



Dorset-wide Gypsy and Traveller (including
Travelling Showpeople)
Site Allocations
Joint Development Plan Document (DPD)

Habitats Regulations Assessment

Screening Report

February 2011



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1 Introduction

The Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 1.1 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is required under the European Directive (92/43/EEC) on the 'conservation of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora'. The Directive, ratified in the UK in 1992 seeks to protect the most valuable habitats and species in Europe. Alongside the European Birds Directive (79/408/EEC) this legislation sets the framework for the creation of a network of protected sites across Europe. These are known as Natura 2000 sites or European Sites
- 1.2 These include sites designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) for their species and habitats and Special Areas of Protection (SPAs) designated for the protection of birds. However, sites designated under the international wetlands Ramsar convention are also included.
- 1.3 Any plan or project that has the possibility of impacting on a Natura 2000 site must be assessed to ascertain the likelihood and significance of effects to the integrity of the site. The Habitats Directive Articles 6(3) and 6(4) sets the requirement for assessment as:
"Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, shall be subject to Appropriate Assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives..."
- 1.4 The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) (Amendment) Regulations 2007 was adopted to ratify the Directive's requirements for the HRA of plans.

The Screening Report

- 1.5 This report identifies all of the protected sites covered by the regulations within and surrounding Dorset. This is the screening stage of the assessment is concerned with identifying possible routes and mechanisms that development of Gypsy and Traveller sites could have on the protected sites.
- 1.6 At this stage in the preparation of the DPD no sites have yet been identified nor policies for their implementation put in place. Therefore, the assessment cannot draw firm conclusions on the likelihood of impact and also allows this assessment to help guide the selection of sites by avoiding vulnerable locations. Further site specific screening will take place, if necessary, at the relevant stage of plan preparation.

The Gypsy and Traveller joint Development Plan Document

- 1.7 The Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document (DPD) will identify and allocate sites for 111 permanent and 144 transit pitches to meet the needs of these communities. They will be identified throughout Dorset, although each local authority area has agreed how many sites it will need to find to meet the identified demand. Many of the pitches will be allocated on small sites of fewer than 5 pitches, although there is the possibility a single site up to 15 pitches in one location could be allocated.

- 1.8 The overall impact of the DPD on the Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites is likely to be low as it is only allocating a relatively small amount of development in comparison to the overall housing growth anticipated in Dorset, Poole and Bournemouth.
- 1.9 In addition, the impacts created by the DPD are likely to be minimal as many of the allocations will simply be to replace existing illegal sites with new permanent ones. This means following the implementation of the DPD and the development of sites there will not necessarily be many more Gypsies and Travellers in Dorset, just a redistribution of the existing population. Therefore, implementing the DPD will not necessarily increase the impacts on the protected sites through the use of resources or visitor pressure, although the location of impacts may change.

2 The Habitats Regulation Assessment process

The HRA process

- 2.1 The HRA is used to describe the process of Appropriate Assessment required under The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) (Amendments) (England and Wales) Regulations 2007.
- 2.2 Guidance on HRA is set out in the guidance from the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) *'Planning for the Protection of European Sites: Appropriate assessment'* (August 2006).
- 2.3 Table 1.1 shows the stages of the HRA. The shaded section shows the task to be completed at the screening stage, relating to this stage of reporting.

Table 1.1: Stage of Habitats Regulations Assessment

Screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify Natura 2000 sites within and adjoining the LDP area and acquire, examine and understand the conservation objectives for each feature of the site. • Consider the changes that policies and proposals in the plan may cause. • Assess whether any elements of the plan are likely to have a significant effect on any interest feature of each N2K site, either indirectly, directly, alone or in combination with other projects and plans. • If no significant effects are likely to occur as a result of implementation, the plan (or certain policies and proposals within it) can be published with no further reference to the Habitat Regulations, i.e. 'screened out' from stage 2. If there are likely significant effects arising from elements of the plan on certain N2K sites, or it is uncertain whether such effects will be significant, progress to stage 2.
Appropriate Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake an assessment of the implications of the plan (those policies and proposals within it identified in stage 1 as requiring AA) for each N2K site likely to be affected, in light of their conservation objectives. • Consider how the plan in combination with other plans or projects will interact and affect the site when implemented. • Consider how the effect of the plan on the integrity of the site could be mitigated and consider alternatives or develop mitigation measures. • If it can be demonstrated that the plan will not have an adverse effect on the N2K, the plan can be adopted. If the plan is still likely to have an adverse impact on the site(s) progress to stage 3.
Assessment where no alternatives exist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The competent authority must demonstrate that there are no alternative solutions to the plan which are less damaging. • The competent authority must establish if there are <i>'imperative reasons of overriding public interest'</i> to proceed with the plan or policy. • Identify and agree compensation measures and how these will be monitored.

