LANCASTER CITY COUNCIL

GYPSY, TRAVELLER AND TRAVELLING SHOWPERSON ACCOMMODATION ASSESSMENT UPDATE

July 2013
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1. Introduction

The Survey

1.1 Opinion Research Services (ORS) were commissioned by Lancaster City Council to undertake a Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment.

1.2 The study seeks to provide an evidence base to enable the authority to comply with their requirements towards Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople under the Housing Act 2004, the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 and Planning Policy for Traveller Sites 2012. The main objective of this study is to provide the Council with robust, defensible and up-to-date evidence about the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in Lancaster in the 14 years period until the end of 2026 in sections covering 2013-2017, 2018-2022 and 2023-2026. The time period for the study covers up to the end of the period of the Development Management DPD from Lancaster’s Local Plan which runs from 2011 to 2026.

1.3 We would note at the outset that the study covers the needs of Gypsies, Irish Travellers, New Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, but for ease of reference we have referred to the study as a Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment.

Definitions

1.4 For the purposes of the planning system, Gypsies and Travellers means:

“Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family’s or dependents’ educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of Travelling Showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.” (Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, CLG, March 2012)

1.5 Within the main definition of Gypsies and Travellers, there are a number of main cultural groups which include:

» Romany Gypsies;
» Irish Travellers; and
» New Travellers.

1.6 Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers are recognised in law as distinct ethnic groups and are legally protected from discrimination under the Equalities Act 2010.

1.7 Alongside Gypsies and Travellers, a further group to be considered are Travelling Showpeople. They are defined as:

“Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their family’s or dependent’s
more localized pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined above.” (Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, CLG, March 2012).

Legislation and Guidance for Gypsies and Travellers

1.8 Decision-making for policy concerning Gypsies & Travellers and Travelling Showpeople sits within a complex legislative and national policy framework and this study must be viewed in the context of this legislation and guidance. For example, the following pieces of legislation and guidance are relevant when constructing policies relating to Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople:

» Planning Policy for Traveller Sites 2012;
» National Planning Policy Framework 2012;
» Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments Guidance October 2007
» Environmental Protection Act 1990 for statutory nuisance provisions;
» The Human Rights Act 1998, when making decisions and welfare assessments;
» The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as subsequently amended);
» Homelessness Legislation and Allocation Policies;
» Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 (sections 61, 62);
» Anti-social behaviour Act 2003 (both as victims and perpetrators of anti-social behaviour);
» Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004;
» Housing Act 2004 which requires local housing authorities to assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies & Travellers and Showpeople as part of their housing needs assessments. This study complies with this element of government guidance;
» Housing Act 1996 in respect of homelessness.

1.9 To focus on Gypsies and Travellers, the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 (Sections 77, 78) is particularly important with regard to the issue of planning for Gypsy and Traveller site provision. This repealed the duty of local authorities to provide appropriate accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers. However, Circular 1/94 did support maintaining existing sites and stated that appropriate future site provision should be considered.

1.10 For site provision, the previous Labour Government guidance focused on increasing site provision for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and encouraging local authorities to have a more inclusive approach to Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople within their Housing Needs Assessment. The Housing Act 2004 required local authorities to identify the need for Gypsy and Traveller sites, alongside the need for other types of housing, when conducting Housing Needs Surveys. Therefore, all local authorities were required to undertake accommodation assessments for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople either as a separate study such as this one, or as part of their main Housing Needs Assessment.

1.11 Local authorities were encouraged rather than compelled to provide new Gypsy and Traveller sites by central government. Circular 1/06 ‘Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites’, released by the CLG in
January 2006, replaced Circular 1/94 and suggested that the provision of authorised sites should be encouraged so that the number of unauthorised sites would be reduced.

1.12 The Coalition Government announced that the previous government’s thinking contained in Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites (Circular 01/06) was to be repealed, along with the Regional Spatial Strategies which were used to allocate pitch provision to local authorities. The CLG published ‘Planning Policy for Traveller Sites’ in March 2012 which set out the Government’s planning policy for traveller sites. It should be read in conjunction with the National Planning Policy Framework.

Planning Policy for Traveller Sites

1.13 The document ‘Planning Policy for Traveller Sites’ sets out the direction of government policy. Among other objectives the new policies aims in respect of Traveller sites are (Planning Policy for Traveller Sites Page 1-2):

» that local planning authorities should make their own assessment of need for the purposes of planning;
» to ensure that local planning authorities, working collaboratively, develop fair and effective strategies to meet need through the identification of land for sites;
» to encourage local planning authorities to plan for sites over a reasonable timescale;
» that plan-making and decision-taking should protect Green Belt from inappropriate development;
» to promote more private traveller site provision while recognising that there will always be those travellers who cannot provide their own sites;
» that plan-making and decision-taking should aim to reduce the number of unauthorised developments and encampments and make enforcement more effective;
» for local planning authorities to ensure that their Local Plan includes fair, realistic and inclusive policies;
» to increase the number of traveller sites in appropriate locations with planning permission, to address under provision and maintain an appropriate level of supply;
» to reduce tensions between settled and traveller communities in plan-making and planning decisions;
» to enable provision of suitable accommodation from which travellers can access education, health, welfare and employment infrastructure;
» for local planning authorities to have due regard to the protection of local amenity and local environment.

1.14 In practice the document states that (Planning Policy for Traveller Sites Page 3):

‘Local planning authorities should set pitch targets for Gypsies and Travellers and plot targets for travelling Showpeople which address the likely permanent and transit site accommodation needs of Travellers in their area, working collaboratively with neighbouring local planning authorities’.
1.15 Local planning authorities should, in producing their Local Plan:

» identify and update annually, a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years’ worth of sites against their locally set targets;

» identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years six to ten and, where possible, for years 11-15;

» consider production of joint development plans that set targets on a cross-authority basis, to provide more flexibility in identifying sites, particularly if a local planning authority has special or strict planning constraints across its area (local planning authorities have a duty to cooperate on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries);

» relate the number of pitches or plots to the circumstances of the specific size and location of the site and the surrounding population’s size and density;

» protect local amenity and environment.

1.16 A key element to the new policies is a continuation of previous government policies. This is, while local authorities now have a duty to ensure a 5 year land supply to meet the identified needs for Traveller sites, if no need is identified they should set criteria based policies to assess potential sites which may arise in the future. Planning Policy for Traveller Sites notes on Page 3-4 that:

1.17 ‘Criteria should be set to guide land supply allocations where there is identified need. Where there is no identified need, criteria-based policies should be included to provide a basis for decisions in case applications nevertheless come forward. Criteria based policies should be fair and should facilitate the traditional and nomadic life of travellers while respecting the interests of the settled community’.

1.18 Therefore, criteria based planning policies sit at the heart of the new guidance, irrespective of whether need is identified or not.

**Tackling Inequalities for Gypsy and Traveller Communities**

1.19 In April 2012 the government issued a further document relating to Gypsies and Travellers in the form of ‘Progress report by the ministerial working group on tackling inequalities experienced by Gypsies and Travellers (CLG April 2012)’.

1.20 This report contains 28 commitments to help improve the circumstances and outcomes for Gypsies and Travellers across a range of areas including:

» Identifying ways of raising educational aspirations and attainment of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children;

» Identifying ways to improve health outcomes for Gypsies and Travellers within the proposed new structures of the NHS;

» Encouraging appropriate site provision; building on £60m Traveller Pitch Funding and New Homes Bonus incentives;

» Tackling hate crime against Gypsies and Travellers and improving their interaction with the criminal justice system;
Improving knowledge of how Gypsies and Travellers engage with services that provide a gateway to work opportunities and working with the financial services industry to improve access to financial products and services;

Sharing good practice in engagement between Gypsies and Travellers and public service providers.

Funding for New Sites

1.21 The new Coalition Government policies also involve financial incentives for new pitch provision in the form of the New Homes Bonus. Gypsy & Traveller and Showpeople sites receive a New Homes Bonus of 6 times the Council Tax plus £1,800 per pitch provided. This is the equivalent of around £10,000-£15,000 per pitch.

1.22 Direct grant funding is also available for Gypsy and Traveller sites. The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) took over delivery of the Gypsy and Traveller Sites grant programme from CLG in April 2009. Since then they have invested £16.3m in 26 schemes across the country providing 88 new or additional pitches and 179 improved pitches.

1.23 HCA have now confirmed allocations for £47m of future funding which will support 71 projects around the country, for the provision of new Gypsy and Traveller sites and new pitches on existing sites, as well as the improvement of existing pitches. As of January 2012 a further £12.1m of funding was available for schemes outside of London and bidding will remain open until all the money is allocated.

Research Methodology

1.24 This section sets out the methodology we have followed to deliver the outputs for this study. Over the past 10 years ORS have developed a methodology which provides the required outputs from a Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment and this has been updated in light of Planning Policy for Traveller Sites.

1.25 The stages below provide a summary of the process undertaken by ORS, with more information on each stage provided in the appropriate section of the report.

Stage 1: Background

1.26 At the outset of the project we sought to understand the background to Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population in Lancaster. The study sought to identify the location of all known sites in the study area and the number of pitches or plots on each one. The study also gathered information from recent caravan counts in each local authority and also waiting lists for public sites.
**Stage 2: Stakeholder Engagement**

1.27 This study included extensive stakeholder engagement with officers from Lancaster City Council and neighbouring councils and other stakeholders. The aim of this engagement was to help understand the current situation in the study area, in particular to households not on known existing sites and also to discuss Duty to Cooperate issues with neighbouring councils.

**Stage 2: Future Pitch and Plot Requirements**

1.28 The methodology used by ORS to calculate future pitch and plot requirements has been developed over the past 10 years and has drawn on lessons from both traditional housing needs assessments and also best and worst practice for Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessments conducted across the country.

1.29 The overall principles behind assessing future needs are relatively simple. The residential pitch requirements for Gypsies and Travellers are identified separately from those for Travelling Showpeople and for each group the requirements are identified in 5 year periods to 2026 in line with the requirements of Planning Policy for Traveller Sites.

