Surrey Heath Local Plan: Preferred Options (2019 – 2038) – Further Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Allocations

Regulation 18































## **AUGUST 2022**

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## I. Introduction

#### About this consultation

- 1.1. This Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Further Site Allocations consultation, and accompanying Interim Sustainability Appraisal are available for public consultation between 12:00 noon on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> August 2022 and 12:00 noon on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2022.
- 1.2. You can view this consultation document and supporting evidence and find out how to respond to this consultation online by visiting our website at xxx.
- 1.3. You can also reach the website quickly by scanning the following QR code:

**XXXX** 

- 1.4. Alternatively, you can email your comments to: planning.consultation@surreyheath.gov.uk
- 1.5. If it is not possible to use electronic communication, send your comments by post to:

Planning Policy
Finance and Customer Services Directorate
Surrey Heath Borough Council
Surrey Heath House
Knoll Road
Camberley
Surrey GUI5 3HD

- 1.6. Documents can also be viewed on paper at the Council's Offices in Knoll Road, Camberley upon request. The consultation document and key supporting documents can also be viewed in libraries throughout the Borough. Information on public consultation events supporting this consultation can be found at xx.
- 1.7. Please return your comments to Surrey Heath Borough Council by 12:00 noon on 23 September 2022.

#### **Data Protection**

1.8. Any personal details submitted as part of a representation will be processed by Surrey Heath Borough Council in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 and used only in connection with the development and adoption of the Surrey Heath Local Plan.



1.9. Please note that the Council will not accept anonymous, abusive or defamatory comments. Comments cannot be treated as confidential and your name, organisation and response will be made publicly available once we publish responses. Further detail on how your personal information will be managed is available on the Local Plan consultation webpage and more general information about how the Council manages your data can be found at https://www.surreyheath.gov.uk/council/information-governance/how-we-use-your-data.

## Purpose of this document

- 1.10. Surrey Heath Borough Council is preparing a new Local Plan which will guide the location, scale and type of future development in the Borough up to 2038. The Council consulted on a Draft Surrey Heath Local Plan: Preferred Options (2019 2038)<sup>1</sup> between March and May 2022.
- 1.11. As set out in more detail later in this document, the Council has a responsibility through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)<sup>2</sup> and legal requirements to plan for the housing needs of all residents, including the Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities. Planning Policy for Traveller Sites<sup>3</sup> (PPTS) (2015) directs the process that must be followed in order to effectively assess and plan for this specific housing requirement. However, as with finding sites for general housing, the existing environmental and Policy constraints in Surrey Heath Borough means that the identification of suitable sites is challenging.
- 1.12. At the time of the March May 2022 Draft Local Plan consultation, only one potential site allocation had been identified as part of Policy H12: Site Allocations for Gypsy and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation. This was at Diamond Ridge Woods and is proposed to provide 4 Gypsy and Traveller pitches. This site alone is not sufficient to meet the identified needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. This consultation document therefore seeks views on a number of additional potential sites that could be allocated within Policy H12 specifically to contribute towards meeting the identified needs.
- 1.13. This consultation is supported by:

<sup>2</sup> Link tbc



<sup>1</sup> Link the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Link tbc

- i. A Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment, 20204;
- ii. A Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Topic paper (updated), August 2022<sup>5</sup>;
- iii. A Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Site Identification Paper (updated), August 2022<sup>6</sup>; and
- iv. An interim Sustainability Appraisal, August 2022<sup>7</sup>
- 1.14. This document should be read in conjunction with the Draft Surrey Heath Local Plan: Preferred Options (2019 2038), and in particular with draft policies H11: Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople which seeks to safeguard existing sites and sets criteria against which planning applications for new sites will be considered, and Policy H12: Site Allocations for Gypsy and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation which sets out the development requirements for the proposed Gypsy and Traveller site allocation at Diamond Ridge Woods, Camberley.
- 1.15. The proposed Gypsy and Traveller site allocation at Diamond Ridge Woods has already been subject to consultation through the Draft Surrey Heath Local Plan: Preferred Options (2019 2038) March May 2022 consultation and is not a formal part of this current consultation document, but is referenced in the Sustainability Appraisal Addendum. Comments made on this site in response to the March May 2022 consultation will be taken into account in preparing the next version of the Local Plan, which will be the Pre-Submission Local Plan Consultation document (Regulation 19).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Link tbc



https://www.surreyheath.gov.uk/sites/default/files/GTAA%20-%20%28Gypsy%20and%20Traveller%20Accommodation%20Assessment%29%20Final%20Report%2 02020.pdf

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Link thc

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Link tbc

# **Further Information**

1.16. Please contact a member of the Planning Policy team at planning.consultation@surreyheath.gov.uk or call our Contact Centre on 01276 707100 if you have any queries relating to this Local Plan consultation.

