

Objection letter. RBC. 5.10.17

I am writing regarding the proposed traveller site on land we farm at Sharneyford. This area is home to hares (at least 2 breeding pairs) also to badgers, foxes, weasels and other small mammals not to mention the many invertebrates etc in the pond areas. many types of grasses and wildflowers have also flourished here in recent years. On our adjoining land we have been part off an environmental stewardship scheme as have other neighbouring farmers. Defra/ RPA have paid out thousands of pounds to preserve and enhance these habitats and this type of ecology which is why I will also be notifying them of your ludicrous intention.

For almost 12 years our sheep and cows have grazed this area as it is not fenced off from the land we own. This has helped in keeping the natural balance so it doesn't become too overgrown.

Councillors have said it could be used as a stop off by travellers on route to "Appleby Horse Fair"

You clearly haven't spoken to anyone who does this as they would never come over this road, If at the Todmorden/Calderdale side they use the flat road to Burnley and from Whitworth/ Bacup they take the direct Burnley Rd. Rawtenstall/Haslingden area go over the bypass from haslingden to Altham! Especially with horse and cart why would anyone make the steep climb to Sharneyford??

The obvious site for the travellers which everyone except Rossendale council can see is behind Futures Park where they already choose to camp. This will still be the next stop for them even if you create the site at Sharneyford. The site there is already tarmaced etc and must be easier to police for any antisocial behaviour if this was to occur. The council need to get over their NIMBY attitude and be more realistic. This will not "offload " the issue to the perimeter of the borough but merely encourage more travellers to the area.

The direct impact/issues of my personal objection is the worry about the dumping of illegal waste etc thus ruining a beautiful and diverse habitat. this has already happened at the other side of Todmorden Rd (Flower Scar Rd) which the council/environment agency are doing nothing about.

Dogs left loose are a real concern for us as sheep farmers. As we don't live at the site it will be impossible to monitor this 24/7 so the first we will know is dead/injured animals and the dogs/owners will be long gone.

If this proposal becomes a serious consideration for the council I feel we may have no choice but to sell off the 97 acres of land we own up there .

The most profitable way to do this would be in small plots and possibly to the travelling/gypsy community who may wish to own land near this site. You can imagine the turmoil this could cause for local residents and the repercussions for the council from a currently quiet and peaceful village community. I do hope you won't force us into taking this action.

Another consideration I think you should make is that for the last two or three years you have been wasting planners and landowners time trying to get them to move "static" caravans from their own land with no reasonable justification? You are now proposing to put 8 caravans on a relatively small area? Right up in our beautiful countryside border! Unbelievable!

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23/12/19 updates after meeting.

TRANSIT?/ transient...?.. How could this be monitored in such a remote location?

When I rang 101 and asked to speak to a police officer regarding Sharneyford I was asked "how I was spelling that?" It is not even known by the force from their Burnley headquarters?

Why as owners of the neighbouring land had we not been notified of the councils intention?

At the meeting 23/12/19 , 5 or 6 councillors said they had visited the site. I doubt they have been in adverse weather? Likely on a nice summer day or during one of the early summer dry spells?

If this important soak away lagoon is encroached on or filled with litter/dumped in it will have a huge impact on the flooding which is already an issue at the bottom of Todmorden rd and through Bacup town centre.

Travellers have never camped in this location as it is freezing cold, windy and very wet for most of the year. They camp near towns/shops bus routes etc etc where they can manage a reasonable existence why would the council want to marginalise them further by pushing them to the edge of the borough?

Has anyone consulted them or are the council going to force this location on them? Freedom of choice tells me they will be back on Futures before this expensive consultation and after it!

(Update May 20: travellers have been at Futures at least twice this year already and never at Sharneyford-freedom of choice!)

Another shock revelation from this meeting is how easy a councillor can propose to throw another massive amount (£125K) just towards consultation etc and thier pals will quickly second it! This is tax payers hard earned and they have no idea how easy you bandy it around like Monopoly money. This will be nothing compared to the cost of setting up this further waste of our money in setting up a waste of a traveller site in a cold, wet, hostile location.

Someone should be held responsible for this so when it is a waste of our money (like the empty homes scandal) heads should roll. Make people accountable as we are in other jobs!

Regards

Susan Howorth