**Stage 3: Conclusions**

1.30 This stage draws together the evidence from Stages 1 and 2 to provide an overall summary of the requirements for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in Lancaster District.
2. Gypsy and Traveller Sites and Population

Background

2.1 A Strategic Housing Market Assessment focuses upon the number of dwellings required in an area, and how many of these should each be provided by the public and private sector. The central aim of this study was to follow a similar format for Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation requirements.

2.2 One of the main considerations of this study is the provision of pitches and sites for Gypsies and Travellers. A pitch is an area which is large enough for one household to occupy and typically contains enough space for one or two caravans, but can vary in size. A site is a collection of pitches which form a development exclusively for Gypsies and Travellers. For Travelling Showpeople the most common descriptions used are a plot for the space occupied by one household and a yard or collection of plots which are typically exclusively occupied by Travelling Showpeople. Throughout this study the main focus is upon how many extra pitches for Gypsies and Travellers and plots for Travelling Showpeople are required in Lancaster.

2.3 The public and private provision of mainstream housing is also largely mirrored when considering Gypsy and Traveller accommodation. One common form of Gypsy and Traveller sites is the publicly-provided residential site, which is provided by the local authority, or by a registered provider (usually a housing association). Places on public sites can be obtained through a waiting list, and the costs of running the sites are met from the rent paid by the licensees (similar to social housing). There is currently one public site in the study area.

2.4 The alternative to public residential sites is private residential sites for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. These result from individuals or families buying areas of land and then obtaining planning permission to live on them. Households can also rent pitches on existing private sites. Therefore, these two forms of accommodation are the equivalent to private ownership and renting for those who live in bricks and mortar housing.

2.5 The Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople population also has other forms of sites due to its mobile nature. Transit sites tend to contain many of the same facilities as a residential site, except that there is a maximum period of residence which can vary from a few weeks to a period of months. An alternative is an emergency stopping place. This type of site also has restrictions on the length of time for which someone can stay on it, but has much more limited facilities. Both of these two types of site are designed to accommodate Gypsies and Travellers whilst they travel.

2.6 Further considerations in the Gypsy and Traveller population are unauthorised developments and encampments. Unauthorised developments occur on land which is owned by the Gypsies and Travellers, but for which they do not have planning permission to use for residential purposes. Unauthorised encampments occur on land which is not owned by the Gypsies and Travellers.
Caravan Count

2.7 The best quantitative information available on the Gypsy and Traveller communities derives from a bi-annual survey of Gypsy and Traveller caravans which is conducted by each local authority in England on a specific date in January and July of each year. This count is of caravans and not households which makes it more difficult to interpret for a study such as this. It must also be remembered that the count is conducted by the local authority on a specific day and that any unauthorised encampments which occur on other dates will not be recorded. The count also only features those caravans the local authority is aware of. Therefore, it may not reflect all of the Gypsy and Traveller caravans in the authority.

2.8 The charts below show the number of caravans on public, private and unauthorised sites since 2007.

**Figure 1**
Gypsy Caravan Count for Public Sites in Lancaster: Jan 2007 – July 2012 (Source: CLG Bi-annual Local Authority Caravan Count)

**Figure 2**
Gypsy Caravan Count for Private Sites in Lancaster: Jan 2007 – July 2012 (Source: CLG Bi-annual Local Authority Caravan Count)
Sites in Lancaster

2.9 The charts overleaf document all sites and pitches known to exist in Lancaster. At the time of writing, there are 155 pitches on Gypsy and Traveller sites with permanent permission (including 2 transit pitches), three pitches with temporary permissions and no unauthorized sites in Lancaster. However, we would note that Council records indicate that the 40 pitches in Heysham are currently being used by non Gypsy and Traveller households. Another 19 pitches are known to be vacant. When also excluding the transit provision this leaves around 97 occupied pitches.

2.10 The North West branch of the Showmen’s Guild has confirmed that there are no known Travelling Showperson yards in Lancaster.
<table>
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<td>Mellishaw Park, Mellishaw lane</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL PITCHES ON LOCAL AUTHORITY SITES</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Private Sites with Permanent Permission</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Borrans Lane, Middleton, Morecambe LA3 3J</td>
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<tr>
<td>Folly Lane, Slyne with Hest, Lancaster LA2 6AB</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hale Carr Lane, Heysham LA3 2AE</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 Hale Carr Lane, Heysham LA3 2AE</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>282 Oxcliffe Road, Heaton with Oxcliffe, Morecambe LA3 3EH</td>
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<td>244 Oxcliffe Road, Heaton with Oxcliffe, Morecambe LA3 3EQ</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Lane, Heaton with Oxcliffe, Morecambe LA3 3EL</td>
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<tr>
<td>296 Oxcliffe Road, Heaton in Oxcliffe</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>294 Oxcliffe Road, Heaton in Oxcliffe</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beach Side, Carr Lane, Middleton</td>
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<tr>
<td>300 Oxcliffe Road, Heaton in Oxcliffe</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL PITCHES ON PRIVATE SITES WITH PERMENENT PERMISSION</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Private Sites with Temporary Permission</strong></td>
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<td>Land To The Rear Of 179 Main Street Lancaster</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Private Sites with Permission for Transit Sites</strong></td>
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<td>Beach Side, Carr Lane, Middleton</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL TRANSIT PITCHES ON PRIVATE SITES</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL PITCHES</strong></td>
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3. Stakeholder Engagement

Introduction

3.1 In order to set the context of the research and ensure the study is based on a sound understanding of the relevant issues, ORS conducted 37 semi-structured, in-depth telephone interviews during March and April 2013. Interviews were undertaken with Council Officers from Planning, Estate Management, Public Health and Safety, Environmental Protection, Communication and Housing Departments.

3.2 Planning Policy for Traveller Sites advises Planning Authorities to consult with the settled community and national and local representative groups. For this reason, ORS also spoke to elected members representing wards where the majority of Gypsies and Travellers sites in Lancaster City are located which includes Overton, Heysham, Skerton East and Westgate wards.

3.3 ORS spoke to local representative and community groups including Mellishaw Women’s Group and TAFTAS.

3.4 National representative groups were also contacted by Lancaster City Council and ORS. Contact was made with the two Gypsy Council groups (which cover the North West area); Friends, Families and Travellers; Irish Traveller Movement in Britain (ITMB); and Clearwater Gypsies. However, one Gypsy Council organisation declined to take part in a telephone interview without a payment for their time, the other failed to respond. Clearwater Gypsies and Friends Families and Travellers were also contacted via email and phone; however, ORS were unable to achieve an interview with a representative of either group. ORS also spoke with the ITMB who felt that they could only contribute once they had consulted with the residents at the Mellishaw Lane site – ORS contacted ITMB on a further occasion but received no response.

3.5 In order to ascertain the views of Travelling Showpeople ORS recruited and facilitated a forum in Knutsford on the 3rd May 2013. ORS advertised the forum in the World Fair publication and invited Travelling Showpeople in the North West area to come and talk about their accommodation needs. The Forum was well-attended with around 30-40 Travelling Showpeople contributing to the discussion. ORS also met with the North-West representative of the Showmen’s Guild of Great Britain.

3.6 As stated in the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, Local Authorities have a duty to cooperate on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries. For this reason Lancashire County Council (education and strategic planning) and neighbouring local authorities including: Craven District Council; Cumbria County Council; Eden District Council; Fylde Borough Council; Lake District National Park Authority; Ribble Valley Borough Council; South Lakeland District Council; Wyre Council; and Yorkshire Dale National Park Authority also contributed to the study.

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1 The date and venue was recommended by the representative of the North West section of the Showmen’s Guild who felt that Travelling Showpeople from the North West would be in the area because of the bank holiday fair in Knutsford. The advert also gave Travelling Showpeople, who could not attend the forum, the opportunity to contact ORS via email or telephone.
3.7 Although the primary purpose of a GTAA study is to establish the extent to which the accommodation in the District meets the current and future needs of Travellers, ‘Planning Policy for Traveller Sites’ states that planning authorities should:

Paragraph 4:

*Enable provision of suitable accommodation from which travellers can access education, health, welfare and employment infrastructure.*

Paragraph 11:

*Promote, in collaboration with commissioners of health services, access to appropriate health services*

*Provide for proper consideration of the effect of local environmental quality (such as noise and air quality) on the health and well-being of any travellers that may locate there or on others as a result of new development.*

Paragraph 24:

*Promoting opportunities for healthy lifestyles, such as ensuring adequate landscaping and play areas for children.*

3.8 Therefore, the City Council asked ORS to gather evidence on community cohesion, health and well-being and education. The inclusion of these issues provides the City Council with some useful context and guidance on the issues they should explore when they undertake direct community consultation. To gather information relating to these issues ORS also spoke to partner organisations including: the Fire Service; Heysham Health Centre; Heysham Library; a school; and the Port of Heysham.

3.9 Themes covered in the interviews included: the need for additional provisions and facilities, travelling patterns, the availability of land, accessing services and work taking place to meet the needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

3.10 Interviews allowed interested parties to reflect and feedback on the general situation - as well as how matters relating to Gypsies, Travellers and Showpeople are currently handled and perceived within Lancaster District and the surrounding areas. Qualitative research of this type attempts to gain a deeper understanding of the issues and is used to supplement statistical information.

3.11 Due to issues surrounding data protection and, in order to protect the confidentiality of those who took part, this section represents a summary of the views expressed by interviewees and minimal verbatim comments have been used.

**Policy and Strategy**

3.12 Officers referred to a number of local and national policy and strategy documents which influence the management of Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople issues at a local level:

» National Planning Policy Framework;

3.13 Officers also referred to the Council’s Housing Strategy which specifically addresses the needs of the Traveller communities and aims to:

» Meet the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and ensure there is enough provision made;

» Talk to Registered Providers and site managers to ensure their needs are being met.

3.14 The aim of this GTAA is to refresh the City’s understanding of the accommodation needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community and to inform the emerging Local Plan. The Local Plan is being prepared for the whole District and will include establishing criteria based policies that can be used to determine proposals for Traveller Sites. An Officer noted that, historically, the District Council has taken a positive approach to applying criteria based policies for Traveller sites and, as a result, Lancaster has happily approved Traveller sites – an approach which is said to have worked well and will continue to be applied.

