

CABINET (LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK) COMMITTEE

11 SEPTEMBER 2007

MEETING GYPSY AND TRAVELLER ACCOMODATION NEEDS

REPORT OF HEAD OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

Contact Officer: Greg White Tel No: 01962 848418

RECENT REFERENCES:

None

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report sets out the requirement under revised housing legislation and the new planning system for the accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers to be met more effectively in the future and, as a result, to reverse past levels of under-provision which have led to caravan site and pitch shortages throughout the country, including Hampshire.

The report outlines the work which has been carried out to produce a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) on behalf of all the Hampshire and Isle of Wight authorities and the part that this will then play in the South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA)'s 'Partial Review' of the South East Plan. This Partial Review will inform the policies in the Regional Spatial Strategy, with the result that individual planning authorities will be allocated specific pitch requirements to meet gypsy and traveller needs within their area; for both permanent and transit accommodation.

It will then be for each authority, acting independently or in co-operation with others, to translate the number of pitches set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy into specific site allocations in the relevant Development Plan Document(s) which forms part of its Local Development Framework (LDF).

The report indicates the phases of the Regional Assembly's programme which lie ahead and the potential implications for Winchester District and the production of its Local Development Framework. Different rates of progress mean that final pitch requirements from the Regional Spatial Strategy will not be available before the City Council is due to publish issues and options through its 'Core Strategy' document.

Nevertheless, the report goes on to recommend firstly, the need for the Core Strategy to indicate that provision to meet locally generated gypsy and traveller needs will need to be made and that this will require more detailed expression through a Development Plan Document.

Secondly, that the Core Strategy should deal with options for accommodating gypsy and traveller sites which can then be used to guide the allocation of any sites through the overall LDF process.

Finally, that Cabinet should be recommended to endorse a draft joint statement which sets out the current position of the South Hampshire Group of authorities, of which Winchester is part. Such a statement, which represents the Group's initial response to the publication of the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment and anticipates future co-working within the Group to meet accommodation needs, could then be forwarded to SEERA to inform its 'Partial Review' of the South East Plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the Committee notes the interim conclusions of the GTAA and, from these, the likely need for making specific provision to meet the local accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers.
2. That work should continue on this issue, with a view to identifying issues and options for consultation at the relevant stage in the production of the LDF.
3. That the Committee notes the content of the draft submission, set out in paragraph 9.4 of this report and recommends to Cabinet that this should be approved as a joint statement to be submitted to SEERA, on behalf of Winchester and the South Hampshire group of authorities, in order to inform the Partial Review of the South East Plan.

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DETAIL:

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Housing Act 2004 now requires all local housing authorities to include gypsies and travellers in their accommodation assessments. This particular change is expected to form part of a more strategic approach, which includes the need for such authorities to draw up a reasoned scheme to demonstrate how the accommodation needs of these particular groups will be met, as part of their wider housing strategy.
- 1.2 The recently issued planning Circular: 'Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Sites' (1/2006), which replaced the earlier DOE Circular 1/94: 'Gypsy Sites and Planning', is more specifically intended to address the issue of a general under-provision of sites for gypsies and travellers. In certain parts of the country, a historic and ongoing failure to make proper provision has resulted in a serious shortage of suitable accommodation for these recognised groups. Consequently, the new Circular requires local housing and planning authorities to adopt a more pro-active stance in terms of encouraging and, where necessary, providing additional sites for permanent and/or transit accommodation in all those areas where there is a recognised and quantified need.
- 1.3 Under the new planning system, the revised Circular and the Government's Planning Policy Statement PPS.11: 'Regional Spatial Strategies' envisage a combined use of the South East England Regional Assembly's Regional Spatial Strategy, together with individual local planning authority's Local Development Frameworks, in order to make robust strategic and locally-based assessments of what practical steps may have to be taken, in any given area. This joint approach is designed to reverse past trends and help to deliver a better future provision which meets the legitimate accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers whilst, in the longer term, reducing levels of impact on local residents, business communities and local authorities.

2. The Planning Circular

- 2.1 The Planning Circular is part of the Government's ongoing review of gypsy and traveller policy, a main object of which is to ensure that there is an effective provision of appropriate sites, both public and private, for these particular communities. Included among these is the culturally distinct grouping of 'travelling show people'. In addition, the Government is committed to "bringing to an end" unauthorised development and the conflict which this generates. In order to progress this aim, there are a number of key changes contained in the Circular:-

- The requirement that local authorities should identify suitable sites for gypsies and travellers in their Development Plan Documents (DPDs). Only in exceptional cases will it now be acceptable to meet such needs by setting out criteria for the identification of sites, without identifying specific sites.
- The inclusion of a revised definition of 'gypsies and travellers' which allows for the cessation of travelling, either temporarily or permanently, for reasons of health, education or old age.
- Improved guidance on drafting the criteria contained in development plans, against which applications for additional sites not allocated in the plan can be judged.
- An explanation as to how local housing needs assessments will assist local authorities in quantifying the level of need and how the new planning system and the involvement of Regional Housing Boards, will translate that need into allocations through the planning process.

2.2 Furthermore, the Government's intentions, as expressed through the Circular, include a number of specific aims. These are:-

- To incorporate the role of gypsy and traveller site accommodation within the wider housing provision, as part of the Government's key objective of ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent home.
- To facilitate and help to maintain the traditional way of life of gypsies and travellers.
- To emphasise the importance of assessing needs at regional and sub-regional levels and for local authorities to develop strategies to ensure that such needs are dealt with openly and fairly.
- To increase the number of gypsy and traveller sites with planning permission, in order to address what is now regarded as a significant under-provision.
- To promote good community relations at the local level and avoid the controversy and conflict often associated with unauthorised developments and encampments.
- To ensure that the location of new or expanded sites is considered from the point of view of their sustainability, both in terms of service provision and transport.
- To reduce the number of unauthorised encampments and developments and to make enforcement more effective, especially in cases where local authorities have complied with the guidance in the Circular.

3. The South East Plan

3.2 To reflect the Circular's provisions, the South East Plan now contains an interim statement committing the South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA) to an early 'Partial Review' of its Plan, having specific regard to the issue of gypsy and traveller accommodation and meeting the requirements of the Circular.

3.3 As envisaged by SEERA, this Partial Review will have a number of objectives:-

- To determine an appropriate provision for gypsy and traveller caravan pitches across the South East, in accordance with locally identified needs. This will include additional provision, as necessary, for 'travelling show people'.
- To assess the most appropriate distribution of local authority transit and permanent caravan pitches across the region.
- To include members of the gypsy and traveller communities, as part of a comprehensive stakeholder engagement in the review process.
- To clearly set out the role of the Regional Spatial Strategy, in providing for Gypsy and traveller accommodation and to identify any implications for other relevant regional strategies, including the Regional Housing Strategy.
- To ensure that the review is consistent with the principles of the Integrated Regional Strategy and the draft South East Plan.

4. Winchester's initial involvement

- 4.1 In order to develop the kind of strategically linked responses required by Government, officers of the City Council have joined a county-wide joint steering group, as an offshoot of the Strategic Housing Officers Group, to compare levels of need and ensure appropriate provision. It was agreed by the Group, at an early stage, that only by taking a Hampshire-wide approach to the required Housing Needs Assessment would it be possible to achieve outcomes which could achieve consistency, equity, deliverability and cost effectiveness.
- 4.2 The Group, therefore, drew up a specification to commission a comprehensive survey of the accommodation needs and aspirations of gypsies and travellers throughout Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. Consultants, David Couttie Associates (DCA), were subsequently appointed to undertake the task and began work on the assessment in December 2005.
- 4.3 The resulting data and findings of the assessment were issued to the project's partners in an initial draft form in November 2006 and re-issued, in a modified form, in July 2007. The report and its conclusions will form the basis for further discussion among the partner authorities, in the period from July to September this year.
- 4.4 It is intended that this process will culminate in agreement by individual authorities, or groups of authorities, as to a broadly acceptable way forward in tackling the assessed accommodation need and that such an agreement can be consolidated and expressed through the Joint Authorities Panel. This would then allow the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Government Association (HIOWA) to make a formal submission to the Regional Assembly on behalf of all the Hampshire District and Unitary authorities. Such a submission must be made on, or before, the 15th October 2007. In the event that any authority is unable to support a collective agreement, it will then be for that authority to make its own reasoned submission directly to the Assembly, before the October deadline.

- 4.5 Although the current emphasis is on bringing local authorities together, to develop collective solutions to the issue of meeting gypsy and travellers' accommodation needs, it should be pointed out that Winchester has a reasonably good record in terms of having made provision for such needs over the years. Whilst there are, currently, ten gypsy and four traveller sites which have been refused planning permission and are the subject of enforcement action, there are, in addition to the local authority site at Tynfield, near Whiteley, a total of eight privately owned gypsy sites with planning permission and a further four sites for travelling show people which also have planning permission.

