

GYPSY AND TRAVELLER

SHORT STAY STOPPING SITES

Consultation

20 August – 1 October 2014

Gypsy and Traveller Short Stay Stopping Sites Consultation

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Foreword

As political leaders and chief executives of public services in Suffolk, we have a responsibility to ensure the needs of the people that live in Suffolk are met. It is important for us to know how you feel proposed changes would affect you before any decisions are taken.

From Wednesday 20 August to Wednesday 1 October, we are seeking your views on proposals for potential Gypsy and Traveller short stay stopping sites in Suffolk.

Between 2007-2013, Suffolk has had 210 unauthorised encampments. Unauthorised encampments can have an enormous impact on the county; not only do they use valuable public service resources, they can also have an impact on our economy.

The cost to the Suffolk taxpayer is considerable and in a time of very tight budgets we must do everything possible to eliminate unnecessary expenditure. Dealing with unauthorised encampments can cost many thousands of pounds.

The recent unauthorised encampments in Ipswich, along with unauthorised encampments in Bury St Edmunds and Felixstowe earlier in the year, reinforce the growing need for a solution.

We believe that introducing three Gypsy and Traveller short stay stopping sites in Suffolk will save taxpayers money, help meet the needs of Gypsy and Travellers moving through the county and reduce unauthorised encampments. We have identified seven potential sites and are seeking your views on these.

Views received as part of the consultation will be analysed and used to help inform recommendations that will be considered by Suffolk County Council's Cabinet in October 2014.

If approved by Cabinet, the three preferred short stay stopping sites would be subject to planning applications. As part of the planning process there would be a further period of consultation.

We value your opinion and would encourage you to respond to this consultation by midnight, Wednesday 1 October. Details about how to have your say are available on page 12.

On behalf of Suffolk Public Sector Leaders



Councillor Mark Bee
Leader of Suffolk County Council



Tim Passmore
Police and Crime Commissioner for Suffolk

Background

Unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller encampments are currently an issue very much in the public eye, both locally and nationally.

Significant tensions have been evident throughout the country between the Gypsy and Traveller community and the settled community. This is often made worse by a public perception that councils are either too slow to act following the arrival of Gypsies and Travellers or do not have effective powers to manage the situation.

Equally, there is frustration within the Gypsy and Traveller community about the lack of provision for residential and short stay stopping sites.

In Suffolk, between 2007-2013, there were 210 unauthorised encampments, with an average of 19 days length of stay. Suffolk needs a long-term solution to this, which we believe is introducing three short stay stopping sites.

Short stay stopping sites are permanent sites intended for temporary use by Gypsies and Travellers. The length of stay generally varies between 28 days and three months. The sites are not intended to be used as a permanent base. Currently there are no short stay sites in Suffolk.

Other counties have short stay stopping sites and these offer the travelling community a proper alternative to unauthorised encampments. For example, a new short stay stopping site in South Norfolk has eliminated recurrent unauthorised encampments on a housing estate in the area.

Short stay stopping sites also give local authorities and the police the opportunity to exercise their powers whilst remaining committed to the required duty of care.

The proposed short stay stopping sites would each have the capacity for eight pitches. Wherever possible, each pitch would be sufficient to accommodate two touring caravans and two parking spaces. We estimate that 0.2 hectares are required to deliver an eight pitch site.

The proposed sites would include temporary facilities such as toilets and waste collection, as and when the sites are in use. A water standpipe would be standard. These services would be chargeable as part of the weekly rent.

We believe offering a 12 week license for staying on a site would be sufficient to cover the needs of Gypsies and Travellers passing through the county.

Details of the seven proposed potential short stay stopping sites that have been identified are on pages 8,9,10 and 11.

