

APP/18/00929 - Southdown View, Long Copse Lane, Emsworth

1. I am the Gypsy Liaison Officer (GLO) for Hampshire County Council.
2. I have been asked by Havant Borough Council planning department to make enquiries relating to the above planning application with a view to establishing the current planning status of the applicant Mr Les Madgwick.
3. In March 2017 I made extensive enquiries at the site regarding the previous application; Stables Adjacent to Hollybank Cottage, LongCope Lane, Emsworth PO107UR – APP/16/01234 – when I interviewed Mr James Madgwick and his father Les Madgwick. As a result of these enquiries Gypsy ethnicity was established for both and there is no reason to doubt that this still stands today.
4. At 11.40 hours on Tuesday 20th November 2018, I met with Mr James Madgwick (27 years of age) and his father Les (53 years of age) on the land I now know as Southdown View, LongCope Lane, Emsworth.
5. In addition to discussing at length the planning application submitted to Havant Borough Council I also verified that the land in question is owned by Mr James Madgwick but the land is viewed as in Madgwick family ownership.
6. I informed Mr Les Madgwick that I had a number of queries that I wished to address from Havant BC planning and for clarity I would replicate the queries in my report and address matters raised accordingly;

(a) Do the applicants meet the definition of gypsy/traveller? With regard to this point, the LPA are aware that it is likely that the applicant likely owns a house in Portsmouth. Therefore the LPA would need to understand whether this constitutes that they are now 'settled', and therefore whether the applicants comply with the definition of gypsy/traveller. Also we are aware from your previous correspondence, that the house in Portsmouth has a household containing Les and Tina Madgwick's daughters, we would need to understand the context of this.

Mr Madgwick informed me that he does still own a house in the Portsmouth area and explained that this was a family home for eighteen to nineteen years during the time that his children were growing up. All his children have now left the family home and he now has a wish to revert to his ethnic roots and traditions by living in a caravan together with his wife and intends to sell the house for use by another family. (Note: during my years as a GLO I have know numerous Gypsy and Traveller housed families who have reverted to

their traditional lifestyles and moved back into caravans / mobile homes after their offspring have grown up and left home)

(b) Do they have a need for accommodation within the Borough?

The applicant advised that he does have a need for future accommodation in the Havant BC area because when the house is sold he will not have access to any alternative suitable accommodation and would have to revert to living at the roadside.

(c) Are you able to verify if there is no other suitable accommodation in terms of available gypsy/traveller pitches in Portsmouth, the New Forest (where they state they have family connections) or West Sussex, including any private sites in Westbourne? Our members referred to these sites during the Planning Committee.

I can confirm from my enquiries that there is no suitable accommodation available in the Portsmouth and New Forest area's and would comment that it would be most unusual after so many years for a Gypsy to move from his own private accommodation onto a 'Council' run site. I have made enquiries of West Sussex relating to the Westbourne Site and whilst there is currently one pitch available on that site, I am advised that this particular site is historically very settled and there are twenty applicants currently being considered for the pitch in question. Mr Madgwick is not on the waiting list and it is considered highly unlikely that he would be considered for this pitch.

I had a discussion with Mr Madgwick regarding the Westbourne site and if he had considered living in that local area on any private land / pitch and he informed me that it was now far too expensive and why when the family already owns land in the Borough of Havant and he wishes to be with his own family.

The applicant informed me that the family does not own any other land other than that at Long Copse Lane and whilst they have family links and connections in the Portsmouth and New Forest area, they also have family living in the Havant area and in particular on the land subject of the application.

7. I discussed at length with Mr Madgwick what he has planned for the future and he informed me that now that all his children had left home he needed to revert to living in a caravan as he was suffering from depressive periods from his continuing to living in bricks and mortar accommodation.

He also felt strongly that living with his son would ensure that there would be someone to assist him as he gets older and to ensure that his future health and welfare would be taken care. I would comment that Mr Les Madgwick's lifestyle is somewhat physically arduous and as he gets older he will more and more need the assistance of his son to continue the family trade. The applicant informed me that currently he continues to visit countless horse fairs in the UK and Ireland in company with his son Jimmy and whilst they are away travelling his wife would be on site to ensure the security of the land and also to keep Jimmy's partner company.

8. The Madgwick family continue to be predominantly horse dealers and traders as was evidenced by the stables on site being fully occupied during my visit. I established that the family have historically and still do visit most of the horse fairs in the country through out the year, not just as a family holiday but to conduct business buying and selling horses and ponies together with tack and equipment.
9. I clarified again where they stayed when travelling and did they have any documents to prove where they had travelled to and was informed that when travelling they stayed with friends and relatives on private land. However, historically they would have stayed at the side of the road but in keeping and in common with this community the retention of any records and official notices to quit is not very common.
10. I asked if it was possible to obtain written letters to prove where they had been and who they had stayed with over the years and was informed that this could be done if required.
11. Like most families of the Gypsy and Travelling community in this day and age they live in mobile homes when on their own land and take a mobile tourer (caravan) with them to live in whilst they are away on business and / or holidays.
12. I was informed that during his life the applicant together with his family have travelled the Country widely for business / economic purpose and he is still away working for at least 4 to 5 months of the year. His home base would not solely be used as a place to commute to work and return home daily but would be somewhere for his family to establish a settled lifestyle whilst he is away as opposed to living at the side of the road due to the lack of local, regional and national pitch and transit site availability.
13. I am not by any means and do not profess to be an expert in planning and case law but I do have a limited knowledge of these matters and also practical expertise attained having dealt with matters and issues relating to the Gypsy and Traveller community over the last sixteen years.

14. The applicant currently has permanent bricks and mortar accommodation but also has a cultural lifestyle of living in a traditional caravan and a history of travelling for economic purpose. He has a strong desire to settle down for the stability, health and future of his family unit. I conclude that after consideration of all the facts, my balanced view is that Mr Les Madgwick is of Gypsy and Traveller status as required for planning purposes.

Barry P. Jordan-Davis

Dated: 27th November 2018