3.15 One officer noted that if, as an outcome of the GTAA, additional sites are required then it would be achieved through a separate Development Plan Document.

Population and Accommodation Need

3.16 Lancaster City is considered to be a favoured location within Lancashire District and, as such, has the largest Traveller community in the North West of England. An officer claimed that the area is favoured because of its accessibility to Ireland via the port of Heysham – although one officer argued that passengers are from the Isle of Man rather than Ireland and a representative of the Port reported little Traveller throughput. In addition, being a tourist resort, there have been associations with fairgrounds and over the years Traveller communities have stayed, settled and created family links.

3.17 The Travelling community within Lancaster is said to be diverse with a mixture of wealthy and poor families, families living in bricks and mortar, large houses, static caravans and trailers. There is reportedly an economic and social division between housed and site based Travellers.

3.18 Stakeholders were asked their opinion on the extent of the accommodation need within Lancaster District which is based around need arising from:

» Current site provision;

» Bricks and mortar accommodation;

» Long term authorised/tolerated developments; and

» Unauthorised encampments.

Gypsies and Travellers: Current Site Provision

3.19 There are 17 Gypsy and Traveller sites across Lancaster City - stakeholders were aware of a concentration of sites in the following wards:

» Central Heysham;

» Overton; and

» Westgate.

3.20 Within Lancaster City the sites are predominantly privately owned with just one public site.
Public Provision

3.21 As aforementioned, there is a 19 pitched social site on Mellishaw Lane which is located in the Overton ward. The site is owned by Lancashire County Council and managed by Lancaster City Council. There is an active waiting list but it was reported that, on occasions, it has been a struggle to encourage people to live at the site. This situation is unusual as most public sites around the UK have high demand and little turnover. However, a Lancaster City Council officer suggested that this situation could be linked to the condition of the site, as opposed to a general lack of demand for pitches. A small number of stakeholders, however, felt that the site was overcrowded and there was an undersupply of pitches for the amount of demand.

3.22 The condition of the site was of concern to most stakeholders who felt that most residents are generally dissatisfied with the site in its current state. Stakeholders used terms such as poor and basic to describe the site:

- The site itself is old and not modernised, it’s awful and like going back in time
- The Council need to upgrade their site to a normal standard of living – this is the 21st century and we are left living in the bad times.

3.23 This view was corroborated by a site representative who raised the following issues:

- Proximity to a rubbish tip;
- No hot water in the caravans;
- Rats on site;
- Rubbish on site (alleged dumping of rubbish by non-occupants);
- Blocked drains;
- The lack of site screening and privacy;
- Damp issues (no damp coursing in the utility rooms);
- No speed limit outside of the site;
- The lack of facilities which can be used by residents (community hall); and
- The lack of safe play areas for children.

3.24 On a positive note, the representative felt that, although the site is in close proximity to a former rubbish tip, it is in a good location insofar as residents have good access to schools and health facilities.

3.25 To address these issues, the residents on the site, acting proactively, have set-up the Mellishaw Women’s group. Positively, representatives of the group feel they have adequate communication with the relevant Council Officers. However, it was noted that little progress has been made in terms of improving the condition of the site. A representative of the Women’s group argued that effort has been made to improve the condition of the site because they don’t feel they are in position to move anywhere else.

3.26 Most stakeholders argued that the situation could be addressed if the County Council made funding available to improve the site. Officers involved in managing the site felt that improving the physical conditions would help foster a positive relationship between Lancaster City Council and residents.
The welfare of animals on the Mellishaw site was of particular concern to one stakeholder who explained that continued efforts by the City Council to ensure that dogs are vaccinated and micro-chipped have failed and resulted in a recent outbreak of parvo on the site. The stakeholder argued for stricter controls and felt the City Council should consider a dog license to limit the number of dogs on the site or, as Preston have done, not allow dogs on site.

Private Provision

Within Lancaster City most of the Gypsy and Traveller accommodation is privately owned and managed. Therefore, many of the stakeholders had little knowledge of the condition and suitability of the sites in question and were unable to comment on the extent to which the provision is meeting the needs of the current residents. Contact with the sites includes the caravan license inspection which is undertaken every 2/3 years.

Most of the private sites in the area are said to be small and accommodate family and friends. They predominantly have an outside toilet and laundry block. The sites are said to be well maintained, no rubbish issues exist and all the vans are reportedly spaced out correctly. There are few issues and complaints concerning these sites – although one officer reported an issue with dogs on these sites. There are thought to be a number of sites that are purely for family use and have two vans.

There is also said to be a trend towards purchasing houses with a large amount of land which can be used for a small site for extended family members.

Three Council officers explained that the largest private licensed site, Hale Carr Lane, is currently exclusively occupied by non-Travellers. The Gypsy and Traveller status of this site is said to have been removed unofficially. One officer pointed out that a similar situation arose at Oxcliffe New Farm and the site has since been removed from the caravan count. A Lancaster City Council Officer reported that the planning department had been alerted that non-Traveller s were living at the sites.

Asked why they feel this occurred, the officers gave the following explanations:

» The supply of sites is greater than demand; and

» Letting or selling to non-Travellers was/is more profitable/easier to manage.

If the latter was the key driver, a consequence could be that further need has been created. Two Lancaster City Council officers suggested this could be the case and one relayed an experience of dealing with a former resident of the Hale Carr site who moved to bricks and mortar because they no longer wanted to stay on the site with non-Travellers. The planned engagement work with bricks and mortar residents, discussed in the following section, could explore the extent to which this has occurred and whether those who have moved as a result would prefer site accommodation.

Stakeholders only knew of the two examples discussed above but felt this practice could be happening on other sites. On discussing this issue further, it is clear that this was unforeseen as it was assumed by Lancaster City Council that Gypsies and Travellers who own and manage sites would only rent or sell pitches to members of the Travelling community. It is also difficult to find out when this is happening insofar as it only gets flagged up to the Council if the new occupants apply for benefits.

A Lancaster City Council officer argued that this issue is difficult to control because of the weaknesses of the planning system insofar as it depends upon the people, who are breaching their planning conditions, to
act in good faith. An officer suggested the licence obligations should be made clearer to owners and estate agents in future but conceded that, ultimately, it is up to landowners to respect those rules. Caravan license checks are one way of ensuring owners respect these rules and it was noted that the checks had identified the issue at the Hale Carr Lane site. The checks are undertaken on private sites, depending upon their size, every 2/3 years. It could be argued that the check could be carried out on a yearly or six monthly basis to ensure that occupants on sites are from the Gypsy and Traveller community.

**Bricks and Mortar Accommodation**

3.36 Stakeholders are aware of Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar and some are under the impression that it could be a substantial proportion of the Traveller population. As one officer explained families have become more settled and are no longer living the transient lifestyle.

3.37 A representative of a community support group and a City Council officer both suggested that there are a large number of housed travellers living in the Skerton area. An Elected Member was of the opinion that there are more Travellers moving into bricks and mortar than there are on sites and a number of officers felt it was a matter of choice and a changing culture that has caused this trend rather than a ‘push’ into housing through the lack of site provision.

3.38 Despite feeling that it is a particularly difficult group to contact, all interviewees stressed the importance of considering the needs of those living in bricks and mortar. A Lancaster City Council Officer explained that the City Council will be undertaking follow-up consultation with the Gypsy and Traveller community and stakeholders discussed ways of engaging with the community and made the following suggestions:

- The Heysham Library was said to be well-used by housed Travellers – a library representative would be happy to publicise and accommodate an event; and
- An elected member provided a contact of a member of the community who was thought to be in touch with many housed Travellers.

3.39 ORS have considerable experience of reaching out to housed Travellers and suggest that, as part of the consultation work, Lancaster City Council ask site residents if they are aware of Travellers who live in bricks and mortar accommodation.

**Travelling Show people**

3.40 A Lancaster City Council Officer referred to the need for one family sized yard which had been identified in the previous GTAA and argued that it was probably unlikely that a single family would wish to locate in the area and felt it more likely that they would want to locate in an area in a larger grouping. There are no existing planning applications for a Travelling Showpeople site.

3.41 In order to ascertain whether there are Travelling Showpeople who would look to or have a desire to live in the area a Lancaster County Council officer felt that communication is a priority. This view was borne out through discussions with Travelling Showpeople at a forum which was held in Knutsford on the 3rd May 2013. ORS advertised the forum in the World’s Fair publication and invited Travelling Showpeople in the North West area to come and talk about their accommodation needs. The Forum was well-attended with around 30-40 Travelling Showpeople contributing to the discussion.
3.42 Overall, the Knutsford group were of the view that there are a large number of Travelling Showpeople in the North West who require a permanent residence, particularly as sites in Bolton and Manchester are thought to be full. Travelling Showpeople felt strongly that all Local Authorities should set land aside for Travelling Showpeople. Travelling Showpeople also had a lengthy discussion surrounding the definition of need and they explained that many Travelling Showpeople have been forced to move out of an area because of a lack of accommodation, yet, their need or want to return to the area is classed as an aspiration, even when they have business links with an area. Many Travelling Showpeople relayed past and present examples of buying seemingly suitable land and having their planning application turned down across the North West area.

3.43 Participants had the following concerns:

» It is considered a gamble buying land: none of us want a place for free, we just want to be sure that if we buy something, we can actually live there

» Finding land that will fulfil the established site criteria is impossible

» Local Authorities use a list of excuses not to grant planning permission to Travelling Showpeople

» Without a permanent address it is difficult to access healthcare and ensure children receive consistent education

» District by District surveys are not robust enough – there is a national shortage of accommodation for Travelling Showpeople, therefore need should be a joined-up national or regional response

» Travelling Showpeople are covered by the same planning policy for Gypsy Travellers, yet they are very different communities with different accommodation needs.

3.44 Participants suggested the following solutions:

» Local Authorities should set aside land for Travelling Showpeople

» Site criteria should reflect what Travelling Showpeople actually want and, on that basis, sites do not need to be close to shops; schools; facilities and the local community

» Allow residential sites near their area of business – to cut down the costs related to travelling.

