

Validation Officer
Wokingham Borough Council
Civic Offices
Shute End
Wokingham
RG40 1BN

16 December 2024

Dear Sirs,

**CHANGE OF USE OF LAND TO USE AS A GYPSY CARAVAN SITE
(RETROSPECTIVE) –
LAND AT THE PADDOCKS, KYBES LANE, READING, RG7 1NG**

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Use, Scale and Layout

This application seeks planning permission for the change of use of land to use for the stationing of caravans for the purposes of human habitation. In total, 11 pitches would be retained for the accommodation of Gypsies and Travellers. The layout of caravans and buildings would be as existing and, as shown on the submitted Site Layout Plan.

Access

Access to the site is via an existing entrance off Kybes Lane. This access was found to be safe by an appeal Inspector in 2018, and, that Kybes Lane was suitable to accept the extra traffic generated by 11 caravan pitches.

Appearance and Landscaping

There would be little point in local and national policy accepting traveller sites in principle within the countryside if the nature and appearance of caravans was considered to be inherently unsuitable to such locations. Furthermore, there is a recognition in Local Plan Policy TB10 that some level of harm will be acceptable, perhaps even inevitable. The aim is to minimise that harm.

In this case, the Appeal Inspector in 2018 observed that: *“The replacement of the grassland by hardstanding, caravans, sheds, a number of utility buildings and general domestic paraphernalia has had an adverse impact on the generally undeveloped character of the landscape locally. The visual impact, although somewhat discordant on this rural lane with only sporadic development, is localised, due mainly to landform and hedgerow retention. The hedgerows remain in place, though thin in places and at risk from some unsympathetic treatment, but the standard oaks appear unaffected and there are few viewpoints from which the development has a significant visual impact”*.

He went on to conclude that: *“Appropriate landscaping would considerably reduce the harm to visual amenity, and sympathetic hedgerow management would help the development integrate into the local landscape”*. In my opinion, this equates to minimising any unacceptable impacts on the character or appearance of the surrounding landscape, in accordance with criterion (e) of Policy TB10.

Planning Considerations.

These are set out in the Planning Statement already submitted in support of this planning application.

Kind regards,

Philip Brown BA (Hons) Urban and Regional Planning