

City of Doncaster Council

Gypsy and Traveller Allocation Policy Review

Consultation Outcomes

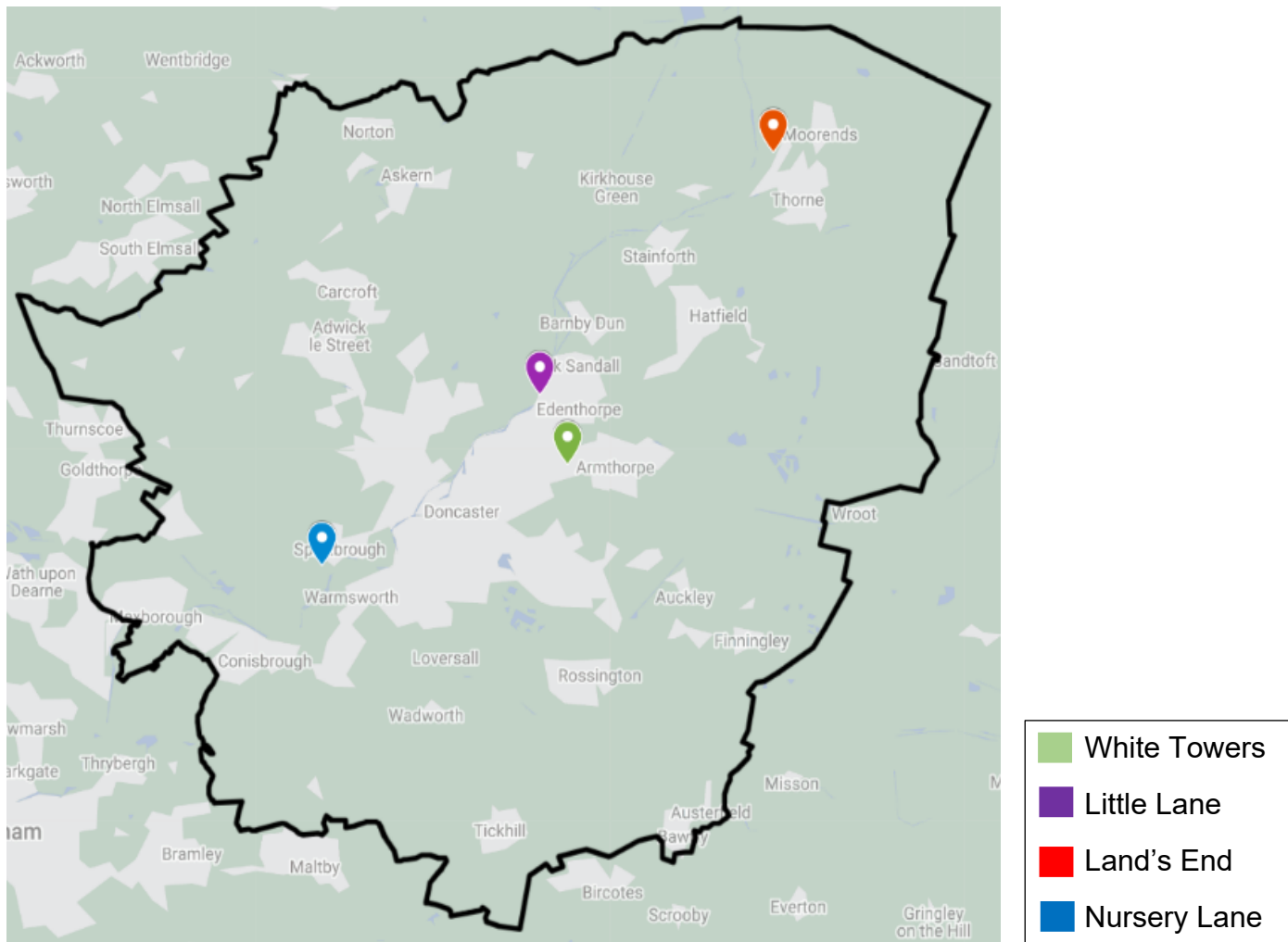
<p>What was the consultation about and who was consulted?</p>	<p>Proposed amendments to City of Doncaster Council's Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Allocation Policy.</p> <p>This policy sets out the framework for allocating caravan pitches on council-owned sites in Doncaster. Gypsy and Traveller sites transferred over to St Leger Homes of Doncaster in 2014. The existing policy is outdated and awareness from site residents and those on the waiting list is low.</p> <p>There were eight proposed changes approved for Public Consultation.</p> <p>This consultation aimed to gather opinions from stakeholders, current site residents and waiting list applicants on the proposed changes and also provide an opportunity to comment on any gaps in policy.</p>
<p>Over what period did the consultation run?</p>	<p>Stakeholder and public consultation was carried out simultaneously over a 12-week period, starting on 20th February 2023 and finishing on 10th May 2023.</p>
<p>How many responses were received?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 53 responses were received from the public consultation • 22 additional comments
<p>Where will the results be published?</p>	<p>Results will be published on the council's website www.doncaster.gov.uk as part of the decision making process.</p>
<p>How will the results be used?</p>	<p>To inform recommendations of which amendments are adopted in the policy as part of the decision making process.</p>

