

## Appendix 1

### Relocation of Lewisham Travellers' site: An assessment of the health impact of two site options

May 2007

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# 1. Executive summary

- 1.1 This rapid appraisal is prepared in response to London Borough (LB) of Lewisham's invitation to BCA to undertake a Health Impact Assessment (HIA), or a health and wellbeing-focussed option appraisal, of the relocation of the Traveller community from Thurston Road. In line with current best practice in HIA we provide suggestions about ways to manage the public health effects of the relocation.
- 1.2 The Thurston Road site was established in 1974 and is home to four generations ranging from young children to frail elderly. The site will be demolished as part of the Lewisham Gateway Development. LB Lewisham are required to find a new site for the Travellers living at Thurston Road.
- 1.3 CB Richard Ellis evaluated sites within LB Lewisham and identified potential sites. LB Lewisham are focussing on Laurence Hill Lorry Park and Church Grove.
- 1.4 The appraisal considers the potential effect on the health and well being of the Travellers of relocating to these sites. The potential effects on neighbours in the settled community was not considered explicitly although throughout the consultation the Travellers expressed concern at the reception they would face at each site.
- 1.5 We look at the policy context for the provision of sites for Traveller and Gypsy communities.
- 1.6 We provide results of a brief literature review of Traveller Health. We show how Travellers experience worse health than their non-Traveller counterparts including most other ethnic minorities and socially marginalised and excluded groups.
- 1.7 We provide results of interviews and discussions with Travellers from Thurston Road and service providers in Lewisham.
- 1.8 These strands of information are used in the appraisal of the two sites.
- 1.9 We conclude that the Church Grove site has greater potential for overall beneficial impact on health and well being than the Laurence House Lorry Park option.
- 1.10 The Church Grove site however is not, as it stands, ideal. The single means of access to the site via Church Grove is problematic. Issues include the ability to move caravans/trailers and day-to-day access to the site. The Travellers are also concerned about acceptance by (and animosity from) neighbours and the risk of flooding from the bordering river.
  - We suggest that further work is undertaken to establish a second point of access to the site and that the river management activities be conveyed to the Travellers.
- 1.11 Difficulties in maintaining continued access to well established current resources including school, church, shops and primary care facilities make the Laurence House Lorry Park option a poor choice from a health and well being perspective. This, is compounded by a lack of privacy, potential air and noise pollution resulting from close proximity to major roads, and security and safety concerns (both day to day risks of intimidation / vandalism / crime, and the short term nature of the tenure). Relocation to the Lorry Park is likely to impact negatively on the health and well being of the Travellers.
- 1.12 It is suggested that monitoring of the health and well being effects of site relocation is undertaken. This will require establishing a baseline (pre-move) and then ongoing monitoring of health and well being. We consider some of the measures that might be collected.
- 1.13 The Commission for Racial Equality suggest that local authorities have Senior Officer and Council Champions for Travellers and that local authorities develop a holistic corporate vision for all work on Gypsies and Irish Travellers. This should be anchored within the Community Strategy, the Local Development Framework and any other relevant strategy, including the race equality scheme.
  - We suggest that a senior named officer be identified as responsible for the holistic corporate vision and for all related work on Travellers. It is also suggested that championing the cause of Travellers becomes an explicit portfolio lead for a Cabinet member.



## 2. Introduction

- 2.1 This document is prepared in response to London Borough (LB) of Lewisham's invitation to BCA to undertake a health impact assessment, or a health and wellbeing-focussed option appraisal of the relocation of the Traveller community from Thurston Road.
- 2.2 The focus of the appraisal is the potential effect on the health and well being of the Travellers of relocating to the sites. The potential effects on neighbours in the settled community was not considered explicitly although throughout the consultation the Travellers expressed concern at the reception they would face at each site.
- 2.3 The relocation of the Travellers from Thurston Road is an important decision with implications for a range of key stakeholders.
- The well being of the Travellers at the Thurston Road site is the primary focus of this appraisal.
  - Lewisham Borough Council has a range of statutory obligations to be met in relation to the housing needs of the Travellers. We consider some of these below.
  - The relocation has a considerable impact on the population of the Borough as a whole. The clearance of the Thurston Road site is central to the Lewisham Gateway redevelopment. The Council will incur financial penalties if vacant possession has not been provided by the time that the developer would otherwise be in a position to proceed with construction.
- 2.4 The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) report that
- "Gypsies and Irish Travellers have the poorest life chances of any ethnic group today: life expectancy for men and women is ten years lower than the national average; Gypsy and Irish Traveller mothers are 20 times more likely than mothers in the rest of the population to have experienced the death of a child; and, in 2003, less than a quarter of Gypsy children achieved five GCSEs at A\*-C grades, compared to a national average of just over half"<sup>1</sup>.
- 2.5 Despite recognition as a minority group under the Race Relations Act (1976) Travellers often face discrimination from statutory services. In 2002 Niner<sup>2</sup> reported that roughly 70% of Traveller sites were in marginal space, nearly 50% being near busy roads / motorways.
- 2.6 The report considers the national, regional and local context for the site relocation. The background to the Thurston Road Traveller site is outlined in section 4 before we describe the methodology used in the appraisal (section 5). The key health determinants are scoped in section 6 before the findings of the site appraisals are summarised from a health and well being perspective (section 7). A range of issues has been identified through the appraisal work and these are reflected on in section 8. The report concludes with final remarks in section 9.

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<sup>1</sup> Commission for Racial Equality. Common Ground: Equality, good race relations and sites for Gypsies and Irish Travellers. 2006. Commission for Racial Equality. Available at: [www.cre.gov.uk/downloads/commonground\\_report.pdf](http://www.cre.gov.uk/downloads/commonground_report.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Niner, P. The Provision and condition of Local Authority Gypsy and Traveller sites in England. 2002. University of Birmingham.