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## 2. Context

## National Policy and legislative context

2.1. The Gypsy and Traveller Topic Paper sets out in detail, the wider policy and legislative requirements for meeting the needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. There is a legislative requirement<sup>8</sup> for local authorities to undertake a periodic review of housing needs of the people residing or resorting to their area with respect to the provision of sites on which caravans (and houseboats) can be stationed. In preparing Local Plans, these must be consistent with national planning policy.

## **National Planning Policy**

- 2.2. The NPPF sets out that the housing needs of different groups in the community, including Travellers, should be assessed and reflected in Policy. Further detail on planning for Travellers is set out in PPTS, 2015 which must be taken into account in preparing Local Plans. In planning for Traveller sites, PPTS indicates that 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. In addition, they should identify and update annually, a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years' worth of sites against locally set targets and a supply of specific developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6 10 and, where possible, for years 11 15.
- 2.3. PPTS sets out that Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances. If a local planning authority wishes to make an exceptional, limited alteration to the defined Green Belt boundary to meet a specific identified need, for a Traveller site, it should only do so through the plan-making process.

#### **Definitions**

2.4. For the purposes of this consultation document, the definition of Gypsies and Travellers is that as set out in PPTS as set out below:

"Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such"

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Section 124 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 introduces a requirement under Section 8 of the Housing Act 1985.



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- 2.5. The PPTS also provides a definition of Travelling Showpeople, as:
  - "Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who, on the grounds of their own or their family's or dependents' more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily".
- 2.6. Only the need from those households who meet the planning definition and from those of the undetermined households who subsequently demonstrate that they meet it should be formally considered as need arising from the GTAA.

## Existing provision within Surrey Heath

2.7. Table I below outlines the number of existing Gypsy and Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople provision within Surrey Heath:

Table 1: Existing Authorised Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation within Surrey Heath.

Site name	Description	Type of site	No. Pitches/Plots
Kalima, Chobham	Gypsies and Travellers	Public	15 pitches
Swift Lane, Bagshot	Gypsies and Travellers	Public	14 pitches
Land south of J3 of M3, Lightwater	Gypsies and Travellers	Private	2 pitches
Bonds Drive, Chobham	Travelling Showpeople	Private	6 plots

# Understanding future needs

2.8. In order to comply with national policy and to provide a robust evidence base, the Council commissioned a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA), 2020. The purpose of the GTAA is to provide a robust assessment of current and future need for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation in the Borough. Needs are assessed through a combination of desk-based research, stakeholder interviews and engagement with members of the travelling community.



- 2.9. The GTAA sets out that the Council has an identified need for 32 Gypsy and Traveller Pitches and 14 Travelling Showpeople plots over the period 2020 2040, with the majority of that need falling within the first five years of the plan period.
- 2.10. The overall need comprises the following:
  - **32 Gypsy and Traveller Pitches -** This is made up of 7 households on unauthorised developments; 5 concealed or doubled-up households or adults; 8 teenage children in need of a pitch of their own in the next five years; a need for 2 pitches due to inmigration; 2 pitches as a result of movement from bricks and mortar; and 9 from new household formation using a rate of 1.70% derived from the demographics of the households that were interviewed. There is also supply from 1 vacant pitch on a public site.
  - 14 Travelling Showpeople Plots This is made up of I concealed or doubled-up household; 7 teenagers in need of a plot of their own in the next 5 years; and 6 from new household formation using a rate of 1.75% derived from the household demographics
- 2.11. Since 2020, and as set out above, planning permission has been granted for a private Gypsy and Traveller Site of 2 pitches located at land south of Junction 3 of the M3 Lightwater. In addition, the Draft Local Plan: Preferred Options includes a proposed allocation at Diamond Ridge Woods, Camberley for 4 pitches. The Council should allocate a further 19 pitches and 9 travelling showpeople plots through the Local Plan process to meet needs identified in the first 5 years of the plan period after adoption. This represents the needs identified as being required in the early part of the Plan period up to 2028 minus the pitches already permitted or proposed for allocation (see Table 2).

