

CABINET – 25 JANUARY 2022**PROCEDURAL MATTERS****Public Questions****Question (1): Daniel Hill**

Surrey County Council's recent Survey concluded that 70% of people disagreed or strongly disagreed with the proposal for a new GRT transit site to be built within the Surrey Hills area of outstanding natural beauty.

Additionally, the statistics show between 2018 and 2020 there were 483 GRT unauthorised encampments in Surrey most of them were in the west of the county with Guildford having 40. This compares with Tandridge Council the least affected area with only 13.

Would Tim Oliver and Surrey County Council consider supporting an alternative location. Which is not only more suitable brownfield land but is also more cost effective for the GRT transit site currently being proposed for Pendell Camp?

Reply:

The Pendell Camp transit site scheme has been developed in partnership with all District and Borough Councils including Tandridge, and Surrey Police. This is a county working together, to not only to address unauthorised encampments, but also to ensure that the needs of the Traveller community are more widely met.

The GRT community is entitled to the same services as those in the housed community, including the right to occupy premises that are fit for use. This includes accessible accommodation and facilities. By providing a transit site in Surrey, the transient GRT population will have the opportunity to access healthcare and social services. The provision of power and hot water facilities will help to provide essential temporary respite from the rigours of lives spent on the road. It has been identified that there is demand for these facilities in both the East and West of the county.

With regards to the landscape, a Landscape and Visual Assessment has been undertaken and submitted in support of the planning application. The report concluded that *"the effects of the Proposed Development would not result in substantial harm to landscape character beyond the Site boundary, nor would there be substantial detrimental effects to visual amenity across a wide area. The Proposed Development would not result in the alteration or loss of any landscape features or elements important to landscape character."*

Furthermore, and most significantly, at present this site is contaminated and polluted by historical waste dumping. Without this investment this pollution will not be resolved.

The investment is in no way detrimental to the area; it will result in remediating and improving the site's natural environment.

At this time, Surrey CC is unable to comment on the viability of other potential GRT sites across Surrey and therefore cannot comment on a private individual's proposal.

Natalie Bramhall
Cabinet Member for Property and Waste
25 January 2022