## 3. Context

### National

- 3.1 Part 6 of the *Housing Act 2004* contains several provisions designed to mainstream the provision of accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers alongside that of the settled community. The measures relating to Gypsies and Travellers include the requirement for local authorities to undertake regular assessments of the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers - as they do for the rest of the community - under the Local Housing Needs Assessment process. Local authorities are also required to develop strategies to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers, as they do for the rest of the community, in line with Section 87 of the Local Government Act 2003, and to take any such strategy into account when they are exercising their other functions, such as planning, education and social care. Ministers expect all local housing authorities to have completed a Gypsy and Traveller accommodation assessment by the end of 2007.<sup>3</sup>
- 3.2 The *Race Relations Act Amendment (2000)* places a legal duty on public authorities to promote race equality and good race relations. Under the Race Relations Act, it is unlawful to discriminate against anyone on grounds of race, colour, nationality (including citizenship), or ethnic or national origin. Gypsies and Irish Travellers have been recognised by the courts to be two distinct ethnic groups, so have the full protection of the Race Relations Act.
- 3.3 Tackling health inequalities is a top priority for the Government and current health policy emphasises the need to reduce inequalities in health and target socially excluded groups.
- 3.4 The *Children Act 2004* provides the legislative foundation for whole-system reform to improve the lives of children, young people and their families. *Every Child Matters: Change for Children*<sup>4</sup> sets out the national framework for local change programmes that aim to "make a step-change in the quality, accessibility and coherence of services so that every child and young person is able to fulfil their full potential and those facing particular obstacles are supported to overcome them".
- 3.5 Every Child Matters reports that  
  
Children and young people have told us that five outcomes are key to well-being in childhood and later life – being healthy; staying safe; enjoying and achieving; making a positive contribution; and achieving economic well-being. (Point 1.1)

### Regional

- 3.6 The *London Plan*, published in February 2004, includes policy 3A.11, which requires boroughs to protect existing caravan sites, to set out criteria for identifying the suitability of new sites and to identify new sites where shortfalls occur. In the light of Circular 01/2006, the Further Alterations amends this policy to relate to the identification of shortfalls in provision, with the supporting text expanded to set criteria for site identification and to refer to the London assessment which had been commissioned. New targets for provision of sites at borough level will be introduced through the Mayor's Housing Strategy, which will be subject to public consultation<sup>5</sup>
- 3.7 The *State of London's Children*<sup>6</sup> notes that London's children are unique in terms of their diversity and in terms of the inequalities, challenges and issues that they, their families and

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<sup>3</sup> Guidance on assessments can be found on the [Communities and Local Government](#) website).

<sup>4</sup> HM Government. Every Child Matters Change for Children. 2004. Department for Education and Skills Available from: [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/publications/](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/publications/)

<sup>5</sup> GLA. Provision of accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers. Briefing note for EIP Panel: BN3. April 2007 See [http://www.london.gov.uk/london-plan-eip/docs/briefings/gypsies\\_and\\_travellers.rtf](http://www.london.gov.uk/london-plan-eip/docs/briefings/gypsies_and_travellers.rtf)

<sup>6</sup> Mayor of London. The State of London's Children Report. December 2004. Greater London Authority. Available from: [www.london.gov.uk](http://www.london.gov.uk)



communities face. Published in December 2004, the report identifies (page 48) the key issues affecting Gypsy and Traveller children to include a lack of site provision, a lack of basic amenities, sites on polluted and hazardous areas, and a range of inequalities in health and in education. London Gypsy and Traveller children achieve less well at Key Stages 1, 2 and 3.

## Local

- 3.8 The Thurston Road site will be demolished as part of the Lewisham Gateway Development. LB Lewisham are required to find a new site for the Travellers living at Thurston Road. A recent study for LB Lewisham by CB Richard Ellis<sup>7</sup> evaluated sites within LB Lewisham and identified three potential sites as suitable for consideration. The criteria used for short listing of sites were:
- *Capacity* -sites which are large enough to accommodate eight pitches as a minimum (i.e. sites above 1,800sq.m).
  - *Suitability* -sites that are located within easy travelling distance of the town centre. In addition sites that are deliverable from a town planning perspective and are considered to have a suitable surrounding environment for the envisaged use.
  - *Availability* -sites that can be assembled and prepared ready for occupation by the end of 2007. It is understood that sites need to be clear, level, serviced and secure to enable fixed mobile homes to be located.
- 3.9 The short listed sites are
- Laurence House Lorry Park, Catford;
  - Church Grove Lewisham, the site of the former Watergate School; and
  - Beechmont Close.
- 3.10 CB Richard Ellis identify the Laurence House Lorry Park as the preferred option. Church Grove and Beechmont Close were identified as reserve sites.
- 3.11 At The Lewisham Mayor and Cabinet meeting of 18<sup>th</sup> April 2007 it was agreed that consultation with Travellers and local residents should commence on the use of Laurence House Lorry Park site or the Church Grove site as being the preferred replacement site for Thurston Road.
- 3.12 Furthermore, Officers were instructed to undertake further work on the potential site layouts, planning requirements and potential costs of each site.
- 3.13 The Mayor and Cabinet will consider a further report on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2007 on the outcome of the consultation process.