3.45 As a result of the forum at Knutsford and the advertisement in the World’s Fair publication ORS were contacted by two Travelling Showpeople, both representing larger groups, who are interested in purchasing land in Lancaster District to develop a yard. Their circumstances are documented below:

Showperson One

» Currently lives in Cumbria with his family. The Travelling Showman conducts fairs in the Lancaster area. The Showman’s son will be getting married yet there isn’t enough room to accommodate the family growth on the plot in Cumbria. The Showman wanted to purchase land in Lancaster for his growing family and felt it would be an ideal location for work. The yard would ideally accommodate 3-5 families and no more than 10.

Showperson Two
Opinion Research Services

Lancaster – Gypsy, Traveller and Showperson Accommodation Assessment

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» Currently lives with his partner on a site in Lancashire. The temporary planning permission for this site will run out in 11 months and will not be renewed. The Showman conducts fairs in the North West and is ideally looking for a plot in the Lancaster area. Showperson two has a number of family members (mother, son and daughter) who wish to live together in any of the aforementioned areas. They all currently live separately on different sites around the North West area, which are reported to be overcrowded, dangerous, unsuitable and expensive. The yard would need to accommodate four plots.

Showperson Three

» Currently lives on a site in Lancashire. The temporary planning permission for this site will run out in 8 months time and will not be renewed. The Showman conducts fairs in the North West and is ideally looking for a plot in the Lancaster area. Showperson three lives with his wife, daughter, son and daughter in law and three grandchildren. The Showperson would also want three relatives to live within the same site. The yard would need to accommodate six plots.

Short-Term Unauthorised Encampments

3.46 Short-term encampments in Lancaster District are considered to be a seasonal occurrence, mainly during the summer months and particularly when Travellers are en route to the Appleby Fair that takes place in June. Some stakeholders pointed out that the large Traveller population in permanent residence in Lancaster City attracts a significant amount of visitors over the year which can peak when there are family events such as weddings and funerals.

3.47 Stakeholders recognised that the majority of encampments are temporary and usually last for four to five days before moving on. A stakeholder mentioned the area near the University and lay-bys as popular stopping places. An officer reported that the Mellishaw Lane site can become overcrowded during Appleby and as a result of social events, however, this is tolerated as it is recognised that it will only be for a short period of time.

3.48 In terms of managing unauthorised encampments: Lancashire County Council manages County-owned land and highway encampments; Lancaster City Council manages encampments on council-owned land; and encampments on private land will be the responsibility of the landowner.

3.49 Lancashire County Council’s approach has recently been formalised and is headed by the Traveller Liaison Officer who, in the event of an encampment, will visit the site to report: how many Travellers are there; how long they are intending to stay; if they are deemed unsafe or causing a danger to road users; and what the next steps will be. The approach is described as being neutral, giving equal consideration to the needs of the Traveller and the settled community. Encampments during the Appleby Fair period are said to be tolerated. The County reported only six unauthorised encampments within Lancaster District during the past two years (2011-2013).

3.50 The County has recently produced a guide to ‘managing encampments’ for private landowners.

3.51 Management of encampments on Lancaster City owned land is reported to be the responsibility of the police and their approach is said to be friendly - their key priority being to encourage encampments to use rubbish bags.
3.52 A representative of the community support group; a District officer and Lancashire County Council officer felt that transit provision, particularly over the Appleby Fair period, would be of use and could help alleviate some of the pressure placed on the County Council, City Council and police adding that it could be more cost effective to have a facility for those stopping in the area and it would be a reasonable and balanced approach to adopt. It was also felt that it could alleviate the community tension that is caused when Travellers use green areas (for example playing fields). It was noted that consultation around location and management should involve the Traveller community as well as looking at best practice examples in other areas.

3.53 In contrast, a representative of a partner organisation and an Elected Member were both of the opinion that the numbers of encampments have decreased over recent years, therefore, there is no requirement for a transit site in the District.

**Future Accommodation Need**

3.54 A number of stakeholders felt there is little or no demand for further provision in the area. The following reasons were given:

» The City Council is not subject to multiple requests from the Traveller community (Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople);

» There are no long-term unauthorised developments; and

» There is no evidence of people residing on sites without consent.

3.55 Fewer numbers of stakeholders felt there is a lack of site provision. The following reasons were given:

» The previous Regional Spatial Strategy work reported a need for 40 additional pitches, 5 transit pitches and 5 plots for Travelling Showpeople – these have not been met;

» Based upon a national shortage of sites – local authorities should provide additional sites;

» Expanding families need additional site provision currently and in the future; and

» There is anecdotal evidence that Travellers are moving into housing – because there is a lack of site alternatives and younger Travellers are becoming separated from their families.

3.56 Although the subject of site supply is an issue, stakeholders felt strongly that improving the living conditions on the Mellishaw Lane site should be a key priority for the City and County Council.

3.57 The issue of transit provision divided opinion. Stakeholders are in agreement that, in order to serve the needs of those travelling to Appleby, transit provision would be beneficial. However, some judge transit provision to be unworkable insofar as users will stay longer, with some attempting to stay indefinitely; managing these issues is thought to outweigh the possible benefits.

3.58 However, as discussed, most stakeholders argued that those in transit usually stay for a short period and felt that a more manageable solution to be a temporary stopping site or transit provision which is available during the peak times (May-July). There are certainly case studies and best practice examples (Eden District Council) of this type of provision that could inform Lancaster City Council if they wished to provide a temporary transit site.
Addressing Future Accommodation Need

3.59 Although few stakeholders felt that more provision is necessary, stakeholders were asked their views on future site provision including: site criteria; location; ownership and management; and size.

Site Criteria

3.60 Stakeholders highlighted criteria they felt should be considered when deciding on an appropriate location for a Gypsy and Traveller site, responses are ordered by frequency:

- Access to facilities (school, health and bus stop);
- Access to highway network;
- Discrete/privacy – to avoid community overreaction and provide security;
- Not far from settled community – to encourage integration;
- Amenities should be available ‘on site’; and
- Appropriate footpaths and lighting.

3.61 Many stakeholders felt strongly that that this question needs to be directed to the Traveller community because it is their preference which should be taken into account. It is worth noting that the residents of the Mellishaw Lane site felt that access to facilities was the key priority and agreed that, in terms of access, the site does meet the criteria.

Site Location

3.62 Stakeholders were asked to consider what they think are potential locations for sites within Lancaster City. It is evident from the response of stakeholders and also experience of conducting GTAA’s elsewhere that stakeholders are generally reluctant to provide potential site locations on the basis that few have any knowledge on land availability and suitability.

3.63 A Lancaster County Council officer argued that, ultimately, private sites will go where they identify sites or, more precisely, where the Traveller community wish to live rather than where Lancaster City Council decide or favour.

3.64 Currently sites are concentrated in the Westgate, Central Heysham and Overton wards and, for this reason, stakeholders were asked to consider if this was putting a strain on services such as health and education and whether further provision in the areas should be avoided.

3.65 Three Lancaster City Council officers argued that, for social sites, the same area would be appropriate because it reflects Travellers previous choices to settle in these areas. An elected member and officer, however, were against the further concentration of sites in these areas on the basis that this would limit choice, ultimately they felt that the community should have a say where sites are placed:

I think they should be widely spread out throughout the District and not in one area. It gives them more choice really

However, the Elected Member felt that, although dispersal of sites is a preference, Heysham is the only area where land is available.
Site Ownership and Management

3.66 In terms of site ownership, the majority of stakeholders suggested that the housing market for Gypsies and Travellers should not differ to the settled community; therefore, there should be a mixture of social and private provision.

3.67 Many Lancaster City Council officers were of the view that private sites function better than social sites as there are fewer incidences of family tensions and essentially they have fewer management issues. Managing social sites are thought to be problematic as families, who may not want to live side-by-side, have to live together in a confined space while sharing amenities that are provided communally such as bathing and washing facilities.

3.68 A representative from a partner organisation was of the opinion that, the women’s group on the site at Mellishaw Lane, has proved to be an effective management tool and has enabled greater communication between service providers and residents. The representative added that, when attending the Practitioners Group, examples of where this had worked well in the North West had been discussed. Indeed, there are women’s groups in Hyndburn, Chorley and Preston.

3.69 One stakeholder was of the view, however, that an established tenants group would be more effective than a women’s group. As a constituted group – they would be able to access funding and the whole site could be involved, including men and children.

3.70 A representative of the community support group argued that private companies, which specialise in managing Gypsy and Traveller sites, would be better placed to run public sites.

Site Size

3.71 A number of stakeholders felt that smaller private sites are desirable as there are fewer tensions on-site and they come into less conflict with the wider local community and are, therefore, easier to integrate.

Community Cohesion

3.72 When asked to consider the extent to which the Travellers and settled communities are integrated and form a cohesive community, stakeholders are in agreement that the Gypsy and Traveller community is well established in the area. The ease at which Traveller children are integrated in the school environment is thought to evidence the positive community relations which exist. An officer referred to the fact that no community issues were raised during the Connecting Communities project which aimed to enable local councils to engage with local people in Skerton and work out what changes they would like to see and enable them to work with other public and voluntary sector organisations to make those changes.

3.73 A representative from a partner organisation, who has built up a relationship with residents at the Mellishaw Lane site, claimed there have been instances of friction between members of the settled community and those on site. A resident at the site, however, reported no issues with the settled

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2 The Connecting Communities Project worked with local people in the Skerton area and included Gypsy and Travellers. For further information about the Connecting Communities Project: http://www.lancaster.gov.uk/connecting-communities-skerton/
community. An Elected Member reported receiving the odd complaint from the settled community about the site but added there has been nothing with impact.

3.74 A few stakeholders, who work with children, are aware of incidences whereby children have been excluded from public places including the cinema, sports centre and, if they go to places like the park, children from the settled community will run away. It was agreed that perceptions held by the settled community are deeply ingrained.

3.75 A representative from a community support group felt discrimination is an issue but argued that it works both ways insofar as the settled community hold unacceptable racist views and the Traveller community displays a mistrust of the settled community. This situation is thought to be exacerbated by the negative portrayal of the Traveller community by national and local media, which hinders the development of local cohesion. Overcoming this is considered to be challenging, nevertheless, some stakeholders felt that more could be done at a local level by the City Council to improve the community image and create a balanced view of the Traveller community.