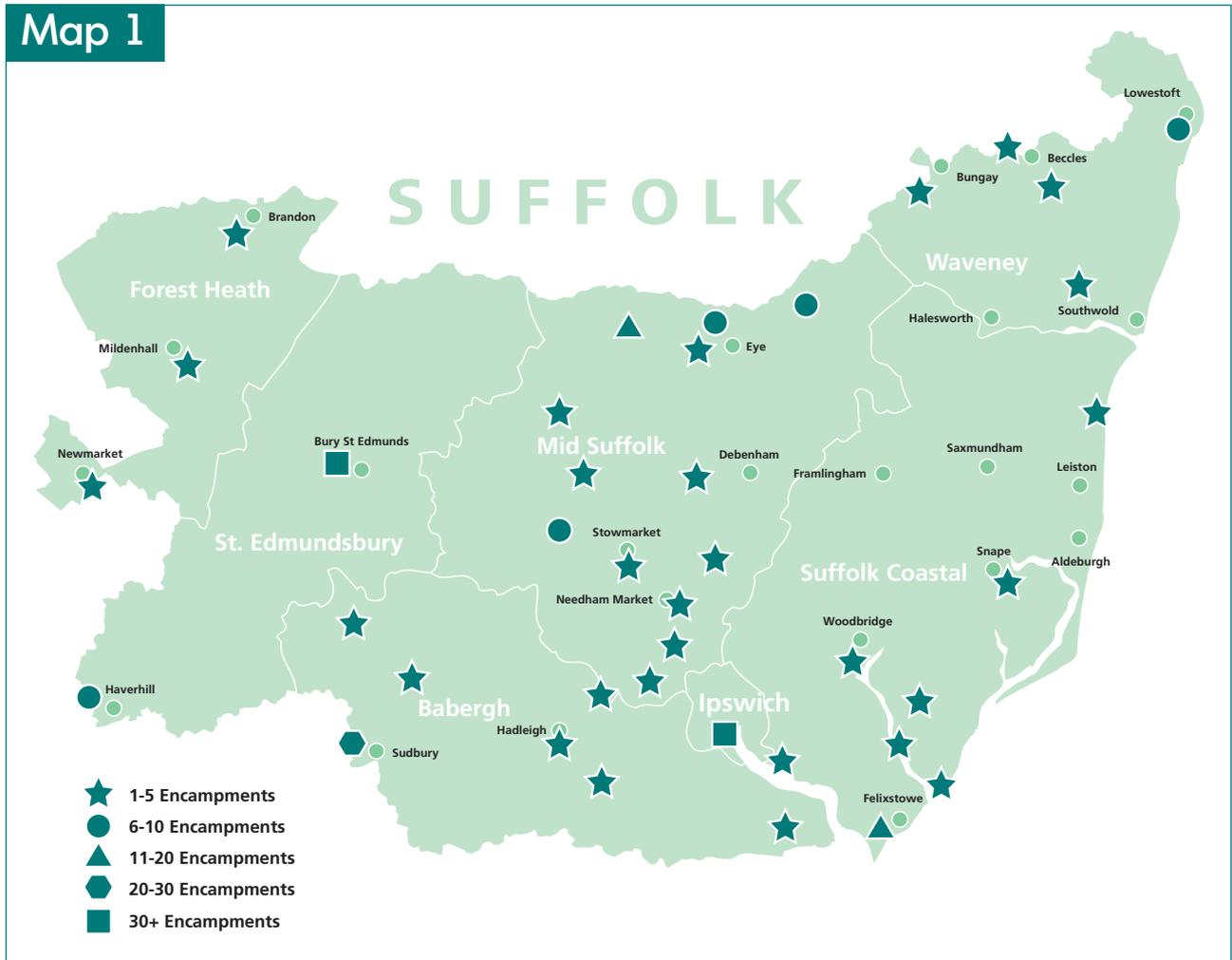
Unauthorised encampments in Suffolk

Table 1 outlines the unauthorised encampments in Suffolk between 2007-2013.

It is important to note that many of the higher figures for encampments are the result of multiple encampments from the same travelling families.

