

INSPECTOR'S NOTE TO COUNCIL FOLLOWING

Hearing Session 5: Gypsy and Traveller Sites

Held on Tuesday 8th April 2014

- 1) Following the Gypsy and Traveller Sites hearing session I have concluded, in the light of the evidence, that the proposed allocation of land at Celtic Way, Coedkernew as a transit gypsy and traveller site under policy H15 renders the submitted Plan unsound. In summary, I consider that the proposed allocation is incompatible with, and fundamentally prejudicial to, the delivery of the adjacent EM1 (i) Duffryn major employment allocation and the ongoing development of this location as "a large scale strategic development area well connected to the M4, containing some of the most prestigious employment developments within Newport". Given the pivotal significance of the Duffryn business area to the attraction of economic investment I regard the proposed transit site allocation as wholly at odds with a key aim of the Plan strategy to deliver new employment and generate economic growth and prosperity for Newport. The proposed allocation at the heart of the strategic business area renders the Plan internally inconsistent and severely undermines its effectiveness in delivering on its key economic objectives, so failing the consistency and coherence and effectiveness tests of soundness.
- 2) It is also clear that the site owner (Welsh Government) is not a willing seller, and it is asserted by Government officials that compulsory purchase would not be possible due to such powers not being available in relation to crown land. Although the Council questions whether the site has crown land status, it has not been established at this time that acquisition of the land against the owner's wishes would be possible. This raises significant doubt in my mind as to the deliverability of the allocation, and thus the coherence and effectiveness of the Plan in these terms also.
- 3) In the light of the above I consider that in order to be found sound the Plan needs to be amended by removing the allocation of land at Celtic Way, Coedkernew for gypsy and traveller transit accommodation. Accordingly the Council is asked to consider putting forward such an amendment to policy H15 and the Proposals Map as a matters arising change.
- 4) Notwithstanding the above, the evidence base on which the Plan is founded identifies a need for seven gypsy and traveller transit accommodation pitches to be provided in the Newport area. Welsh Government guidance is clear that where the evidence indicates a

need for transit site accommodation, the Plan should make provision for identified need.

- 5) In the light of my conclusion that the site at Celtic Way should not be allocated the Council is asked to consider the available options, and provide as soon as possible its proposals for how the Plan should now deliver the identified gypsy and traveller transit accommodation requirement, together with the reasoning which supports its position.

Alwyn Nixon

Examination Inspector

6 May 2014