

Regional Spatial Strategy Single Issue Review: Planning for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in the East of England

Environment Committee, item 5

Committee: Environment

Date: 11 March 2008

Title: **Regional Spatial Strategy Single Issue Review: Planning for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in the East of England**

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Agenda Item

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Item for decision

Summary

The Regional Assembly has submitted formally a draft policy to the Secretary of State indicating by district the number of net additional pitches for gypsy and traveller caravans over the period 2006 to 2011. In Uttlesford, the policy proposes a net addition of 15 pitches by 2011, increasing the number of authorised pitches from 37 to 52.

Recommendations

That the draft policy be supported

Background Papers

Letter and enclosures from EERA dated 21 February 2008

Impact

Communication/Consultation	EERA is carrying out consultation on the draft policy between 25 February and 16 May. Town and Parish Councils are being informed through their county associations. Copies are available for inspection at the Council Offices in Saffron Walden and on EERA's website.
Community Safety	Many of the problems faced by Gypsies and Travellers arise from lack of provision for their accommodation needs.
Equalities	Gypsies and Travellers are among the most deprived and socially excluded groups within the East of England.
Finance	None
Human Rights	The policy aims to address the needs of

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	Gypsies and Travellers.
Legal implications	None
Sustainability	The draft policy is accompanied by a sustainability appraisal.
Ward-specific impacts	Uncertain at this stage
Workforce/Workplace	Issue will need to be incorporated into Uttlesford Local Development Scheme

Situation

- 1 The Regional Assembly has been working closely with planning authorities to identify the number of additional pitches required to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers. The policy is based on a number of research studies, which identify an urgent need for more provision. The draft policy is being proposed as an amendment to the Regional Spatial Strategy. The location and design of pitches within District, Borough or Unitary Authority will be a matter for local development documents.
- 2 The current pattern of provision for Gypsies and travellers is concentrated in particular parts of the region. The proposed distribution of additional pitches follows a similar pattern with the highest number of additional pitches in Fenland (89), South Cambridgeshire (59), Basildon (81) and Kings Lynn and West Norfolk (53). However, all authorities will be required to provide an additional 15 pitches to broaden the choice available to the Gypsy and Traveller community.
- 3 The draft policy represents an equitable approach to this pressing issue.

Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
The draft policy fails to address the needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community	2	2	Monitoring delivery of pitch provision will be included in annual monitoring reports. Measures to assist delivery will be further investigated by EERA and DCLG.