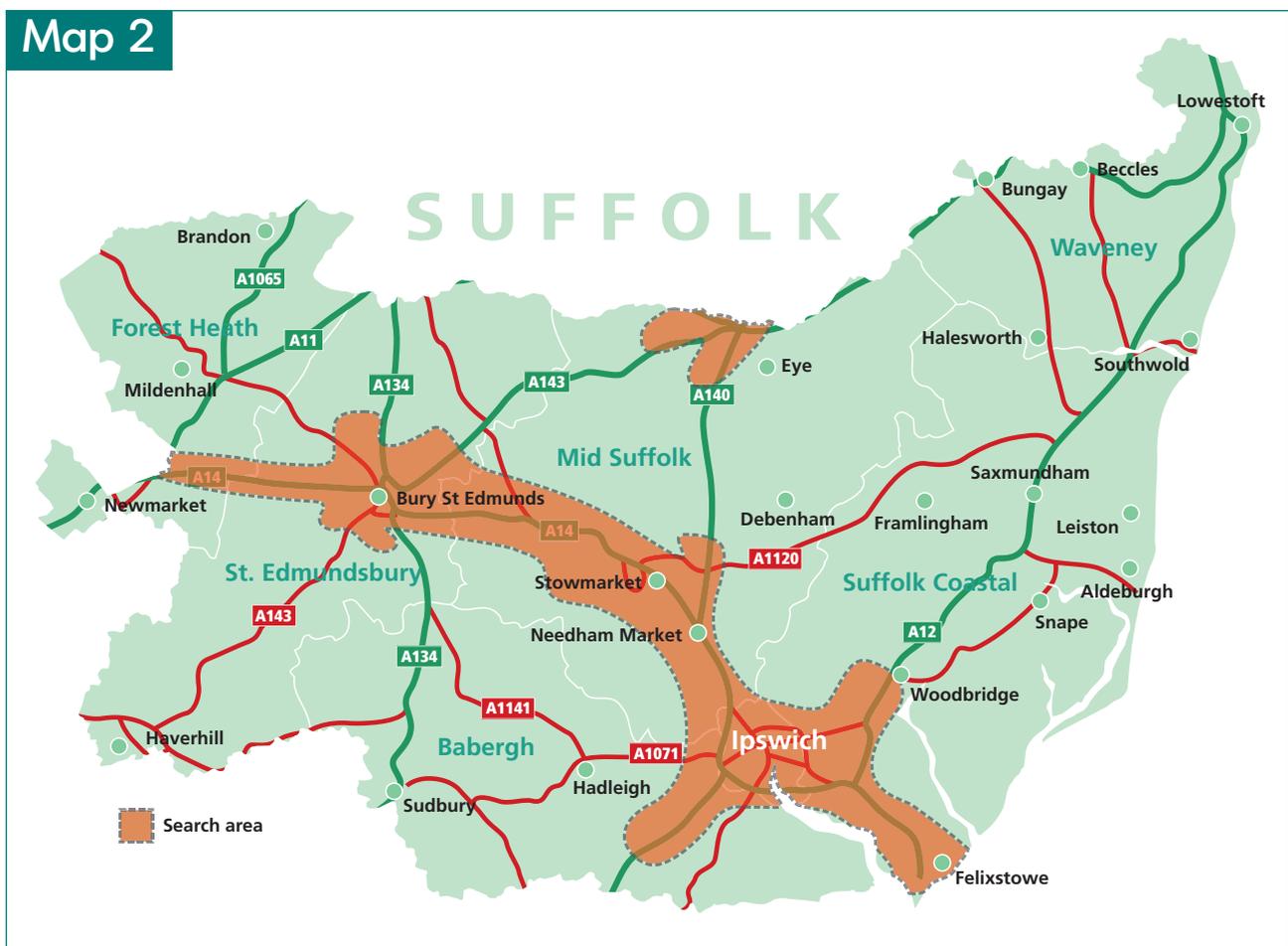
Table 1								
District/borough	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total
Babergh	3	5	3	7	12	7	3	40
Forest Heath	2	4	1	1	1	0	0	9
Ipswich	2	9	9	4	3	3	8	38
Mid Suffolk	5	9	3	17	18	4	3	59
St Edmundsbury	3	5	1	9	2	7	20	47
Suffolk Coastal	6	3	2	1	2	4	10	28
Waveney	1	3	1	1	3	3	1	13
Total	22	38	20	40	41	28	45	234
Total days stay	938	617	290	478	444	374	816	3957
Average length of stay (days)	43	16	15	12	13	13	18	19

Map 1 shows the locations of the unauthorised encampments in Suffolk between 2007-2013.