5. The Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment's Findings

- 5.1 During the course of the study DCA have gathered and subsequently analysed a great deal of data relating to different aspects of accommodation need. This includes detailed information relating to: travel patterns; local access to health and education services; access to other services and facilities; additional needs resulting from disability; and both individual and group preferences regarding the type and location of future provision for accommodation.
- 5.2 A number of 'Key Action Points' have emerged from the study, among which are those underpinning the overall conclusion that there is a need to make further provision for both permanent and transit sites. The principal Action Points are contained within the Executive Summary of the DCA report, attached to this report as Appendix A.
- 5.3 Other Action Points (shown in full, on pages 129-131 of the Final Report) relate to planning policy, partnership working with the community, education/health and the management of sites. A copy of the Final Report's 'Executive Summary', which sets out the key findings, is attached to this report as Appendix A.

6. Recommendations of the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment

Permanent site provision

- 6.1 Allowing for some degree of technical refinement it is likely that, if endorsed by the partner authorities on the advice of the Joint Authorities Panel, the findings of the county-wide study, highlighted in the main action points, will underpin the conclusions of the Accommodation Assessment when it is formally submitted to the Regional Assembly in October of this year. The Assessment's findings for the Isle of Wight will be the subject of a separate submission.
- 6.2 Consequently, unless more significant changes are made in the meantime, it is likely that the Assembly will be advised to endorse a total provision for the Hampshire Districts, Portsmouth and Southampton, of 44 new permanent pitches for the period 2006-2011. The consultant's study found that, for the study area, combining the backlog of residential need with newly emerging need generates an overall requirement for 89 permanent new pitches during the period to 2011. However, this gross figure has been adjusted downward, by subtracting the projected level of supply, which currently amounts to 45 new pitches.

- 6.3 In terms of new provision, the Assessment points to the fact that the Steering Group had agreed “that the recommendations and the breakdown of need across the study area should group all the Hampshire District’s together; this gives greater flexibility to meet needs across Hampshire, taking account of environmental constraints and sustainability”.
- 6.4 The Assessment also indicates that “The distribution of new sites across the study area will be a matter for each local authority to determine”. Nevertheless, the Assessment does note that “although there is already a strong supply of authorised site pitches within the Hampshire Districts, these are concentrated in Hart, Winchester, New Forest and, to a lesser extent, Test Valley. Based on existing and ideal locations the data suggests an ongoing need for new provision in these areas to cope with overcrowding and new family formation”.
- 6.5 However, any particular sub-division of the overall ‘targets’ could only be regarded as indicative, at this stage. Notwithstanding this, according to the area breakdown of the Hampshire figure (set out in the DCA report’s Executive Summary, Appendix A), the South Area (Havant, Gosport, Portsmouth, East Hampshire, Winchester and Fareham) would have an overall need for “18 new permanent authorised pitches in the south of the study area, over the next five years”. To give an indication of the scale of such a provision the ‘Tynefield’ site in the southern part of Wickham Parish, which is the only local authority site within the South Area, currently accommodates 18 families on 36 caravan pitches.
- 6.6 The Assessment goes on to indicate that “the need identified in the south of the study area was focused in Winchester [District]. This reflects the higher proportion of gypsy and traveller households already in Winchester and the need arising from overcrowded households on existing authorised sites and new forming households on all sites in Winchester. The turnover of pitches on the Tynefield site in Winchester will go some way to meeting need within the south of the study area”.
- 6.7 In addition, the Assessment points out that “There is also a high level of unauthorised camping within Winchester. The Caravan Count recorded an average of 28 caravans, equating to 21 households on unauthorised sites in Winchester over the last three July Caravan Counts”. Partly in consequence of this, the study projects a need for 11 households (some of which are currently living on unauthorised or overcrowded sites) to be accommodated on new permanent site pitches within Winchester. “This is based on the percentage need by district applied to the total net need for 44 pitches, after the supply from pitch turnover has been taken into consideration”.
- 6.8 To put this again into a wider context the Assessment does, nevertheless, recognise that for the provision of new pitches “Our recommendations for the distribution of sites at a local level are based on preferences expressed through the survey, but draw on broader findings from secondary data and stakeholder engagement....The Steering Group agreed that recommendations and the breakdown of need across the study area should group the study area into the North, South and West areas; this gives greater flexibility to meet needs across Hampshire taking account of environmental constraints and sustainability”. As referred to in paragraph 6.5, above this grouping has resulted in an overall figure of 18 new site pitches for the South group, which includes Winchester.

Transit site provision

- 6.9 With regard to the provision of transit sites, the Assessment's methodology draws on data from the established Caravan Count procedure, secondary information from Hampshire County Council and the individual authorities (including some data derived from enforcement activity) and the findings from a number of questions contained in the survey itself. The Caravan Count and local data both demonstrate a high level of unauthorised camping, which initially suggests a need for additional transit provision. However, the Assessment does make the point that "on closer examination of the data... it was found that most of these households need a permanent pitch. Transit provision would only be appropriate as a short term option until a permanent pitch becomes available".
- 6.10 This comment notwithstanding, the Assessment has calculated an overall transit need which is based on information relating to: vulnerable families evicted during the previous twelve-month period; households moving through the study area; families moving within the study area and; the distribution of unauthorised camping within the area. From the information obtained it has been concluded that there is a county-wide need for 41 households to be accommodated on transit pitches.
- 6.11 The Assessment goes on to suggest that "The nature of this provision will be a matter for local debate and further guidance is awaited from the Department for Communities and Local Government". Notwithstanding this, the Assessment also indicates that "Transit provision should be approached with some caution and flexibility. A full review of the need for transit provision should be carried out in 2011; this should take into consideration the impact of new permanent pitch provision on demand for transit pitches locally".
- 6.12 Nevertheless, the Assessment concludes by recommending the provision of four managed transit sites, one in the north of Hampshire (Basingstoke and Deane), one in the south of Hampshire (Winchester), one in western Hampshire (covering the areas of Test Valley, Eastleigh and New Forest) and a fourth, arranged independently by Southampton. As a supplement to this, it is recommended that a Hampshire-wide strategy should be developed for dealing more effectively with any unauthorised encampments and that this should be backed up by an agreed protocol to enable all relevant agencies, including the police, to share information.

7. Informing the preparation of Development Plan Documents

- 7.1 In terms of the Government's planning guidance, the number of pitches set out in a Regional Spatial Strategy must be translated into specific site allocations, in one of the Development Plan Documents forming part of a local authority's Local Development Framework. Prior to this, each authority's Core Strategy will need to set out the number of pitches required and the criteria for the location of gypsy and traveller sites, which can be used to guide the allocation of sites in the relevant DPD. Such criteria may then be used to respond to, and deal with, later instances of unforeseen demand. However, under the terms of the Planning Act (2004), the suitability of any such criteria will be subject to detailed scrutiny and possible Government intervention in the plan-making process, if this should become necessary.

- 7.2 Therefore, under the new planning system, planning policies which rule out, or place unreasonable constraints on the development of gypsy and traveller sites, cannot be included in either RSSs or DPDs. Furthermore, criteria must not be used as an alternative to site allocations through LDF's, where there is an identified need for pitches.
- 7.3 In terms of delivery, there are also requirements for annual monitoring. However, the Government does accept that allocating suitable sites is, in certain respects, even more challenging than using the previous criteria-based policy approach. The new approach will almost inevitably require more resources and could well delay the preparation of LDFs.
- 7.4 The result of this could lead to an initial policy vacuum and greater uncertainty for all concerned, especially in circumstances where neighbouring authorities are attempting to coordinate provision and seek to progress this through stages of their own LDF formation which may not be following a similar timetable. Furthermore, delay in putting Local Development Frameworks in place would also impact on the process of determining planning appeals, with Planning Inspectors becoming increasingly inclined to grant temporary planning permissions, to offset the lack of a clear policy-led strategy at the local level.
- 7.5 Overall, the requirement that local planning authorities should allocate sites is an important feature of the plan-led system now in operation. The underlying intention is that this changed approach is more responsive to the needs of the community, is more capable of managing expectations and has the potential to reduce conflict. Where there is an assessment of need, the allocation of sites according to clear criteria based policies should provide greater certainty for both local people and the gypsy and travellers' community.
- 7.6 However, this will not necessarily remove friction, because of the inherent sensitivity of the issue. Furthermore, the powers that the Government will retain and may use to require Councils to comply with the Circular could, in fairly extreme circumstances, result in allocations being made which are in conflict with the wishes of the local authority.

