

From PARTICIPANT 368
My Comment ID 620
and Matter 9 Statement
also refer

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FAO Mrs Wendy Burden
Inspector
Cheltenham Plan Examination

Dear Mrs Burden

**Matter 9: Other Matters: Gypsies, travellers and travelling show people:
Clarification of Policy GTI**

In addition to your Questions on Castle Dream Stud on Thursday or Friday, I should be very grateful if you could agree to considering the following on Policy GT1.

I am very concerned over how, or even whether, the AONB will continue to be protected from further adverse built development. So far

- a) the gypsy yard boundary seems to have been extended into the AONB land without any prior consultation over this additional incursion
- b) the temporary conditioned personal planning control imposed by the 2011 Inspector, specifically to protect the AONB, appears likely to be abandoned (see 2 and 3 below)
- c) no survey appears to have been made to check facts on site since the GTAA was unable to contact the site owners in 2017 (see 1 below)

1 Evidence base for third pitch questionable?

There is an explanation in CP13 of why a third pitch could be potentially necessary, though as the Gloucestershire GTAA 2017 states on Figure 21, Page 37, there was “*no contact possible*” with the existing Castle Dream residents to ascertain what the real need was. Have Borough Planners undertaken such contact as due diligence would suggest? If not, why not?

2 Will the three pitch yard be subject to the existing temporary conditioned personal permission, so important in protecting the AONB?

For information, a brief summary follows of the 5 Conditions protecting the AONB, shown in full in the Decision Notice for the latest application 17/00129/FUL for an extension for the temporary permission at Castle Dream Stud.

1 The occupation of the site shall be only by Mrs Cox and any dependant relatives.

When they cease to occupy the land the permission will cease and the land will be returned to its original condition.

- 2 No more than 2 caravans, one touring, one static, on site at any one time (NB Check this number – believed to have been changed)
- 3 The stable buildings and associated land shall only be used for agricultural and non-commercial equine purposes . . .
- 4 Only one commercial vehicle not exceeding 7.5 tonnes to be kept on the land
- 5 Prior to erecting a day room, plans to be submitted to the LPA.

These conditions are extremely helpful by

- insuring that the Borough can monitor and have some control
- over who is there, how many caravans, what activities can be pursued;
- that, in the event of the gypsies giving up the site, the special strip of the Cotswolds AONB now occupied by the Yard will be returned to its original condition - pleasing to Council Members who steadfastly abide by the obligations placed on them by the CRoW Act 2000 to conserve and enhance the Cotswolds AONB.

3 Will the three pitch yard be given permanent conditioned personal permission?

From CP13.5 it appears this may be the case as “*the previous planning status of the site*” is described as “*only a temporary permission*”.

- The conditions above will apply in the same way except that
- as the site is permanent, the AONB may never be restored.
- The site’s becoming permanent will be an undeserved financial gain to the gypsy family for taking over the site in an unauthorised way

4 Will the three pitch site be given permanent permission but without the personal condition?

This in my view would be the worst of all worlds.

- It would overturn the Inspector’s decision in 2011
- It would open this private site to being sold and becoming public
- It would open the site to general gypsy traffic difficult for the Borough to monitor
- It could be heading towards the requirement for all the services and trappings of a municipal site, however inappropriate in the AONB. Has Cheltenham costed for this?

Conclusion

I am concerned that Cheltenham’s planning choices for GT1 need to be the best possible for protecting the AONB as well as meeting genuine gypsy needs. I would hope that this can be conveyed in the text of GT1 even at the expense of a minor modification.

Yours sincerely

Alice Ross