- 2.4 The HRA process is set up of a number of key stages, this initial stage is 'screening' the DPD, prior to any drafting of the plan or selection of sites. The intended outcome of this stage is a decision on whether it is necessary to proceed with further stages of HRA as there is a possibility of significant impacts, or whether impacts are so unlikely as to make further study unnecessary. The stage of screening area therefore:
- identification of all the sites in and round the plan area that may be affected by the DPD (section 3 and Appendix 1)
 - establish the main mechanisms by which the DPD could influence the Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites and what the impacts may be (section 4, Appendix 2 and 3)
 - concluding the HRA and making decisions on what the next steps of HRA should be (section 5).
- 2.5 At this screening stage it is useful to identify strategic issues in the DPD that may result in impacts on Natura 2000. This allows for the opportunity for these impacts to be avoided early on in the plan preparation process, by seeking alternative approaches or locations for growth.
- 2.6 If the local planning authority determines that the DPD is not likely to have significant effects on European sites it may be proceed without further reference to the HRA process. This should be agreed with Natural England (NE).
- 2.7 If it is determined that further assessment is required the next steps are likely to include the need for additional information on the proposals and policies of the DPD. Consultation with NE will also be carried out to determine the method for the further assessment, as well as more detail on the Natura 2000 sites and their sensitivities.
- 2.8 This stage of the HRA will be looking for ways that any significant effects can be avoided or mitigated against. In order for the DPD to proceed it would have to be shown that this is possible. Where significant effects are identified it may be possible to mitigate against site specific impacts using 'conventional' mitigation measures. This includes measures to prevent disturbance, use further appropriate assessment, setting planning obligations or conditions. If such an approach is shown to be necessary it will be essential to explicitly state this in the DPD.
- 2.9 For strategic issues, where the impacts can not be identified on a site specific basis, it may be necessary to include specific policy in the DPD to mitigate or avoid the potential for impact. This may be particularly be where the implementation will require a more detailed level of assessment.
- 2.10 It should be highlighted here HRA at this level does not preclude the need for subsequent appropriate assessment at a more site specific level if identified as necessary when seeking planning permission.

Determining significance

- 2.11 The aim of the appropriate assessment is to identify where there might be significant adverse effects and how these may be mitigated against. There is no standard definition of what is significant:

“The notion of significance needs to be interpreted objectively. At the same time, the significance of effects should be determined in relation to the specific features and environmental conditions of the protected site concerned by the plan or project, taking particular account of the site’s conservation objectives.” (EC, 2000 page 34, 4.3.1¹).

- 2.12 The EC Guidance 2001² on appropriate assessment suggests that assessment of significance will be based upon factors include:
- the character and perceived value of the affected environment
 - the magnitude, spatial extent and duration of anticipated change
 - the resilience of the environment to cope with change
 - confidence in the accuracy of predictions of change
 - the existence of policies, programmes, plans etc. which can be used as criteria
 - the existence of environmental standards against which a proposal can be assessed (e.g. air quality standards, water quality standards)
 - scope for mitigation, sustainability and reversibility.
- 2.13 Therefore, the screening report will consider the possible ways in which development delivered through the Gypsy and Traveller DPD could effect the protected sites. The impacts then need to be assessed for their significance.

‘In combination’ effects

- 2.14 The regulatory requirements of HRA set out a requirement that in addition to determining if the DPD would have a significant effect on Natura 2000 sites on its own, it is also necessary to assess if there would be any significant effects in combination with other plans and projects.
- 2.15 This ‘in combination’ assessment will need to look for other plans and projects that also require HRA, such as other DPDs prepared by the Council’s and those in neighbouring counties. There may also be impacts with other specific projects proposed in the County or elsewhere. In order to achieve this it may be suitable to adopt some type of cross boundary working on HRA issues, and the need for a system to be in place to flag up other strategies and plans in the area that may have relevance to the HRA of the DPD.

