

## **Bristol City Council Examination note - Gypsies, Travellers, Travelling Showpeople and Houseboat Dwellers**

This note has been prepared by Bristol City Council as part of the examination of the Bristol Local Plan in response to the Inspectors' document **IN7: Action Points following hearing sessions: Weeks 1 and 2.**

This note addresses the following specific action points required by the Inspectors for the council to provide:

### **Policy H10: Planning for traveller sites**

#### ***Provide details setting out the current position relating to Travelling Showpeople - including the understanding of current needs***

The GTAA 2020 (EVEH04) identified a need for 8 travelling showpeople plots over the assessment period 2020-36. This was assessed as follows:

- 2 plots: As a result of a single group living on an existing plot at Locks Yard, Bedminster having a hidden household and having members who migrated into the area which together formed a separate household.
- 6 plots: As a result of notice being served on a group of circus performers by a private landowner who they were renting land from.

Opinion Research Services (ORS) prepared the council's accommodation assessment and they have advised on current needs relating to travelling showpeople. ORS have advised that the needs identified above have now fallen away for the following reasons:

- The households at Locks Yard, Bedminster are likely to have moved and met their need elsewhere.
- The group of circus performers have now moved to a new yard in South Gloucestershire.

The current assessed need for plots for travelling showpeople in Bristol is therefore nil.

#### ***Draft a main modification to Policy H10 for our consideration which (i) sets out the identified need within introduction to the policy and (ii) add a new criterion relating to how flood risk will be considered.***

A suggested modification to paragraph 6.134 to address point (i) has been added to the Schedule of Suggested Main Modifications. This is shown below:

#### **Policy H10, paragraph 6.134**

The council has commissioned a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment to determine the specific needs for traveller sites. The assessment follows the approach set out in national planning policy and identifies for the period 2020 to 2036 an overall pitch need a total need of 32 pitches for travellers (that meet the planning definition set out in Planning policy for traveller sites - December 2023), and an overall plot need for travelling showpeople for the period 2020 to 2036. The current assessed need for plots for travelling showpeople is nil.

A suggested modification to the policy to address point (ii) has been added to the Schedule of Suggested Main Modifications. This is shown below:

Policy H10, policy text

Proposals for residential pitches for travellers or plots for travelling showpeople should be located and designed in order to:

i. Provide acceptable living conditions for the future occupiers of the site;

...

ix. Minimise the risk and impact of flooding in accordance with Policy FR1

'Flood risk and water management'.

***Provide in table format a breakdown of need, in five-year intervals from 2020 up to 2036 along with potential sources of supply.***

Pitch need for gypsy and traveller households that met the planning definition (set out in Planning policy for traveller sites - December 2023) and likely supply by year periods

Years	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-17	Total
	2020-24	2025-29	2030-34	2035-36	
Need	24	3	4	1	32
Supply	0	7	25	0	32

***Add the 'Bristol Harbour Place Shaping Strategy: Waterspace Plan' to the examination library.***

The document was added to the examination library on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

**Policy H11: Live aboard and leisure moorings**

***Consider how the 'mooring areas' could be identified within the Plan and/or Policies Map and draft suggested modifications for our consideration as appropriate.***

The 'Bristol Harbour Place Shaping Strategy: Waterspace Plan' identifies the current intended locations for new live aboard moorings within the Floating Harbour (Moorings Strategy Overview p.11). As this could be subject to change in the future, it may not be appropriate to specify locations within the plan or on the policies map. Instead, it is suggested that the first criterion of the policy is removed and reference made in the explanatory text to the intended locations as set out in the 'Bristol Harbour Place Shaping Strategy: Waterspace Plan'. This provides flexibility should locations change as part of any revised strategy.

Suggested modifications to the policy and the first paragraph of the explanatory text have been added to the Schedule of Suggested Main Modifications. These are shown below.

***Draft modifications for our consideration which:***

***In relation to the second bullet point, (i) define what a reasonable walking distance would be (within the explanation to the policy) and***

**provide a rationale for the definition. (ii) Provide proposed wording in the explanation as to whether the phrase 'post boxes' refer to mail collection points or delivery points; (iii) Consider whether 'elsan' is the most appropriate phrase, as this may point to the need for provision of different facilities for waste disposal, and propose a change if considered appropriate.**

**In relation to the final bullet point, (i) propose additional wording in the explanation to the policy as to how a decision maker should interpret issues relating to "amenity". (iii) Provide us with an explanation of how 'no adverse impact' will be assessed and propose a change to the policy or explanation wording if considered appropriate.**

**Remove reference to "complying with the Harbour Operational Moorings and Facilities policy" from the policy as it was explained to us this is not a planning requirement. The explanation can retain the existing proposed wording in relation to the Harbour Authority**

**Add a suggested criterion relating to flood risk and flood risk mitigation.**

Suggested modifications to the policy and the explanatory text have been added to the Schedule of Suggested Main Modifications. These are shown below.

#### Policy H11: Live aboard and leisure moorings

The council has identified the potential for additional live aboard and leisure moorings within the Floating Harbour. This policy addresses the needs of houseboat dwellers by setting out the approach to proposals for live aboard and leisure moorings.

#### Policy text

Proposals for live aboard and leisure moorings within the Floating Harbour will be permitted where:

- ~~The proposal is within an identified mooring area; and~~
- Provision is made for electricity and; water points, waste and recycling and elsan toilet waste disposal at the mooring location, showers and toilets or where such provision is within reasonable walking distance; and
- Provision is made, where practicable, for showers and toilets at the mooring location, otherwise such existing facilities are within a reasonable walking distance; and
- Pontoon moorings make appropriate provision for secure access, utility connection points and post boxes; and
- The existing navigation channel remains open and accessible; and
- There are no adverse impacts on the amenity, recreation, heritage, biodiversity and operational functions of the Floating Harbour which cannot be appropriately mitigated.

~~Proposals for live aboard and leisure moorings and associated facilities should have regard to guidance set out in the Bristol Harbour Place Shaping Strategy: Waterspace Plan.~~

~~Proposals should comply with the Harbour Operational Moorings and Facilities policy.~~

Proposals should be supported by a site specific Flood Risk Assessment and will require a comprehensive approach to mitigation to ensure the risk of flooding is appropriately addressed.

#### Explanation

The policy criteria should be implemented having regard to guidance set out in the Bristol Harbour Place Shaping Strategy: Waterspace Plan (including revisions to or replacements of this guidance). This includes ~~locations for potential increase in moorings,~~ guidance on mooring design and facilities and the location of the Floating Harbour navigation channel. The Waterspace Plan also identifies intended locations for new moorings.

A range of facilities should be provided at the mooring location, including electricity and water points, separated refuse facilities, and toilet waste disposal comprising Elsan or other chemical disposal points. Provision should also be made for toilet and shower blocks at or close to the mooring location, or use made of existing facilities within a reasonable walking distance (no more than 800 metres, equivalent to a 10-minute walk). Where pontoon moorings are proposed these should include utility connection points and secure access incorporating visually attractive gates and mail delivery points.

The design and siting of proposals should not result in adverse impacts on the amenity of the Floating Harbour. These include negative visual impacts on the immediate area, negative impacts upon existing residents' living conditions by reason of noise or poor waste management, and obstruction of access to the waterside or public rights of way.

Approval and management of moorings will be subject to the policies of the Harbour Authority, including the Harbour Operational Moorings and Facilities Policy 2025-2030, and any subsequent decisions of the relevant governing committee.