Table 2: Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople needs

		Gypsy and Traveller Pitches	Travelling Showpeople Plots
Total needs 2020 - 2040		32	14
Estimated Pitches/Plots required within first 5 years after adoption of the Plan		c.25	c.9
Pitches/ Plots granted to date	Land south of M3, Lightwater	2	0
Proposed allocation within Reg. 18 Draft Local	Diamond Ridge Woods, Camberley	4	0



Plan to date			
Total shortfall against total requirements for Gypsy & Travellers and Travelling Showpeople at publication of Reg 18 Draft Local Plan March – May 2022 consultation		-26	-14
Shortfall against needs idea years of the plan period aft publication of Reg 18 Draft May 2022	er adoption at	-c.19	-с.9



## 3. Meeting Future Needs

## Site identification process

- 3.1. To date, a significant portfolio of work has been undertaken to identify sites to help meet the Council's identified needs for Gypsy and Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople plots. This has included the development of an appropriate, robust and consistent site identification methodology to identify sites that are achievable, deliverable and developable. The assessment process comprised the following stages with a Red-Amber-Green (RAG) assessment used to identify the performance of each site against each criterion:
  - **Stage 1:** Consideration against absolute constraints
  - Stage 2: Consideration against non-absolute constraints and accessibility
  - **Stage 3:** Qualitative Review
- 3.2. Site identification work began prior to the publication of the Draft Local Plan: Preferred Options consultation (which took place between March May 2022). This initial work identified 103 potential sites for further consideration at the early stages of the site identification process. Potential sites were identified from a range of sources, including:
  - a. Extant Planning Permissions or pitches/plots under construction;
  - b. Undetermined planning applications;
  - c. Planning applications that have been refused or withdrawn;
  - d. Sites with temporary permissions or unauthorised sites that may potentially
  - e. be suitable for regularisation;
  - f. Pre-application enquiries (where not confidential);
  - g. Land in the ownership of the local authority;
  - h. Surplus and likely to become surplus public sector land.
  - i. Sites submitted by developers through formal 'Call for Sites' and/or through
  - j. local plan consultations;
  - k. Sites suggested through engagement with local communities and call for sites;
  - I. Vacant and derelict land; and,
  - m. Intensification and/or extension of existing permanent authorised sites and other sites.



- 3.3. Using the methodology set out above, the initial Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Site Identification Paper identified 3 potential sites for allocation within the Draft Local Plan, however two of these sites were subsequently discounted from consideration as a result of further feasibility work. The remaining site (at land south of Junction 3 of the M3, Lightwater) was approved through a planning application and was not therefore included as a site allocation.
- 3.4. Notwithstanding this, following a site comprising a small area at Diamond Ridge Woods, Camberley was subsequently proposed by Members outside of the wider site identification process and was taken forward into the March May Draft Local Plan Consultation.
- 3.5. Following the March May Draft Local Plan Consultation, further work was undertaken to try and identify further sites to assist with meeting the Council's identified needs for Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation. This included:
  - a. Reviewing sites considered through the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Site Identification Paper (GTTSSIP);
  - b. Exploring sites suggested by Officers;
  - c. Re-reviewing Surrey Heath land ownership datasets;
  - d. Reviewing land for sale in Surrey Heath;
  - e. Undertaking a range of evidence based studies, including contamination studies, utilities searches, title reports;
  - f. Liaising with relevant stakeholders, including Surrey County Council, Environmental Health and Legal Services;
  - g. A further call for sites seeking submissions for Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation;
  - h. Exploring sites suggested by Members.
- 3.6. This work identified a further 12 sites which were then taken through the site assessment methodology set out within the GTTSIP. Arising out of the recent site search and assessment process and as detailed further in the updated Site Identification and Topic Papers, additional proposed site allocations are set out below.