8. Implications for the Winchester District

- 8.1 Given the emergent status of both the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment and the Regional Spatial Strategy there are, at present, very real uncertainties for most Hampshire authorities, in terms of seeking to address the currently unmet and anticipated future accommodation needs of these groups. This uncertainty holds good for both Winchester and its neighbouring authorities.
- 8.2 Whilst the Planning Circular makes it clear that the Regional Spatial Strategy is intended to establish and then allocate District-level pitch numbers for incorporation into Local Development Frameworks there are, nevertheless, a number of important stages to be gone through before this particular mechanism becomes fully operational. Indeed, the Circular makes provision for the transition to the new system by indicating that "Where it is not possible to allocate pitch numbers comprehensively in the current round of RSS revisions, RPBs will need to consider interim arrangements".

- 8.3 With regard to the Partial Review of the South East Plan, which is of central importance to the Hampshire authorities in terms of being given specific requirements for providing caravan pitches for gypsies and travellers, the Regional Assembly's Planning Committee has recently amended the Review timetable. This has had the effect of putting back the deadline for final submission of 'advice' from the local authorities until mid-October 2007. As a consequence of this and following further consideration including consultation on options, the Regional Assembly's approval of the Partial Review's policy content and provisions is expected to be given in November 2008, with submission to the Government Office following in December 2008.
- 8.4 Clearly, it will some time before firm targets are set and allocations assigned to individual authorities. In some cases, such allocations will involve actively engaging with an adjoining authority (or authorities) to deliver the necessary provision in the most appropriate location.
- 8.5 In any event, the City Council is required to incorporate relevant measures for meeting its eventual allocation figures, as part of the Local Development Framework. Although the GTAA's current figures for both permanent and transit accommodation needs are some way from being endorsed by the Assembly and reflected in the Partial Review, they do give an indication of the fact that almost all Hampshire authorities are likely to receive some level of allocation for new accommodation needs and will have to make local provision, accordingly.
- 8.6 However, with regard to transit provision, Winchester District's inclusion as a key element in the 'South Hampshire' grouping will create additional challenges, in terms of seeking to develop and drive forward a collective solution with the five other authorities in this particular group. Overall, the Accommodation Assessment clearly intends that any new transit sites within Hampshire should be closely and conveniently situated along the main travel corridors; which comprise the A303, M3, M27, A3 (M) and their respective linkages.
- 8.7 Given the alignment of boundaries between Winchester and its group partners (East Hampshire, Havant, Portsmouth, Gosport and Fareham), which generally run along the District's southern and eastern edges, it would appear that the Assessment envisages a transit site for South Hampshire which is closely related to the M27 - A3 (M) corridor. Added to this, practical experience gained by the County Council and other Hampshire authorities supports the view that a transit site located any significant distance from this type of well-travelled route would have only limited appeal to groups in transit.
- 8.8 This particular corridor skirts around the Winchester District and the only point at which it can be accessed from within the District is at Junction 9 (M27), Whiteley. All other access points, along its full length, are located within the boundaries of other authorities in the South Hampshire group. Additionally, it should be borne in mind that the same junction (Junction 9) is also the nearest point on the principal road network to the existing permanent gypsy and traveller site at Tynefield.
9. A Draft Submission on behalf of the South Hampshire Group of Authorities
- 9.1 At a recent meeting of officers representing Winchester, East Hampshire, Havant, Portsmouth, Gosport and Fareham, the issue of attempting to arrive

at an agreed submission on behalf of the South Group was discussed. Pressure is now being put on all the Hampshire authorities to make a collective or, if wholly unavoidable, individual submissions to SEERA, before the cut-off date in October. Consequently, there is now considerable urgency in seeking to formulate a joint 'position statement' from the six South Hampshire authorities.

- 9.2 If such a position could be achieved, the resulting statement could then be brought together with other, similar statements on behalf of the West and North Hampshire Groups, to support a joint Hampshire Submission to SEERA. A unified response of this kind would then be taken, in conjunction with the 'advice' contained in the submitted findings and recommendations of the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment, in order to inform the South East Plan's Partial Review.
- 9.3 However, if an individual authority was to reject the evidence base and/or conclusions of the Accommodation Assessment at this stage, it is likely that the Partial Review would lead to a mandatory allocation to that authority which took little, if any, account of further potential for collaborative working with other authorities within its 'group' and, therefore, the possibility of negotiating a more equitable distribution of provision, particularly with regard to transit needs.
- 9.4 Following the officer group meeting referred to in paragraph 9.1, the following draft statement has been produced:

"Although there have been reservations expressed about the findings in the DCA report, it is agreed that this represents a snapshot in time which will act as a foundation from which future surveys will benefit, as experience in this challenging housing needs assessment field grows. In view of this, the South Area Sub-Group accepts the overall figures for Hampshire and Isle of Wight (44 permanent and 41 transit pitches) and also accepts the recommendation in the DCA report that 18 permanent pitches should be identified across the geographical area that the Sub-Group covers.

The process to determine where those pitches might be provided has begun and the Sub-Group is working together to achieve the necessary outcomes. However, the process is complex and needs to involve site identification, public consultation and Elected Member approval. The Sub-Group wishes to work to achieve shared provision where it can, because: this will enable sites to be best placed for access by the Gypsy and Traveller community and; the economies of scale achieved by joint provision will ensure that investment is well spent and that the management of resources is available to ensure the sustainability of site provision".

10. Conclusions and Recommendations

- 10.1 The Planning Circular is clearly intended to reverse the under-provision of accommodation for gypsies and travellers which has occurred in recent years and, therefore, encourages far more rapid and effective action by all local authorities to overcome this problem. Indeed, the Circular states that "Where there is clear and immediate need, for instance evidenced through the presence of significant numbers of unauthorised encampments or developments, local planning authorities should bring forward DPDs

containing site allocations, in advance of the regional consideration of pitch numbers and the completion of the new GTAAs”.

- 10.2 However, given that within Hampshire the most critical part of the new allocation and delivery mechanism is now centred on the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment and the way in which this will feed through to the Regional Assembly’s Partial Review of the South East Plan, there seems little point in individual authorities taking pre-emptive action at this stage, particularly in regard to the issue of transit provision, where a collective approach is now expected and should prove to be more successful.
- 10.3 In terms of the currently assessed shortage of gypsy and traveller accommodation, the Winchester District is by no means out of step with other Hampshire authorities. However, given the findings of the Final Draft GTAA and, in particular, the level of unauthorised encampments in the District, combined with the preferences expressed by interviewees, it is quite likely that Winchester will be assigned an allocation for new permanent accommodation that is broadly in line with the ‘Needs Accommodation Model’ figures coming out of the GTAA.
- 10.4 In addition, Winchester may be expected to be pivotally involved in the provision of a transit site serving ‘south Hampshire’. At the very least, this would require liaison and close co-operation with East Hampshire, Havant and Fareham, notwithstanding any particular District location that might ultimately be selected
- 10.5 Therefore, in terms of the City Council’s own Local Development Framework and the timetable set for this in the Local Development Scheme (LDS) there is a need to set down, through the ‘issues and options’ stage of the forthcoming Core Strategy, the options for making an allocation, or allocations, to meet part of the County-wide shortfall in pitches. In addition, the Core Strategy should include a clear strategy and criteria for the location of gypsy and traveller sites which can then be used to guide any necessary allocation in the site allocations Development Plan Document.
- 10.6 A further aspect of the Council’s development of issues and options could involve reviewing the status and local impact of existing unauthorised gypsy and traveller sites within the District and giving further consideration to the question of whether, any of these, might be thought suitable candidates for the grant of an authorising permission. If any currently unauthorised site was to be legitimised in this way, such a gain in accommodation provision could be offset against the District site requirements called for by the Partial Review.
- 10.7 Under the terms of the current LDS (August 2007), approved by Cabinet in January 2007, submission of the Council’s Core Strategy and Sustainability Appraisal report to the Secretary of State are timetabled for September 2008. This is, therefore, likely to precede the Regional Assembly’s adoption of its Partial Review and the formal issuing of allocations to individual authorities.
- 10.8 All these matters will be the subject of further reports to be put before this Committee, as additional information becomes available regarding the progress of the Partial Review and the likely breakdown of allocations to the Districts. Nevertheless, the main purpose of the current report is to update

the situation and inform Members of the evidence that has been collected, to date.

