

Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Project - transit site

Well-being Impact Assessment Report


This report summarises the likely impact of the proposal on the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Denbighshire, Wales and the world.

Assessment Number:	619
Brief description:	This impact assessment considers the likely impact over the long term (including acknowledgement of areas where there will be interim or short term impacts) of the proposal to establish a transit site for gypsy and travellers in St Asaph. The proposal design includes 5 pitches that can be occupied for up to 3 months.
Date Completed:	11/03/2019 14:45:54 Version: 2
Completed by:	Kim Waller
Responsible Service:	Facilities, Assets & Housing
Localities affected by the proposal:	Elwy,
Who will be affected by the proposal?	The future residents of the site will be affected by the proposal. A range of other stakeholders have been identified who may be affected or who perceive that they will be affected by the proposal. These include immediate neighbours to the site, the wider community living in St Asaph and the surrounding area, businesses and employees on the St Asaph business park and within St Asaph city, people who use the area for leisure activities.
Was this impact assessment completed as a group?	Yes

IMPACT ASSESSMENT SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Before we look in detail at the contribution and impact of the proposal, it is important to consider how the proposal is applying the sustainable development principle. This means that we must act "in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

Score for the sustainability of the approach

 (3 out of 4 stars) Actual score : 22 / 30.

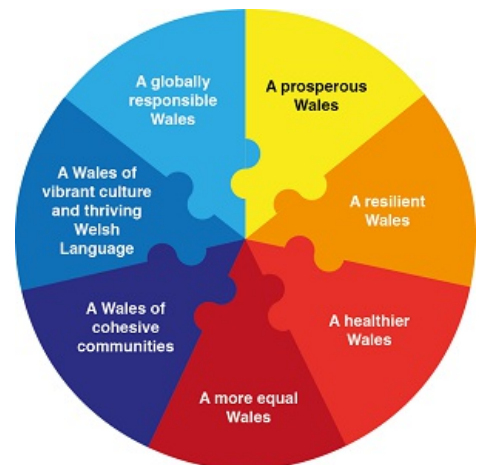
Implications of the score

Need to engage with potential users of the Transit site.
Need to consider how this provision could function as a part of regional provision.
LDP criteria has been considered.
Meets wider well-being objectives, promoting independence and resilience.

Summary of impact

Well-being Goals

A prosperous Denbighshire	Neutral
A resilient Denbighshire	Neutral
A healthier Denbighshire	Neutral
A more equal Denbighshire	Positive
A Denbighshire of cohesive communities	Neutral
A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	Neutral
A globally responsible Denbighshire	Neutral



Main conclusions

There are areas of uncertainty regarding operational delivery and demand which need to be better understood and resolved. Failing to do this may change a neutral assessment of impact with some of the well-being goals to negative. We need to engage with emerging discussions taking place in the UK regarding good practice around transit sites and engage with potential transit site users to ensure that the design and management arrangements are robust and fit for purpose.

There appears to be concerns that local businesses will be negatively impacted by the proposal. Some of these concerns appear to be based on experiences of unauthorised encampments. This proposal seeks to reduce unauthorised encampments and the associated problems. We need to seek additional information from other similar sites. We need to ensure that appropriate management systems are in place to mitigate concerns. We need to engage with potential site users to ensure that the site meets needs. We need to consider this proposal in the context of a regional network of sites as there is a risk that one transit site in the region could be over-subscribed.

We need to consider possible demand for the site and explore the potential to develop this provision within the context of a regional network rather than in isolation which could create problems if there is higher demand than can be met.

We need to consider the concerns of the existing community and the possible future residential site community and ensure that the design and management arrangements respond to concerns. Some concerns are underpinned by negative stereotypes and unauthorised encampments and we need to provide accurate information on these.

We need to build relationships with the existing community.

We need to undertake a further ecology study.

We need to assess the broadband service.

We need to consider the likely demand /level of childcare services locally.