Proposals for short stay stopping sites in Suffolk

The locations for potential short stay stopping sites have been identified using the evidence gathered between 2007-2013 and looking at the main travel routes through Suffolk. Map 2 shows the search area used for potential short stay stopping site locations.



Each potential short stay stopping site has been assessed against criteria. Appendix A shows the criteria and scoring for each potential short stay stopping site.

Following the consultation, three locations will be recommended to Suffolk County Council's Cabinet in October 2014. If agreed, these sites would be subject to planning applications.

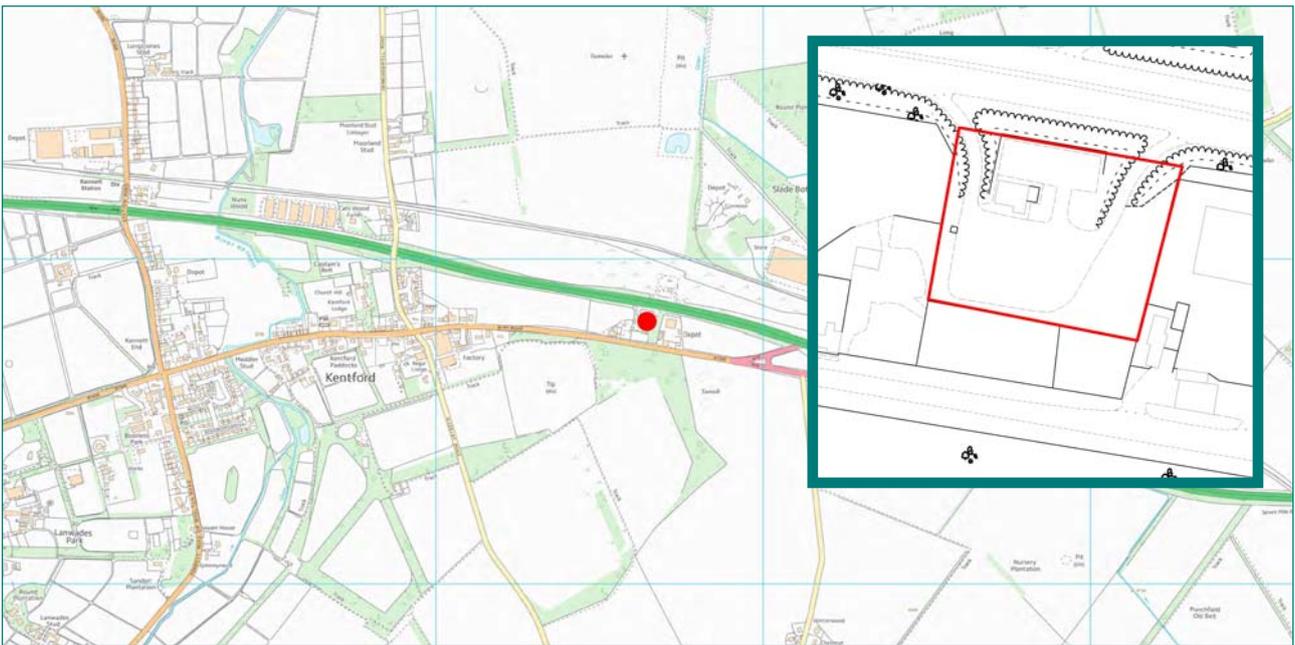
Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury

Forest Heath has had fewer encampments in recent years, possibly due to the short stay stopping place in Thetford. However the A11 is a major route in and out of Suffolk and needs to be factored in for consideration.