- 10.9 It is expected that, despite the mismatched timing with the Partial Review, the City Council's Core Strategy will need to include a general policy on the provision of gypsy and traveller accommodation and acknowledge the fact that a site, or sites, will have to be put forward to meet local gypsy/traveller needs, as part of the District's development requirement to be met through its Development Provision and Allocations DPD. The next stage, therefore, is for the development of possible options which will lead to a strategy to inform and guide the location of any such sites.
- 10.10 The inclusion of a site (or sites) allocation will form part of the Development Provisions DPD and this element would also need to be fully compliant with the evidence-base, front-loading, Statement of Community Involvement, Sustainability Appraisal and other requirements which apply to all Development Plan Documents.
- 10.11 Taking account of these factors, joint working should continue with other Hampshire authorities, particularly those where there appears to be most scope for joint provision (East Hampshire, Havant and Fareham District Councils). This could be particularly useful in terms of the transit situation, given the relative importance within southern Hampshire of the M27-A3 (M) corridor which passes around Winchester and through adjoining Districts.
- 10.12 With that in mind, it is recommended that the draft statement set out in paragraph 9.4, above should be adopted as a reasonable summary of the City Council's position, both in response to the publication of the GTAA and in regard to its intention to work with the other South Hampshire authorities in meeting the formal requirements which will ultimately emerge from the Partial Review.
- 10.13 It will be necessary, in due course, for the Council's housing and strategic planning teams to survey and initially screen possible locations within the District which might be considered potentially suitable in terms of their sustainability, transport connections and various other constraints. This will ensure that sites for new pitches can be identified for the purpose of eventual allocation, through the Development Provisions DPD.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

11. CORPORATE STRATEGY (RELEVANCE TO):

This report is of relevance to the Corporate Strategy's aim of maintaining and supporting the local economy and conserving the resource base and the rural landscape, together with the Strategy's objective of sustaining and improving the natural environment and promoting a healthier, safer and more caring community.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

12. If the recommendations contained in this report are adopted there will be implications for this authority, both in financial and staff resource terms. Adequate resources exist to undertake the necessary studies, but if these

suggest the need for the development of additional sites new funding would then be required.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

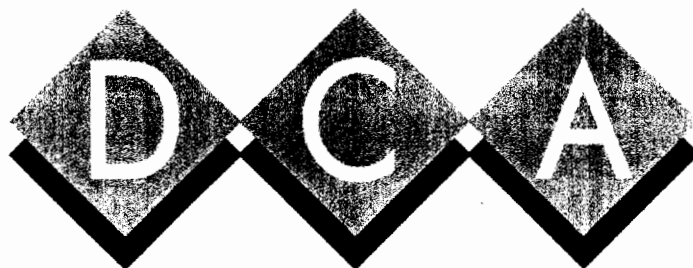
13. Copies of the GTAA will be deposited in the Planning Department of the Development Services Directorate and in the Chief Executive's unit.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A: Hampshire and Isle of Wight Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment: The Report's Executive Summary

Appendix B: The GTAA's role in the formation of a Regional Spatial Strategy

HAMPSHIRE & ISLE OF WIGHT
GYPSY & TRAVELLER
ACCOMMODATION ASSESSMENT
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

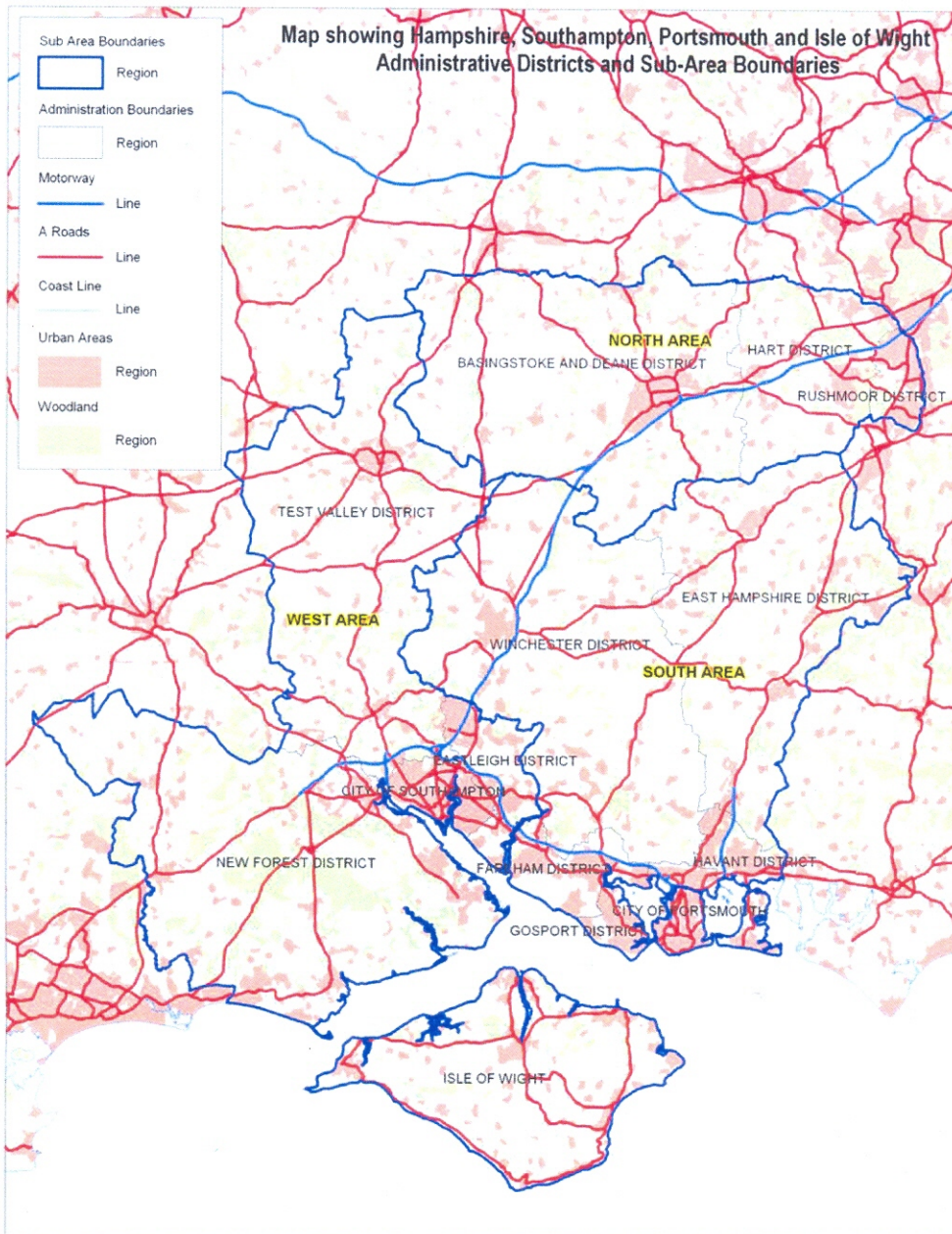


This study was conducted during 2006 and this report published in June 2007.

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Key Aims and Objectives

- 1.1.1 The Local Authorities in Hampshire, Southampton, Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight commissioned the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) jointly in January 2006.
- 1.1.2 A map of the study area is shown below.



- 1.1.3 The study has been carried out in line with the latest Draft Guidance on Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments (February 2006).
- 1.1.4 *"The assessment of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation need is a statutory requirement under s225 of the Housing Act 2004"* (Draft Guidance February 2006 paragraph 1).
- 1.1.5 This report does not include Travelling Show People; this is in line with Government Planning Circular 1/2006. However guidance coming into force in January 2007 expanded the definition of Gypsy and Travellers for the purposes of the 2004 Housing Act to include Show People. DCA recommend and the Steering Group accept, that a separate study of the needs of Travelling Show People be carried out sub-regionally in the autumn of 2007.
- 1.1.6 The methodology adopted for the study comprised:
- Secondary data analysis;
 - A specialist survey of Gypsy and Traveller households;
 - Stakeholder engagement.
- 1.1.7 There are many difficulties inherent in producing a robust and defensible GTAA. The key challenges are:
- The often hidden elements of the community;
 - The small size of the Gypsy and Traveller population in relation to the overall population;
 - The lack of data on ethnicity reflecting Gypsy and Traveller as a separate ethnic group;
 - The mobile nature of the community;
 - The lack of historic data on the needs of the community.
- 1.1.8 A total of 145 site-based interviews were completed including 64 on unauthorised sites across Hampshire, and Southampton. No interviews were carried out in Portsmouth as there are no authorised sites and no unauthorised encampments or developments found during the study period. A further 22 interviews were completed on unauthorised encampments on the Isle of Wight, which are analysed in a separate report. (See Appendix XIX)
- 1.1.9 22 interviews were completed with households living in bricks and mortar accommodation.
- 1.1.10 The survey response rate was 65.9% on authorised sites and 79% on unauthorised encampments and developments.