Map of Gypsy and Traveller Sites

The map below shows the location of the four council-owned Gypsy and Traveller sites within the Doncaster area. These are:

- White Towers, Armthorpe (23 pitches)
- Little Lane, Long Sandall (10 pitches)
- Land's End, Thorne (22 pitches)
- Nursery Lane, Sprotbrough (10 pitches)

Across the four council-owned sites, there are a total of 65 pitches.



Stakeholder Consultation

At the beginning of the policy review, advice and support was sought from the National Gypsy and Traveller advisory panel.

As part of stakeholder consultation, focus groups were held with eleven elected members representing the relevant wards. Additional consulted stakeholders included:

- Doncaster Council Enforcement Team
- Public Health
- Education Services
- NHS Health Services
- South Yorkshire Police
- SLHD Housing Management

A presentation detailing the proposed changes to the City of Doncaster Council's Gypsy and Traveller Allocation Policy facilitated this initial discussion.

Public Consultation

Eight proposed changes were approved for public consultation. These were:

1. Be clear on who cannot join the waiting list for legal reasons. For example, those under 18 or those subject to immigration control who are not eligible for housing assistance. **Why?** To be clear on the council's legal duties.
2. Be clear on who does not qualify to join the waiting list. For example, based on antisocial behaviour or debt. **Why?** To be fair and prioritise those most in need.
3. Be clear on the maximum pitch occupancy for single and double pitches. **Why?** To make sure we meet space standards for fire prevention.
4. Confirm that permission is needed from the landlord for more caravans and/or people being moved onto the site. **Why?** To promote understanding and site management. To comply with space standards for fire prevention.
5. Include a statement about how the council uses, keeps and shares information. **Why?** To meet data protection law and explain how we use information.
6. Review the highest Platinum Band reasons. For example, making sure that applicants who are roadside for six months or more with a local connection to Doncaster are given high priority for a settled pitch and access to facilities. **Why?** To ensure that priorities are comprehensive.
7. Be clear on what exceptional circumstances may be taken into account in prioritising applicants in addition to the priority bands where there is supporting information to confirm. **Why?** To have a clear rehousing policy in line with best practice.

8. Ensure that the local connection criteria is fair and recognises cultural differences e.g. travelling out of area for part of the year. **Why?** To make sure we take into account culture and lifestyle in assessing proof of local connection to Doncaster. To have regard to case law.

In order to remove literacy barriers prevalent among the Gypsy and Traveller community, public consultation on the proposed policy changes was carried out through face to face discussions with current site residents and direct telephone contact with active waiting list applicants. Face to face consultation with current site residents was supported by a newsletter which outlined clearly the proposed changes. Each site was visited at least twice to maximise the opportunity for face to face consultation with residents.

Engagement with site residents was high, with 95% seen in person. In addition to this, 100% of the waiting list was contacted, with a response rate of 54%.

In total, there were 53 responses from current site residents and waiting list applicants. None of the proposed policy changes were particularly contentious and as such, all eight proposals were fully supported by all responding consultees. 22 additional comments were also noted and a summary of these can be found at the end of this document.