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<sup>7</sup> CB Richard Ellis. Travellers Site Search Option Evaluation. March 2007. London Borough of Lewisham. (Appendix 2 of Relocation of Travellers' Site). Available at: [www.lewisham.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/D2E2FD4B-6165-40E9-9F0C-8760360B2399/0/Item8appendix218April2007.pdf](http://www.lewisham.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/D2E2FD4B-6165-40E9-9F0C-8760360B2399/0/Item8appendix218April2007.pdf)



## 4. Background

- 4.1 The Traveller site was established in Thurston Road in Lewisham Town Centre in 1974. It was designed to be home to 16 tenants / families, in four blocks of four.
- 4.2 The site is on land close to the main railway track. The site is visible from the railway line and the platform. The block of four pitches closest to the railway had to be closed as bricks, cans etc were being thrown onto the site from the railway platform.
- 4.3 Seven of the available sixteen pitches were licensed as at March 2007. Of these seven pitches, three are occupied by older women and four by younger families. Six school-aged children live on the site.
- 4.4 Four generations live on site ranging from young children to frail elderly and the Travellers' community has a wide range of health and well being needs.
- 4.5 The Travellers see themselves as a well established part of the local community. This is supported by specialist service providers who emphasise the positive connections with the Thurston Road Travellers, the benefits of the trust that has been established and the Travellers' resulting feelings of safety / security. Well established relationships with the Travellers include:
  - Lewisham Bridge School has been school to Traveller children since the site was opened. The Primary School age children on site are well established at the school and the parents are happy to approach the school directly. The attendance records of the children at school is good. Travellers and education professionals consider it would be advantageous if this could continue.
  - The Traveller community frequently attends mass at St. Saviours Catholic Church (Lewisham High Street). Funerals and baptisms for the Travellers have been held at St. Saviours over many years. Priests from St. Saviours visit the Thurston Road site once a week to see the great-grandmother who is unable to attend mass. The Travellers were referred to as being a family "full of faith".
  - Established relationships with the local GP and with Health Visitor services have meant that the Travellers have felt able to access services when needed, and for them to accept services offered, particularly those provided to the under 5's by Health Visitors.
- 4.6 The Urban Renaissance Lewisham (URL) programme includes the Lewisham Gateway Development plans. The need to relocate the Travellers from Thurston Road has been common knowledge since Spring 2004. Specialist service providers to the Travellers site are commonly greeted with the request for "any news on the site?"
- 4.7 The Travellers are not the only Lewisham Council tenants to be affected by the Development plans. However, unlike the Travellers, the housing needs of other tenants have been addressed and they have moved in to their new homes.
- 4.8 LB Lewisham have worked to relocate the Travellers. Plans for relocation to part of the Ladywell Day Centre site were developed. Travellers commented that they had devoted considerable time to the design of this site and had had high hopes that relocation would proceed. Subsequent communication as to why this option was not possible was not felt to be good.
- 4.9 Consultation on relocation of the site to Laurence House Lorry Park or the Church Grove site is being undertaken during May 2007 with prospective site neighbours, in parallel with this appraisal.



## 5. Methodology

- 5.1 Our approach draws from Health Impact Assessment (HIA) methods. The International Association of Impact Assessment defines HIA as
- ... a combination of procedures, methods and tools that systematically judges the potential, and sometimes unintended, effects of a policy, programme or project on both the health of a population and the distribution of those effects within the population. HIA identifies appropriate actions to manage those effects.<sup>8</sup>
- 5.2 We have tailored the assessment method to address the needs of this option appraisal. Our analysis is qualitative.
- The first phase of this rapid assessment was scoping. We conducted a brief literature review of studies of Traveller health to establish the key health determinants. We developed a framework to guide the analysis (see Table 3). These general research findings were 'localised' taking into account the current Traveller community at Thurston Road and drawing on local information sources.
  - The second phase of the project involved visits to the potential sites with representatives of the Travellers. Sue Forrest of Novas brokered the site visits. Novas are the Housing/Supporting People Service Provider to the Travellers. We conducted interviewed key stakeholders (see Table 1).
  - The framework provided the consultant with a prompt for discussions rather than a rigid checklist / series of questions. The framework was refined through the consultation and discussion.
  - The draft report was shared with key contributors to the research work. This enabled verification of findings and resulted in subsequent exploration of key issues. The report has been refined to reflect these second round dialogues.
- 5.3 The brief for this work was agreed on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2007. The desk based research, all fieldwork and report writing were undertaken during May and the final report was delivered on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2007.

**Table 1: Project consultees**

Name	Role	Organisation
Brenda Downes	Travellers Outreach Worker	Lewisham Irish Community Centre
Glenda Bogdanois	Play Bus Service leader	LB Lewisham
Hilary Dowber*	Co-ordinator Lewisham Traveller Education Service	LB Lewisham
Katrina McCormick*	Assistant Director of Public Health	Lewisham PCT
Mary**	Traveller 'representative'	Thurston Road Travellers site
Michele Lawrence*	Officer	LB Lewisham
Father Sean O'Connor	Chaplain	St Saviour's Catholic Church Lewisham
Sue Forrest*	Service Manager	Novas

\*Reviewed draft report

\*\* Discussed report findings

### Time constraints and the limitations of this appraisal

- 5.4 The time constraints for this assignment have limited the extent of stakeholder engagement. A more comprehensive assessment would include community (Traveller) engagement at a number of stages and could work to a Steering Group including representatives of the Travellers and the statutory and voluntary sectors. The rapid nature

<sup>8</sup> R. Quigley, L. den Broeder, P. Furu, A. Bond, B. Cave, and R. Bos. Health impact assessment. International best practice principles. Special publication series No. 5, 2006. See [www.iaia.org](http://www.iaia.org)



of this project has limited the extent to which Travellers can be engaged to identify their perspective of health issues.

- 5.5 Closer working with the public consultation work would allow for explicit consideration of the health impacts of the site options on neighbouring settled populations and key stakeholders groups such as local businesses.