- 3.7. All of the identified sites are currently located within the Green Belt. It is considered that there are exceptional circumstances to warrant limited alterations to the defined Green Belt boundary to inset the sites identified. The case for exceptional circumstances is set out in the Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Topic Paper (update), in addition to an overview of future work to be undertaken. This will be published alongside the Further Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Allocations consultation. In advance of the Regulation 19 Local Plan Consultation, further site-specific work will be undertaken to support the deliverability of the sites identified.
- 3.8. The proposed Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Site Allocations must contribute to the delivery of sustainable development. This is assessed by undertaking a Sustainability Appraisal (SA). Reasonable alternative policy options (where they exist) have been tested against a set of social, environmental and economic objectives. An Interim SA has been prepared to inform this document and builds on the Interim SA undertaken alongside the Draft Surrey Heath Local Plan: Preferred Options (2019 2038) consultation. The Interim SA for this document is subject to six week consultation alongside this document and can be viewed from the Local Plan webpage.
- 3.9. A Habitats Regulation Assessment has been prepared to support this document has concluded that none of the Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Site Allocations will result in adverse effects on the Thames Basin Heaths SPA and Thursley, Ash, Pirbright & Chobham SAC, both alone and in-combination.



# 4. Site allocations for Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople use

- 4.1. As a result of further site identification work undertaken by the Council subsequent to the March May Draft Local Plan Consultation, three further sites with potential for allocation have been identified. These are:
  - a) Swift Lane Extension, Bagshot (5 Gypsy and Traveller pitches);
  - b) Land south of Broadford Lane, Chobham (13 16 Gypsy and Traveller pitches);
  - c) Bonds Drive Extension, Pennypot Lane, Chobham (5 9 Travelling Showpeople Plots).
- 4.2. The sites are discussed in more detail below, including proposed development requirements to be incorporated into Policy H12: Site Allocations for Gypsy and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation for each site. To ensure that the allocated sites continue to meet the Council's identified needs, it is expected that the sites shall only be occupied by those persons who meet the definition of Gypsies and Travellers. This shall be controlled by condition.
- 4.3. To aid the delivery of the remaining pitches and plots required across the plan period, provision will be sought as part of the development of larger sites through Policy HII. Some of the remaining identified needs may also be met through windfall sites. Windfalls are the sites that are brought forward which have not been specifically identified for development. The Council would also welcome any further suggestions of deliverable Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites throughout the consultation process.

#### Swift Lane (extension), Bagshot

4.4. Swift Lane Gypsy and Traveller site is located within the Green Belt in Windlesham Ward and lies to the east of the A322 and to the north of the M3 Motorway, adjacent to the Bagshot Community Recycling Centre (see Figure 1). The existing, well-established site, which comprises 14 pitches, is owned by Surrey Heath Borough Council and managed by Surrey County Council. It is considered that there is scope to provide a further 5 pitches on land to the east of the existing site, which falls within the ownership of Surrey Heath Borough Council.



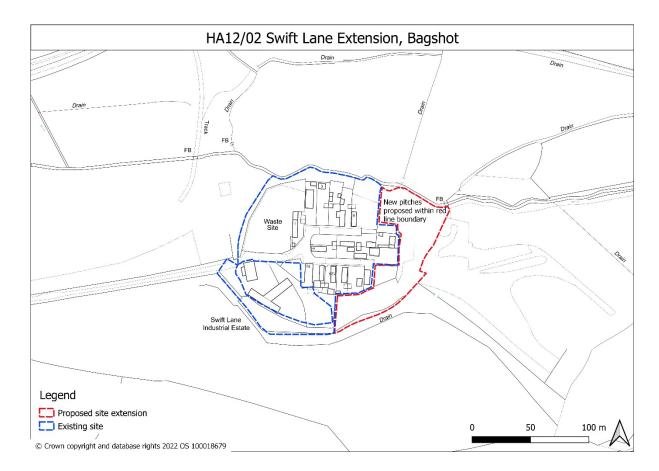


Figure 1: Swift Lane Gypsy and Traveller Site (proposed extension shown in red)

- 4.5. The site has no significant highway issues and is relatively sustainably located, falling in close proximity to the adjacent settlement of Bagshot. Extending the site would enable needs arising from within the existing site to be met.
- 4.6. As a result of historic unauthorised works, some areas of land around Swift Lane (particularly to the east of Swift Lane) are known to have contamination issues which will need to be explored further.
- 4.7. The Council also recognises that the site is located in flood zone 2 and accordingly a flood risk assessment will therefore be required to ensure that the layout of the site is appropriate, given the vulnerable nature of caravans.



