

**SOUTH EAST ENGLAND
REGIONAL HOUSING BOARD**

Date: 28 June 2006

Subject: **South East Plan Partial Review of Gypsies and Travellers**

Report of: Planning Strategy Director, South East England Regional Assembly

Recommendation: That the Board note the contents of this report.

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide an update on the early partial review of the draft South East Plan in relation to the provision of accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers.

2. Background

- 2.1 At its meeting on 7 December 2005, the Regional Planning Committee agreed to an early partial review of the South East Plan to provide a full assessment of regional and district level pitch requirements for Gypsies and Traveller caravan accommodation.
- 2.2 Circular 1/2006 'Planning for Gypsies and Traveller Caravan Sites', published in February 2006 confirmed the requirement for Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) to take a view of Gypsy and Traveller needs across the region and identify the number of pitches required for each local authority.
- 2.3 At its meeting on 24 May 2006, the Regional Planning Committee agreed the actions required to take forward a formal partial review of the draft South East Plan.

3. Partial Review Requirements, Timing and Management

3.1 Scope and Requirements of the Review

- 3.1.1 The review will be conducted in accordance with Government policy as set out in Planning Policy Statement 11 'Regional Spatial Strategies'. This requires the Assembly as Regional Planning Body to consult on a project plan for any review of RSS and that such a Plan should incorporate a statement of Public Participation.

3.2 Timing of the Review

- 3.2.1 Circular 1/2006 acknowledges that a full consideration of need cannot be undertaken in advance of the completion of the local authority led Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments (GTAAAs). In the South East all of GTAAAs are timetabled to have completed by summer 2007.
- 3.2.2 Section 5(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that if a regional planning body decides to make different provision for different parts of the region, the detailed proposals must be made by a Section 4(4) (ie county or unitary) authority (also known as the 'principal authorities') unless that body and the RPB agree otherwise. Given the requirements of Circular 1/06 to provide district level advice, Section 5(5) also applies to the partial review. The arrangements for determining district level Gypsy and Traveller provision will therefore be taken forward in a similar way to those employed for determining district level housing requirements in the draft South East Plan. However, in this case, the proposals will be based on joint working between the county, unitary and district authorities.
- 3.2.3 Assuming the GTAA timetables are adhered to discussions are to be held with principal authorities with a view to their advice being submitted to the Assembly, following public consultation, by the end of 2007; with the Assembly's final advice submitted to the Secretary of State in summer 2008.

3.3 Management

- 3.3.1 In accordance with PPS11, and the Assembly's established ways of working, three management groups are being established:
- An officer task group to oversee the review process and take a strategic view of the needs of the region as a whole;
 - A steering group (comprising a representative from each of the five main groupings on RPC) to provide the necessary member steer at key stages in the review process; and
 - A Gypsy and Traveller Reference Group to ensure the views of this key stakeholder group are accounted for in the review process.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1 A draft project plan will be presented to the Regional Planning Committee in July, following further liaison with the principal authorities.
- 4.2 A further update on the work associated with the partial review will be presented to the next meeting of the Board.

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