## 6. Identifying key health determinants

### Traveller health: research findings

- 6.1 There are a number of small studies looking at the health status of Gypsies and Travellers. These studies tend to identify high levels of inequality between Gypsy and Traveller communities and the settled community: for example: high infant mortality and perinatal death rates, low birth weight, low immunisation uptake and high child accident rates.
- The 1987 national study of Travellers' health status in Ireland<sup>9</sup> reported a high death rate for all causes and lower life expectancy for Irish Travellers: women 11.9 years and men 9.9 years lower than the non-Traveller population.
  - The report of the *Confidential Enquiries into Maternal Deaths in the UK* (1997-1999) found that Gypsies and Travellers have "possibly the highest maternal death rate among all ethnic groups".
  - Poor access to health care services is cited by a number of commentators as a factor in poor health outcomes. Anecdotal evidence suggests that Travellers face discrimination in access to health care<sup>10</sup>, this can arise as a result of NHS staff prejudice<sup>11</sup>.
  - Gypsies and Travellers frequently have difficulties in registering with a GP, due to rejection by GP practices<sup>12</sup>, Gypsies and Travellers' lack of information, or enforced mobility<sup>13</sup>. Registration is frequently on a temporary basis, undermining holistic, preventative and continuous care<sup>14</sup>.
  - Accounts from Health Practitioners cite a range of health issues "that are attributed partly to adverse environmental conditions: accidents, gastro-enteritis, upper respiratory infections and otitis media"<sup>15</sup>.
- 6.2 Table 2 shows results from a review conducted by the South West Public Health Observatory on the health status of Travellers. It shows a range of areas where Travellers have worse health than the lowest UK socioeconomic groups. There are some factors where Travellers' health was found to be better than the settled population.

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<sup>9</sup> Barry, J., Herity, B., Solan, J. The Travellers' health status study, vital statistics of travelling people, 1987. Dublin: Health Research Board.

<sup>10</sup> Lynch, E. Travellers' tales. Nursing Standard June 21 vol 20 no 41 2006

<sup>11</sup> Bowers, J. Travellers' Tales. Health Service Journal 16 December 2004

<sup>12</sup> Feder, G. Traveller Gypsies and Primary Health Care in East London. 1994. London: PhD Thesis, University of London.

<sup>13</sup> Webster, L. A report for the Children's Society on the impact of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act on the lives of Travellers and their children. 1995

<sup>14</sup> Select Committee on Office of the Deputy Prime Minister: Housing, Planning, Local Government and the Regions. Supplementary memorandum by the Traveller Law Reform Coalition (TLRC) (GTS 12(b)) Women, Children and Families and Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation)

<sup>15</sup> Parry, G., Van Cleemput, P., Peters, J., Walters, S., Thomas, K., Cooper, C. Health status of Gypsies and Travellers in England. Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health 2007; **61**: 198-204



**Table 2: SWPHO review of health status of Travellers**

Poor Health Status	Good Health Status
Increased perinatal mortality	Increased rates of breastfeeding
Low birthweight	Good maternal diet
Diarrhoea and giardia	Children generally have good diets – not fruit
Lead poisoning	Less wheeze reported in children (Kearney and Kearney 1999)
Increased Hepatitis A and B	Generally well – health scores similar to static population
Increased infectious disease	Good informal networks for advice and information
* Decreased immunisation rates	Less pain and discomfort reported than the average population
Increased alcohol usage	
* Increased accidents	
Increased domestic violence	
* Increased smoking	
* Increased heart disease	
* Decreased life expectancy – up to 10 years	
Increased genetic conditions	
* Lack of access to cervical screening	
* Lack of eyesight tests	
* Increased dental problems	
* Increased mortality due to all causes	
Worse than general population especially on nerves, and mobility	

\* Evidence based

Source: Collation of data from South West Public Health Observatory 2002 <sup>16</sup>

- 6.3 There are some difficulties with the data. Many of the studies are small and so may not have results that can be extrapolated to the tenants at Thurston Road. The studies also look at Traveller Gypsy communities in situations different to the Thurston Road site *eg* rural and on occasion highly mobile. That said the results strongly indicate extreme health and other social inequalities for Traveller communities.
- 6.4 In 2004 a team of health services researchers from the University of Sheffield undertook a large scale epidemiological study to explore health experiences, beliefs and attitudes of Gypsy Travellers. The study found that
- ... significant health inequalities exist between the Gypsy and Traveller population in England and their non-Gypsy counterparts, even when compared with other socially deprived or excluded groups, and with other ethnic minorities.<sup>15</sup>
- 6.5 This is the largest of the studies and so is important for considering the processes affecting the health and wellbeing of people at Thurston Road and likely effects of relocation. We provide some of the key findings below.
- Gypsy Travellers have significantly poorer health status and significantly more self-reported symptoms of ill-health than other UK-resident, English speaking ethnic minorities and economically disadvantaged white UK residents.
  - Self reported chest pain, respiratory problems, and arthritis were more prevalent in the Traveller group
  - For Gypsy Travellers, living in a house is associated with long term illness, poorer health state and anxiety. There is a strong relationship between travelling patterns and health. Those who rarely travel have the poorest health. The study is unable to say in which direction this relation goes: *ie* whether Gypsy Travellers with poor health are more likely to settle, or whether Gypsy Travellers' health deteriorates once they settle.

<sup>16</sup> Devon Health Forum. Travellers Wellbeing Multi Agency Approaches to Address Issues for Travellers. 2003.



