

## **Council response 020315 to H Jones statement PS/D033(i)**

**From:** Simon Latimer  
**Sent:** 02 March 2015 11:53  
**To:** Tony Blackburn  
**Cc:** Andrew Marshall; Bill Caulfield  
**Subject:** Helen Jones Statemnt & Policy HO12

Tony,

Thank you for your e-mail relating to the attempt by Helen Jones to make a late representation / submission.

As you know the Council's position has been that as no duly made representation was made by Helen Jones or Leeds GATE at Publication draft stage then the Council was not minded to accept a late representation and by dint invite her to appear at the EIP hearing relating to Policy HO12.

The Council consider that it would not be appropriate at this stage to reply in detail to the all of the points made by Helen Jones not least because some of the points raised by her relate to an as yet uncompleted study. However there are a number of points which could be helpful to the Inspector at this stage as there are a number of mistakes and errors in Helen Jones statement. Of course if the Inspector does want a more detailed response at some point we would be happy to provide one.

### **Policy HO12 & The Evidence Underpinning It**

Policy HO12 has been drawn up to reflect and comply with the results of the 2008 West Yorkshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment. That study was a robust piece of work. Whether a study should be considered out of date depends not only on the actual date it was published but whether there is any evidence that circumstances have changed and that the conclusions of that work are no longer valid. The Council have commissioned a new updated study from Arc4 to make absolutely sure that there is no significant change in circumstances and that the strategic policy and pitch and plot targets in the Core Strategy are soundly based. The study is yet to be completed. The Council had hoped that the study would either be completed by the time of the EIP hearings or completed in a 'good draft' form. The consultants are currently undertaking some further work in response to comments on a very preliminary draft. I am not in a position to say when the work will be completed but hopefully will be able to do so by the time of the currently scheduled EIP session. It has always been the position of the Council that if the results of the study were to require a change to the pitch and plot targets in Policy HO12 the Council would publish a main modification and of course the evidence underpinning it would also be published providing an for comment and if necessary objection.

What the Council would prefer not to do is to get into a premature debate about that study and its methodology on the 20th March before the study has been completed and methodological issues resolved.

It should be noted that the Council has sought to involve and consult with Leeds GATE as part of this Arc4 work. Leeds GATE have refused certain offers of involvement in the work on the basis that they want to remain at arms length from it - which from the Council's view is somewhat disappointing.

### **Duty To Co-operate**

The Council considers that it has met its obligations under the Duty to Co-operate on all matters including on Gypsies and Travellers and has set out the extensive work carried out at Leeds City region level in its Duty to Co-operate Statement. The Leeds City Region work included consideration of both cross boundary issues and sharing of evidence and in places developing common evidence base methodologies. Consideration and discussion was held over to whether it was both practical or necessary to carry out joint studies but the Council's position was that it was not necessary or feasible to do so in the main due to the very different stages the different local authorities were at with their Local Plans. The approach was therefore twofold:

- to include Gypsy and traveller issues in the Leeds City region work stream covering both cross boundary matters and evidence base issues
- to embed further consultation with neighbouring authorities into the preparation of any new studies. Arc4 have duly sought input to all the neighbouring authorities as part of their stakeholder survey.

The Council can confirm that whether the final pitch and plot requirement remains as per Policy HO12 or needs amending when the Arc4 work is completed, it is intending to allocate land to meet this requirement in full. It can also confirm that no other Local Authority is currently seeking a commitment from Bradford to meet their needs.

### **Inaccuracies in Helen Jones Statement Re Core Strategy Policy HO12**

As stated above it is not our intention to respond to detailed points made in Helen Jones' statement. However there are a number of instances where Helen has misinterpreted and thus misrepresented the policy approach or the supporting text.

- Firstly Helen Jones refers to paragraph 5.3.183 of the supporting text and had interpreted this as the Council claiming that the Gypsy and traveller population has increased since the 2008 study. This is not correct. The text in question is actually quoting from the 2008 study - the reference is therefore to the 2008 study reporting an increase of population prior to the 2008 study's preparation.
- Helen Jones claims that paragraph 5.3 187 has confirmed the need for transit pitches but an unwillingness to make provision. This unwillingness was what the 2008 study was reporting from their stakeholder study at the time. It is not the position of the Council. Again contrary to the indication given by Helen Jones Policy HO12 does include an allowance for transit provision as can be seen by reference to table HO8 which states that the 74 pitch overall target includes 6 transit pitches. The new study by Arc4 is considering whether there is a need for transit pitches and this will be reflected in any main modification published in due course. If necessary the wording of Policy HO12 could be amended to make clear the transit element.
- Helen Jones claims that Policy HO12 is directing all new Accommodation to the Shipley and Canal Road Corridor area. This is completely false. In similar vein to Policy HO2, Policy HO12 is simply directing the future DPD's which deal with land allocations to make the necessary allocation for in this case pitches and plots for Gypsies and Travellers. No decisions have been made as to where the sites will be placed or concentrated and the Council does not consider that it is necessary for the Core Strategy to do so.
- Helen Jones makes veiled comments of Bradford not having learned the lessons of the Leeds EIP. This is wholly inaccurate, misleading and unfair. In Leeds's case that Council took the decision to undertake their own in house and desk top up date of a needs assessment based predominantly on an analysis of their registered homeless data. The work was completed at the time in draft form without any stakeholder involvement or survey work of the local community whatsoever. This was rightly criticised. To rectify this the Inspector in question asked for further work to be undertaken. None of this is remotely the case in Bradford who have commissioned an independent study from Arc4, in line with Government guidance, and with full

stakeholder involvement, and full surveys of households on all Gypsy and Traveller and Snowpersons sites.

There are a range of other issues raised in Helen Jones submission where clearly the Council would potentially interpret things differently but the Council does not seek to respond to those in this note.

In summary there are a range of issues raised in the statement by Helen Jones but a fair proportion of them either misinterpret the existing Policy HO12 or refer to the new study which is as yet incomplete and which are therefore premature at this point in time.

Regards,  
Simon

**City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council**