Evidence to support the Well-being Impact Assessment

- We have consulted published research or guides that inform us about the likely impact of the proposal
- We have involved an expert / consulted a group who represent those who may affected by the proposal
- We have engaged with people who will be affected by the proposal

THE LIKELY IMPACT ON DENBIGHSHIRE, WALES AND THE WORLD

A prosperous Denbighshire

Overall Impact	Neutral
Justification for impact	<p>The proposal is too small to generate a significant positive or negative impact to the prosperity of Denbighshire overall. Although, a reduction in unauthorised encampments may have a big impact on individual landowners or businesses.</p> <p>The provision of secure short-term accommodation with safe and appropriate facilities would allow people to access seasonal employment or other employment activities without the fear of being moved on. Feeling secure in the length of stay would also allow residents to access education and training should they wish to.</p> <p>This would provide a safer environment for children and support the ability of families to travel together which in turn would allow shared childcare arrangements if desired.</p> <p>There are currently no other transit sites in north Wales or indeed Wales. It is difficult to forecast demand because of the lack of similar provision elsewhere. There is a risk that there could be a higher demand for the site during peak travelling periods than anticipated and there would currently be no alternative provision available elsewhere in the region to direct people to in such circumstances.</p>
Further actions required	<p>We need to engage with potential residents to better understand requirements, potential demand etc in order to ensure that the design, management arrangements and services will be suitable. We need to check broadband provision and childcare. Developing this proposal as part of a regional network of transit sites would reduce the possibility of over demand and any associated problems that this may cause. We need to hold further conversations at a regional level around developing a network of transit sites to manage possible demand during the busier travelling periods.</p>

Positive impacts identified:

A low carbon society	The transit proposal provides an amenity block which will be built to current standards and legislation.
Quality communications, infrastructure and transport	<p>It is assumed that the site has decent 4G although this needs to be confirmed.</p> <p>Taking into account travelling patterns, current predicted demand is unlikely to impact on the speed of deterioration of the road.</p>
Economic development	<p>This would provide appropriate accommodation for members of the Gypsy and Traveller community to engage in traditional economic activities such as seasonal work or self-employment. Families visiting for leisure purposes would bring economic benefits to Denbighshire businesses. This proposal is to provide an appropriate and managed facility as an alternative to unauthorised encampments. A reduction in unauthorised encampments will reduce costs and inconvenience for landowners and businesses who may be affected.</p>
Quality skills for the long term	<p>Providing safe and secure accommodation for up to 3 months for people travelling through the county will enable them to access education and training for the period of their stay. Information for residents could also include details on business support, employment and training.</p>

Quality jobs for the long term	As a small accommodation project this proposal will not directly provide jobs.
Childcare	A suitable, managed site will provide a safe location for children during their stay in Denbighshire without the fear of being moved on or risks associated with living on the side of a road or on a carpark. Children will also be better placed to access education during their stay. It will allow families to travel together and provide childcare support if desired.

Negative impacts identified:

A low carbon society	We need to engage further with potential users in order to understand measures would be beneficial for short-term stays. The caravans themselves would be outside the scope of this project as they would be the property of the resident.
Quality communications, infrastructure and transport	There is a risk that if new sites users miss the entrance to the site that they will find it difficult to turn around further down the lane (as this is not a through road). We need to consider mitigation and the impact of this.
Economic development	The site is intended to provide accommodation only. We need to think about how we could support any self-employed residents in the appropriate disposal of trade waste. There appears to be concerns that local businesses will be negatively impacted by the proposal. Some of these concerns appear to be based on experiences of unauthorised encampments. This proposal seeks to reduce unauthorised encampments and the associated problems. We need to seek additional information from other similar sites. We need to ensure that appropriate management systems are in place to mitigate concerns. We need to engage with potential site users to ensure that the site meets needs. We need to consider this proposal in the context of a regional network of sites as there is a risk that one transit site in the region could be over-subscribed.
Quality skills for the long term	No known negative impacts
Quality jobs for the long term	There have been concerns raised that people will not want to work or locate a business nearby. Concerns seem to be predominantly based on negative unauthorised encampments. We need to consider how we would manage demand/high demand.
Childcare	There may be a perceived lack of childcare options more widely in the community.

A resilient Denbighshire

Overall Impact	Neutral
Justification for impact	The site is too small to generate a significant positive or negative impact. The proposal will involve the development of a small area of land with a structure and hard standing area. A flood survey has been carried out and management of water run off considered. There will be the opportunity to provide education and also appropriate services to manage waste and recycling which has often been a problem with unauthorised encampments.