- The scale of health inequality between the Gypsy Traveller (study) population and the UK general population is large, with reported health problems between two and five times more prevalent.
  - The aspects of Gypsy Traveller health that show the most marked inequality are self-reported anxiety, respiratory problems including asthma and bronchitis, and chest pain. The excess prevalence of miscarriages, stillbirths, neonatal deaths and premature death of older offspring was also conspicuous. There was less inequality observed in diabetes, stroke and cancer.
  - Accommodation was the overriding factor, mentioned by every respondent, in the context of health effects. Issues include security of tenure, access to services and ability to register with a GP, support and security of being close to extended family, a non-hazardous environment and the notion of freedom for the children.
  - The ability to choose their style of living is of fundamental importance and crucial to the sense of independence and autonomy of Gypsy Travellers. The lack of choice or the intolerable conditions, mentioned by the majority of respondents, are an indication to them of the negative way in which they are viewed by the non-Traveller society. It is this feeling of injustice and persecution that is often forcibly expressed as much as concern about the adverse effects of the conditions *per se*.<sup>15</sup>
- 6.6 The last three bullet points would appear to be of particular relevance when considering the potential health effects of relocation: notably increased rates of self-reported anxiety, the overriding importance of accommodation and the factors associated with accommodation and the ability to choose their way of life..
- 6.7 The limited time available mean that detailed enquiries into the health of the current site licensees was not possible. The small number of people involved mean that detailed reporting of health status would not be appropriate. The Traveller community at Thurston Road spans four generations and its people range in age from five to ninety one. It is clear from this brief appraisal that the tenants at Thurston Road have a wide range of health needs and that relocation to a site which compromises feelings of safety and existing access to services, to friends and family and other social networks could have serious adverse effects.
- 6.8 The framework of health determinants in Table 3 below draws on these research findings, government guidance and local work. It also draws on evidence from national and international research<sup>17</sup>
- 6.9 This framework was used to inform and record discussion during site visits and interviews. It guided the collection of respondents' views.

**Table 3: The framework of health determinants**

Health Determinants key area	Health determinants to consider	Potential pathway
<b>Access to local resources</b>	Absolute:	To local resources (education, work, shops, healthcare and social networks)
	Continuity:	Does the site permit continued access to same school, GP etc
	Mode:	Is it possible by public transport
<b>Environment</b>	Therapeutic quality	Green and pleasant or grey and grim? - Impact on psychological wellbeing Space for pets?
	Aspect	Views and <b>sunshine</b> add to sense of well-being. Being at the end of a ' <b>wind</b> tunnel' effect will not be conducive to good psychological well being. Being overseen by large buildings may be stressful through lack of sense of <b>privacy</b> .

<sup>17</sup> R. G. Wilkinson and M. Marmot. *Social determinants of health: the solid facts*, Denmark:World Health Organization, 2003.



<b>Health Determinants key area</b>	<b>Health determinants to consider</b>	<b>Potential pathway</b>
	Flood risk	Height above sea level, proximity to natural (rivers) and man made (sewerage system) water sources.
	Enabling exercise	Green space for play / exercise
	Enabling food production	Scope for growing vegetables / keeping chickens
<b>Income</b>	Employment opportunities	Access to local employment / transport to opportunities, and/or potential for running a business on the site
	Benefits	Continuity issues if relocation means new links need to be developed with new benefits offices.
<b>Facilities</b>	Number of pitches	Ideally scope for guest pitches / additional family members
	Size of pitches	Including proximity of shower / toilet huts. Overcrowding issue.
	Level pitches	
	Utilities (water, electricity, gas, sewerage)	Planning input will be required to establish the feasibility of providing basic utilities.
<b>Pollution</b>	Noise levels	The site visits will provide an impression of levels.
	Air pollution	Environmental Health Officers will need to be commissioned to establish actual levels over a 24 hour period.
	Ground contamination	The site visits and consideration of previous land use will provide an impression of levels. Environmental Health Officers will need to be commissioned to establish actual levels
<b>Safety</b>	Internal to the site	Accidents and injures in general
	Risks in immediate vicinity	In particular Road Traffic related
<b>Security</b>	Day to day	Impact on stress and mental wellbeing / sense of security arising from actual or perceived risk of vandalism, abuse (verbal and/or physical) and threatening behaviour.
	Length of tenure	Impact on stress and mental wellbeing / sense of security



## 7. Appraisal of the site relocation options

- 7.1 The key areas of the framework of health determinants (set out above) structure the appraisal feedback.
- 7.2 The income key area is not considered in detail as was seen by stakeholders as being equal across the two relocation options.
- 7.3 Both the options are currently level ground and would require site facilities to be designed. As such the facilities key area is also omitted from the appraisal summary.
- 7.4 The appraisal is summarised for the Church Grove option in Table 4 starting on page 13 and for the Laurence House Lorry Park option in Table 5 starting on page 15.
- 7.5 Option 0 is to *do nothing*, that is for the Travellers to remain at Thurston Road. Financial penalties will be incurred by LB Lewisham if the Thurston road site is not released to facilitate the start of construction, scheduled for May 2008. The Traveller Community agrees that the site at Thurston Road is no longer fit for purpose. There is no issue with moving from Thurston Road. Questions relate to the location of the new site.
- 7.6 Option 0 – do nothing is not feasible and so it has not been appraised. However, the appraisal of the two relocation options uses Thurston Road as a comparator.
- 7.7 Table 4 and Table 5 provide a commentary looking at the pathways by which health and well being may be affected by the relocation.
- 7.8 In addition to the commentary an assessment of the potential of the relocation site to impact on health and well being is made, relative to the Thurston Road site. The *at a glance indicator* key is as follows:
  - > better (greater potential beneficial impact on health and well being) than Thurston Road site
  - ~ similar (potential impact) to the Thurston Road site
  - < worse (potential adverse impact on health and well being) than the Thurston Road site.
- 7.9 The use of multiple symbols makes clear that some elements of the appraisal were held by stakeholders to be of greater (or lesser) importance. It does not imply a doubling or trebling of the potential effect.
- 7.10 The appraisal tables are descriptive, reflecting the uncertainties inherent in impact assessment and the time constraints for this project.
- 7.11 The appraisal indicates that the Church Grove option provides greater opportunity for maintaining and improving the health and well being of the Travellers.