Table 1-1 *Number of Households and Response Rate*

	Estimated number of households		Number of interviews achieved	
	Authorised	Unauthorised	Authorised	Unauthorised
	N ^{os.}	N ^{os.}	N ^{os.}	N ^{os.}
Hampshire districts	109	78	67	61
Portsmouth	0	0	0	0
Southampton	14	3	14	3
Total	123	81	81	64

- 1.1.11 Following debate within the Steering Group and discussions with DCLG it was agreed that the Caravan Count provides a sound and credible starting base from which to establish the total number of households living on sites in Hampshire and Southampton.
- 1.1.12 Site based interviews in Hampshire and Southampton have been grossed to the known population of Gypsy and Traveller households to represent the whole site based community.
- 1.1.13 The sample of households living in Bricks and Mortar accommodation and the sample of site-based travellers on the Isle of Wight has not been grossed, as there is no credible baseline available.
- 1.1.14 It was also agreed that DCA should apply weighting factors at a local authority level, which eliminates the potential bias resulting from differing response rates in different local authority areas.
- 1.1.15 In the case of Hampshire and Southampton, the Caravan Count provides a credible baseline from which DCA has been able to estimate the number of Gypsy and Traveller households living on authorised and unauthorised sites.
- 1.1.16 Table 2 of the July 2006 Caravan Count provides information on the number of pitches available on local authority sites, with a pitch being let to a single household. Local management data is available to confirm the number of vacancies on these sites, allowing DCA to calculate the number of occupied pitches and therefore the number of resident households.
- 1.1.17 The information available from local authorities and the Caravan Count on private authorised sites also provides a credible baseline from which to work. DCA applied the number of living units per household as found in the DCA Gypsy and Traveller household survey to the July 2006 Caravan Count, to derive the number of households living on authorised private sites, a total of 47 for Hampshire and Southampton. There are no private sites in Portsmouth.
- 1.1.18 To address the fluctuation both seasonally and over the years in relation to households on unauthorised sites, and to achieve a credible baseline for DCA to work with, we used the average number of unauthorised caravans recorded in the study area over the last 3 July Counts (2004, 2005 and 2006).

- 1.1.19 The survey data showing the average number of living units per household on unauthorised sites was then applied to the Caravan Count data to derive the number of households on unauthorised sites. The household figure was further refined during the fieldwork period where in some cases a higher number of households was found. This local knowledge was used to adjust the estimated number of households before the data was grossed and weighted.
- 1.1.20 In line with Draft Guidance, grossing the data to a total known population allows the study to reflect the needs of all Gypsy and Traveller households within the study area, *“enabling the local authority or partnership to derive overall figures by which to identify accurately the current level of Gypsy and Traveller households and accommodation need in that area”* (Draft Guidance February 2006 paragraph 76).

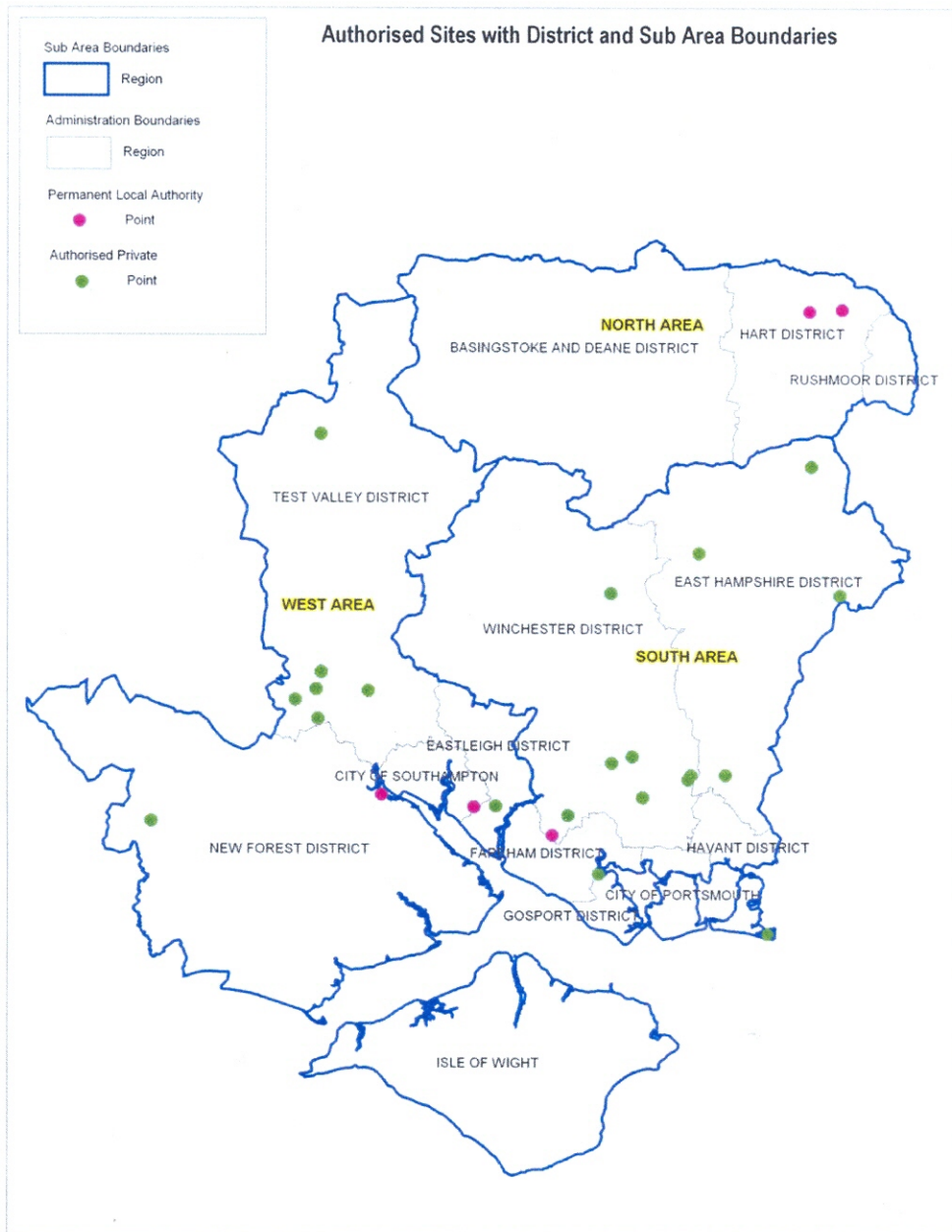
1.2 Secondary Data Analysis

- 1.2.1 A wide range of secondary data was collected and analysed as part of the GTAA. The project brief required an analysis of existing statistical information on Gypsy and Traveller households; in addition DCA requested secondary data from all local authorities to supplement and verify the survey findings and local policies and strategies for housing, health, education and supporting people to create some context for the study.
- 1.2.2 The Caravan Count provides the only national published data on Gypsy and Traveller households. Although the Caravan Count is widely recognised as an imperfect record it none the less provides a nationally established baseline from which to work.
- 1.2.3 In the 1970s and 1980s Local Authorities had a statutory duty to provide permanent sites. There were 6 sites in the study area providing approximately 118 pitches.
- 1.2.4 Since 1995 one site at Peaks Copse Dummer has closed and another in Kaneshill in Southampton has been refurbished with fewer pitches. There are now five permanent local authority sites in the study area providing 92 pitches.
- 1.2.5 Local authority sites are concentrated in the west and central districts; there is a lack of provision in the north of the study area and on the Isle of Wight.
- 1.2.6 Apart from the Caravan Count there are no other formal records of how many authorised private sites were in the study area before the survey nor how many pitches they provided. On the basis of the Caravan Count and survey data the GTAA estimates 21 authorised private sites in the study area. The numbers of pitches are unknown for three sites. The rest provide between one and four spaces totalling an estimated 36 pitches. Six pitches were identified in Test Valley with time limited planning permission that will expire by 2011.
- 1.2.7 Analysis of the Caravan Count over the last 25 years suggests that across Hampshire private authorised sites are not developing as rapidly as private sites in other parts of the country. The reasons for this need to be explored and may include, planning decisions and restrictions, the high cost of land, or a shortage of land.

- 1.2.8 A parallel trend within the Caravan Count shows a growth in unauthorised camping across the study area over the last 25 years. This increase is part of national pattern and may be due to a number of factors, for example a general increase in the numbers of people in Gypsy and Traveller populations, a reduction in the number of permanent sites, the loss of land previously used for unauthorised encampments, and the numbers of people now living in bricks and mortar accommodation who may travel for short periods of time.
- 1.2.9 Apart from the Caravan Count there are no formal records of how many unauthorised developments there are in the study area, or how many pitches they provide. On the basis of the Caravan Count and information collected during the fieldwork period the study has recorded an average of 30 households on unauthorised developments and 29 on unauthorised encampments over the last 3 years.
- 1.2.10 There are no formal records of how many Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar housing, DCA recommend that procedures be put in place to monitor the number of households in bricks and mortar accommodation to inform future GTAA's.
- 1.2.11 Local staff working with the community report that Gypsies and Travellers living in bricks and mortar accommodation are a significant minority ethnic community in some parts of Hampshire. Some people have lived in housing for several generations but still wish to travel.
- 1.2.12 Nationally there is evidence to show that increasing numbers of Gypsies and Travellers have felt forced to stop travelling because of the lack of legal stopping places and the difficulty of accessing services for children or vulnerable people when they are not living in bricks and mortar accommodation.
- 1.2.13 In addition to the information provided by the Caravan Count a wide range of site management and planning data was collected for the study. However, consistent data across Local Authority areas was difficult to obtain, and DCA recommend improved monitoring of site management and planning data to inform future GTAA's.
- 1.2.14 The study also found a lack of reference to Gypsy and Traveller needs in local plans and strategies. DCA recommend that future plans and strategies should more fully reflect the needs of this community and be developed in consultation with the Gypsy and Traveller community.
- 1.2.15 It is recommended that all Hampshire districts develop Gypsy and Traveller strategies which will ensure that the Gypsy and Traveller community are engaged in planning for their future needs. Southampton has already developed a Gypsy and Traveller Strategy which could provide a good practice model for the other Hampshire districts.

