fact 'compelling'.</p> <p>The need to take proportionate action to balance the rights to respect for private and family life and the rights in relation to prohibition of slavery and forced labour must be</p>              |





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|  |  |  |  |  | <p>considered.</p> <p>The demand for affordable housing is recognised in the council's Housing Strategy. The draft Local Plan recognises the need for additional pitches to be identified.</p> <p>In terms of community cohesion, the consultation has highlighted significant concerns relating to crime and antisocial behaviour which have been raised by residents living nearer to the sites</p> |
|--|--|--|--|--|---|

**Stage 4 - Identifying mitigating actions that can be taken to address adverse impacts.**

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| <p><b>Stage 4 – Conclusions, Recommendations and Action Planning</b></p>   |  |  |  |  |
| <p><b>4.1 What are the main conclusions and recommendations from the assessment?</b></p> <p>The consultation has highlighted significant concerns relating to crime and antisocial behaviour which have been raised by residents living nearer to the sites. It is important that these issues are addressed in order to improve community relations.</p> <p>The assessment has identified two vulnerable groups at risk of being adversely affected by the proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People living in mobile homes and caravans which are being rented out as affordable housing. The demand for affordable housing is recognised in the council's Housing Strategy 2016 -2021</li> <li>• Gypsies and Travellers experience housing need as evidenced in the Bedfordshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2016. National research also indicates that Gypsies and Travellers experience some of the worst outcomes of any group, across a wide range of social indicators</li> </ul> <p>The consultation has provided an opportunity for a meaningful dialogue to commence between the Council and site residents and to identify whether alternative options can be identified. It may be beneficial to explore these opportunities further before deciding to apply for a CPO.</p> <p>A CPO should not be made unless there is a compelling case in the public interest. The question of whether a less intrusive option is available will always be relevant to the question of whether the case is in fact 'compelling'.</p> <p>If the preferred option of CPO is pursued there will be an adverse impact on the above groups and so there would be a need to develop a clear strategy as part of the CPO process for assisting occupiers to move to suitable housing or to alternative sites. The Council's Housing Options service will support any residents who need to find alternative accommodation.</p> |  |  |  |  |
| <p><b>4.2 What changes will be made to address or mitigate any adverse impacts that have been identified?</b></p> <p>It is recommended that further time is spent considering whether there are alternative solutions to CPO. Ongoing dialogue and the cooperation of residents on the site would be critical to making</p>  |  |  |  |  |



| this work.  |              |      |          |
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| <b>4.3 Are there any budgetary implications?</b>  |              |      |          |
| The estimated cost of the recommended proposal is £9m. The costs of any alternative proposals are yet to be determined but they must be cost effective in comparison to the estimated £9m for the preferred Council proposal. |              |      |          |
| <b>4.4 Actions to be taken to mitigate against any adverse impacts:</b>   |              |      |          |
| Action  | Lead Officer | Date | Priority |
| Identification of the viability of alternative proposals for Greenacres and the Stables Gypsy and Traveller Sites   |              |      | High     |
| Identification of alternative housing solutions for people living in mobile homes and caravans which are being rented out as affordable housing.  |              |      | High     |
| If CPO is pursued identification of a suitable alternative site for stationing a caravan on reasonable terms or suitable residential accommodation.   |              |      | Medium   |
|   |              |      |          |

**Stage 5 - Checking that all the relevant issues and mitigating actions have been identified**

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| <b>Stage 5 – Quality Assurance &amp; Scrutiny:</b>   |
| <b>Checking that all the relevant issues have been identified</b>  |
| <b>5.1 What methods have been used to gain feedback on the main issues raised in the assessment?</b>                   |
| <b>Step 1:</b>   |
| <b>Has the Corporate Policy Advisor (Equality &amp; Diversity) reviewed this assessment and provided feedback? Yes</b> |
| <b>Summary of CPA’s comments:</b>  |
| The Council’s Equality Lead has been fully involved in the development of this assessment.                             |
| <b>Step 2:</b>   |
| <b>5.2 Feedback from Central Bedfordshire Equality Forum</b>   |
| The Equality Forum will be invited to comment on the proposal as it is further developed.                              |

**Stage 6 - Ensuring that the actual impact of proposals are monitored over time.**

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| <b>Stage 6 – Monitoring Future Impact</b>   |
| <b>6.1 How will implementation of the actions be monitored?</b>   |
| Subject to agreement the Council will establish a formal Project Board to progress work to:   |
| a. ensure that all legal options are pursued to make the Greenacres and The Stables site:   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• compliant with planning and licensing regulations</li> <li>• safe and well maintained</li> </ul> |



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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• well managed and accessible to the authorities</li> </ul> <p>b. define in detail the site standards to be achieved</p> <p>c. agree how the Council will work with site residents to achieve the standards</p> <p>d. agree how progress will be measured</p> <p>e. set review meetings and conduct site visits</p> <p>f. agree the timescales for reporting back to Executive with recommendations based on the outcome of the work</p> |
| <p><b>6.2 What sort of data will be collected and how often will it be analysed?</b><br/>To be identified by the Project Board</p>  |
| <p><b>6.3 How often will the proposal be reviewed?</b><br/>To be identified by the Project Board</p>  |
| <p><b>6.4 Who will be responsible for this?</b><br/>To be identified by the Project Board</p>   |
| <p><b>6.5 How have the actions from this assessment been incorporated into the proposal?</b><br/>The Equality Impact Assessment is being considered by the Executive Committee of the Council and the conclusions are reflected in the Executive report.</p>  |

**Stage 7 - Finalising the assessment.**

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| <p><b>Stage 7 – Accountability / Signing Off</b></p>  |
| <p><b>7.1 Has the lead Assistant Director/Head of Service been notified of the outcome of the assessment</b></p> <p>Name: _____ Date: _____</p>       |
| <p><b>7.2 Has the Corporate Policy Adviser Equality &amp; Diversity provided confirmation that the Assessment is complete?</b></p> <p>Date: _____</p> |