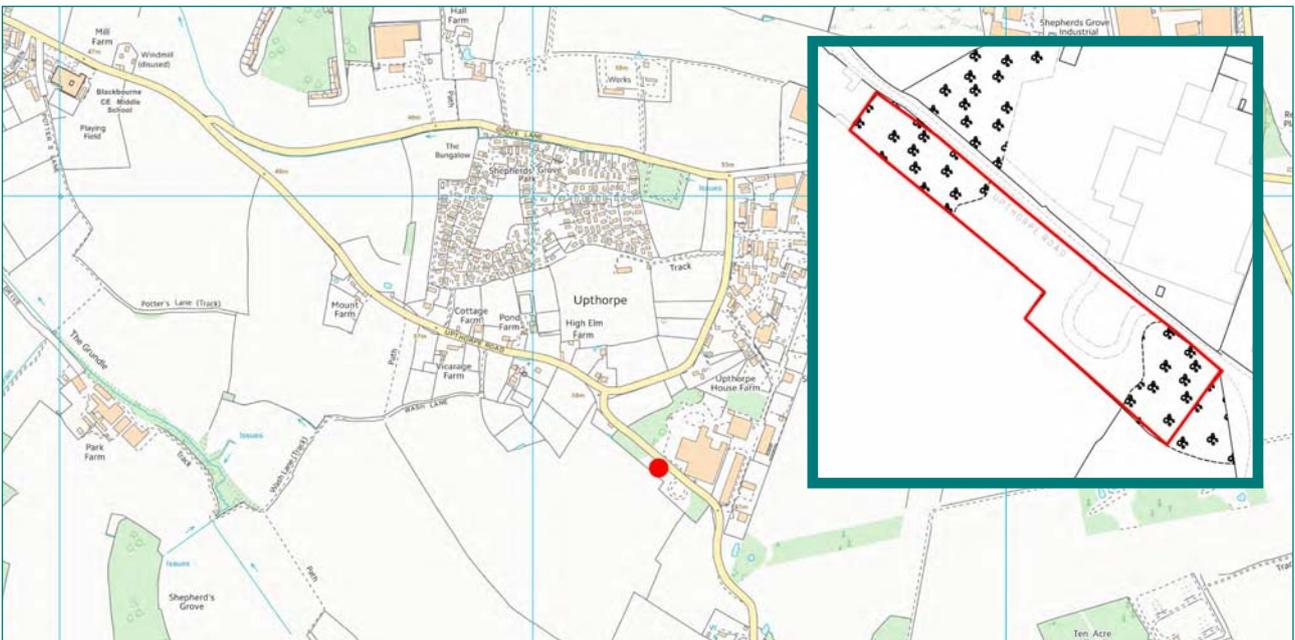
The majority of the encampments in the St Edmundsbury area are in Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill. However, the figures for the encampments in Bury St Edmunds have been inflated in the past year due to one family moving around the area.

