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Submission to the Development of the Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024

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Introduction

CENA Culturally Appropriate homes welcomes the opportunity to input in to the fifth round of the Traveller Accommodation Programmes (TAPs) CENA is a Traveller led Voluntary Accommodation Association. The name CENA is the translation of the cant term (Traveller Language) for home. The objectives of CENA are informed by the vision of an Ireland where all Travellers are accommodated in culturally appropriate accommodation that meets their needs and also fulfils Travellers right to a home within a sustainable community setting of their choice.

CENA FOCUS AND PRINCIPLES

The core focus of CENA will be on the provision of culturally appropriate housing for and with Travellers. The success of the organisation will be judged by the extent to which Travellers are accommodated in culturally appropriate accommodation that meets their needs and that achieves Travellers' right to a home within a sustainable community setting of their choice.

Successful development will depend, from the beginning, on the extent to which Travellers are able to:

- Understand the process involved and contribute positively and realistically to the planning and design process.
- Become organised as residents in a way that allows for effective self-representation during the planning of new developments and into the future.
- Take real responsibility of their own built environment in a way that ensures long-term sustainability, cohesion and enhanced access to local services, facilities and opportunities.

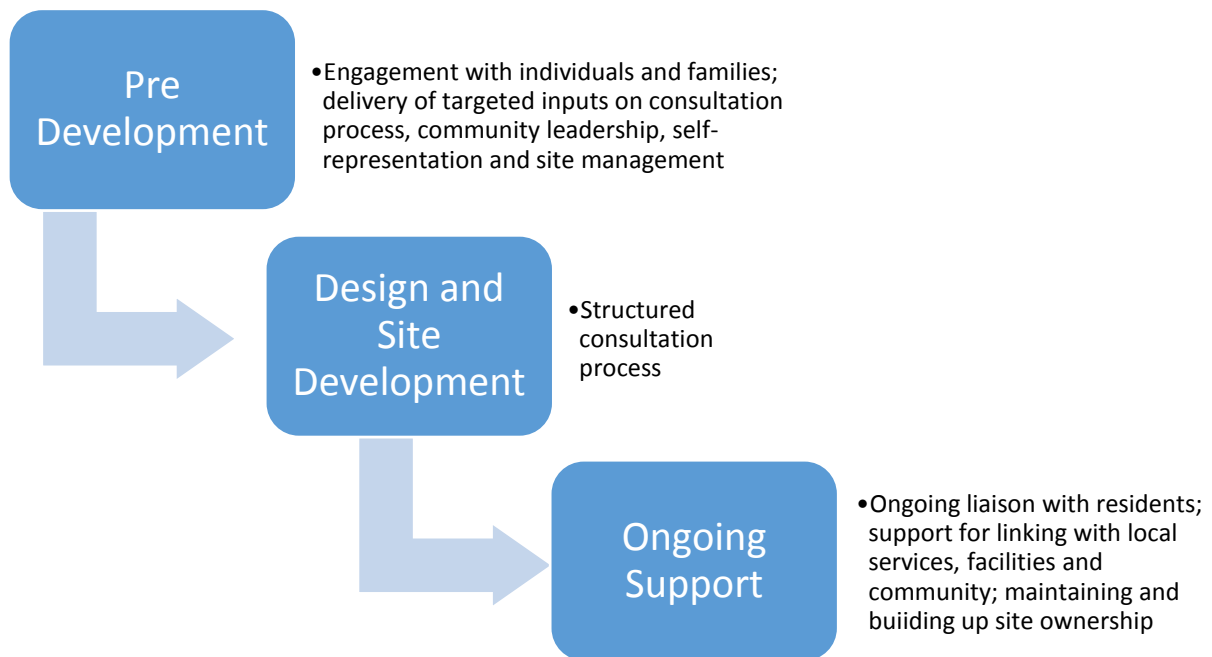
Success will also depend on the extent to which CENA is able to forge effective working partnerships with local authorities and work jointly towards the achievement of this vision.

This focus and approach has two major implications for the core operational model of CENA being proposed:

1. Firstly, and most importantly, we will create a 'Residents Education' function within the organisation. One full-time post will be created with a responsibility for:
 - a. Developing resources to guide the delivery of on-site educational programmes. These will address the key issues of self-representation, consultation, leadership and site management.
 - b. Overseeing the delivery of these programmes, either through direct delivery by CENA or delivery in partnership with local Traveller community development projects. CENA will be responsible for quality control of delivery in all cases.
 - c. Maintaining ongoing contact with residents in CENA-developed sites, providing support and advice where required to help sustain a cohesive community and good living conditions for all.
2. Secondly, each CENA development will include provision for a community facility, within which joint activities can be organized by residents and which can become the focal point for effective self-management of the site.

We envisage that the pilot projects, now underway, will provide insights and assistance for us in developing the resources and methodology we need to build on the model into the future. But it is already clear that the approach taken to all developments in the future will be a three-phased approach. Because we are committed to the creation of long-term sustainable and self-organising communities, CENA involvement cannot be restricted to the design and development phase of new initiatives. As is shown in the diagram overleaf, the organisation will also be equipped to actively engage with families and communities' pre-development (in a broader educational sense) and post-development (in an ongoing support capacity).

The CENA Model for Individual Site Development



The development model adopted bears some similarities to the standard model adopted by other housing associations. There are, however, very important differences that need to be acknowledged.

1. Firstly, the depth and nature of challenges being addressed are on a very different scale than exist within the standard accommodation field. Provision of culturally appropriate Traveller accommodation has persisted as a major challenge for successive governments over decades.
2. Success in meeting this challenge is determined by a range of factors that are not restricted to design, build environment or construction. Very real barriers exist in relation to social exclusion, marginalisation, low income and disconnection from progression opportunities for Travellers; lack of support and frequently open hostility from the settled community.
3. An effective response to accommodation issues must therefore encompass a developmental dimension that allows for purposeful engagement with Travellers, facilitates a learning and inclusion process and builds a sense of ownership around Traveller accommodation.

A Role for CENA in the Next Traveller Accommodation Programme

CENA is now in consultation with several local authorities. Our approach in each case is to:

1. Undertake an extensive consultation process with all Traveller families (or an agreed number in some cases) with a view to establishing their accommodation needs – not

just in the short-term but with a view to the accommodation needs of future generations.

2. Develop a strategic plan, based on the needs expressed. The plan will include the identification of possible locations, a full costing and a time-line (allowing for short, medium term and long term targets
3. Negotiation with the relevant local authority with regard to resourcing of the strategic plan (or part thereof) and the contractual arrangements based on this agreement.

We are asking all local authorities to declare their willingness to work with CENA, along the lines outlined above, as an integral part of delivering their Traveller Accommodation Programme.

Kind Regards,

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