Further actions required	We will undertake a further ecology study to ensure that appropriate steps are taken to minimise the impact on local wildlife. We will introduce additional planting of local species around the site to provide additional/replacement habitat. We will follow best practice guidance on the design and use of materials for the amenity building. We will work with future residents to ensure that they make the best of recycling and reusing options.
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Positive impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment	Planting around the site would provide privacy, a noise and light barrier and support biodiversity. A further ecology survey is required to ensure that all requirements are understood.
Biodiversity in the built environment	The site will provide one amenity building with facilities for each pitch and hard standing areas for caravans and parking for cars. There is minimal opportunity for planting within the main body of the design but there will be opportunity for planting both around the site and along the driveway to the site supporting biodiversity.
Reducing waste, reusing and recycling	This proposal will ensure that suitable waste and recycling facilities can be provided that would not be available on an unauthorised site. Expectations around recycling can be explained to new residents on the site. The provision of electricity for fridges that would not normally be available on an unauthorised encampment could reduce food waste.
Reduced energy/fuel consumption	The design of the amenity block follows up to date guidance on design and use of materials to maximise energy efficiency and reduce fuel consumption.
People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity	Residents will be staying on a short-term basis. However, the development of a welcome pack could help to convey information on environmental and biodiversity issues.
Flood risk management	A flood survey has been carried out. Surface water run off has been considered during the design phase.

Negative impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment	The proposal would lead to the loss of around 0.5 hectares of farmland. The proposal would also lead to the removal of a tree. Additional planting of local species is proposed around the site and access way. There will be temporary disruption around the site during the build period. However, this is a small site and this would be managed to minimise disruption as far as possible.
Biodiversity in the built environment	The proposal will involve additional structures. However, these will be small in size and therefore the impact will be minimal.
Reducing waste, reusing and recycling	We need to consider the disposal/recycling of gas canisters for use with caravans.
Reduced energy/fuel consumption	Caravans retain heat less efficiently than permanent buildings. Further engagement with potential residents could help to explore how to reduce energy consumption.
People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity	No known negative impacts

Flood risk management	The proposal involves an amenity building and hard standing areas which will reduce the porous area of the site. However, a flood survey has been undertaken and actions identified to mitigate risk.
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A healthier Denbighshire

Overall Impact	Neutral
Justification for impact	<p>The overall impact is considered neutral because the stay is for a short period of time. There could be benefits from not having to stay in an unauthorised encampment. There is likely to be minimal engagement with health professionals.</p> <p>There is a lack of information and evidence to help us consider the impact of the proposal on health and well-being, particularly for gypsy and travelling communities.</p>
Further actions required	We will undertake a welfare assessment with new residents to identify any immediate health and welfare issues. We will provide a welcome pack with information on health and other services.

Positive impacts identified:

A social and physical environment that encourage and support health and well-being	A transit site will be positive for users because they will have access to facilities, including toilets and washing facilities and a meeting room. There will be reduced stress from legal challenge/confrontation that can be experienced following an unauthorised encampment.
Access to good quality, healthy food	This proposal would provide access to electricity to run fridges in caravans which would not be available on an unauthorised encampment. This will allow families to store fresh food for longer and support healthy eating.
People's emotional and mental well-being	There will be reduced stress from legal challenge/confrontation that can be experienced following an unauthorised encampment. People will have secure accommodation for up to 3 months.
Access to healthcare	<p>There will be improved access to information, but whether people will chose to access health care is outside the influence of the project.</p> <p>A neutral meeting room could be used to encourage better relationships with health and social care, and other services.</p>
Participation in leisure opportunities	Providing secure accommodation without the risk of legal action that comes with an unauthorised encampment will provide residents with the peace of mind to be able to pursue leisure opportunities should they wish to.

Negative impacts identified:

A social and physical environment that encourage and support health and well-being	We are not sure what the impact will be on neighbouring residents, but consultation responses suggest many people are fearful of a transit site.
Access to good quality, healthy food	No known negative impacts

People's emotional and mental well-being	There may be families staying on the site from different areas and communities. We need to further develop the management structure and monitoring arrangements for the site. It is important that the site is well managed and that rules and responsibilities are clear to new residents to support cohesion on the site.
Access to healthcare	Residents will be from outside of Denbighshire and will not have existing arrangements with services. This may place extra demand on local services which are already under pressure. However, the site is small and any impact will reflect this.
Participation in leisure opportunities	There may be disruption on the narrow lane during the construction phase that could impact on other users of the lane. This would be short-term.