**Table 4: Church Grove option**

Health Determinant key area	Commentary	At a glance indicator
<b>Access</b>	<p>Continuity in access is maintained: trusted services (local shops, school, church, GP services) remain within a reasonable walking distance. Given the importance of an understanding and trusting relationship between the Travellers and specialist services, and recognising that such relationships take considerable time and effort to develop and maintain, this determinant was valued highly by both service providers and the Travellers. In our appraisal it became clear that a very important element of access to services was the continuity of access to established and trusted services. The importance of these relationships is reflected in the 'at a glance' indicator.</p> <p>The Church Grove site is well located for access to bus and rail public transport services</p> <p>There are public playing fields adjacent to Ladywell Railway station. These are a few hundred yards from Church Grove, across Ladywell Road. The close proximity of this facility provides easy access to space for exercise and general de-stressing. The 'at a glance' indicator reflects that whilst this is important from a health and well being perspective, the Travellers themselves did not mention it.</p> <p>There is at present a single point of access to the site. This is a concern in terms of caravan / trailer access. The current access via Church Grove places a question mark over the ability of the Play Bus to visit the site; the Play Bus has provided a facility for Traveller and neighbouring children for thirty years and enables positive promotion of lifestyles and builds bridges between Traveller and settled communities. The Travellers were also concerned that if local residents were hostile/unwelcoming this would be faced on a daily basis as a result of a shared approach way (Church Grove). The single point of access to the site is additionally of concern to the Travellers in terms of emergency exits in the event of fire or flooding.</p> <p>Our site visit suggests empty properties between the Watergate School site and Wearside Road. If these were to become an extension to the site and facilitate a new primary site entrance this would go a long way toward resolving access related concerns from both the Traveller and local resident perspectives. It might also be possible to establish pedestrian access through neighbouring properties for emergency access.</p>	<p>&gt;&gt;&gt;</p> <p>2</p> <p>&gt;</p> <p>&lt;&lt;</p>
<b>Environment</b>	<p>On the basis of our site visit, the immediate neighbourhood is visibly appealing with well kept housing to the South and East. There is a wide range of local shops within easy walking distance on Ladywell Road.</p> <p>The River Ravensbourne forms a natural boundary to the site (western and northern sides). Recent work has minimised the risk of flooding to the site.</p> <p>During the visit to Church Grove there was obvious Traveller anxiety at the prospect of being close to the River and the fear of being unable to escape in the event of flooding. The concerns voiced by the Travellers in relation to flood risk will need to be recognised and managed. The anxiety, if not well managed will have a negative impact on psychological well being.</p>	<p>&gt;</p> <p>&lt;</p>



Health Determinant key area	Commentary	At a glance indicator
<b>Pollution</b>	<p>Relative to the Thurston Road site the Church Grove site is remote from traffic pollution (noise and air). Further measurements would be required to establish absolute levels, though as noted these are almost certainly low relative to current site and would pose negligible risk to health.</p> <p>The site was previously used as a school. This suggests that land contamination is unlikely to be a problem. A full Environmental Health report would be required to verify this.</p> <p>There is the possibility of air pollution arising from activity at the nearby industrial units, though none was noted during the course of our visit. This would need to be verified by appropriate measurement at the site.</p>	<p>&gt;&gt;</p> <p>~</p>
<b>Safety</b>	<p>The approach road appears to be quiet with no through traffic. This reduces the likelihood of road traffic accidents in the immediate vicinity of the site. The site will need to be cleared and a Traveller site designed and built. This provides scope to design in safe play area as an integral part of the site. The safety of the children is of particular concern to Travellers and other key stakeholders; this is reflected in the 'at a glance' indicator.</p>	<p>&gt;&gt;</p>
<b>Security</b>	<p>The relatively secluded location of site would mean minimal scope for spur-of-the-moment, casual intimidation / vandalism. A minor negative is that it reduces passive surveillance. The railway line to the northwest is sufficiently far away for the site to retain its privacy. The orientation of neighbouring residential housing is such that the site is largely shielded from view. The main area where the Travellers privacy might be compromised would relate to the industrial units to the north of the site and the railway line. Preservation of tree cover and careful design of the site should be sufficient to maintain the privacy of the site. The threat of vandalism is of particular concern to the Travellers, reflecting experiences at the Thurston Road site.</p> <p>The consultants are not aware of any threat to a long-term tenancy. Nor are we aware of any planned building developments in the vicinity.</p> <p>As introduced in the commentary above (see <i>Access</i>) the Travellers are concerned that they may face hostility from unwelcoming neighbours in Church Grove. The recent consultation with those residents will help in gauging the strength of opinion. This aspect of the site is potentially a daily source of anxiety for the Travellers and will need to be managed sensitively.</p>	<p>&gt;&gt;</p> <p>&gt;</p> <p>&lt;&lt;</p>