¹ EC, 2000 *Managing Natura 2000 Sites: the provisions of Article 6 of the ‘Habitats’ Directive 92/43/EEC*

² EC 2001 *Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites: methodological guidance on the provision of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*

3 Identifying Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites

- 3.1 This is the initial step of screening process and involves identifying the Natura 2000 sites, in and around Dorset that the policies and proposals of the Gypsy and Traveller DPD allocations could have an impact on.
- 3.2 All Natura 2000 sites within the Dorset, or in close proximity County boundaries are (those partially or totally within Dorset shown in **bold**):
- **Avon Valley** – SPA and Ramsar
 - Beer Quarry and Caves – SAC
 - **Bracket's Coppice** – SAC
 - **Cerne & Sydling Downs** – SAC
 - **Chesil Beach & the Fleet** – SAC, Ramsar and SPA
 - Chilmark Quarries – SAC
 - **Crookhill Brick Pit** – SAC
 - **Dorset Heathlands** – Ramsar and SPA
 - **Dorset Heaths (Purbeck & Wareham) & Studland Dunes** – SAC
 - **Fontmell & Melbury Downs** – SAC
 - Great Yews – SAC
 - **Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs** – SAC
 - **Poole Harbour** – Ramsar, SPA
 - Prescombe Down – SAC
 - **River Avon** – SAC
 - River Axe – SAC
 - **Rooksmoor** – SAC
 - **Sidmouth to West Bay** – SAC
 - Solent and Southampton Water – SAC, Ramsar, SPA
 - Solent & Isle of Wight Lagoons – SAC
 - South Wight Maritime – SAC
 - **St Albans Head to Durlston Head** – SAC
 - New Forest – SAC, Ramsar, SPA
 - **West Dorset Alder Woods** - SAC
- 3.3 In total there are 24 sites identified for this assessment, the majority of which are within Dorset. The sites range in size from small largely self-contained sites, to large single areas and those made up of many individual habitat patches covered by the same designation. The most common type of habitat in Dorset is lowland heathland, alongside many areas of calcareous grassland and coastal habitats.

- 3.4 There are also coastal protected sites and rivers. Several of the sites are also covered by multiple designations SPA, SAC and Ramsar.
- 3.5 Appendix 1 lists of the sites, their location and protected features that are the reason for designation. The appendix also show the vulnerabilities of each of the sites to change, these give an indication of the type of impact that could have significant effect on the of the site. Section 4 of this report identifies the mechanisms by which the identification and delivery of Gypsy and Traveller sites could have an impact on the protected areas.

4 The Gypsy and Traveller DPD and Potential for Impacts

- 4.1 It is essential that the development delivered through the Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document (DPD) does not have significant adverse impacts on the features of interest on the designated Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites.
- 4.2 This section of the Habitats Regulations Assessment screening looks at the generic vulnerabilities of the protected sites. Following this, consideration is given to how potential allocations and policies of the Gypsy and Traveller DPD could result in adverse impacts on the features on interest on the protected sites.

Vulnerabilities

- 4.3 Types of vulnerability identified in the site forms include:
- **Physical loss:** all sites would be impacted on through direct land loss from development and infrastructure development
 - **Physical damage:** all of the sites have the potential to be harmed through direct physical damage. The type of damage most likely varies from site to site and will include changes to vegetation form management regime change, quarrying, change in coastal processes, fire damage and illegal tipping
 - **Loss of supporting populations:** some habitats are reliant on linked habitats patches, fragmentation through loss of links can result in the decline in species populations
 - **Non-physical disturbance:** including the impacts from recreation pressure, light pollution, changes in the water table
 - **Biological disturbance:** such as long-term overgrazing, invasion by non-native species, predation by cats
 - **Scrub encroachment:** such as caused by under-grazing leading to vegetation change and problems of scrub management
 - **Toxic pollution:** this may include accidental spillage impacts on water quality
 - **Non-toxic pollution:** including nutrient enrichment of water from agricultural run-off or waste water outflow, or air pollution impacts changing soil characteristics.
- 4.4 The possible impact routes need to be compared with the role and function of the Gypsy and Traveller DPD and the development it helps to deliver. Sites and policies are yet to be put in place for the DPD. However, there is already a clear aim for what the DPD will aim to do, and from this the type and scale of impacts can be being to be characterised.

Mechanisms for impact on Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites

- 4.5 The table in appendix 1 of this report takes assesses the potential for adverse impacts on each of the protected sites in and around Dorset. This table, alongside the findings of the HRA of the Draft RSS, allow for the identification of possible sensitivities and mechanisms of impacts.
- 4.6 **Direct and indirect disturbance:** No Gypsy and Traveller pitch sites will be allocated on Natura 2000 or Ramsar sites, as the method of site selection automatically rules

them out. However, if a site is allocated in close proximity to a Natura 2000 or Ramsar site there is the risk of adverse effects from clearance of the site and development of structures.

