



The Planning Inspectorate  
4/02 Wing  
Temple Quay House  
2 The Square  
Temple Quay  
Bristol  
BS1 6PN

28<sup>th</sup> February 2011

Dear Sirs,

**Appeal reference number: APP/C3105/11/2144721**  
**Change of use of land for Romani gypsy families, adjacent A.34, parish of Hampton Gay and Poyle, Oxfordshire**

The Oxford Green Belt Network has been notified of the above appeal against refusal of planning permission by Cherwell District Council. We support that refusal and hope that the appeal will be dismissed.

We understand that you will have received all previous correspondence, including our emailed letter to Cherwell District Council dated 28<sup>th</sup> June 2010. That letter sets out the grounds for our opposition to application 10/00839/F and we will therefore just summarise our position. It seems to us that the issue largely comes down to the presumption against development in the Green Belt versus any special circumstances that might be identified. We would make the following points:

- (1) The site in question is in the Oxford Green Belt, outside any existing settlement, where development is inappropriate according to Annex E and other advice in PPG.2 and to advice in Circular 01/2006.
- (2) Circular 01/2006 states that “National planning policy on Green Belts applies equally to applications for planning permission for gypsies and travellers, and the settled population.” We find it impossible to envisage planning permission being granted to a non-gypsy population to establish a new settlement on the site in question.
- (3) The large amount of development proposed would materially affect the openness of the Green Belt, and be harmful to the visual amenity of the surrounding countryside.
- (4) The development would be contrary to Policy GB1 in the Adopted Cherwell LP 1996 and Policy GB1 in the Non-Statutory Cherwell LP 2011. Cherwell’s emerging Core Strategy also requires policy to accord with PPG.2.

- (5) If there is a need for more traveller pitches, we question whether alternatives have been explored before Green Belt locations are considered, as required by Circular 01/2006. We note that Cherwell DC appears to have allowed non-gypsy use of pitches at Bicester Trailer Park (in 2007?) because it was considered that there was no need for gypsy use.
- (6) We have no expert knowledge relating to flooding, but note the earlier reservations of the Environment Agency. It seems to us that the suggested requirement that the mobile homes and access road be raised, together with the need for an emergency exit and the suggested registration with the EA flood warning system, all point to a significant danger in the event of extreme climatic conditions.
- (7) The site, close to a busy road and fast slip road, without services and no bus stop, is far from ideal for what, according to Mr Briscoe's letter from the County Council to Cherwell DC of 6<sup>th</sup> July 2010 would amount to a settlement of 32 persons.
- (8) The presumption against development in the Green Belt, the scale of the development proposed, and the unsuitability of the site, override the applicant's claim that personal circumstances constitute the very special circumstances needed to justify this particular application for planning permission.

The Oxford Green Belt Network would like to reserve the right to appear at any inquiry to be held into this appeal, and we would like to be notified (via the address above) of the Inspector's report and recommendation to the Secretary of State.

Yours sincerely,

Dr D.I.Scargill

email: [chairman@oxfordgreenbelt.net](mailto:chairman@oxfordgreenbelt.net)