A more equal Denbighshire

Overall Impact	Positive
Justification for impact	This proposal is considered positive as it seeks to deliver against an identified housing need in the County for a group with protected characteristics. There is no other culturally appropriate provision available in Denbighshire..
Further actions required	We need to provide further information to the wider community around the proposal. We need to undertake consultation to ensure that the site rent will be affordable.

Positive impacts identified:

Improving the well-being of people with protected characteristics. The nine protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage or civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation	<p>Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers are a protected characteristic in law. We have a housing duty to meet their accommodation needs and public services duties under the Equality Act.</p> <p>This proposal specifically addresses the housing need. Appropriate, good quality, secure accommodation directly contributes to better health and well-being and eliminates the stress of confrontation from legal action on an unauthorised encampments.</p>
People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage	Gypsy and Travellers can face significant discrimination and disadvantage. This proposal seeks to provide appropriate short-term accommodation to meet the housing need. Such provision does not currently exist in the area.
Areas with poor economic, health or educational outcomes	This proposal will have a neutral impact on areas with poor outcomes.
People in poverty	Gypsies and Travellers are amongst the most excluded groups in British society and many families are living in poverty. This proposal provides short-term accommodation to support the cultural practice of travelling for social and economic purposes without fear of legal action.

Negative impacts identified:

<p>Improving the well-being of people with protected characteristics. The nine protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage or civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation</p>	<p>There are cultural differences which can lead to tensions between Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers (and thus tensions between people with protected characteristics). This could occur with different residents moving on and off the transit site but due to the proposed close proximity of the sites could also occur between transit site residents and those families living on the permanent residential site.</p>
<p>People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage</p>	<p>There have been concerns expressed by the wider community about the proposal many of which are based on negative stereotypes and unauthorised encampments. This proposal seeks to address the issues caused by unauthorised encampments by providing appropriate accommodation with suitable facilities that is not normally available on an unauthorised encampments. There would be rules and responsibilities for residents to adhere to and a management structure in place to monitor adherence to the rules. We need to communicate this information to the community and explain the differences between unauthorised encampments and the proposed managed provision.</p>
<p>Areas with poor economic, health or educational outcomes</p>	<p>This proposal will have a neutral impact on areas with poor outcomes.</p>
<p>People in poverty</p>	<p>There will be site fees set for residents. We need to ensure that these are set at an appropriate level to ensure that the site is accessible.</p>

A Denbighshire of cohesive communities

<p>Overall Impact</p>	<p>Neutral</p>
<p>Justification for impact</p>	<p>Effective management arrangements for the transit site will be critical to its success and this needs to take into account the possible tensions that may arise between the changing short-term resident population and tensions that may arise with the families living on the residential site.</p> <p>The consultation has highlighted significant concern among the existing local community.</p> <p>The transit site is based on the needs assessment findings, which were based on the number of historical unauthorised encampments. The needs assessment is based on statistics and there has not been the same extensive engagement with potential users of the transit site.</p>

<p>Further actions required</p>	<p>There will be an office on site to provide a neutral space for meetings which will include a welcome/booking in meeting. This will set out rules and responsibilities of residents on the site. Robust monitoring and management arrangements need to be developed to manage this effectively. Management of the transit site needs to be discussed as a priority. If approved this would be the first transit site in Wales, which means learning lessons from England and other areas is key. There are some unknowns, eg what would happen on the driveway if the site were full. We need to explore the concept of a regional network. We need to ensure that the concerns of the existing community and future permanent site residents are considered and where appropriate addressed through the design and management arrangements and these are communicated to the wider community. There is a need to build more positive relations moving forward. We need to confirm the availability of adequate broadband. We need to engage with potential transit site users / learn from discussions taking place in England about good practice in transit site provision.</p>
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Positive impacts identified:

<p>Safe communities and individuals</p>	<p>The availability of a transit site, if used, could reduce unauthorised encampments. It also enables Police to enforce legislation.</p> <p>The site is small and demand is predicted to be from Easter to October, generally speaking.</p> <p>There would be a booking in process which will allow more positive dialogue to take place than currently happens around unauthorised encampments. This should allow more effective welfare assessments to take place with families with the opportunity to address any welfare concerns.</p>
<p>Community participation and resilience</p>	<p>The proposals have been shared with the local community which has helped to identify not only planning considerations but also wider concerns.</p>
<p>The attractiveness of the area</p>	<p>The long term impact on the attractiveness of the area is considered to be neutral. The design allows for fencing and security measures to be included but uses planting of local species to provide a natural noise and light barrier. The use of planting will also soften the visual aspect of the site and will be in keeping with the surrounding area.</p>
<p>Connected communities</p>	<p>There is an assumption that the site will have acceptable broadband and mobile infrastructure. This will be tested.</p> <p>Near to cycle routes, bus routes and the A55.</p>
<p>Rural resilience</p>	<p>The site is near to the A55 and facilitates employment and self-employment opportunities.</p>

Negative impacts identified:

<p>Safe communities and individuals</p>	<p>There is may be disharmony between residential site tenants and users of the transit site. The transit site will likely have different communities staying there for different lengths of stay. There is likely to be less attachment to the site and the local area (than that felt by tenants on the residential site).</p> <p>There could in theory be traffic with daily moves, but there is no evidence to suggest a daily turnover of users.</p>
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Community participation and resilience	There has not yet been any meaningful engagement with the transit community /potential site users. There has been occurrences of cohesion issues and hate crime in the St Asaph area whereby some people are concerned about the proposals.
The attractiveness of the area	There will be short term impacts associated with the construction phase.
Connected communities	No known negative impacts
Rural resilience	No known negative impacts

A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

Overall Impact	Neutral
Justification for impact	The proposal is too small to have a significant positive or negative impact. However, providing culturally appropriate accommodation for the Gypsy and Traveller community would be a significant step for protecting the traditional ways of life this community. A well managed site would demonstrate that both communities can co-exist successfully which would help to challenge the negative stereotypes which exist around the Gypsy and Traveller culture.
Further actions required	We need to ensure that the site is well-managed and that information is provided that will be accessible to all residents.

Positive impacts identified:

People using Welsh	Information and signage will be bi-lingual. This will support the continued use of the language with welsh speaking residents.
Promoting the Welsh language	As this proposal would be used by visitors to the area the use of bilingual signage would promote the welsh culture to those from outside of Wales.
Culture and heritage	This proposal provides culturally appropriate accommodation for residents. The provision of a well-managed Gypsy and Traveller transit site could help to address negative stereotypes about this community.

Negative impacts identified:

People using Welsh	No known negative impacts
Promoting the Welsh language	Literacy levels within the Gypsy and Traveller community can be low. Bilingual paperwork may be overwhelming. However, it will be essential to communicate the tenancy arrangements for the stay, site rules etc. It may be necessary to use other methods to communicate key messages to residents.
Culture and heritage	As the residents will be short-term their interest in integrating in the Denbighshire community and sharing their culture and heritage is likely to be minimal.

A globally responsible Denbighshire

Overall Impact	Neutral
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Justification for impact	This is a small proposal and will have a neutral impact on producing a globally responsible Denbighshire. The residents will be from outside the area and will be staying for short periods which will reduce the likely impact further. However, providing secure, appropriate accommodation without the conflict that arises during legal action (associated with unauthorised encampments) could foster a better relationship with public services and allow residents to access services should they wish to.
Further actions required	To foster positive relations it is important to provide a transit site which meets the needs of the community. Further research and engagement is required to do this. Provide a welcome pack of information to assist visitors to the area. Identify welfare needs and any other areas of concern through an initial welfare assessment.

Positive impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains	Consideration can be made to locally sourced products through the procurement process. Any planting will use local species.
Human rights	The provision of culturally appropriate accommodation helps to protect the rights of Gypsies and Travellers. This proposal will provide a more positive opportunity to engage with the transit community than currently exists with unauthorised encampments. This could lead to better relationships and dialogue around any Human Rights concerns.
Broader service provision in the local area or the region	Residents will be staying in the area for 3 months or less and as such may not have requirements for local services. There will however, be the potential to access services should they need it and information will be made available to assist should this be the case.

Negative impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains	No known negative impacts
Human rights	No known negative impacts
Broader service provision in the local area or the region	This may mean an additional demand for local services. It is possible that if people have been travelling that people haven't sought early intervention and they need a higher level of service.