Proposals for potential sites

Former Little Chef Site, Kentford, between Bury Road and A14



Former Chippings Dump, Upthorpe Road, Stanton



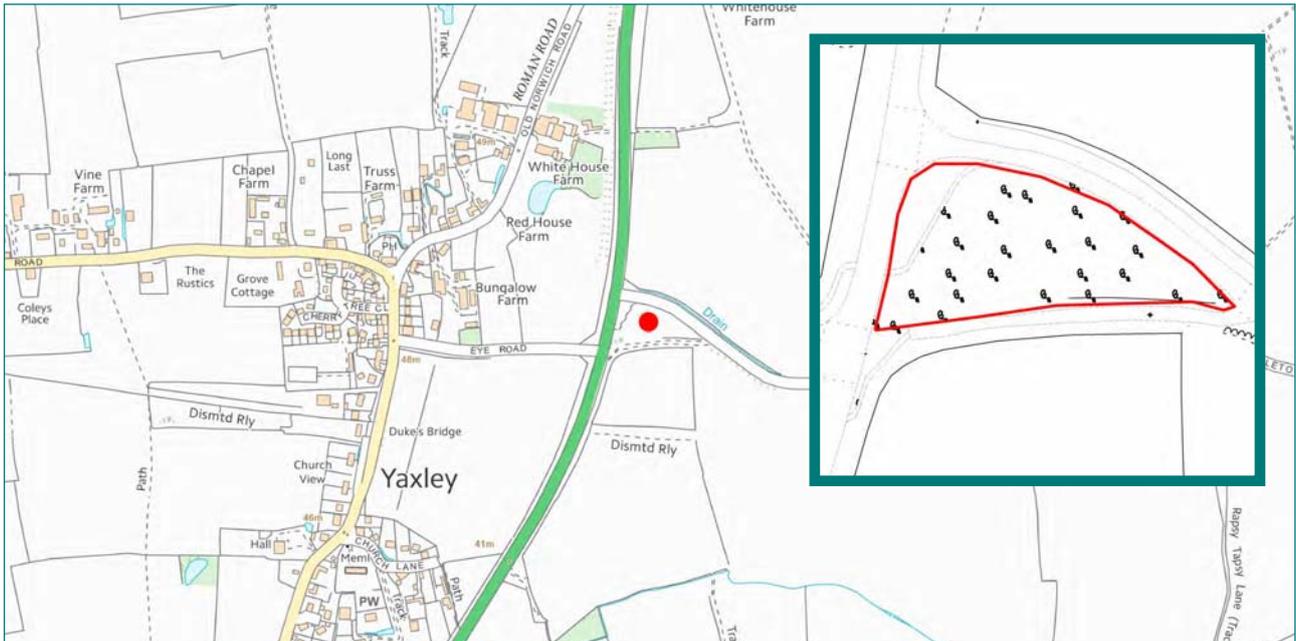
Mid Suffolk and Babergh

Mid Suffolk has had the majority of unauthorised encampments to the north around the Eye area.

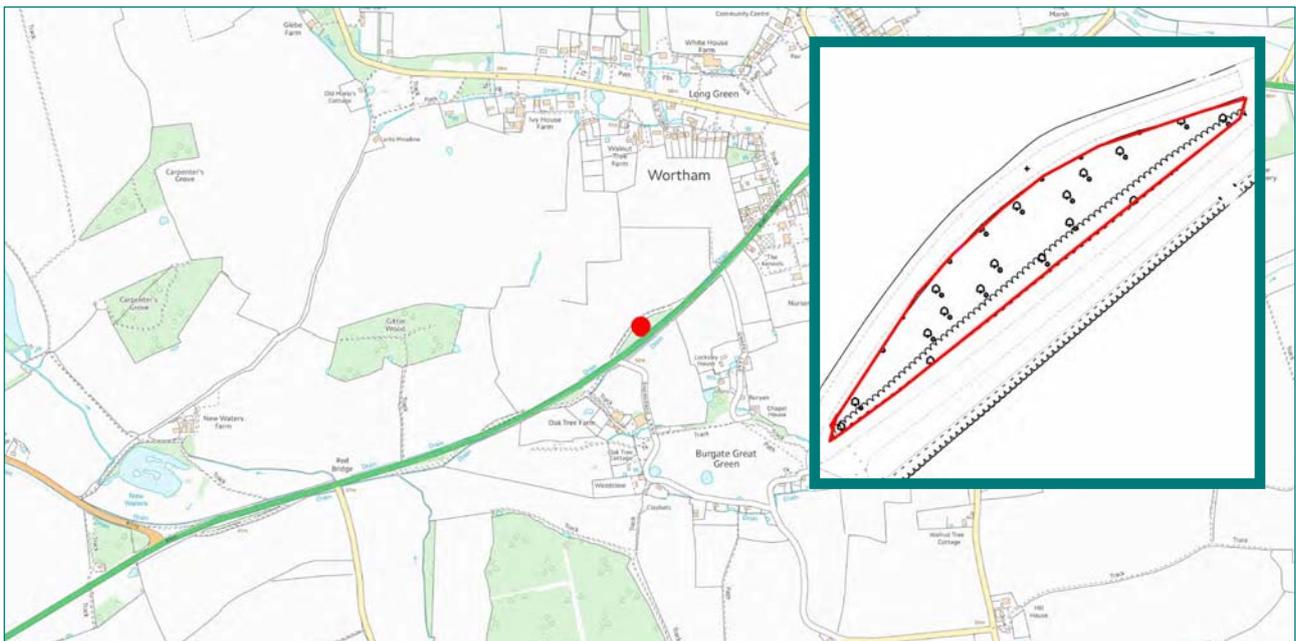
Babergh has had a number of encampments around the Sudbury area. However, as Sudbury is not in a main route through Suffolk there are no proposals for Babergh currently.

