

New row over Belfast gipsies

BY DAVID WATSON

AN influential City Hall committee is trying to veto plans by Belfast City Council to provide a temporary itinerants' site at May's Market.

After hearing objections to the scheme from about 10 local traders and receiving a petition from residents in the Markets area, the health, markets and meat plant committee has voted that the plan should be abandoned.

Mr. Fred Proctor, the committee's deputy chairman, said today: "While we are sympathetic to these people, because they have no permanent place yet, we could not see a way of going ahead.

"The traders pay rents and we might have difficulty getting some of the itinerants off the site once the future permanent one at Springfield Road becomes ready."

Since most of the traders left the Markets area to move to Boucher Road, the council gave approval in principle to using May's Market as a temporary home for the itinerants.

But now members of the markets committee — still negotiating for the Government to take over the area under a development plan — feels that it could become a problem when the time came to move several dozen caravans from the area.