
BASILDON LOCAL PLAN SECOND DEPOSIT

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 Basildon District Council are progressing their local plan through its statutory process. This has now reached the stage where they are consulting on their revised deposit draft. The initial deposit draft did not raise any significant issues for the Rochford District. The second deposit does raise one issue of significance for the Rochford District.
- 1.2 Unfortunately due to the 6-week deposit period (which Basildon DC would not extend), the late arrival of the document and this Council's summer recess, it was not possible to put this issue before Members prior to submissions needing to be made.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The second deposit of the Basildon Local Plan includes additional text in paragraphs 3.86, 3.87 and 3.88, which have potential implications for the Rochford District. The paragraphs relate to Gypsy / Traveller Sites and are part of the explanatory text relating to Policy BAS H5. The inserted text states:

“3.86 Gypsy/Traveller counts over the past 10 or more years have shown a relatively high number of unauthorised Gypsy/Traveller sites in the District, mainly in the Green Belt. The latest available Gypsy/Traveller count figures (Jan 2005), show that within Basildon District there were 106 authorised and 111 unauthorised pitches.

3.87 To put into perspective the contribution that Basildon District makes to the provision of sites for Gypsies/Travellers, it is instructive to look at that of neighbouring Authorities. The July 2004 count shows that the three Authorities to the east of Basildon, (Castle Point, Rochford and Southend) had between them only two caravans on authorised pitches, and Brentwood, a District of some 15,300 hectares, compared with Basildon's 11,000 hectares, had only 13. In comparison, there were 149 caravans on authorised sites in Basildon. The same Gypsy/Traveller count showed that, apart from South Cambridgeshire, Basildon had more caravans on unauthorised sites than any other Authority in the Eastern Region.

3.88 It can be reasonably claimed that Basildon District has made a full contribution towards dealing with the issue of providing sites for Gypsies/Travellers, and the Council is looking to other Districts / Boroughs to make corresponding contributions.”

2.2 As can be seen from the paragraphs above, the implications are that:

- The paragraphs use inconsistent survey dates to give a flawed representation of site numbers;
- The paragraphs do not follow Government guidance and do not have the benefit of an up to date, best practice based, needs assessment;
- The plan text is contrary to the advice given in Circular 1/94 and the more recent consultation document entitled *Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Sites*; and
- Basildon's Local Plan would have the effect of pushing development to other Districts.

2.3 In light of the above, officers decided that it would be best to place an objection to the Local Plan, which could be later withdrawn if Members did not agree. The objection can be found in appendix 1. The objection will be fleshed out as the Local Plan process progresses.

3 RISK IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The implications of these specific amendments to the Basildon Local Plan are that the Rochford Replacement Local Plan and the Rochford District Local Development Framework may be adversely affected as significantly different pressures will occur.

4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

4.1 If these amendments are carried through, there are likely to be resource implications for the development control, planning enforcement, planning policy, legal, housing and environmental health teams.

5 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There may be legal implications if these amendments are carried forward, due to an increase in unauthorised sites in the Rochford District.

6 RECOMMENDATION

6.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

- 1) That the representations made by officers be agreed as an appropriate response on behalf of Rochford District Council.
- 2) That authority be delegated to the Head of Planning Services to make full representations on behalf of Rochford District Council with regard to Gypsy / Traveller Provision as contained within the Basildon District Replacement Local Plan Redeposit and through the remainder of the Basildon Local Plan replacement process.

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Background Papers:-

Basildon District Replacement Local Plan Redeposit

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APPENDIX 1

The following text was sent to Basildon District Council as an accompanying sheet with their *pro forma* response form.

Rochford District Council objects to the inclusion of paragraphs 3.86, 3.87 and 3.88 for the following reasons:

- The paragraphs use inconsistent survey dates to give a flawed representation of site numbers;
- The paragraphs do not follow Government guidance and do not have the benefit of an up to date, best practice based, needs assessment;
- The paragraphs are contrary to the advice given in Circular 1/94 and the more recent consultation document entitled *Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Sites*; and
- Basildon's Local Plan would have the effect of pushing development to other districts.

Rochford District Council suggests that the following amendments be made to the text. The use of struck through text indicates that the text should be deleted, whilst new text is shown underlined:

~~3.86~~ Gypsy/Traveller counts over the past 10 or more years have shown a relatively high number of unauthorised Gypsy/Traveller sites in the District, mainly in the Green Belt. The latest available Gypsy/Traveller count figures (Jan 2005); show that within Basildon District there were 180 ~~406~~ authorised and 221 ~~444~~ unauthorised sites ~~pitches~~.

~~3.87~~ ~~To put into perspective the contribution that Basildon District makes to the provision of sites for Gypsies/Travellers, it is instructive to look at that of neighbouring authorities. The July 2004 count shows that the three authorities to the east of Basildon, (Castle Point, Rochford and Southend) had between them only two caravans on authorised pitches, and Brentwood, a District of some 15,300 hectares, compared with Basildon's 11,000 hectares, had only 13. In comparison, there were 149 caravans on authorised sites in Basildon. The same Gypsy/Traveller count showed that, apart from South Cambridgeshire, Basildon had more caravans on unauthorised sites than any other authority in the Eastern Region.~~

~~3.88~~ ~~It can be reasonably claimed that Basildon District has made a full contribution towards dealing with the issue of providing sites for Gypsies/Travellers, and the Council is looking to other Districts / Boroughs to make corresponding contributions."~~