- 4.8. The site is currently located within the Green Belt. It is proposed that site would be removed from the Green Belt through the Local Plan process. Taking into account the location of the site, which falls adjacent an area of moderate landscape sensitivity within the Green Belt, the Council will seek to maintain defensible site boundaries sensitive to the countryside setting, whilst not enclosing the site with hard landscaping, high walls or fences, to an extent that suggests deliberate isolation from the community. This is expected to include the retention of existing vegetation to limit any urbanising effect on the rural landscape.
- 4.9. Box I sets out the proposed development requirements to be incorporated for the Swift Lane Extension into Policy H12: Site Allocations for Gypsy and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation.

Box I: proposed allocation for Swift Lane Extension		
Site Reference	Site Name/Address	Indicative Gyspy & Traveller Pitches
HA12/02	Swift Lane Extension	5 Pitches

Development Proposals are required to:

- a. provide high quality landscaping and appropriate and usable private and communal amenity space;
- b. Additional pitches should be developed as part of a wider redevelopment of the existing site to provide an improved layout conducive to community and individual well being, through good design.

#### Land south of Broadford Lane, Chobham

4.10. Land South of Broadford Lane is located within the Green Belt to the south of the settlement area of Chobham and to the east of Castle Grove Road, adjacent to the Chobham Wastewater Treatment Works. The site, which comprises land for grazing, is considered to have capacity for between 13 – 16 pitches (see Figure 2).



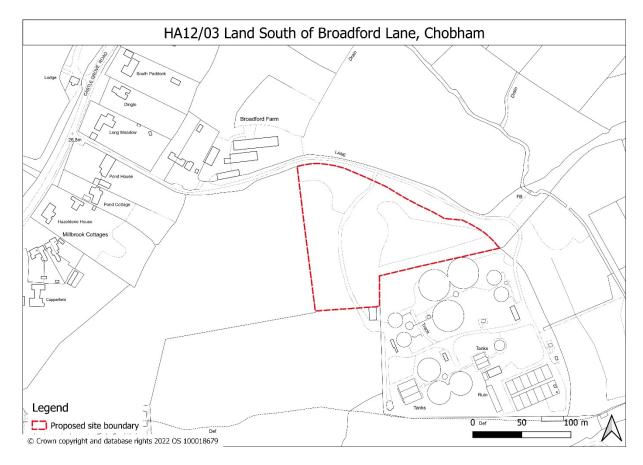


Figure 2: Land South of Broadford Lane

- 4.11. The site is relatively sustainably located, falling in close proximity to the adjacent settlement of Chobham.
- 4.12. As a result of its historic use, the site may have contamination issues which will need to be explored further. In addition, it is expected that a Traffic Assessment will be undertaken to inform the proposed allocation.
- 4.13. The site is currently located within the Green Belt. It is proposed that site would be removed from the Green Belt through the Local Plan process. Taking into account the location of the site, which falls within an area of moderate landscape sensitivity within the Green Belt, the Council will seek to maintain defensible site boundaries sensitive to the countryside setting, whilst not enclosing the site with hard landscaping, high walls or fences, to an extent that suggests deliberate isolation from the community. This is expected to include the retention of existing vegetation to the south and west boundaries of the site to limit any urbanising effect on the rural landscape.



4.14. Box 2 sets out the proposed development requirements to be incorporated for the Land South of Broadford Lane into Policy H12: Site Allocations for Gypsy and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation.

Box 2: proposed allocation for Land South of Broadford Lane, Chobham		
Site Reference	Site Name/Address	Indicative Gyspy & Traveller Pitches
HA12/03	Land South of Broadford Lane, Chobham	13-16 Pitches

#### Development Proposals are required to:

- a. provide high quality landscaping and appropriate and usable private and communal amenity space;
- b. Promote community safety and social cohesion through measures such as natural surveillance on site
- c. provide suitable vehicular access to the site from Broadford Lane with supporting traffic assessment, in consultation with Surrey County Council, and suitable access within the site.
- d. Retain existing vegetation boundary to the south and west of the site.
- e. Include a tree survey to accompany any planning application for residential pitches
- f. Be supported by an extended Phase I extended ecology survey.

