

**Bradford Local Plan**

**Core Strategy Examination**

**Council Update on Habitats Regulation Assessment  
Review and Gypsy and Traveller Assessment in  
Response to Inspectors Question.**

**Date: 28<sup>th</sup> April 2015**

## **Introduction**

- 1.1 The Inspector requested clarification on the timetable for the Habitats Regulation Assessment Review and Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment and the nature and timing of any consultation. These are considered in turn below.

## **Habitats Regulations Assessment Review**

- 1.2 The HRA Review is programmed to be complete in mid July. The work will be undertaken with close liaison and consultation with Natural England throughout including a formal sign off from Natural England of the final HRA. Within the review limited consultation will be undertaken with interested parties (RSPB and CEG). The final signed off HRA will be then published for wider comment at the same time as the Main modifications.
- 1.3 Phase 1 of HRA review to comprise assessment of SHLAA 2 sites (trajectory and residual) and supporting habitat in accordance with Natural England advice (as set out in letter of 1<sup>st</sup> August 2014) and methodology agreed with Natural England.
- 1.4 Urban Edge aim to complete early analysis by early May. Early consultation with Natural England to discuss initial analysis and outputs for Phase 1 and agree approach to Phase 2 in mid to late May.
- 1.5 By first week in June Urban Edge complete integration of responses from with Natural England and Councils to produce a revised version of the Phase 1 work for consultation of 2 weeks with interested parties ( RSPB and CEG).
- 1.6 Urban Edge to start on Phase 2 of review once phase 1 initial draft has been completed. Key tasks in Phase 2 to comprise: review and assessment of disturbance effects within SPA and fire incidence, review of structure and approach in relation to Tyldsley Guidance, refinement of approach to avoidance and mitigation measures and future work, including consideration of approach of other authorities starting to take shape through work on Local Plans. Consider the schedule of modifications. Ongoing liaison on phase 2 with Natural England.
- 1.7 Consideration of comments from interested parties on Phase 1 and completion of Phase 2 work by end June. Submission to Natural England for final sign off which could take up to 3 weeks based on their protocols.
- 1.8 Publish revised HRA for comment at same time as main modifications anticipated to be mid July.

## **Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment**

- 1.9 Moving on to the issue of provision for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation the council can confirm that the production of a new and updated Accommodation Assessment by consultants Arc4 is nearing completion. The Council considers that the discussion held at the hearing session into this matter was helpful and constructive discussions were held with the representatives of Leeds GATE and following the hearing session. In line with the Government's technical guidance which is still extant, the Council are currently consulting both the steering group for the study and neighbouring authorities on a revised draft report. As part of this

consultation, Leeds GATE have been provided with a copy of the revised report and have been asked for their comments. The Council will be considering all comments received week commencing 27th April. Clearly the Council cannot guarantee that agreement will be reached on all matters but assuming there are not any new or significant issues the Council would expect a final report to be completed by mid to late May.

- 1.10 The Council considers that the new assessment has been carried out in broad compliance with both the Government's guidance contained within 'Planning policy for traveller sites' and with the technical guidance contained within 'Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments 2007'. In particular the Council has focused consultation and engagement on the process and methodology of the work with the steering group and adjoining authorities in line with paragraphs 46 and 47 of the technical guidance. It has also carried out stakeholder engagement during the study in line with paragraphs 49 and 50. As explained in previous statements the work has involved both on-site face to face interviews with existing households and also electronic stakeholder questionnaires.
- 1.11 The Council having reviewed the Government's 2007 technical guidance note, considers that there appears to be no specific or formal requirement to carry out public consultation on the Accommodation Assessment once it is completed. The Council will publish and make available the new study on the Examination website as soon as completed but given the extensive engagement with stakeholders during the study's preparation and the relatively narrow and specialised focus of the work it does not intend to carry out a public consultation once the Arc4 work is complete. The study will of course be available for consideration by any party wishing to make formal representations at the main modifications stage.
- 1.12 Based on a review of the revised Arc4 report it appears likely that modest changes will need to be made at main modifications stage to the pitch and plot targets contained within Policy HO12 and these would be combined with further changes based on the discussions held at the EIP hearing and as outlined within the Council homework statement (PS/FO64).