- 4.7 The potential for adverse impacts from a closely located development site may arise from a loss of land that contains habitat types that help support the features at the designated site. For example, land well beyond sites protected for bats sites can be important foraging habitats for the protected species or provide the links between foraging and breeding or roosting sites. However, the HRA of the Draft RSS does not list any of the Dorset and surrounding bat sites as at risk. Therefore, it may be safe to assume that Gypsy and Traveller pitch sites in Dorset have adverse impacts on these sites.
- 4.8 Sites outside protected areas may also contain linking features, such as hedges, trees or scrubland. Maintaining these links may be necessary to support the movements of species around the otherwise isolated patches that often make a single Nature 2000 or Ramsar designation, this is essential for maintaining viable populations. Therefore, inappropriately located development or site clearance can have adverse impacts on designated site features.
- 4.9 In addition, and covered elsewhere in this section, are other potential effects of development in close proximity to designated sites, such as air pollution, recreation impact or changes in the water table.
- 4.10 Therefore, in considering sites for development the implications of nearby nature conservation sites needs to be considered. Proximity to designated sites may not prevent development, but mitigation measures may need to be specified in site development or management to avoid adverse impacts
- 4.11 **Water abstraction:** The overall level of development of all types that will be delivered in Dorset will inevitably lead to an increase in demand for water. This will result in increase abstraction from surface and/or groundwater with the potential for adverse impacts on designated sites that also rely on this water.
- 4.12 The contribution of Gypsy and Traveller sites to increased abstraction demands is likely to be relatively minimal compared to the overall demand created through new development. The DPD is only anticipating identifying sites for 111 permanent pitches and 144 transit pitches. Many of these will also not be new, instead will be providing legal sites in appropriate locations for to replace some existing illegal pitch sites. Therefore, overall water consumption created through the DPD will remain similar. Transit sites will also have lower water demand as they will not be occupied all year round.
- 4.13 In the HRA of the Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West (RSS)³ the Environment Agency state that there are no existing water abstractions that would have a significant adverse effect on the interest features of protected sites. However, if abstraction was to increase greatly there may be the potential for adverse effects on:

³ The South West Regional Spatial Strategy has been revoked and no longer provides a planning framework for delivering development. However, the Habitats Regulations Assessment of the remain valid and provide a basis for this stage of assessment.

- Avon Valley SPA
 - Dorset Heaths SAC, Dorset Heathlands SPA and Ramsar site
 - Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC
 - Crookhill Brick Pit SAC.
- 4.14 To help reduce water demand where possible new Gypsy and Traveller sites should make use of more water efficient technologies. For instance, in sites with utility blocks showers, toilets and other washing facilities should be fitted to use water more efficiently.
- 4.15 **Water quality:** Waste water created by new development can caused harm to features of interest in protected sites. Effects can be more severe where there are issue of over-abstraction and low flows.
- 4.16 The Environment Agency identify three sites with the potential to be affected by water pollution as a result of housing numbers:
- **Avon Valley SPA and Ramsar Site / River Avon SAC:** The impacts are likely to be greatest from growth at Salisbury, with a need for sewage works to be upgraded to cope with this. Therefore, the development of Gypsy and Traveller pitch sites in Dorset is likely to have minimal impact in comparison.
- 4.17 Natural England also raises concerns about possible impacts at:
- **Chesil Beach & the Fleet SAC:** water quality is an issue in the Fleet, development that is served by the Abbotsbury STW that flows into the Fleet could be a concern for biological water quality. However, only around 40 of all types of pitch sites need to be found in West Dorset, therefore, impacts are very unlikely.
 - **Poole Harbour SPA and Ramsar:** Nutrient loads here could be causing harm, with an increase in the algal mats covering the mud flats. Waste water from Gypsy and Traveller sites may be contributing to the nutrient enrichment, although the contribution to impacts of this specific development source will be minimal given the quantity of from other source, including agricultural diffuse run-off.
 - **River Axe:** Natural England already believes that this site is already failing its phosphate target with all new development likely to exacerbate this
- 4.18 For water quality, as with water supply, the contribution of new Gypsy and Traveller sites to worsening water quality will be small relative to the other growth. Housing, employment, industrial and agriculture can all have impacts on water quality. The Environment Agency are responsible for managing discharge consents anticipated throughout Dorset. Therefore, these controls may be sufficient to avoid adverse impacts of new Gypsy and Traveller sites on the water environment.
- 4.19 **Visitor pressure and recreation:** The HRA of the Draft RSS identified several Natura 2000 sites and Ramsar sites that are particularly susceptible to recreational impacts. In Dorset and the surrounding area these include:
- Avon Valley SPA and Ramsar Site