Health and Well-Being

3.76 The health of those living on the Mellishaw site was thought to be very poor due to the aforementioned living conditions. The majority of stakeholders argued for a complete refurbishment of the site and felt this would lead to improved health outcomes. A representative of TAFTAS felt strongly that problems with heating and drainage at the site should be addressed. A representative of Lancashire County Council was concerned that residents with disabilities are in need of adaptations to make their accommodation suitable. A resident at the site confirmed the existence of numerous health issues and felt that children are missing periods of schooling due to illnesses such as chest infections and asthma.

3.77 When considering access to health services, the health authority has made a significant recent investment in the health centre in Heysham which is in close proximity to a number of sites, including the Mellishaw Lane site. Therefore, based on proximity, many stakeholders felt the Traveller population are in a particularly advantageous location. A resident on the site reported that the majority of those living on the site are registered with a local GP.

3.78 However, a few stakeholders explained that there are a number of issues. Members of the Traveller community:

> Visit A&E more frequently than the settled community – therefore they have a reactive rather than proactive approach to managing their health;

> Are reluctant to allow outside agencies into their home environment to care for the elderly and infirm - preferring relatives to provide for their health needs;

> Are reluctant to vaccinate children – which could be due to lack of understanding or appropriate information in a correct format; and

> Are reluctant to access services including health checks and general prevention.

3.79 It was argued that, due to poor literacy, general health campaigns have less of an impact on the Travelling community than the wider population insofar as they can’t read many of health literature that is made available nationally.
The extent to which the community access services at the health centre and more generally, and feedback on the issues listed above could be explored in more depth when Lancaster City Council conducts their consultation with the Gypsy and Traveller community. In improving, say, the vaccination rates amongst Travellers, it will benefit from local feedback. A stakeholder recommended setting up a health forum to gain a greater understanding and to inform a strategy to address the aforementioned issues.

Education

The early age in which Traveller children leave education and the levels of absenteeism are two areas of concern. Stakeholders directly involved in the education system, explained that Traveller children, girls in particular, continue to leave education once they reach high school age. Stakeholders discussed ways to tackle these issues. A representative of a local school is of the view that little can be done to address what is essentially a cultural norm. Rather than attempt to keep Traveller children in the school system the representative felt that the County Council should adopt a more rigorous approach to monitoring home schooled Travellers and expressed concern that the once a year check that is currently carried out is not enough to ensure that they are receiving any tutoring. Another stakeholder believed that a separate curriculum, which suits Travellers moral and cultural beliefs, would encourage more Travellers to stay in the school system. For instance, a City Council Officer believed that offering Traveller children the choice of vocational courses, such as hair and beauty, could be more attractive to the community.

For a few stakeholders, tackling poor educational outcomes amongst Traveller children is the responsibility of central government and they are of the opinion that, unless efforts are undertaken at a national level, outcomes will continue to be poor. However, the current direction of educational policy at a national level divided opinion and some stakeholders were apprehensive of the move to bring Traveller parents in line with other parents whereby they can be prosecuted for their child’s non-attendance at school as stated in s.444 (1) of the Education Act 1996:

> If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his parent is guilty of an offence

> Parents who refuse to register a child at a suitable school without good reason may receive a school Attendance order from the Local Education Authority. Failure to comply with the order can result in prosecution

Currently, under section 444(6) of the Education Act 1996, parents are exempt from prosecution for a school attendance offence, provided that the child is of no fixed abode and:

> Parents are engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place

Therefore, children will have to attend school, even when travelling. One stakeholder felt that could be problematic for schools to facilitate as it is often the case that schools are full and travelling children will not be able to be found a place. The stakeholder suggested speaking to Northamptonshire who have justified going over their pupil roll by classifying Travellers as a vulnerable group.

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3.85 Absenteeism also has an impact on schools particularly those who have a large proportion of Traveller children. Stakeholders, with direct experience, noted that children do miss some periods of schooling which places the school at a disadvantage insofar as their ability to have 95% attendance and hit SAT result targets is reduced. As a result, one stakeholder felt that, when considering the future location of sites, the demand placed on schools should be taken into consideration.

3.86 One stakeholder expressed concern that bullying is a problem for school-aged Travellers. A resident at the Mellishaw Lane site confirmed there had been an issue but was under the impression that this had been remedied and confirmed that, although there are instances of home tuition, most children do attend school.

3.87 Outside of the school environment, educational initiatives to address and improve educational attainment have been undertaken by Heysham library. A representative of the library explained that since the library opened in 2009 a number of children now use the library on a regular basis to use computers and the library services in general and referred to a number of initiatives that have helped improve Traveller Children’s levels of literacy. These include:

- After school club;
- Reading scheme (ages 4-11); and
- Specific cultural events.

3.88 Depending on funding, the library is also hoping to arrange for a teacher to facilitate a homework club – this was seen as an opportunity to help children of secondary school age to remain in school.

3.89 The representative reported that a large proportion of service users are housed Travellers. A representative of the school felt those living on sites would benefit from using the library as it would give them space to do their homework. Efforts to promote the service to those living on sites have included sending a mobile library to the Mellishaw site.

3.90 The representative argued that, in addition to the obvious educational benefits, the library has acted as an interface between the settled and Traveller communities and, despite some tensions at the outset, relationships between children from the different communities are said to have improved.

3.91 There are reportedly a number of voluntary organisations who are attempting to set-up projects but these are believed to be on a small scale. Funding for out of school activities is viewed as a priority.

**Consultation Activities**

3.92 Stakeholders felt that Lancaster City Council should prioritise consultation with the Traveller community:

> It is important to engage them [Travellers] as much as possible...They are harder to reach so it’s hard to get feedback on services and future provision. It would be good to have a better relationship with the community.

3.93 Stakeholders referred to the Gypsy Roma Traveller practitioner meeting which meets three times per year and brings together all those working with the Traveller community as well as representatives (one –two) from the community. An example of the positive feedback is presented below:
It’s a very effective forum. Basically everybody who attends will give feedback and a lot of linking up and networking happens. I linked up with people from the local education group so then we were able to organise concerts and Traveller performances and speakers at different schools. It’s enabled me to be informed about what is going on.

3.94 A Lancaster City Council officer also referred to the commissioning of a research company to undertake focus groups with members of the Gypsy and Traveller community, with the purpose of producing a guide to engagement. This guide is still used by services.

3.95 Going forward, a number of stakeholders suggested that more could be done to engage with the community. A Lancashire County Council Officer promoted an idea to identify an ambassador within the community who could become a community advocate. An Elected Member pointed out that there are families in the area that are well known within the Traveller community – and could be a starting place for finding a community ambassador.

3.96 A council officer felt strongly that any engagement with the community should take into account the consultation fatigue that is particular to the Gypsy and Traveller community and recommended that incentives, including payment, are part of the engagement methodology.

3.97 Another stakeholder stressed the need to engage with younger Travellers and suggested that a young Travellers forum be set-up to address the needs of the next generation of Travellers.

3.98 An Elected Member expressed disappointment that, a committee meeting, which was previously held every three months, had ceased. Two Elected Members felt strongly that a mechanism for communication between Elected Members and members of the Traveller community should be set-up.

Cross-Boundary Issues

3.99 Stakeholders were asked their views on current cross-border movement and working and were asked to suggest future joint working issues:

Cross Border Movement

3.100 Stakeholders referred to the following routes:

» The A6 which runs from Luton in Bedfordshire to Carlisle in Cumbria;

» The A65 which runs north west from Leeds in Yorkshire via Kirkstall, Horsforth, Yeadon, Guiseley, Ilkley and Skipton, passes west of Settle, then continues through Ingleton and Kirkby Lonsdale before terminating at Kendal in Cumbria; and

» Entry and exit from Heysham Port to and from Ireland. However, a representative of the Port suggested there was little Gypsy and Traveller movement through the Port.

3.101 When considering cross-border movement, aside from the temporary movements around the time of the Appleby Fair, the Gypsy and Traveller population in Lancaster is believed to be settled and, aside from the obvious natural growth, remains static. There is no known movement, temporary or permanent, ‘back and forth’ between neighbouring areas. Therefore, stakeholders had little to say about cross border movement and felt there was little cross-border working required. Some stakeholders referred to Fylde and Wyre as areas where the Traveller population is growing.
3.102 Duty to Cooperate and Joint Working

Two Lancaster City Council officers referred to discussions that have taken place with Wyre, South Lakeland and Craven District Council which explored the methods that areas have been using to meet the needs of Travellers. The main objective of these discussions has been to share information and understand the level of provision in neighbouring areas. The Gypsy and Romany Traveller achievement services also liaise across borders. This work is said to have led to an improved understanding of movements. However, it was highlighted that this can be difficult as most areas are at different stages of their local plan.

3.103 As aforementioned, stakeholders understood there to be little cross-boundary movement, however, the majority still felt that, given the mobile nature of the Travelling community, joint working is more effective than local authorities working alone. Information sharing between local authorities, across the Lancashire region and beyond, was seen as crucial to the success of managing encampments and the provision of permanent accommodation.

3.104 Future joint working with Cumbria, Burnley and North Yorkshire County Council was recommended, particularly on issues related to Appleby Fair encampments and transit provision.

Neighbouring Authorities

3.105 As stated in the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, Local Authorities have a duty to cooperate on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries. Therefore, as part of the stakeholder consultation, ORS conducted 9 interviews with officers representing the following neighbouring authorities: Craven District Council; Cumbria County Council; Eden District Council; Fylde Borough Council; Lake District National Park Authority; Ribble Valley Borough Council; South Lakeland District Council; Wyre Council; and Yorkshire Dale National Park Authority. The section below presents a summary of the interviews with the aforementioned representatives.

Craven District Council

3.106 Craven has 18 pitches spread across three private sites. The District has experienced a number of issues with unauthorised encampments around the time of the Appleby Fair, which have created tension with the settled community, especially around the Gargrave Parish, which is a traditional stopping place for Travellers. At the time of writing, Craven District Council has yet to publish the results of its 2013 GTAA.

3.107 The representative reported no cross-boundary issues with Lancaster City.

Cumbria County Council

3.108 Cumbria County Council is not a planning or housing authority. There is a large authorised site in Carlisle and several others within the County.