Proposals for potential sites

A140 junction with Castleton Way, Yaxley



Layby off A143 opposite Shepherds Lane, Wortham



Ipswich and Suffolk Coastal

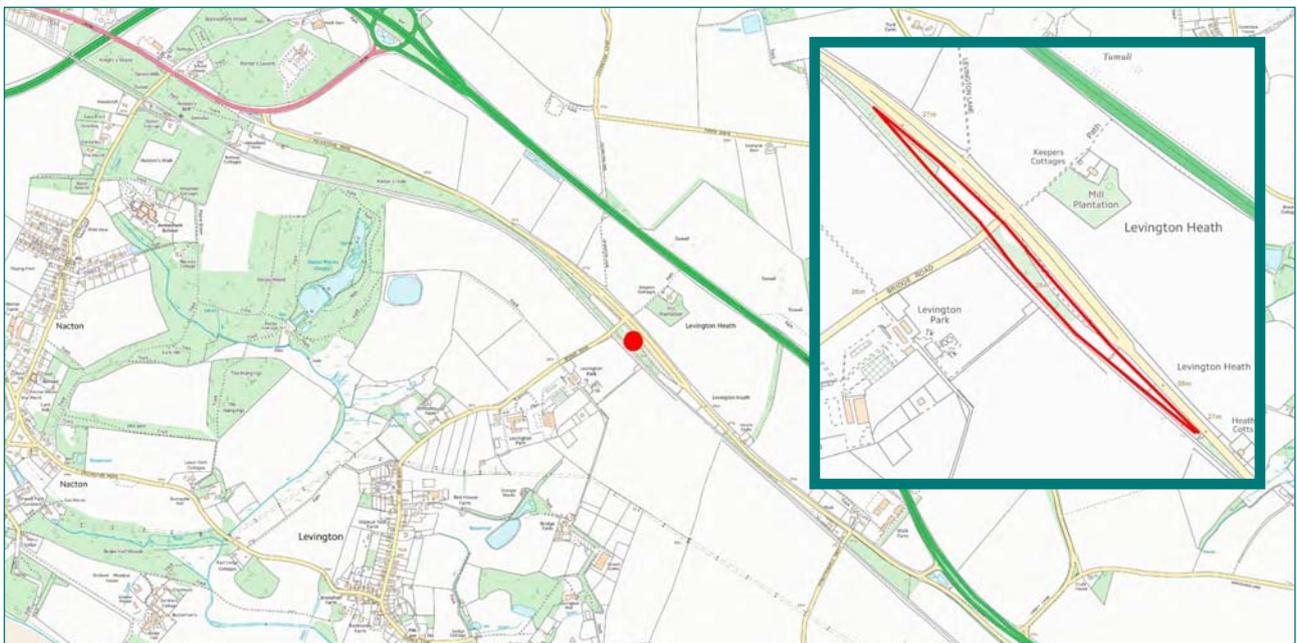
Ipswich has had quite a high number of encampments in a small area and therefore would benefit from a short stay stopping site.

Suffolk Coastal has a relatively sporadic placement of unauthorised encampments, with the majority of these being in the Felixstowe area.

We believe the needs of Ipswich and Suffolk Coastal would be most effectively met by a short stay stopping site located on the A14 corridor between Ipswich and Felixstowe.