- Chesil and the Fleet SPA and Ramsar Site
 - Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC
 - Poole Harbour SPA and Ramsar
 - The New Forest SAC.
- 4.20 In these areas there is the risk that a concentration of new Gypsy and Traveller pitches nearby one of these features could cause additional impact. However, with perhaps the exception of the Avon Valley, these sites all are very attractive to visitors from a very large catchment. Therefore, the relative increase in recreational pressure from new Gypsy and Traveller sites is likely to be very minimal in comparison to overall growth in impact.
- 4.21 The likelihood of impacts on the Avon Valley could be considered on a site-by-site basis for any proposed pitch locations in close proximity.
- 4.22 Previous work completed in the area has identified residential development in the vicinity of the **Dorset Heaths** is very likely to have significantly adverse impacts on identified features from increased recreation. A strategy has therefore been developed to manage this risk through provision of mitigation and avoidance measures, *The Dorset Heathlands: Interim Planning Statement 2010-2011*.
- 4.23 Gypsy and Traveller pitches are a type of residential development. Therefore, to avoid adverse impacts the advice in the strategy should be followed. Further information on this issues is covered in Appendix 2. Discussions with Natural England indicated the strong level of protection the heaths are afforded, where they will object to any new residential development within 400m of a protected site. Outputs of these discussions are show in Appendix 4.
- 4.24 **Air quality:** The HRA of the Draft RSS for the South West (now revoked) identified that the main influence of development on air quality is with respect to diffuse pollution from transport, which can in particular influence the levels of nitrogen deposition as well as levels of acid deposition and ozone.
- 4.25 The Highways Agency suggest that that air quality impacts attributable to local transport will only be felt around 200m from the road. Therefore, the impacts from increased car travel created by new development locally is unlikely to be experienced beyond this distance. However, it is not possible to predict with accuracy at this stage the relationship between new Gypsy and Traveller sites and air quality. There is a nationally and countywide trend for increase car travel, therefore new Gypsy and Traveller sites will therefore only be one of numerous influences on road traffic.
- 4.26 Sites may need to be reviewed on a case by case basis to identify the sensitivity of nearby protected sites and the scale of the proposed development.
- 4.27 Appendix 3 shows the relationship of air quality and the risk of harm to SPA/SAC and Ramsar sites. The table shows that sites that are above critical load/levels for nitrogen deposition are (in order of greatest exceedance):
- Great Yews

- West Dorset Alder Woods
- Sidmouth to West Bay
- The New Forest
- Rooksmoor
- Fontmell & Melbury Downs
- Prescombe Down
- South Wight Maritime
- Cerne & Sydling Downs
- Bracket's Coppice
- Dorset Heaths/ Dorset Heathlands

4.28 All of the sites identified in this assessment are also at risk from elevated ozone levels. Vehicle exhaust also contributes to acid deposition and two protected areas are already showing very high levels putting the habitat at risk, far exceeding the loads at other sites. These protected areas are:

- Dorset Heaths/ Dorset Heathlands
- Dorset Heaths (Purbeck & Wareham) & Studland Dunes.

4.29 However, there is also the risk of exceedance for ozone is also high in:

- South Wight Maritime
- West Dorset Alder Woods
- Cerne & Sydling Downs
- Sidmouth to West Bay.

5 Summary and Conclusions

- 5.1 This is a screening of the Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites in and around Dorset. The purpose is to assess the likelihood of development proposed through a Gypsy and Traveller DPD having significant adverse impacts on the integrity of the protected sites. This is in accordance with the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).
- 5.2 The aim is to identify where there is the potential for the DPD to have adverse impacts. This assessment will help avoid the potential for impacts in drafting the DPD, and identify where further consideration of impacts may be needed.
- 5.3 In total 24 sites were identified for consideration in this screening report, the majority within the County boundaries of Dorset (including Poole and Bournemouth unitary authorities).