1.3 Key Findings From Households on Authorised Sites

- 1.3.1 There are five permanent local authority sites providing 92 pitches, and 21 authorised private sites providing around 47 pitches across the study area. There are no authorised sites in Basingstoke and Deane, Fareham, Rushmoor or Portsmouth.
- 1.3.2 Authorised sites have been mapped using grid references in the map below.



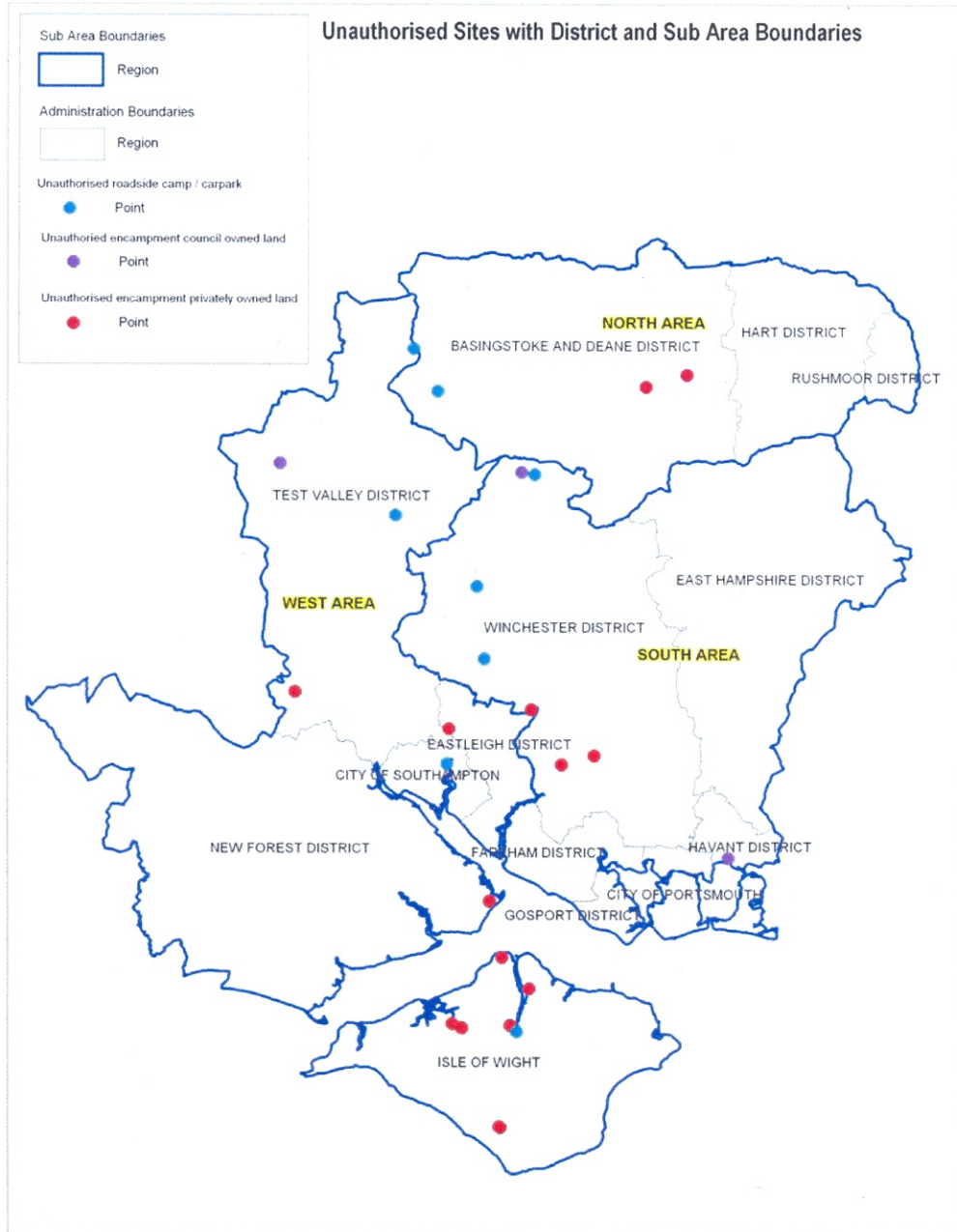
- 1.3.3 The study found that households living on authorised sites were generally very settled.
- Half are living in a mobile home and 99% are living on their main base;
 - 55% of households on local authority sites and 71% on private sites had lived there for more than 5 years.
- 1.3.4 Based on a basic overcrowding calculation comparing the number of beds to the number of people in the household, the survey found 19 households on authorised sites who were overcrowded in their current accommodation.
- 1.3.5 The data does not allow for a more detailed analysis of overcrowding, and the study assumes that two pitches will be required to accommodate each overcrowded household. However, depending on the circumstances of the individual family and the particular site it may be possible to deal with individual cases in a number of ways. For example by expanding the boundaries of the site or increasing the size of the individual pitch, in other cases it may be possible for the family to have an additional living unit on the pitch. DCA recommend that the options for tackling overcrowding be considered on a site-by-site basis.
- 1.3.6 75% (92) of households on authorised sites felt their home was adequate for their needs. The main problem was that the accommodation was too small.
- 1.3.7 55% (65) of households on authorised sites had concerns about Health and Safety, the main worries were rats / vermin and poor drainage / sewerage.
- 1.3.8 Overall levels of satisfaction with sites were far higher on authorised private sites (94%) than any other type of site. Levels of satisfaction were higher on unauthorised developments than on local authority sites.
- 1.3.9 Levels of access to services such as health and education were high on authorised sites. 89% (109) of households were registered with a doctor and only three households were identified with school age children not in school. There was a significant gap in level of access to doctors on authorised sites (89%) compared to unauthorised sites (48%).
- 1.3.10 9% (11) of households on authorised sites included a person with a long term illness or disability. The main problems were asthmatic / respiratory problems and walking difficulty. One household indicated that they needed adaptations to their home.
- 1.3.11 Just 10 (8%) households on authorised sites had experienced harassment at their current site. However, 74% (81) of households on authorised sites would take harassment into consideration if moving to another site.
- 1.3.12 A high proportion of respondents currently living on an authorised local authority site aspire ideally to living on a private authorised site 58% (41). However, just under a third of the sample provided details of their income, of which 96% indicated that their income was below £10,000. Low incomes will have an impact on the ability of households to meet their aspirations for a private site.
- 1.3.13 22 applications had been received for private site development in the last three years, resulting in 12 approvals (four per year).

- 1.3.14 Travel is an integral part of the Gypsy and Traveller lifestyle, however only 15% (18) of households living on an authorised site had travelled in the last 12 months. Those who had travelled gave 'way of life' as the main reason for travelling.
- 1.3.15 Only 12% (15) of households currently living on an authorised site had moved sites in the last 12 months. Of this group 36% (5) had moved from another location within the study area and 64% (10) had moved from outside the study area.
- 1.3.16 Only 11% (13) of households currently living on an authorised site had any plans to move from their current location. The main reasons given were the quality of the site and to be nearer family and friends.
- 1.3.17 A further six (5%) of households on authorised sites wanted to move but were unable to do so. The fact that there were no sites available or that waiting lists were too long were the main reasons given.
- 1.3.18 Eight concealed households were identified on authorised sites. Two wanted to live in bricks and mortar accommodation, and six wanted a local authority site. All demand from this group was for accommodation within the study area with most wanting to remain in the local authority area where they currently live.
- 1.3.19 53% (55) of households on authorised sites felt that a mobile home on a public permanent site would be their ideal type of accommodation, and almost a quarter said that an authorised private site was their ideal type of site.

1.4 Key Findings From Households on Unauthorised Encampments and Developments

- 1.4.1 In July 2006 there were 69 caravans equating to approximately 29 households living on unauthorised encampments and 47 caravans equating to approximately 30 households on unauthorised developments within Hampshire and Southampton, no sites were identified in Portsmouth.