3.109 The representative felt that there is no evidence of a shortfall of need (a Cumbria wide Study was being conducted at the time of interview) but was aware of some issues with regard to unauthorised encampments and referred to anecdotal evidence of an increase in unauthorised encampments on the M6 corridor – the main road network through the area. There are no Travelling Showpeople in the area.

3.110 The representative was unsure of formal cross-border working but stated that neighbouring authorities will be consulted as part of the current GTAA process.
**Eden District Council**

3.111 The officer explained that the District is currently undertaking its GTAA with Cumbria. There is one private site in the area with 75 caravans with some on-site transit provision. The site is consistently under-occupied because the owner of the site chooses who is let onto the site – a practice which is said to affect Irish Travellers.

3.112 The officer reported dealing with three-four encampments over the summer period. These are largely tolerated and are encouraged to use bin bags. If action is needed in Eden District there is a Cumbria wide joint agency protocol in place which involves: District councils; police; highways; fire service; RSPCA; and children’s services.

3.113 Although awaiting the results of the GTAA, the officer explained that there is possibly a need for transit provision around the Penrith area of the District. Eden District Council has explored this but has struggled to find a suitable location and landowners have not brought any land forward. During the Appleby Fair period there are a number of tolerated stopping areas.

3.114 Aside from undertaking a joint GTAA there is no formal cross-border working. The officer felt little could be achieved through cross-boundary work and explained that when there is an encampment they know little about where they are travelling to so they cannot notify neighbours if they should expect them. Also, if Eden District had advance warning it was argued that it would not put them in a better position because Travellers would still camp where they want to. They would either tolerate the site or would take action under the protocol – advance notification would have little effect on the process.

**Fylde Borough Council**

3.115 Fylde have an adopted Local Plan which includes criteria-based policy on sites for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. The policy is currently being updated. There is one private Gypsy and Traveller site which has planning permission for six pitches, the site is on Flyde but is close to the Blackpool border. There is also a Travelling Showperson’s site with planning permission for two plots. There is also a current application for four permanent pitches for Gypsies. There is also a site in Preston which is near the Fylde border.

3.116 Although there are said to be few unauthorised encampments there is an unauthorised development which arose in the area in 2009. There have been several appeals and it the application will be heard at the Appeal Court in July 2013.

3.117 The previous assessment reported a need for five transit pitches. The area used to be a popular transit area during Christmas and the New Year, but this is said to have decreased as a result of preventative action taken by the borough council.

3.118 The need for transit provision has not been addressed and a new GTAA had not been commissioned at the time of interview (May 2013). The officer felt that better evidence of need is required.

3.119 When asked about cross border issues the officer reported that there is a large Gypsy and Traveller population in Blackpool and, if they preferred to live in a more rural area, they could possibly in the future look to live on the edge of Blackpool or in Fylde, but the officer was not aware of a huge demand.
3.120 Fylde hold duty to co-operate meetings with Blackpool, Wyre and Lancashire County Council and meet separately with Preston. However, it is felt that no major discussion with the neighbouring areas needs to take place.

Lake District National Park Authority

3.121 Similar to Cumbria, the Park Authority is not a planning or housing authority. The representative was not aware of any Gypsy and Traveller sites in the area but was aware of a Travelling Showperson’s site which was being used for storage. The previous GTAA calculated the need figure as zero but the representative felt this may change once the GTAA is updated.

3.122 In terms of short-term unauthorised encampments the area is not considered to be on any major thoroughfare – including Appleby. The main routes are said to be South Lakeland and Eden – both of which are outside the Park Authority area.

Ribble Valley Borough Council

3.123 Officers felt that the current provision of sites in the Borough is largely sufficient. It was noted that the previous GTAA (Lancashire 2007) had identified a need for 6 pitches in the area, but officers reported no applications for new or expanded sites, and did not feel there was any pressure from the Travellers themselves for any additional provision.

3.124 Officers reported no cross-boundary issues, though one officer noted that there was a striking disparity between the Traveller population in Ribble Valley and its neighbour Hyndburn. The officer felt this was likely due to the rural nature of Ribble Valley and the lack of work opportunities in comparison to the relatively populous area of Hyndburn.

3.125 In terms of cross-border working, officers mentioned the various housing and planning groups where officers from Lancashire Districts meet to discuss issues. However, officers reported no on-going discussions relating to Gypsies and Travellers. Officers did not regard this as a particular issue for Ribble Valley, given that the District currently has no significant problems with Travellers, though they were open to cooperative working should they be approached by another local authority.

3.126 In terms of cross-boundary movements, the A59 was identified as the primary route through the District.

South Lakeland District Council

3.127 The previous GTAA was undertaken in 2008 jointly with Cumbria and concluded a need for five Gypsy and Traveller pitches and 3 plots for Travelling Showpeople. Further work undertaken by South Lakeland found there was no need. However, their Land Allocations Document was felt not to comply with the new national policy because it did not set out the need over the whole plan period up to 2025. This prompted the Borough to commission a new GTAA which they are currently undertaking with Cumbria.

3.128 The officer reported no formal sites in South Lakeland and was not aware of any unauthorised encampments. The only transit issue is caused by movement to the Appleby Fair, however, Travellers are accommodated in Sedbergh – an area within the Yorkshire Dales Park Authority. On this basis, the officer felt there is no need for transit provision within the area.

3.129 The officer was unaware of any further cross-boundary issues.
Wyre District Council

3.130 The officer explained that the District is currently drafting its Local Plan and is about to commence a GTAA with Fylde Borough Council and Blackpool Borough Council.

3.131 The representative gave a breakdown of the current provision of accommodation which included: one 10 pitched site for Travelling Showpeople which has temporary permission until May 2014; and one unauthorised 8 eight pitched Gypsy Traveller site which has been through the appeal process resulting in the Travellers having to vacate the premises in November 2013. It is thought that the group will want to stay in the area or possibly Blackpool or Fylde – not Lancaster.

3.132 There are reportedly few instances of short-term unauthorised encampments and no pressure for permanent sites on privately owned land. There are instances of Travellers moving through the A6 corridor when travelling to Appleby.

3.133 It is argued that proximity to Blackpool, for employment reasons, can attract encampments and could be a possible reason for the unauthorised sites in Wyre and Flyde.

3.134 In terms of cross-boundary cooperation Wyre District Council have been in contact with Ribble Valley Borough Council but, on the basis that the Forest of Boland acts as a barrier, the representative was unaware of any specific issues which have required or necessitated any closer cooperation. Although the boroughs join geographically, the direction of travel is more north/south to Lancaster or Preston rather than eastwards into Ribble Valley.

3.135 The main issue which unites both boroughs is the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) which appeared to the representative, to be the key issue.

Yorkshire Dale National Park Authority

3.136 The officer explained that the Authority developed a Gypsy and Traveller policy in June 2012. This was the first policy dealing specifically with the group because it is not considered to be an issue in the area. There are no permanent and transit sites.

3.137 A number of encampments arise during travel to the Appleby Fair. These are tolerated. However, there is a current planning application to make an area of Sedbergh, which is used on a fairly consistent basis, a formal provision to stop the use of the less suitable places including village greens, highway verges and lay-bys.

3.138 Cross-boundary working occurred during the previous GTAA assessment (2008) and the current GTAA both commissioned jointly with Cumbria. The officer concluded that these have been the only instances of cross-boundary working however, considering that it is a specialist area of policy, links with neighbouring areas would be beneficial.

The Future: Conclusions and Areas for Consideration

3.139 Stakeholders felt the findings of the forthcoming GTAA would influence the direction of local policy and provision of sites.
Gypsies and Travellers

3.140 Improving the condition of the Mellishaw Lane site is considered to be a priority.

3.141 Stakeholders believed there to be high numbers of Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar, particularly in the Skerton area. Stakeholders made a number of suggestions on how Lancaster City Council could engage with this community in the future:

» Heysham Library would be happy to publicise and accommodate an event; and

» An Elected member provided details of a member of the Traveller community who is in touch with many housed Travellers in the area – ORS would be happy to contact the individual on behalf of Lancaster City Council.

3.142 Short-term encampments are considered a seasonal occurrence, mainly during the summer months around the time of the Appleby Fair. Most stakeholders believe that a temporary transit site would alleviate some of the pressures that arise around this time but expressed concerns around the management of such provision. However, a less formal provision could be an alternative to a managed site. Eden District, for instance, has a number of tolerated stopping areas during the Appleby fair and they simply provide bin bags. Lancaster City Council could allocate a field with access to running water and portaloos.

3.143 Due to fact that some of the Gypsy and Traveller provision has been sold on to non-Travellers, many stakeholders felt this indicated an oversupply of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation. On the other hand, some stakeholders believed it to be motivated by a desire to make a profit and that this practice has pushed those Gypsies and Travellers, who had once lived on the site, into bricks and mortar accommodation. If the latter is the case, then it suggests that accommodation need could have increased. The proposed engagement work, in particular with those living in bricks and mortar, is a key priority to understand what impact this has had on the accommodation needs of the community.

3.144 Lancaster City Council also needs to consider how it can prevent this from happening in the future. Site owners and local estate agents need to be made aware of the conditions of the site licenses.

3.145 Although many stakeholders were of the view that the community is well integrated, a small number of stakeholders raised the issue of discrimination of Traveller children. Certainly, this issue should be addressed by Lancaster City Council and the police. Again, this issue needs to be explored with Travellers when Lancaster City Council undertakes its engagement work.

3.146 Stakeholders agreed that the perception of the Traveller community can be negative and this is aggravated by the negative media coverage that occurs at both the local and national level. Certainly, with the help of the Traveller community, local ‘positive’ stories should be compiled and disseminated to help counteract damaging stories.

3.147 Most stakeholders were of the view that the residents of the Mellishaw Lane site have been adversely affected by the poor living conditions on the site - instances of illness are thought to be a direct consequence. Improving health outcomes for residents is considered to be closely linked to improving accommodation.