A breakdown of the consultation by site can be seen below:

Face to face site consultation

	No. of current site residents	No. consulted with
White Towers	10	10
Little Lane	8	7
Land's End	21	20
Nursery Lane	1	1

Telephone waiting list consultation

	No. on waiting list	No. consulted with
White Towers	12	7
Little Lane	3	2
Land's End	9	4
Nursery Lane	4	2

Additional Comments

All the additional comments received during consultation with current site residents and active waiting list applicants are listed below. The table outlines the common themes mentioned within the additional comments.

Theme	Mentions
Pitch sizes / number of trailers should account for age and sex of children.	8
Tenants should be consulted before new allocations are made to avoid community tension.	7
People already living on site should be sorted first.	4
No transit site in Doncaster for visiting families.	3
Caring responsibilities on site.	2
Site improvement works.	2
Unauthorised residents should not be allowed on waiting list.	1
Relatives waiting for pitch allocation.	1
Make new tenants pay a bond.	1

- Caring for parents, wants own pitch.
- Re change three: new plans need to take into account need for trailers as separate space for older children and/or different sex. Also visiting family as no transit site in Doncaster. Pitches need minimum of two trailers permanently on pitch. Tenants should be consulted before a new pitch is let to ensure no community tension. Tenants on site need sorting first.
- Thinks residents should be consulted before anyone new is allocated a pitch as there are specific families that have intimidated residents and caused issues on site. Thinks people who pull onsite without permission and aren't going to be considered for a pitch should not be able to join the list straight away to bypass others.
- They have two trailers on the pitch with a third needed for daughter in law with caring responsibilities. Need to reflect community needs.
- Re change three: has seven children and needs separate trailer on pitch to accommodate adult son with learning disabilities as needs to be separate from younger children.
- Support all proposals. Thinks community should be consulted before new tenant accepted to ensure no community tension.

- Need at least two trailers on site. Son is temp on pitch one as is caring for them. Want him to be considered. Think people on site already need to be sorted with pitches before considering anyone else.
- No transit site in Doncaster so family stay over when travelling here for funerals etc. Number of trailers on pitches dictated by family size and ages/sexes of children. At present, no issues on site. Everyone gets on so would want to be consulted before anyone new is allocated a pitch to ensure no community tension.
- Has a number of relatives recently moved onto her pitch who are wanting a site pitch and are on the waiting list.
- Re change three: needs two trailers on pitch as family stop over to care for him and wife. Family also come and visit as no transit site in Doncaster.
- Re change three: needs at least two pitches per plot as family visit. Also thinks that community need to be consulted before a new pitch is allocated to make sure there is no community tension. Wants to move to larger pitch across from her. Thinks priority should be given to existing tenants on site. Concerned re planning proposals and offered to speak to people doing the plans as is worried that they aren't going to meet residents' needs.
- Moved on with permission. Related to site occupants and wants to stay. Agreed with all changes, just thinks should sort out people on site first before letting anyone new on to avoid problems. Quiet site, no problems. Thinks pitch space should be taken into account for visiting family and individual needs with number of trailers.
- Agree with all. Concerned about plot reducing.
- Thinks people who pull on without permission just before a pitch comes up shouldn't be considered and that people's previous addresses and reasons for leaving, medical proof etc.
- Has two trailers. Needs to take into account visiting family on pitches.
- Need to take into account no. of trailers for different sex / age of children.
- Settled site so should check with residents before allocating any new pitches.
- Should make new tenants pay a bond like they used to.
- Needs two trailers on plot for grandchildren.
- Needs an extra van on the pitch.

- Not impressed with repairs service and issues with potential flooding.
- Thinks they should have a say in who is allocated pitches on site. Major work needed to improve site quality.

Demographic Information

Disclosure of demographic information and protected characteristics by existing tenants and waiting list applicants was limited. As such, we are only able to accurately report on demographic information already held by housing management (age and gender of existing tenants). This information is based on the named tenants of site pitches.

Age

	16 - 24	25 - 34	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 64	65+	DNK
White Towers	0	0	2	0	2	5	1
Little Lane	1	1	0	2	2	1	1
Land's End	2	5	6	1	5	2	0
Nursery Lane	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
TOTAL	3	6	8	3	10	8	2
% of all current residents	7.50%	15%	20%	7.50%	25%	20%	5%

Gender

	Male	Female
White Towers	5	5
Little Lane	2	6
Land's End	2	19
Nursery Lane	1	0
TOTAL	10	30
% of all current residents	25%	75%