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West Midlands
Regional Spatial
Strategy : Gypsies,
Travellers and
Travelling Showpeople

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Regional Spatial Strategy

- West Midlands RSS confirmed June 2004
- Does not meet the requirements for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites set out in Circulars 01/2006 and 04/2007
- Sites issues are included in Phase 3 of the RSS Revision launched in November 2007
- Because of the time lag, Ministers required Interim Regional Statements (issued in 2007) on:
 - Gypsies and Travellers
 - Travelling Showpeople

Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Review : Next Milestone

- Working towards a Consultation on Issues and Options in Summer 2009
- This means establishing:
 - a regional estimate of pitch/plot requirements (permanent, transit and Showpeople)
 - a small number of Options for the distribution of requirements between local authorities
- ‘. . . in the light of the GTAAs and a strategic view of needs across the Region’ (Circular 01/2006, para 23)

Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Review : Tasks Completed

- A Reference Group of stakeholders has been established to advise the process and has met twice so far
- The 6 sub-regional GTAAs have been examined and pitch requirements collated
- Strategic authorities have been asked for their Advice (under Section 4(4)) on pitch numbers and possible ways of distributing them between LAs
- The Advice has been collated and assessed:
 - some information gaps remain
 - little guidance given on approaches to pitch distribution

Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Review : Ongoing Tasks

- Determining the principles for Option development for permanent pitches:
 - ‘need where it arises’ (as in GTAAs)
 - taking account of planning opportunities and constraints
 - a more even distribution to maximise choice
- This will be the subject of a further request for Advice from Strategic Authorities
- Developing a consultation strategy and making links

Later Milestones

- WMRA develops Options drawing on Section 4(4) Advice, other evidence of need, and advice from the Reference Group and CLG
- Formal Consultation on Issues and Options, involving a wide range of stakeholders including Gypsy and Traveller communities
- Development of the Preferred Option for submission to the Secretary of State
- Formal Consultation on the Preferred Option prior to Examination in Public

Features of the West Midlands

- In terms of process, can learn from Gypsy and Traveller reviews in other Regions:
 - South West – Proposed Changes following EiP
 - East of England – awaiting Panel report after EiP
 - South East – Issues and Options Consultation in process

Features of the West Midlands

- A very varied Region:
 - conurbation, smaller towns, suburban and deep rural areas
 - all the main Traveller groups represented – Romany Gypsies, Irish Travellers, New Travellers and Travelling Showpeople – with different needs
 - uneven spread of current site provision and need arising, but not so extreme as East of England

An Indication of Levels of Need to be Planned For

□ From the GTAAs, the extent of requirements to be planned for at regional level:

- permanent pitches 2007-2012 660
- permanent pitches 2012-2017 279

2007-2012

- transit pitches/stopping places 240
- plots for Travelling Showpeople 120