3.148 Low literacy levels amongst the Traveller community are understood to have an adverse effect on health outcomes insofar as the Traveller community are less likely to take notice of health prevention messages which are disseminated via the written word (posters and leaflets). More attention needs to be paid to
improving the literacy skills of older Travellers and parents. In the interim, health awareness message about vaccinations, for example, should use the spoken word. Setting up a health forum in addition to engagement with the community would be an ideal platform for addressing many of the health issues.

The low numbers of Traveller children who remain in education beyond the age of 11 was viewed as a key priority. The ease at which this can be addressed was viewed with some pessimism insofar as it is a cultural norm. One suggested method of tackling this issue was through more robust monitoring of home schooled Traveller children – to ensure they are having some tutoring.

Stakeholders were aware that some schools do have larger numbers of Traveller children and there was some discussion about the effects on these schools in terms of attendance and SAT results. Linking education to future accommodation provision, some stakeholders believed that demands placed on the school should be a consideration when determining the location of sites.

Overall, despite current engagement work, the majority of stakeholders felt that more effort is needed to engage and consult with the Traveller community. A community ambassador and payment were considered to be ways to make engagement more meaningful and inclusive.

### Travelling Showpeople

Travelling Showpeople felt that Local Authorities should begin to work closely in consultation with Travelling Showpeople families and the Guild to find workable local solutions to move forward with planning policy and implementation.

Similar to the Gypsy and Traveller community Lancaster City Council should pro-actively promote positive images of Travelling Showpeople, their culture, their work and highlight their constructive contribution to communities to counteract prevalent negative stereotypes and misconceptions.

### The Duty to Cooperate

Stakeholders claimed that the Traveller community in Lancaster is stable and settled and there is no cross-boundary movement that invites discussion with neighbouring local authorities. Despite this, the majority of stakeholders felt that joint working is more effective than local authorities working alone.

Information sharing between local authorities across the region is viewed as beneficial and this view was shared by many of the neighbouring areas. Based on suggestions from other assessments that ORS have conducted, we recommend that Lancaster City Council organises a regional forum, to discuss the results of GTAA’s which would help surrounding authorities understand each other needs and provide a platform for the sharing of information in the future.
4. Future Site Provision

Pitch Provision

4.1 This section focuses on the extra site provision which is required in Lancaster currently and over the next 19 years by 5 year segments.

4.2 This section concentrates not only upon the total extra provision which is required in the District, but whether this provision should be in the form of public or private sites.

4.3 The March 2012, the CLG document ‘Planning Policy for Traveller Sites’, requires an assessment for future pitch requirements, but does not provide a suggested methodology for undertaking this calculation. However, as with any housing assessment, the underlying calculation can be broken down into a relatively small number of factors. In this case, the key issue for residential pitches is to compare the supply of pitches available for occupation with the current and future needs of the households. The key factors in each of these elements are set out below:

Supply of pitches

4.4 Pitches which are available for use can come from a variety of sources. These include

» Currently vacant pitches;
» Any pitches currently programmed to be developed within the study period;
» Pitches vacated by people moving to housing;
» Pitches vacated by people moving out of the study area
» Pitches vacated due to the dissolution of households (normally through the death of a single person household).

Current Need

4.5 There are four key components of current need. Total current need (which is not necessarily need for additional pitches) is simply:

» Households on unauthorised developments for which planning permission is not expected;
» Concealed households;
» Households in brick and mortar wishing to move to sites; and
» Households on waiting lists for public sites.

Future Need

4.6 There are three key components of future need. Total future need is simply the sum of the following:
» Households living on sites with temporary planning permissions;
» New household formation expected during the study period; and
» Migration to sites from outside the study area.

4.7 We will firstly provide the model as set out above for Gypsies and Travellers before repeating the calculation for Travelling Showpeople.

Supply of Pitches

4.8 There are currently 19 pitches on public sites and 78 occupied pitches on private sites in Lancaster including those on sites with temporary permission.

4.9 The next stage of the process is to assess how much space is, or will become available on existing sites. The main ways of finding this is through:
  » Current empty pitches;
  » New sites or site extensions which are likely to gain planning permission;
  » Migration away from the area;
  » Movement to bricks and mortar;
  » Dissolution of households.

4.10 Currently, all authorised public site pitches are occupied, so there is no available space. As noted in Section 2 of this report there are at least 59 pitches with planning permission for Gypsy and Traveller use in Lancaster which are not occupied by any one from these groups due to 40 being used as residential park homes and 19 being vacant. We have not included any of the pitches as being available for Gypsy and Traveller use in the future because they are occupied by non Gypsies and Travellers or not in use. If they were brought back into use for Gypsies and Travellers they could address future supply need. Beyond these 59 pitches, there is no evidence of significant unoccupied pitches on private sites.

4.11 For out-migration to other areas or movements to bricks and mortar households will also wish to move in the opposite direction. Therefore, rather than seeking to include figures at this stage for out-migrants leaving pitches in Lancaster for elsewhere in the country or leaving pitches for bricks and mortar we have linked these figures with in-migrants and those seeking to leave housing for sites and they are included in the current and future needs below. Essentially some households will leave existing sites in Lancaster, while other households will move on to them and we have linked these movement together below.

4.12 The dissolution of a household occurs when all the members leave the household. The most common way for a household to dissolve is for a person living on their own to die. Rather than seek to estimate the number of households who will dissolve due to the death of all household members, we would note that in the period to 2026 a number of households will also seek to form in Lancaster. Therefore, we have treated the net growth in household numbers covering both deaths and formations as being part of the future need.
Additional Site Provision: Current Need

4.13 The next stage of the process is to assess how many households are currently seeking pitches in the area. Groups of people who are likely to be seeking pitches will include those:

» Households on unauthorised developments for which planning permission is not expected;
» Concealed households;
» Households in brick and mortar wishing to move to sites; and
» Households on waiting lists for public sites.

Concealed Households

4.14 Evidence from stakeholders indicates that there is no overcrowding on the public site in Lancaster and that private sites are also not intensively used. Therefore, there is no evidence of any concealed households who require their own accommodation.

Bricks and Mortar

4.15 Identifying households in bricks and mortar has been frequently highlighted as an issue with Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments.

4.16 The 2011 UK Census of Population identified a population of 331 Gypsy and Traveller persons in Lancaster. Given that there are nearly 100 pitches on site in the area, much of the population is likely to be living on sites. The figure of 331 persons is likely to be an under-estimate of the total population due to some Gypsies and Travellers not declaring their ethnic status or completing the Census at all, but it does still indicate a relatively low population in bricks and mortar.

4.17 Lancaster Council operates a Choice Based Letting scheme entitled Ideal Choice Homes which covers all of the social housing stock, including the Gypsy and Traveller site at Mellishaw Lane. An analysis of Ideal Choice Homes by Lancaster City Council indicates that there are currently 32 Gypsy and Traveller households on the accommodation waiting list. Of these two wish to move on to the public site and have been counted within the waiting list information below. Another one wishes to move off the public site and we have counted them a potential free pitch. The remaining 29 households are all seeking to move between bricks and mortar accommodation. This indicates that most households in bricks and mortar are happy to remain there rather than seeking to move back on to sites. This also supports the views of many stakeholders who report that Gypsies and Travellers are living in bricks and mortar in Lancaster through choice.

4.18 We would also note that for a number of recent studies undertaken by ORS we have worked with national Gypsy and Traveller representatives to identify households in brick and mortar. For a number of recent studies the representatives reported over 100 known households in housing and they encouraged them to come forward to take part in the survey. The actual number who eventually took part in the surveys ranged from zero to six households per area, and not all wished to move back to sites. Therefore, while there is anecdotal evidence of many Gypsies and Travellers in housing most appear to be content to remain there and when provided with the opportunity by national representatives to register an interest in returning to sites few choose to do so.
Waiting Lists for Public Sites

4.19 The method of registering a desire to obtain a pitch on Mellishaw Lane public site is through placing your name on the waiting list held by Lancaster City Council. Currently there are 2 households on the waiting list for Mellishaw Lane. At the time of writing, both households are of no fixed address.

Additional Site Provision: Future Need

4.20 The next stage of the process is to assess how many households are likely to be seeking pitches in the area in the future. Groups of people who are likely to be seeking pitches will include those:

» Households living on sites with temporary planning permissions;
» New household formation expected during the study period; and
» Migration to sites from outside the study area.

Temporary Permission

4.21 There are currently three pitches on a site with temporary planning permission. This site is now subject to a full planning application for permanent permission. We have counted them as need at this stage in the calculation because if the permanent planning permission is not granted and the temporary permission is allowed to lapse the loss of the three pitches would need to be replace elsewhere. However, if the site is granted full planning permission it will count three pitches towards future provision. If a further temporary permission is granted then the need will arise again in the future.

New Household Formation

4.22 It is recognised that an important group for future pitch provision will be children from existing households who will wish to form their own households. Many studies of Gypsy and Traveller populations, including the North West Regional Spatial Strategy, assume a net growth in household numbers of around 3% per annum. Long-term trends indicate that the number of Gypsy and Traveller caravans on site has grown by 134% nationally in the past 34 years, which equates to a net growth of around 2.5% per annum.

4.23 While it is possible to argue that because most studies use a net growth rate of 3% per annum it should be used here, we believe that an evidence base should use the most accurate information possible and not simply rely upon precedent. Therefore, we consider it appropriate to allow for future projected household growth to occur in line with national trends. If we allow for the household numbers to grow at 2.5% then in the second year the 2.5% growth would be on 102.5% of the base population and so on. This is known as compound growth. When including the impact of compound growth, a 2.5% growth per annum provides for 13% growth over 5 years, 28% growth over 10 years, and 41% over 14 years.

4.24 On the basis that there are approximately 97 households on site plus two moving from bricks and mortar minus one leaving for housing and a growth rate of 41% would see an additional 40 households in the area by the end of 2026.
In-migration from Other Sources

4.25 The most complicated area for a survey such as this is to estimate how many households will require accommodation from outside the area. Potentially Gypsies and Travellers could move to the Lancaster from anywhere in the country. The number of household seeking to move to Lancaster is likely to be heavily dependent upon pitch provision elsewhere. It has been noted that a weakness of many Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments conducted across the country has been that they either allowed for out-migration without in-migration which led to under-counting of need, or they over-counted need by assuming every household visiting the area required a pitch.