Characteristics of the DPD

- 5.4 It is likely the Gypsy and Traveller DPD will have limited or no impact on the Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites based on the quantity of development it will deliver and the site selection process.
- 5.5 The Gypsy and Traveller DPD will identify and allocate sites to be developed for a relatively small amount of development (sites for 111 permanent and 144 transit pitches). Furthermore, the allocation of pitches will not necessarily mean a higher population, instead it may simply be the redistribution of existing illegal pitch sites to legal sites. Therefore, the impact of the DPD on the protected sites will be limited in comparison to growth in other types of development in the local authorities of Dorset.

Sites in need of further consideration

- 5.6 In total 24 sites were assessed in this screening report to determine the likelihood of impacts.
- 5.7 The review of the sites location and vulnerabilities has ruled out eight sites from further consideration as part of the Habitats Regulations Assessment. The screened out sites are:
- **Beer Quarry and Caves** (bats): excluded due to location outside Dorset and vulnerabilities that mean it is very unlikely to experience adverse effects from implementation of the DPD
 - **Chilmark Quarries** (bats): excluded due to location outside Dorset and vulnerabilities that mean it is very unlikely to experience adverse effects from implementation of the DPD
 - **Great Yews** (yew woodland): despite sensitivity to poor air pollution it is very unlikely an increase in Gypsy and Traveller sites within Dorset will have an identifiable adverse impact on this site
 - **The New Forest** (mixed): this site is vulnerable to impacts from increased recreation and vulnerabilities to decline in water and air quality. However, it is a large site and beyond the boundaries of the County therefore it is unlikely

that any impacts can be attributable to Gypsy and Traveller sites within Dorset

- **Prescombe Down** (grasslands): the main impacts to this site are from inappropriate management, it is also outside Dorset. Therefore it is unlikely that any impacts can be attributable to Gypsy and Traveller sites within Dorset
- **Solent and Isle of Wight Lagoons** (coastal lagoons): this is a marine site outside of the boundary. It is vulnerable to water quality deterioration however, this is unlikely to be attributable to growth of Gypsy and Traveller sites within Dorset.
- **Solent and Southampton Water** (marine coastal): this is a marine site outside of the boundary. It is vulnerable to water quality deterioration however, this is unlikely to be attributable to growth of Gypsy and Traveller sites within Dorset.
- **South Wight Maritime** (marine coastal): this is a marine site outside of the boundary. It is vulnerable to water quality deterioration however, this is unlikely to be attributable to growth of Gypsy and Traveller sites within Dorset.

5.8 Therefore, only 16 sites remain to be considered. All of the sites are at risk of direct disturbance from inappropriately located development. However, the selection of sites for allocation as part of the DPD preparation process will automatically exclude any within Natura 2000 or Ramsar sites. This means for the majority of sites there is a very low risk of significant adverse impacts.

5.9 If Gypsy and Traveller pitch sites are allocated in close proximity to Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites then the potential for indirect impacts should be assessed. This would may include risks of site fragmentation through removal of movement links, such as hedgerows, trees or ponds. Other impacts may come from the loss of feeding or foraging habitats.

5.10 In moving forward with the DPD the following vulnerabilities relating to water supply, water quality and air quality need to be taken into account. However, except in occasional circumstances it will be difficult to identify the impact new Gypsy and Traveller sites are having on these issue, when compared to other growth. It is unlikely any impacts will be identifiable as significant.

5.11 **Water supply and water quality:** There is the risk that new Gypsy and Traveller sites will have an impact on waste water quality and increase water demand. The protected sites most at risk are:

- Avon Valley SPA/Ramsar
- Chesil Beach & the Fleet SAC/SPA/Ramsar
- Crookhill Brick Pit SAC
- Dorset Heaths Ramsar/SPA
- Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC
- Poole Harbour Ramsar/SPA

- River Avon SAC
- River Axe SAC.

5.12 **Air quality:** The greatest risk to air quality comes from increase road travel. New Gypsy and Traveller sites have the potential to increase cars on the roads if they are not located with good access to services. The most vulnerable sites to this type of impact are:

- Brackett's Coppice SAC
- Cerne and Sydling Downs SAC
- Dorset Heaths Ramsar/SPA
- Dorset Heaths (Purbeck & Wareham) & Studland Downs SAC
- Fontmell & Melbury Downs SAC
- Rooksmoor SAC
- Sidmouth and West Bay SAC
- West Dorset Alder Woods SAC.

5.13 These potential routes for impacts will be used to assess the appropriateness of sites for allocation, as well as giving an indication of any controls that may be needed to ensure that harm is avoided. In addition, the cumulative impacts of Gypsy and Traveller pitch sites with other types of development may need to be considered.