1.4.2 Unauthorised sites identified during the fieldwork period have been mapped across the study area.



1.4.3 While unauthorised developments on Gypsy and Traveller land tend to be relatively settled, households living on encampments are more mobile and tend to be living a more insecure and vulnerable lifestyle, with lower levels of access to services and facilities and higher likelihood of eviction.

- 1.4.4 As would be expected, the survey found that households living on unauthorised sites were less settled than those on authorised sites.
- 98% of households who had lived on their current site for less than a month were on unauthorised sites.
 - 31 households on unauthorised sites (38%) were not living on their main base. All of whom were on encampments. Of this group 15 were permanently travelling and 18 had a base elsewhere.
- 1.4.5 In spite of the high level of insecurity however, the survey found that 92% (68) of households on unauthorised sites felt their home was adequate for their needs. 8% (10) felt it was inadequate, the main problem identified were a lack of facilities.
- 1.4.6 23.3% (17) of households on unauthorised sites were worried about health and safety on their site. The main issues were lack of basic amenities, lack of washing facilities and rubbish collection.
- 1.4.7 Access to both health and education was far lower for those living on unauthorised sites. 27 of the 29 households whose school age children did not go to school were living on unauthorised sites and only 48% of households on unauthorised sites were registered with a doctor, on encampments this fell to 39%.
- 1.4.8 13 households on unauthorised sites included a person with a long term illness or disability. The main problems were walking difficulties and other physical disabilities. These individuals are likely to be especially vulnerable given their low level of access to health facilities and their more insecure accommodation situation.
- 1.4.9 The experience of harassment was higher amongst families living on unauthorised sites. 15% (12) of households on unauthorised sites had experienced harassment at their current site, of which 67% (8) were living on unauthorised encampments. 67% of households on all unauthorised sites would take harassment into consideration if moving to another site, similar to the level for those on authorised sites.
- 1.4.10 Households living on unauthorised sites were also far more likely than those on authorised sites to have travelled in the last 12 months, the data showed that those living on encampments were the most likely to have travelled. 68% of the 73 households who had travelled in the last 12 months were living on an unauthorised encampment. The main reason given for travelling was way of life.
- 1.4.11 73% (58) of households currently living on an unauthorised site had moved in the last 12 months, of whom 91% (53) were currently living on an encampment. Of this group 62% had moved from another location within the study area and 38% (18) had moved from outside the study area.
- 1.4.12 Eviction is a key factor in the move-on patterns of households living on unauthorised sites. Local data provided evidence of eviction, with a total of 33 enforcement actions resulting in eight evictions over a 12 month period. The highest level of enforcement action and unauthorised camping was found in Basingstoke and Deane.

- 1.4.13 45 households had plans to move from their current location (56% of the sample); of this group 41% (18) were currently living on an unauthorised encampment. The site not being permanent and threat of eviction were the most common reasons given.
- 1.4.14 A further 10 (12.3%) households living on unauthorised sites wanted to move but were unable to do so, all of these were on unauthorised encampments. The fact that there were no sites available or that waiting lists were too long were the main reasons given.
- 1.4.15 Seven concealed households were identified on unauthorised sites. Two of those responding wanted a local authority site, and one wanted a transit site. 33% of demand from this group was for accommodation within the study area with most wanting to remain in the local authority area in which they currently live.
- 1.4.16 46% (36) of households on unauthorised sites felt that a mobile home on a permanent site would be their ideal type of accommodation, and over two thirds said that an authorised private site was their ideal type of site with the remaining third opting for a local authority site.

1.5 Key Findings From Households in Bricks and Mortar

- 1.5.1 22 households were interviewed in bricks and mortar accommodation. The data for this group has not been grossed or weighted as the total number of households in bricks and mortar accommodation is not known, and there is no credible baseline from which to work.
- 1.5.2 DCA recommend that local authorities put in place systems to monitor the number of Gypsy and Traveller households in bricks and mortar accommodation and promote ethnic monitoring across service areas. A credible baseline should be available for future GTAAs, enabling the needs of Gypsy and Traveller households living in bricks and mortar accommodation to be more fully reflected in the future.
- 1.5.3 Research shows that across England Gypsy and Traveller households are living increasingly settled lifestyles. DCA research, in line with research by CURS (2005), has noted a trend towards settlement in bricks and mortar accommodation or on permanent authorised sites, with a preference for households to travel for short periods to retain their cultural identity.
- 1.5.4 The majority of those interviewed were well settled, living in permanent accommodation, 59% (13) were renting from a social landlord, 40.9% (9) were owner-occupiers.
- 1.5.5 A higher proportion of those in bricks and mortar accommodation were couples with children (50%) compared to households living on sites. Accessing schooling for children was the single biggest reason for settlement in bricks and mortar accommodation.
- 1.5.6 Ten households (47.6%) indicated that they included a member with a disability or long term illness. This is far higher than the site based sample although only one household living in bricks and mortar accommodation had moved from a site because of health reasons. The proportion of households living in bricks and mortar accommodation who were registered with a doctor was slightly higher than for the site based sample.

- 1.5.7 Two households (9.1%) had travelled in the last 12 months, however seven households (31.8%) had vans or trailers that would enable them to travel. When considering their reasons for travelling a wide range of reasons were given with family and community event, and work being the most common reasons.
- 1.5.8 Only four households (18.2%) had previously lived on a site; and only one household (4.5%) had any plans to move house. There was no demand for site based accommodation from existing households within the bricks and mortar sample.
- 1.5.9 Four existing households (18.2%) from the bricks and mortar sample included a member needing independent accommodation in the next three years. One (25%) wanted to live on a site, and three (75%) would prefer owner occupied bricks and mortar accommodation.
- 1.5.10 On the basis of the sample the demand for site based accommodation from households living in bricks and mortar accommodation is very limited. The site based sample found 14 existing households and five new forming households planning to move to bricks and mortar accommodation.

1.6 Transit Pitch Requirements

- 1.6.1 Transit sites are managed sites to enable movement around and through the study area. Transit sites may also be used to facilitate move-on from unauthorised encampments.
- 1.6.2 Emergency Stopping Places may be available in addition to formal transit sites. These are tolerated stopping places that will have a lighter touch in terms of management and a lower level of facilities. Emergency Stopping Places are a short-term response and not a solution to the need for permanent pitches and transit sites.
- 1.6.3 There are no existing transit sites within the study area. The lack of transit sites locally has a number of impacts:
 - It contributes to the high level of unauthorised camping, especially during peak summer travel periods.
 - It restricts the ability of the Police and other authorities to move families on from unauthorised sites.
 - It increases the cost of enforcement. Evidence from Southampton Gypsy and Traveller Strategy suggests that it would be more cost effective to provide managed transit sites than maintain a high level of enforcement.
- 1.6.4 Evidence from local secondary data, the specialist survey of Gypsy and Traveller households, and discussions with local stakeholders suggests a need for transit provision:
 - The Caravan Count shows an average of 146 caravans on unauthorised encampments in the Hampshire districts during the last three July Caravan Counts.
 - Local secondary data and the survey data suggest the majority of movement is within the Hampshire districts.

- 61.5% of households on an unauthorised encampment within the study area had moved from a previous location within the study area; 65.0% plan to move on within the study area.
 - There is no evidence from DCA studies in adjoining districts (Wiltshire and West Sussex) of households planning to move into Hampshire. However, a cross tabulation showed 27 households had moved into the study area in the last 12 months, a rate of in migration of 13.7%. 40.1% had come from elsewhere in the south of England.
- 1.6.5 DCA recommend the provision of four well-managed transit sites to accommodate 41 households per year. There is a need for one transit site covering the north of Hampshire (Basingstoke and Deane), one in the south (Winchester), and one in the west (Test Valley / Eastleigh / New Forest).
- 1.6.6 Because of the restrictions within Section 62 powers preventing the Police from moving households across unitary boundaries, a separate site is needed in the unitary authority of Southampton. No need has been identified in the unitary authority of Portsmouth.
- 1.6.7 DCA also recommend a network of Emergency Stopping Places to deal with peak flows of travellers through the study area during the summer months. It should be noted that although Emergency Stopping Places would not be available as move-on sites under Section 62 powers they could ease the problems of unauthorised camping in the short term. Emergency stopping places should focus on known travel routes through Test Valley, Basingstoke and Deane, and Winchester to the coast along the M3 corridor.
- 1.6.8 DCA recommend a Hampshire-wide policy to deal with unauthorised camping; policies developed in Basingstoke and Deane and Southampton provide good practice examples.
- 1.6.9 There is a clear need for transit provision across the study area. However, DCA recommend that a full review of transit provision be undertaken as part of the GTAA in 2011. It is likely that as local authorities increase their provision of permanent pitches the need for transit provision will be reduced.