#### Bonds Drive (extension), Pennypot Lane, Chobham

4.15. Bonds Drive Travelling Showpeople site is located within the Windlesham and Chobham Ward and lies to the south of Pennypot Lane within Chobham (see Figure 3). The existing, well-established site, which comprises 6 Plots and is owned by the residents of the site. It is considered that there is scope to provide up to 9 further plots on land to the west of the existing site, which currently falls within private ownership. Surrey Heath Borough Council is in discussion with the landowner.



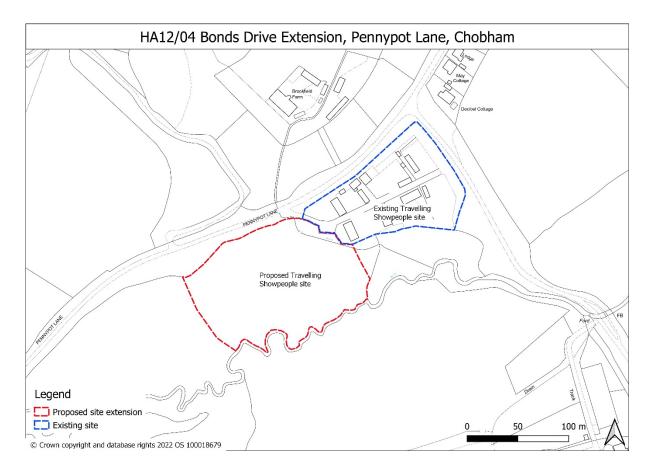


Figure 3: Bonds Drive Extension, Pennypot Lane, Chobham

- 4.16. The site has no significant highway issues but is located is a relatively remote location between the settlements of West End and Chobham. Extending the site would enable needs arising from within the existing site to be met.
- 4.17. The Council recognises that the site is located in flood zone 2 and flood zone 3 and accordingly a flood risk assessment will therefore be required to ensure that the layout of the site is appropriate, given the vulnerable nature of the proposed use.
- 4.18. The site is currently located within the Green Belt. It is proposed that site would be removed from the Green Belt through the Local Plan process. Taking into account the location of the site, which falls within an area of moderate landscape sensitivity within the Green Belt, the Council will seek to maintain defensible site boundaries sensitive to the countryside setting, whilst not enclosing the site with hard landscaping, high walls or fences, to an extent that suggests deliberate isolation from the community. This is expected to include retention of existing vegetation to the northern boundary of the site to limit any urbanising effect on the rural landscape.



4.19. Box 2 sets out the proposed development requirements to be incorporated for the Bonds Drive Extension, Pennypot Lane into Policy H12: Site Allocations for Gypsy and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation.

Box 3: proposed allocation Bonds Drive Extension, Pennypot Lane Extension.		
Site Reference	Site Name/Address	Indicative Travelling Showpeople Plots
HA12/02	Land South of Broadford Lane, Chobham	Up to 9 Plots

Development Proposals are required to:

- a. provide high quality landscaping and appropriate and usable private and communal amenity space;
- b. Include a flood risk assessment in support of a planning application for residential plots.
- c. Include a tree survey to accompany any planning application for residential pitches
- d. Be supported by an extended Phase I extended ecology survey.
- e. Incorporate appropriate vehicular access and turning space.



# 5. Next Steps

5.1. Comments received on this Draft Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople allocations document, along with those on the Draft Local Plan consultation held earlier in the year will be used to help inform the next version of the Local Plan. This is known as the Pre-Submission (or Regulation 19) version and will be published for further comments in early 2023. The remaining stages and timetable for the Local Plan are set out in the table below.

Table 3: Surrey Heath Local Plan timetable

Stage	Dates
Draft Local Plan: Preferred Options consultation	March – May 2022 – completed
Draft Local Plan: Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Further Site Allocations	8 <sup>th</sup> August – 19th September 2022
Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) Consultation on the Local Plan	January to February 2023
Submission of the Plan and supporting evidence to the Secretary of State for independent examination	June 2023
Local Plan Examination (Hearing sessions)	August 2023
Local Plan adoption	December 2023