**Table 5: Laurence House Lorry Park option**

Health Determinant key area	Commentary	At a glance indicator
<b>Access</b>	<p>The town centre location of Catford affords access to a wide range of services. However, the distance from Catford Town Centre to the established services currently accessed by the Travellers, Lewisham Bridge School and Saint Saviours Church in particular, leaves the Travellers facing significant time and cost (bus fares) pressures to maintain their existing links in Lewisham. A very important element of access to services is the continuity of access to established and trusted services. The impact of the loss of continuity to services that would arise from relocating to this site is reflected in the 'at a glance' indicator</p> <p>The Laurence House Lorry park site is well located for access to bus and rail public transport services</p> <p>The Private Bank Sports Ground, Canadian Avenue, London, SE6 is opposite the entrance to the Lorry Park. This would enable a degree of access to open space and support informal sports activities. The regular use of the facility by PowerLeague for organised sports games will restrict access and make the space largely out of bounds to dog use.</p> <p>There is at present a single formal point of access (driveway) to the site. Given the nature of the boundaries to the site (Laurence House Offices and Car Park to the north, Bromley Road to the east, residential property to the south) it is difficult to visualise an appropriate additional formal entrance that includes vehicular access.</p> <p>The Lorry Park is currently used as a cut through for commuters leaving (or joining) buses on Bromley Road. Alternative use of the Lorry Park would clearly impact on this informal pathway.</p>	<p>&lt;&lt;&lt;</p> <p>2</p> <p>^</p> <p>^</p> <p>^</p>
<b>Environment</b>	<p>The Lorry Park location is similar to that of Thurston Road. The views are predominantly of a grey built environment dominated by busy roads. The Lorry Park has the advantage of a pleasing (green) open space to the west beyond the site entrance albeit largely out of view from the site itself.</p>	<p>2</p>
<b>Pollution</b>	<p>The Thurston Road site is subject to traffic noise and associated air pollution arising from through traffic and the mainly daytime road traffic visits to the retail site (Matalan), plus the railway line almost overhead. Emergency vehicle sirens can be heard frequently throughout the day and night. There is no railway line in the immediate vicinity of Laurence House Lorry Park. However, the A205 and A21 bring volumes of traffic into Catford Town Centre. The A21 Bromley Road is a (wide) pavement's width from the site boundary. The vicinity of the site is busy with road traffic noise and the air is likely to contain pollutants associated with road traffic. Environmental Health checks will be needed to establish the levels of air pollution but these could reasonably be expected to exceed levels at Thurston Road. As a Town Centre hub it can be anticipated that the wail of sirens is similarly round the clock.</p>	<p>^</p>
<b>Safety</b>	<p>The short timeframe for this appraisal is such that land checks have not been undertaken to establish contamination levels arising from previous land use. It is recommended that council officers be instructed to undertake such checks.</p> <p>On two sides the Lorry Park has busy roads nearby. Bromley Road (A21) lies immediately to the East. To the north the Council offices provide a buffer between the site and the A205 Catford Road. Child safety is a particular a concern with the nearby roads giving rise to high risks of road traffic accidents.</p>	<p><b>Not known</b></p> <p>&lt;&lt;</p>



Health Determinant key area	Commentary	At a glance indicator
Security	<p>The day-to-day security / personal safety of the Travellers would appear to be a particular concern with this option. The Lorry Park is in a very public location in the heart of Catford and lack of privacy has been raised as a concern by a number of key stakeholders. The adjoining Council Care Park is in use throughout the day, with peaks in traffic at the start and end of the working day. The vicinity of the Lorry Park is "swamped" with school children at the start and end of the school day. With the lack of privacy comes an increased (perceived) risk of harassment, vandalism and theft. Concerns were also expressed that attempts to reduce these risks through site design could lead to 'ghetto-isation' of the site and reduce scope for integration. The Travellers site search option evaluation report notes, "The limiting factor for the site is the road improvements proposed to the A205 (which Lewisham Council are committed to) are part of wider proposed improvements to Catford Town Centre. However, the Laurence House site is still considered to be good in the short term as it is unlikely that the site will be required to facilitate the strategic objectives of the Catford Town Centre Area Action Plan for a period of no less than 18 months". The Travellers have lived with the uncertainty of site relocation for the last three years. Moving to a temporary site extends the uncertainty still further into the future and thereby increases the likelihood of negative impacts on mental health and well being. Given the uncertainty relating to this site it was questioned by interviewees whether Planning Permission for housing could be obtained for this site. The recently published Draft Guidance on the design of sites for Gypsies &amp; Travellers<sup>18</sup> states that "as a rule of thumb, no sites should be identified for Gypsy and Traveller use that would not be appropriate for ordinary residential dwellings. Where possible, sites should be developed near to housing for the settled community as part of mainstream residential developments."</p> <p>The Travellers have expressed concern regarding the anxiety that would arise from facing hostile neighbours. The recent consultation with residents and business neighbours suggests that the Lorry park option may well give rise to tensions with neighbours..</p>	<<  <<  <

<sup>18</sup> Communities and Local Government. Draft Guidance on the Management of Gypsy and Traveller Sites - A Consultation Paper. May 2007 (point 3.1.6). Department for Communities and Local Government, London. Available from: [www.info4local.gov.uk/documents/consultations/161969](http://www.info4local.gov.uk/documents/consultations/161969)



## 8. Reflections

### Moving towards good practice: the role of a Traveller Champion

- 8.1 The Commission for Racial Equality state that local authorities should have Senior Officer and Council Champions for Travellers<sup>1</sup>. This raises the profile of Traveller issues in general. Traveller champions have been instrumental in proactive bridge building between communities and minimising discrimination against Travellers.
- 8.2 Local Traveller champions would promote integration of services provided to Travellers to both ensure there are no gaps and to reduce duplication of efforts.
- 8.3 It has been pleasing to hear that the Lewisham Travellers Forum has recently been established. The Forum will be strengthened when local Traveller champions and Travellers themselves become members.
- 8.4 A recent DCLG report to Ministers<sup>19</sup> highlighted the importance of a corporate joined up approach to provision for Travellers and noted that "it is important [that] each authority area [has] a senior politician and a senior official identified as having responsibility for, and authority to act on Gypsy and Traveller issues in a corporate capacity".