4.26 Overall the level of in-migration to Lancaster District is a very difficult issue to predict. Movement to the public sites is covered by the waiting list and therefore does not need to be included within the model again. We have allowed for a balanced level of migration on to existing private sites. This means that for every household who leaves a private site in Lancaster, we have assumed that another household will move from elsewhere in the country to Lancaster. The advantage of allowing for net migration to have exactly the same number of households moving in and out of Lancaster is that it avoids the problems seen with other Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments where the modelling of migration clearly identified too low or high a level of total pitch provision. An assumption of net nil migration implies that the net pitch requirement is driven by locally identifiable need.

4.27 Beyond this number, rather than assess in-migrant households seeking to develop new sites in the area, we would propose that each case is assessed as a desire to live in the area and that site criteria rules are followed for each new site. It is important for Lancaster to have clear criteria based planning policies in place for any new potential sites which do arise.
Overall Needs for Lancaster

The estimated extra site provision that is required until 2026 is 44 pitches. This is almost entirely due to the growth in household numbers due to household formation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for Requirement/Vacancy</th>
<th>Gross Requirement</th>
<th>Supply</th>
<th>Net Requirement</th>
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<td>Supply of Pitches</td>
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<td>Additional supply new sites</td>
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Requirement by Time Periods

In terms of providing results by 5 year time periods we have assumed that all waiting list needs and sites with temporary planning permissions are addressed in the first 5 years. Household growth is apportioned over time.

The evidence contained in this survey is that there is a requirement in the next 5 years for a total of one pitch to address the needs of those who wish to move on to the public site in Lancaster from the two households on the waiting list minus the one who wishes to move off. There is also a need for three pitches for the loss of a temporary planning permission on one site. Household growth is then projected to be a total of 13% over the next 5 years, giving a further 13 households. Therefore the identified requirement in the period 2013-2017 is 17 pitches.

From 2018 onwards all future project growth is for household formations. In the period 2018-2022 this is projected to be 15 pitches, for the four year period 2023-2026 this is projected to be 12 pitches.
Travelling Showpersons

4.32 There are currently no Travelling Showpeople’s yards in Lancaster. However, representative from the North West Showmen’s Guild indicate that there are a number of Travelling Showpeople who regularly work in the area and who would also wish to live in Lancaster. As was shown in Section 3 of this report there is immediate interest from at least three different groups of Travelling Showpeople who would wish to develop sites. This amounts to at least 16 plots across three sites.

4.33 No group has identified any potential land in the area and would not wish to do so without pre-planning discussion with Lancaster City Council. However, we would note that Planning Policy for Traveller Sites places the duty to identify a land supply on the local authority rather than on the household seeking to move to an area.

4.34 It could be argued that the wishes of the three groups represent a desire rather than a need to move to Lancaster and that potentially other areas could meet their needs. However, similar arguments have been made on other applications such as a recent case in Selby and the planning inspectorate has found in favour of the Travelling Showpeople. If an area currently contains no population than any needs must arise from in-migration and Planning Policy for Traveller Sites requires local authorities to address the needs of in-migrant households. Planning Policy for Traveller Sites paragraph 22 states:

Local planning authorities should consider the following issues amongst other relevant matters when considering planning applications for traveller sites:

- the existing level of local provision and need for sites
- the availability (or lack) of alternative accommodation for the applicants
- other personal circumstances of the applicant
- that the locally specific criteria used to guide the allocation of sites in plans or which form the policy
- where there is no identified need for pitches/plots should be used to assess applications that may come forward on unallocated sites
- that they should determine applications for sites from any travellers and not just those with local connections

4.35 Therefore the lack of current provision for Travelling Showpeople in Lancaster may count against the authority and there is no requirement to prove local connections to the area.
5. Conclusions

Introduction

5.1 This chapter brings together the evidence presented earlier in the report to provide some key policy conclusions for Lancaster. It focuses upon the key issues of future site provision for Gypsies and Travellers and also Travelling Showpersons.

Gypsy and Traveller Future Pitch Provision

5.2 The estimated extra site provision that is required until 2026 is 44 pitches. This is almost entirely due to the growth in household numbers due to household formation. However, we would note that a high number of existing pitches in Lancaster are currently occupied by non-Travellers and are instead being used as residential park homes. If these pitches were returned to use they would address all of the needs until 2026.

Travelling Showpeople Requirements

5.3 There is currently no authorised Showmen’s yard in Lancaster. ORS spoke to three different groups of Travelling Showpeople who would wish to develop sites. Their needs amount to at least 16 plots across three sites and they fall within the definitions of households who are covered by Planning Policy for Traveller Sites.

A Supply of Deliverable and Developable Sites

Safeguarding existing sites

5.4 In developing their local plans, “Planning Policy for Traveller Sites” requires local planning authorities to identify and keep up-to-date a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years’ worth of sites against those locally set targets and a supply of specific developable sites or broad locations to meet needs, where possible, for up to 15 years.

5.5 We would suggest that an initial starting point would be for Lancaster to consider safeguarding existing authorised Gypsy and Traveller sites, to ensure that existing needs continue to be met in perpetuity. If sites are lost from these uses, then new replacement sites may need to be found to maintain an adequate supply to meet needs in accordance with the identified pitch and plot targets.

Broad Geographical Locations

5.6 Where specific deliverable or developable sites for further Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople provision cannot be identified, the Council should consider including broad geographical locations within their Local Plans which would identify potential locations.

5.7 This document recommends that the identification of further Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople residential sites should focus on the broad geographical locations and should take into account where the
need arises and the capacity of local infrastructure to determine the most appropriate broad location to commence the site search.

5.8 The Council should investigate public sites within the most sustainable broad locations, particularly in locations where there is good access to main facilities and services such as local hospitals.

5.9 The Council should be reasonably flexible about the location of small private sites and should consider sites outside but close to the broad locations.

Sites with Potential to Meet Future Needs

5.10 The Council should investigate the potential from existing sites to achieve additional pitches/plots either through increasing the capacity within existing boundaries or through site extension onto adjoining land.

5.11 To provide a medium and long term supply, the Council should consider allocating sites through their Local Plans.

Delivery

5.12 As with other forms of development, the release of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites should be managed to ensure a good fit with identified need.

5.13 However, there is no direct correlation between existing and future needs and sites which may have potential to meet those needs. For example, a family may need further pitches in the future to meet the future needs from existing children, but their current site may not have capacity, whilst an existing family may not require pitches in the future but they may have a site where there is potential for future provision.

5.14 It is important to note that the future availability of existing private sites to accommodate needs is entirely dependent on existing site owners being prepared to accommodate future needs on these sites.

5.15 It is also important to note that Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers have separate traditions and patterns of movement and may not be prepared to share sites. Similarly, Travelling Showpeople families operate separate commercial businesses and are unlikely to share sites.

5.16 There is therefore a strong likelihood that more than the bare minimum of sites will need to be identified and brought forward to provide a flexible and sufficient pool of sites to meet identified existing and future needs.

5.17 We would suggest that it would be prudent for Lancaster to identify a potential reserve supply from the identified sites or other sites which could be brought forward in the future if required to ensure a continuous supply of deliverable and developable sites.

Phasing, Monitoring and Review

5.18 Any release of land to meet future needs would require active monitoring of supply against need, at least on an annual basis. It would also require Lancaster to undertake periodic reviews of the needs evidence base.
## Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amenity block/shed</td>
<td>A building where basic plumbing amenities are provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ANOB</td>
<td>Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bricks and mortar</td>
<td>Mainstream housing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caravan</td>
<td>Mobile living vehicle used by Gypsies and Travellers. Also referred to as trailers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chalet</td>
<td>Normally refers to a single storey residential unit which can be dismantled. Sometimes referred to as mobile homes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CLG</td>
<td>Department of Communities and Local Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concealed household</td>
<td>Households, living within other households, who are unable to set up separate family units.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Plan Document</td>
<td>Local Authority spatial planning documents that can include specific policies for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency stopping place</td>
<td>Site with limited facilities to be occupied by Gypsies and Travellers while they travel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Belt</td>
<td>A policy or land use designation used to retain areas of largely undeveloped, wild, or agricultural land surrounding or neighbouring urban areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gypsies and Travellers</td>
<td>Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family’s or dependents’ educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of Travelling Showpeople or circus people travelling together as such. Includes Romany Gypsies, Irish Travellers and New Travellers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Household formation</td>
<td>The process where individuals form separate households. This is normally through adult children setting up their own household.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Irish Travellers</strong></td>
<td>A distinct ethnic group originating in Ireland with a tradition of travelling</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>New Travellers</strong></td>
<td>Fall within the definition of Gypsies and Travellers but do not have a status as an ethnic group like Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal planning permission</strong></td>
<td>A private site where the planning permission specifies who can occupy the site and doesn’t allow transfer of ownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pitch/plot</strong></td>
<td>Area of land on a site/development generally home to one household. Can be varying sizes and have varying caravan numbers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Private site</strong></td>
<td>An authorised site owned privately. Can be owner-occupied, rented or a mixture of owner-occupied and rented pitches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Romany Gypsies</strong></td>
<td>A distinct ethnic group with a tradition of travelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SADP</strong></td>
<td>Site Allocations Development Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Site</strong></td>
<td>An area of land on which Gypsies and Travellers are accommodated in caravans/chalets/vehicles. Can contain one or multiple pitches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social site</strong></td>
<td>An authorised site owned by either the local authority or a Registered Housing Provider.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Temporary planning permission</strong></td>
<td>A private site with planning permission for a fixed period of time</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Transit site</strong></td>
<td>Site intended for short stays and containing a range of facilities. There is normally a limit on the length of time residents can stay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Travelling Showpeople</strong></td>
<td>Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their family’s or dependent’s more localized pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unauthorised Development</strong></td>
<td>Caravans on land owned by Gypsies and Travellers without planning permission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unauthorised Encampment</strong></td>
<td>Caravans on land not owned by Gypsies and Travellers and without planning permission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Waiting list</strong></td>
<td>Record held by the local authority or site managers of applications to live on a site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yard</strong></td>
<td>Name used by Travelling Showpeople to refer to a site.</td>
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</tbody>
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