1.7 Permanent Site Pitch Requirements

- 1.7.1 The 2006 GTAA has calculated a need for an additional 44 permanent pitches across the study area, this includes 18 within the South Group area of Havant, Portsmouth, Gosport, Fareham, East Hampshire and Winchester; 17 in the West Group area, including Southampton, Test Valley, Eastleigh, and New Forest; 9 in the North Group area, including Basingstoke and Deane, Hart and Rushmoor.
- 1.7.2 A full breakdown of the need for each district is given in **Error! Reference source not found.** of the report. In addition there is a need for 24 pitches on the Isle of Wight, which is analysed in a separate report.
- 1.7.3 The GTAA needs model used in this report is based on latest Government Guidance (February 2006); projections of need are made for the next 5 years and will need to be updated in 2011.

- 1.7.4 DCA recommend that new planning approvals are monitored against the recommendations of the 2006 GTAA and fed into future GTAA's. Once the backlog of need identified in this report has been addressed, through the provision of permanent authorised site pitches, local authorities will need to plan for new family formation and in-migration in future years.
- 1.7.5 There is a total supply of 139 authorised site pitches across Hampshire and Southampton but there are no authorised pitches in Portsmouth. This includes 92 pitches on local authority sites and 47 on private sites.
- 1.7.6 There is a backlog of 63 pitches needed to meet demand from households on unauthorised sites, overcrowded households on authorised sites and concealed households on all sites across the study area. Local data showed just 50 households on a waiting list for a local authority pitch, suggesting that many of those with a need are not registered on a waiting list.
- 1.7.7 There is a projected need for 26 new pitches to meet the needs of new forming households up to 2011, and for those living on sites with temporary permissions due to expire before 2011.
- 1.7.8 The survey data showed a high correlation between existing and desired locations for all the needs groups reflected in the survey. DCA recommend that the strategy for new pitch provision takes as a starting point an assessment of the viability of extending existing sites to accommodate overcrowded and new forming households already living on those sites.
- 1.7.9 There is a projected supply of 45 pitches expected to become vacant as a result of pitch turnover on local authority sites from 2006 – 2011, a pitch turnover of 9.8%. The survey data was broadly consistent with local management data showing 7 vacancies on local authority sites over the last 12 months.
- 1.7.10 The level of vacancies will vary depending on individual family circumstances and the availability of other accommodation options. Pitch turnover on local authority sites should be monitored across the study area.
- 1.7.11 There are no plans to provide additional permanent local authority pitches across the study area within the next 12 months and no applications for private site development or extension in the pipeline that are likely to be approved. Historic data shows an average of four private pitches approved per year over the last three years.
- 1.7.12 The survey data suggested that 64.4% of all new site provision should be on private sites, 29.5% on public sites. The ability of households to achieve their aspirations for private site development is constrained by low income as well the availability of suitable land for site development. DCA recommend that local policies be developed to help Gypsy and Traveller households through the planning system and that financial options are developed to enable families to access finance for site development either independently or in partnership with a RSL.
- 1.7.13 The distribution of new pitches across the study area will be a matter for each local planning authority to determine. DCA recommends a distribution of new pitches on the basis of preferences expressed through the survey. This methodology is in line with general Housing Needs Assessments.

1.8 Key Recommendations and Action Plan

Recommendation	Action Points	Targets
New permanent pitch provision	Provide accommodation for 44 households across Hampshire districts, including:	By 2011
	- 9 Pitches in the North area (Basingstoke and Deane, Hart and Rushmoor)	By 2011
	- 18 Pitches in the South area (Havant, Portsmouth, Gosport, Fareham, East Hampshire, Winchester)	By 2011
	- 17 Pitches in the West area (Southampton, Test Valley, Eastleigh, New Forest)	By 2011
	Provide 64.4% of new pitches on private authorised sites	By 2011
	All new pitch approvals to accommodate 2 living units, plus space for an additional 2 vehicles	On going 2006 – 2011
New transit pitch provision	Develop 4 managed transit sites to accommodate 41 households per year.	By 2011
	Transit sites should be provided in Basingstoke and Deane, Winchester, and one in the west of Hampshire. Separate provision should be made in Southampton.	By 2011
	Develop a sub-regional policy and procedure monitoring and management of unauthorised encampments	By 2011
	Identify and agree a network of emergency stopping places across Hampshire, focusing on Basingstoke and Deane, Winchester and Test Valley.	Summer 2008
	Identify and agree emergency stopping places in Southampton and Portsmouth	Summer 2007
	Complete a review of the level of transit provision	2010

Recommendation	Action Points	Targets
Planning Policy	Make provision for identified needs through Local Development Frameworks	2007
	Undertake a feasibility study to assess the viability of expanding existing sites to accommodate overcrowded or concealed households	2007
	Develop site search criteria alongside a proactive approach to identifying suitable land for site development	2007
	Develop a policy to provide support to Gypsy and Traveller households accessing the planning system	2011
	Develop financial options to enable Gypsy and Traveller households to access finance for site development individually or in partnerships with local RSLs	2011
	Monitor the level of new planning approvals against the recommendations of this report, encouraging the Gypsy and Traveller community to identify potential sites themselves	Ongoing 2006 - 2011
	Put in place systems to monitor the number of Gypsy and Traveller households in bricks and mortar accommodation, and promote ethnic monitoring across all service areas	2007
	Carry out a study of the needs of Show People	2007
	Carry out future Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments every 3 - 5 years	2011

Recommendation	Action Points	Targets
Partnership working	Develop a policy to ensure all future housing, planning and supporting people strategies are developed in consultation with the community and reflect their needs	2011
	Develop a Gypsy and Traveller strategy for the Hampshire districts, and separately for Portsmouth	2011
	Continue to develop links between the Gypsy and Traveller community and education service	2011
	Develop a health promotion policy for the Gypsy and Traveller community	2011
	Develop community capacity building in the Gypsy and Traveller community	2010
	Develop positive images of the Gypsy and Traveller community in local authorities and train staff accordingly	2010
	Develop a code of guidance to enable Gypsy and Traveller households to access adaptations to their homes	2011
	Establish a joint protocol for dealing with allegations of harassment	2011
Local Authority Site management	Develop and support a local authority site management structure led by a senior manager that ensures consistent monitoring of site management information across the study area, improved site standards and appropriate and consistent responses to illegal encampments	2011
	Develop a code of standards for all sites in consultation with the community	2011
	Complete a review of permanent site provision	2010

Appendix B

1. The GTAA's role in the formation of a Regional Spatial Strategy
- 1.1 The information emerging from the Hampshire and Isle of Wight GTAA, setting out the gypsy and traveller need for sites will, as with other elements of housing need, form a key component in the overall assessment used to inform the housing policies contained in the Regional Spatial Strategy. Therefore, in general terms, all Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments - including the Assessment currently being refined on behalf of the Hampshire authorities, will be expected to provide a valuable evidence base for estimating the need for additional pitches.
- 1.2 However, taking into account recent experience in other parts of the country, the South East England Regional Assembly considers it unlikely that all such Assessments will be undertaken using identical methodologies or assumptions. In terms of variation, there are also quite considerable differences in the scale of those studies conducted so far. With the involvement of fourteen partner authorities Hampshire and the Isle of Wight's Assessment is among the largest, in terms of its complexity and coverage. Therefore, in order to address these issues and to minimise variation within or between regions, the Assembly has commissioned research to develop a common methodology for translating identified need into estimates of required pitch provision, by type.
- 1.3 The resulting methodology has now been made available to local authorities and, in effect, their specialist consultant/advisors and takes the form of 'guidance' for the final preparation of their formal advice to the Regional Assembly, which must be received by the Assembly no later than October, 2007. Informed by this methodology, the advice submitted can then be more effectively 'benchmarked' by the Assembly to determine the extent to which authorities, or groupings of authorities, have responded consistently.
- 1.4 Nevertheless, it is recognised that certain elements of uncertainty and inconsistency are not surprising, given that this is the first round of assessments. In many cases, these have been undertaken before any draft practice guidance was put in place and may, therefore, represent little more than snapshots of a very dynamic and fast-changing reality, and concern population groups about which little was previously known.
- 1.5 Given the present limitations on both the quantity and quality of information available to those undertaking GTAAs and, most particularly, in regard to transit needs, it is likely that further difficulties will be encountered by the Regional Planning Board of the Assembly, in determining aspects of the Regional Spatial Strategy relating to targets and allocations.
- 1.6 In the light of such issues there is already a very strong emphasis on the need for the proper development and implementation of ongoing monitoring and review. Consequently, progress towards improved site provision will be an important part of the annual monitoring reports required under the new planning system. In addition, it is anticipated that future Regional Spatial Strategy reviews will build on a growing understanding of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation issues and, in particular, the impact which planned site provision has had on needs and preferences, demographics and travel patterns.