### Ensuring equality

- 8.5 In June 2004 The Mayor of Lewisham formally agreed to disposal of Council landholdings, including the Travellers site at Thurston Road, within the Lewisham Gateway Scheme.
- 8.6 In relation to the Travellers' site there has been a range of activity since June 2004 towards relocation. However, the substantive outcome of these endeavours is the identification of two potential sites for relocation.
- 8.7 Service providers to the Travellers at Thurston Road have for some time been asked "is there any news on the new site?"
- 8.8 Consultees noted that progress in relocating the Traveller site has been slow compared with the rehousing of other council tenants. The re-provision of 211 mixed-tenure homes on the Sundermead Estate has been undertaken following extensive consultation. Phase I construction began in March 2003 and residents are now enjoying the benefits of their new homes. The close proximity of this estate to Thurston Road prompts comparison and raises the question, why it is taking so long to relocate the Traveller site?

### The value of good communications

- 8.9 Good communications with Travellers have an important role to play in reducing the "feeling of injustice and persecution", noted by Parry et al,<sup>15</sup> "that is often forcibly expressed as much as concern about the adverse effects of the conditions *per se*".
- 8.10 The time constraints of the appraisal work have limited our interaction with the Travellers. However, despite limited time, it has been made clear to us that the Travellers feel that the considerable time and effort they put into the planning of a site for the Ladywell Day Centre location have been unacknowledged - "not so much as a thanks".
- 8.11 It is concerning to hear that the site residents learnt about the closure of Thurston Road from market traders and not from council officers.
- 8.12 Consultation work with Travellers (and other key stakeholders) and the development of designs for prospective sites provide great opportunities for local service providers to build bridges with their Traveller communities.
- 8.13 If these opportunities are grasped they can assist in promoting inclusion through improved understanding of the needs of Travellers as a minority ethnic group amongst service

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<sup>19</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government. Gypsy and Traveller Task Group on Site Provision and Enforcement. Interim report to Ministers. March 2007



providers and settled residents. The engagement processes in themselves can assist in building capacity in the Traveller community.

- 8.14 It is noticeable that the local settled community at each site express concern and fear about Travellers. The Travellers themselves are concerned at eliciting this reaction.

### **Balancing short terms needs and longer term strategic aspirations**

- 8.15 There are at present only four Traveller licensees, plus a possible two former informal licensees on the housing list, to be rehoused. Of the seven tenants at the start of March, one of the elderly women has agreed to move into a new build flat.
- 8.16 The aspiration for LB Lewisham is to retain its current complement of sixteen Traveller pitches. This requirement taken alongside CLG guidance on site size<sup>20</sup> guided the most recent (January 2007) site search<sup>1</sup> that sought to identify two, eight pitch sites. Potential sites with insufficient space for eight or more pitches were excluded from further consideration.
- 8.17 The question arises whether amongst those sites excluded (for being less than eight pitches in size) there are four to six pitch sites that would offer greater positive potential impact on the health and well being of the Travellers urgently requiring alternative homes.
- 8.18 The requirement under the 2004 Housing Act for the local authority to undertake a Housing Needs Assessment for Gypsies and Travellers provides an opportunity to identify requirements over and above the urgent need to relocate the current (four to six) Traveller licensees.
- 8.19 In considering the choice of site the Council will need to balance short term pressures arising from the needs of the current licensees, with the needs of potential future licensees.

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<sup>20</sup> Communities and Local Government. Draft Guidance on the Management of Gypsy and Traveller Sites - A Consultation Paper. May 2007. Department for Communities and Local Government, London. Available from: <http://www.info4local.gov.uk/documents/consultations/161969>



## 9. Conclusion

- 9.1 The Church Grove option suggests greater potential for overall beneficial impact on health and well being, compared with the Laurence House Lorry Park option.
- 9.2 The Church Grove site however is not, as it stands, ideal. The single means of access to the site via Church Grove is problematic. Issues include the ability to move caravans/trailers and day-to-day access to the site. The Travellers are also concerned about acceptance by (and animosity from) neighbours and the risk of flooding from the bordering river.
- We recommend that further work is undertaken to establish a second point of access to the site and that the river management activities be conveyed to the Travellers.
  - Our site visit and subsequent examination of maps of the area suggest that access could be achieved by obtaining disused (boarded up) houses (two) on Wearside Road and clearing the houses. This would both provide alternative more suitable access, and give increased privacy for both Traveller and other local residents. We recommend the council investigates the feasibility of this. This option would also enable continued access to the Traveller site by the highly valued Play Bus service.
- 9.3 Difficulties in maintaining continued access to well established current resources including school, church, shops and primary care facilities make the Laurence House Lorry Park option a poor choice from a health and well being perspective. This, is compounded by a lack of privacy, potential air and noise pollution resulting from close proximity to major roads, and security and safety concerns (both day to day risks of intimidation / vandalism / crime, and the short term nature of the tenure) suggest that the Lorry park is likely to impact negatively on the health and well being of the Travellers.
- 9.4 It is suggested that monitoring of the health and well being effects of site relocation is undertaken. This will require establishment of a baseline (pre move) and then ongoing monitoring of health and well being.
- We recommend that standardised measures are used to evaluate the health and well being impact of the relocation: EuroQol-5D is a generic health status measure, sometimes described as a health-related quality-of-life measure. Additional standardised measures of anxiety and depression (HADS scale), respiratory symptoms (MRC Respiratory Symptom Questionnaire) and chest pain (Rose Angina Scale) are suggested. These were used in the 2004 Study of Gypsy Traveller Health Status<sup>19</sup>.
- 9.5 CRE good practice suggests Senior Officer and Council Champions for Travellers and that local authorities should develop a "holistic corporate vision for all work on Gypsies and Irish Travellers, and anchor it within the community strategy, the local development framework and any other relevant strategy, including the race equality scheme".
- We recommend that a senior named officer be identified as responsible for the holistic corporate vision and for all related work on Travellers. It is also suggested that Championing the cause of Travellers becomes an explicit portfolio lead for a Cabinet member.