

TO: KENT PLANNING
OFFICERS GROUP

Gypsy and Traveller Unit

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Dear Colleague

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL SELECT COMMITTEE REPORT ON GYPSY AND TRAVELLER SITES 2006: REQUEST FOR COMMENTS AND INFORMATION

I trust by now that your Council has been able to consider the content and recommendations of the above Select Committee report.

Recommendations 11-14 inclusive were the following:

11. For KCC, with district authorities, to lobby the government to provide sufficient resource to ensure that unsuccessful retrospective planning applications can be dealt with in weeks rather than years. (Page 42, 6.9.14)

The Select Committee would like to know whether you have been experiencing what you regard as excessive delays, and, if so, whether you are confident that the recent proposals to streamline the planning system will be sufficient to reduce or eliminate these, or whether further representations need to be made.

12. For Kent local planning authorities to consider the importance of ensuring that temporary applications are refused in situations where there are material objections, along the same lines as dealing with permanent permission applications. (Page 42, 6.9.14)

The Select Committee would like to know whether you have been experiencing temporary applications being granted in such situations, or whether temporary and permanent applications, where there have been material objections, have been treated in a very similar manner.

13. For Kent local planning authorities to consider the importance of ensuring that, where rural exception policies are included within Local Development Frameworks, there is a need to ensure that they are tightly drafted to mitigate any potential increase in planning applications on these grounds. (Page 42, 6.9.14)

The Select Committee would like to know whether your Council has experience of rural exception policies being included within Local Development Frameworks (or perhaps Local Plans) and whether they have been tightly drafted, if so.

14. KCC to facilitate the establishment of a Countywide partnership group, which will work to share best practice and information to reduce and tackle Unauthorised Developments. (Page 42, 6.9.14)

The Select Committee would like to know whether your Council would like to take part in such a group, if it were set up, and whether it is something you would find useful. Alternatively, Unauthorised Development issues might be discussed as part of the Countywide Officer Group already established under Recommendation 17 of the Select Committee report.

I would be very grateful for your reply on these issues by the end of this year, or earlier if possible.

Yours sincerely

**Bill Forrester
Head of Gypsy and Traveller Unit**