Head of Culture and Development
Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council
Council Offices
Argents Mead
Hinckley
Leicestershire
LE10 1BZ

8 June 2011

Dear Sir,

RE: VARIATION OF CONDITION 12 ATTACHED TO PLANNING PERMISSION No. 08/00891/FUL - LAND AT STOKE LANE, HIGHAM ON THE HILL

Please find enclosed completed planning application forms, plans and requisite fee in respect of the above-mentioned proposal.

PLANNING STATEMENT

Planning permission No. 08/00891/FUL gave consent for the change of use of the appellant's land for a mixed use for the keeping of horses, and as a residential caravan site for one gypsy family with two caravans.

Condition 12 attached to the planning permission reads as follows:

No additional caravans and/or mobile homes, as defined by the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 and the Caravan Sites Act 1968, other than those approved by this permission, whether for storage or human habitation shall be placed onto the land whether for temporary or permanent purposes without the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

It is proposed to accommodate 3 additional households on the applicant's caravan site, the families of the applicant's siblings, occupying a total of 6 additional caravans. A site layout plan accompanies this application which demonstrates that the extra caravans can be accommodated in a manner which complies with the standard caravan site licence requirements.

My client proposes that Condition 12 should be amended to read as follows:

No more than 8 caravans, as defined by the Caravan Sites and Development Act 1960 and the Caravan Sites Act 1968, shall be stationed on the land, of which no more than four shall be single-unit static caravans/mobile homes.

The Council may also wish to limit the number of families/households permitted to occupy the caravan site to a total of four.

Core Strategy Policy 18 (*Provision of Sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople*) states that the Council will allocate land for 42 residential pitches (26 up to 2012, 16 from 2012-2017), of which 6 pitches should be socially rented. Policy 18 also includes criteria against which planning applications for new gypsy and traveller caravan sites are to be assessed. Planning permission will be granted for Gypsy sites providing that, *inter alia*, it is located within a reasonable distance of local services and facilities including shops, GP's and schools, even if the site is not directly adjacent to the settlement boundary; has safe highway access, provision for parking and servicing; and, can be capable of sympathetic assimilation into the surroundings.

The Council has already accepted that the application site is located within a reasonable distance of local services and facilities in Higham on the Hill; a new access has been provided as requested by the Local Highway Authority; and adequate provision would be made on site for parking and servicing, as shown on the submitted site layout plan

The site is not widely visible and has been screened in accordance with conditions 14 and 15 attached to the existing planning permission. As a result, the existing caravan site has not been unacceptably harmful to the character or appearance of the surrounding area. The accommodation of additional families/caravans would have no more than a marginal impact on the character or appearance of this rural area, particularly once approved planting has reached maturity. The proposal would therefore comply fully with Core Strategy Policy 18.

The GTAA found an unmet need for an additional 26 residential pitches, 2006-2011. The Regional Spatial Strategy has subsequently accepted this figure as being the minimum residential pitch requirement for Hinckley and Bosworth during the period 2007 to 2012. Since April 2007, when the GTAA was published, three new residential pitches have been granted planning permission in the Borough: 2 on appeal at The Paddock, Watling Street, Higham on the Hill; and one pitch on the application site. However, the site at Ben's Hut, Desford Lane, Ratby has closed down, with the loss of at least 5 pitches. At the present time, therefore, there is an unmet need for at least 28 additional residential pitches. The accommodation of an additional 3 pitches on the application site would make a significant contribution towards meeting the identified need, and towards meeting the objectives of Core Strategy Policy 18.

Toilet, bathroom and laundry facilities would be provided for families living in the touring caravans by conversion of the existing barn into an amenity block. Bearing in mind that such use would not involve a change of use of the land, or require material change to the external appearance of the building, I consider that this conversion can be undertaken under the existing planning permission.

For the above reasons, I trust that you will support my client's planning application, and I look forward to receiving the Council's decision in due course.

Yours faithfully,

PHILIP BROWN BA (HONS) MRTPI