



Councillor Moira Gibson  
Regional Planning Committee Chairman  
GTTS Consultation  
SEERA  
Berkeley House  
Cross Lanes  
Guildford GU1 1UN

**Date:** 19 November 2008

**Our Ref:** GT/tn

Dear Councillor Gibson,

**Partial Review of the South East Plan: Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs**

I am writing in response to your letter of 1 September 2008 seeking views on providing places to live for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the South East region.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Regional Assembly's consultation exercise as detailed above. In response to the proposed pitch numbers and distribution options outlined in the consultation papers please note that Brighton & Hove City Council's response is as follows:

**Proposed overall provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the period to 2016.**

The council supports the overall numbers being proposed for the provision of new pitches/plots for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the South East region as a whole for the period to 2016 (1,064 spaces for Gypsies and Travellers 274 spaces for Travelling Showpeople). The council also supports the overall level of provision to be provided in the East Sussex and Brighton & Hove area (47 spaces for Gypsies and Travellers and 0 spaces for Travelling Showpeople). These assessments are based on advice from local authorities drawing upon their local assessments of Gypsy/Traveller and Travelling Showpeople's accommodation needs.

**Distribution Options A – D.**

The council is able to support Distribution Options A and/or B as the most appropriate and preferred distribution options for the provision of permanent Gypsy / Traveller pitches for Brighton & Hove (14 or 11 pitches respectively). Towards this end, the Council has already identified a 'preferred site' capable of accommodating up to 14 permanent pitches to meet the locally identified need for local Gypsy/Traveller families.

A bid has been made to central government for 100% grant to fund the development of the site which will, of course, be subject to planning consent. The search for a suitable site has proven extremely difficult given the very densely developed nature of the existing built up area of the city and the highly constrained boundaries. Much of the city's urban fringe is designated either Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) or proposed National Park designation.

The 'preferred site' will itself require a 'departure' application since it is located within a local countryside designation and no other suitable sites were able to be identified. As such, the council sees Option A (14 pitches) as the maximum that can realistically be delivered given the very serious constraints noted above.

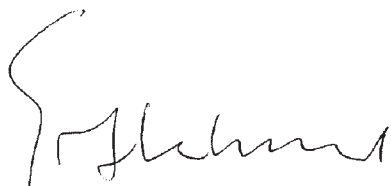
The council does also recognise the role and value of promoting wider regional responsibility for the provision of Gypsy/Traveller accommodation needs and in this respect could support Option D for Gypsy/Traveller permanent pitch provision. This option seeks to allocate most of the need for new spaces to be in the same general areas where Gypsies and Travellers currently live but redistributes a proportion (25%) of locally assessed need across the region to make sure that all areas provide some spaces. Under this option we understand that the requirement for Brighton & Hove would be for 13 permanent pitches to be provided.

#### **Future Transit Provision**

The council supports the approach outlined in the consultation document that the details for future transit provision should be for determination in Local Development Frameworks drawing on local knowledge.

I hope you find the council's comments useful and trust that they will be taken into account in determining the preferred option for distributing spaces across council areas. Once again, thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Regional Assembly's consultation exercise.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Geoffrey Theobald', written in a cursive style.

**Councillor Geoffrey Theobald, OBE  
Cabinet Member for Environment**