5.14 **Visitor pressure:** Some Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites are vulnerable to visitor pressure. New residential sites, including Gypsy and Traveller development, in proximity to these sites has the potential to have adverse impacts. The sites are:

- Avon Valley SPA/Ramsar Site
- Chesil and the Fleet SPA/Ramsar Site
- Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC
- Poole Harbour SPA/Ramsar

5.15 Dorset Heathlands have been identified to very vulnerable to this type of impact and any nearby residential development. Therefore, Gypsy and Traveller sites proposed within 400m of these protected areas, may need to be decided on a site by site basis. Between 400m and 5km from these sites a financial contribution may be needed to help fund new areas of outdoor recreation space to offset the impacts of increased recreational pressure. This is set out in the *The Dorset Heathlands: Interim Planning Statement 2010-2011*.

Mitigation

5.16 Where it is found that the allocation of Gypsy and Traveller may have an adverse impact on development, there may be several ways of mitigating impacts, including:

- Avoiding allocating the site and selecting an alternative, such as sites away from protected areas or those that have nearby services or public transport, therefore helping to reduce car use

- Putting in place site specific policies are in place to manage the delivery of development, for instance retaining hedgerows developing only part of the site, these could be part of the DPD or in Core Strategies
- Ensuring there are generic policies in place reduce resource consumption, such as more efficient use of water and sustainable drainage systems
- Reducing the impacts of increased recreational pressure by ensuring there are up-to-date access management plans on nearby protected sites
- Use of financial contributions to avoid impacts, such as set for the Dorset Heathlands in *Interim Planning Statement 2010-2011*
- Implementing other plans and strategies, such as upgrading of waste water treatment works or improvements to public transport.

Next stages

- 5.17 The next stage will be to assess a more fully completed draft of the DPD to identify any issues arising from proposed allocations or policies. It is likely that this will be a further stage of site screening, unless a significant impact is identified and 'appropriate assessment' is required.

Appendix 1: Screening of potential impacts

Site and location	Reasons for designation	Vulnerabilities	Comment	Next Steps
Avon Valley SPA, Ramsar East Dorset / Christchurch	Ramsar criteria 1: Diverse range of habitats associated with chalk river, including fen, mire, lowland wet grassland and woodland. 2: Diverse assemblage of wetland flora and fauna including nationally rare species. 3: Overwintering Gadwall, <i>Anas strepera strepera</i> , NW Europe SPA Annex 1 birds Bewick's Swan Migratory species: Gadwall	Physical loss: Drainage/land-claim for agriculture; sedimentation and siltation Non-physical disturbance: recreation/tourism disturbance esp to wintering birds Water Table: water abstraction; problems with retaining floodwater – summer drying; reservoir/barrage/dam impact: low flow regime Toxic contamination: Pollution – agricultural fertilisers and domestic sewage Biological disturbance: Introduction/invasion of non-native plant species; vegetation succession	The location of Gypsy and Traveller sites in East Dorset and Christchurch may put extra recreational pressure on the site. New development may create an increased water demand in-combination with other development in the area. Waste water created from new Gypsy and Traveller sites may impact on the site.	Assess location of sites for likelihood of disturbance from increased recreational pressure. Identify if there will be an increase in the Gypsy and Traveller population resulting in greater water use and waste water.
Beer Quarry and Caves SAC outside Dorset	Annex I Primary Bechstein's bat Annex II Non-primary Lesser horseshoe bat Greater horseshoe bat	Physical damage: occasional quarrying of stone from habitat areas. Non-physical: Disturbance from recreation and quarrying to bat habitat	The site is well beyond the County boundary and impacts from Gypsy and Traveller pitch sites are likely to be negligible based on known site vulnerabilities.	Screened out from further assessment.
Bracket's Coppice SAC West Dorset	Annex I non-primary: Molina meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey silt-laden soils Annex II primary: Bechstein's Bat	Non-physical disturbance: Light pollution and human presence (professional judgement) Biological disturbance: Birch invasion of grassland Air quality risks: Acid deposition, nitrogen deposition, ozone.	The greatest risk would be from a new Gypsy and Traveller site located in close proximity to the protected site. If such a site is proposed specific development measures could be used to mitigation potential impacts, including lighting and possible alternative recreation space. The site is also at risk from air pollution impacts related to road transport.	Assess sites proposed in proximity to woodland for impacts of increased recreation pressure.

