

The Planning Inspectorate (PINS) have been in dialogue with the appellant's agent and are now adamant that they are going for written representation route.

The Council does not dispute the travellers status of the families, and is of the opinion that this doesn't need to be tested verbally at a hearing, the PINS agree. They offered a date of 14/4 for final comments. The Council has nothing to add to its already submitted statement, the site is Metropolitan Green Belt and therefore unsuitable for this use.

The PINS will next offer a date for a site visit, possibly indicating that it will be an accompanied site visit (i.e. just UDC officers I suspect just myself). I would consider that the site visit should occur over the remainder of April. The decision of such matters usually takes 6/8 weeks following the site visit.

I personally visited the site on Thursday 1/4 and noted that four statics had been brought onto the site. The tourers which the statics are said to be replacing remain in the site. Firstly, although the statics are large, and probably arrived on low-loaders they do fall within the definition of caravan. As the statics are clearly to replace the tourers there is a need to decant from one to the other. I have been told that the tourers will leave the site shortly. The hard coring at the time of visiting had only been used around the entrance.

It is a fact that any changes to the site including the swapping of caravans and the treating of the surface, does require approval under the terms of the injunction from the High Court. Obviously the Court has not been operating fully during the pandemic and, as such, some minor changes including the swapping of two vans and the treating of the surface were verbally approved. It is clear that they have exceeded this agreement and, as such, I will be taking legal advice on where this takes us. Obviously we do need to consider on the timetable of any enforcing of the injunction alongside the now more timely consideration of the appeal.

As expected from discussions on site on Thursday (Maundy Thursday), many travellers have gone travelling for the Easter period. They are likely to return (which they can) during the next few weeks. I intend to revisit the site within the next fortnight. Obviously, residents will see more activities as families return from travelling.

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