Proposals for potential sites

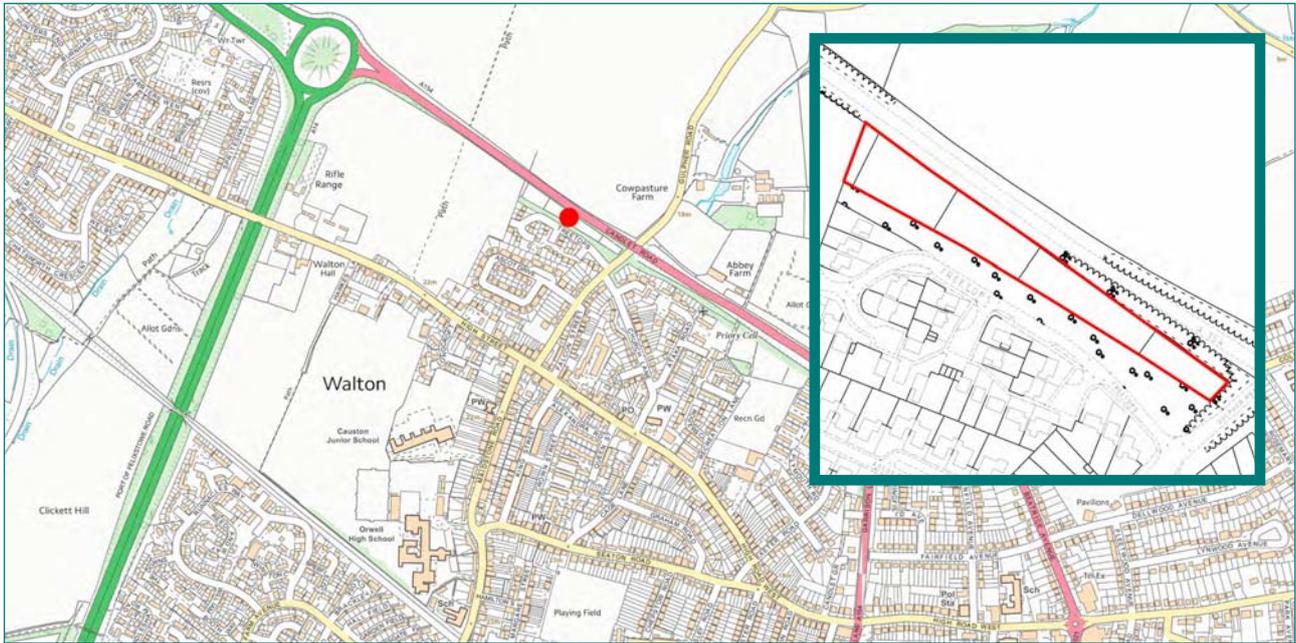
Layby on Felixstowe Road, Levington, south of junction with Bridge Road



Former Little Chef site, off A14 by the Orwell Bridge



Land between Candlet Road and Treetops, Felixstowe



Waveney

Waveney has had quite a small proportion of unauthorised encampments; therefore there are no proposals for this area currently.

How to have your say

- Complete the survey online, available from: www.suffolk.gov.uk/consultations.
- Download, print and complete the survey available from: www.suffolk.gov.uk/consultations. Return to:
Freepost RTAC-HSKL-CSAY
SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL
IPSWICH IP1 2EB
Section: Business Development
- Request a survey to be sent to you, email: shortstaysites@suffolk.gov.uk or call: 0845 603 1842
- Complete the telephone survey, on: 0845 603 1842
- Attend a consultation drop-in session between 2-8pm, on:
Monday 8 September 2014 - Council Chamber, Mid Suffolk District Council, Needham Market
Tuesday 9 September 2014 - Bucklesham Village Hall
Wednesday 10 September 2014 - Stanton Village Hall
Thursday 11 September 2014 - Eye Town Hall
Friday 12 September 2014 - Millennium Centre, Red Lodge
- Email your feedback to: shortstaysites@suffolk.gov.uk

All responses must be received by midnight, Wednesday 1 October.

What will happen after the consultation?

Once the consultation closes, all views will be analysed and used to help inform the three short stay stopping site recommendations that will be put forward to Suffolk County Council's Cabinet in October 2014.

If approved by Cabinet, the three proposed short stay stopping sites would be subject to planning applications, which would include further consultation.