<p>Cerne & Sydling Downs</p> <p>SAC</p> <p>West Dorset</p>	<p>Annex I primary: Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies: on calcareous substrates</p> <p>Annex II primary: Marsh fritillary butterfly</p>	<p>Biological disturbance: Long-term overgrazing prevents survival of March fritillary; scrub encroachment by under grazing.</p>	<p>Unlikely to be any direct impacts on vulnerabilities.</p> <p>However, this habitat is made up of a number of habitat patches therefore further fragmentation through loss of hedgerows could have adverse impacts. The location and development of Gypsy and Traveller sites will need to avoid further fragmentation.</p>	<p>Assess proposed sites impact on site fragmentation.</p>
<p>Chesil Beach and the Fleet</p> <p>SAC, Ramsar, SPA</p> <p>West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland</p>	<p>SAC:</p> <p>Annex I Primary: Coastal lagoons; annual vegetation of drift lines; perennial vegetation of stony bank scrubs</p> <p>Annex 1 Non-primary: Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts; Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand; Atlantic sea meadows; sand banks which are slightly covered by seawater at low tide; mudflats and sandbanks not covered by seawater at low tide.</p> <p>Ramsar criteria:</p> <p>1: Outstanding example of rare lagoon habitat. Also supports rare saltmarsh habitats.</p> <p>2: Supports 15 specialist lagoon species, five nationally scarce wetland plants and ten nationally scarce wetland animals. Also important for habitats and species.</p> <p>3: Largest barrier-built saline lagoon in the UK with the greatest diversity of habitats and biota.</p> <p>4: Important for a number of species at</p>	<p>Physical damage: Changes in natural physical coastal processes (e.g. due to coast defences); recreational pressures; development of existing shellfish farm</p> <p>Non-physical damage: recreational pressure; MOD firing range.</p> <p>Toxic contamination: Accidental or routine oil/chemical pollution in harbour</p> <p>Non-toxic contamination: water quality – blooms of blue green algae possibly from nutrient enrichment (agricultural run-off, sewage discharge?)</p> <p>Biological disturbance: Introduction of non-native species</p>	<p>The location of new Gypsy and Traveller is unlikely to have direct physical impacts on these sites. However, there is the possibility of increased recreational pressure and possibly increased levels of waste water run-off.</p>	<p>Monitor the location of new sites to identify likely recreational pressure impact or likelihood of non-toxic contamination.</p>

	<p>critical stage in their life cycle, including post-larval and juvenile bass. 5: Nursery for bass. 6: Overwintering Dark-bellied Brent goose</p> <p>SPA Details: Annex 1 Birds: Little tern Migratory species: Branta</p>			
<p>Chilmark Quarries SAC outside Dorset (Salisbury)</p>	<p>SAC Details: Annex II primary: Greater horseshoe bat; Barbastelle Bat; Bechstein's Bat Annex II non-primary: Lesser horseshoe bat</p>	<p>Physical loss: Collapse of underground voids Non-physical disturbance: Human presence, noise and visual disturbance; light pollution</p>	<p>Gypsy and Traveller sites within Dorset are unlikely to create extra recreational pressure on these site, due to distance from County boundary and known site vulnerabilities.</p>	<p>Screened out from further assessment.</p>
<p>Crookhill Brick Pit SAC West Dorset</p>	<p>SAC Details: Annex II Primary: Great crested newt</p>	<p>Vulnerabilities: Physical loss: Long term risk of deterioration of the waterbodies due to lack of maintenance. Biological disturbance: Short-term risk of the introduction of invasive non-native plant species and fish.</p>	<p>There is the potential for a new site in close proximity to the site to have a minor disturbance.</p>	<p>If any Gypsy and Traveller site is proposed near this location further assessment may be needed.</p>
<p>Dorset Heaths Ramsar, SPA West Dorset, Purbeck, Poole, East Dorset, Christchurch</p>	<p>Ramsar criteria: 1: Particularly good examples of northern Atlantic wet heaths with cross-leaved heath, <i>Erica tetralix</i>, acid mire with <i>Rhynchosporion</i>, southern Atlantic wet heaths. 2. Supports one nationally rare and 13 nationally scarce wetland plant species,</p>	<p>Physical loss: Development pressure Physical damage: Further fragmentation, recreational pressure, wildfires, infrastructure works (e.g. A31, airport), extant mineral permissions, erosion from scrambling bikes, soil enrichment</p>	<p>New residential development, including Gypsy and Traveller sites, has the potential to have adverse impacts on the Dorset Heaths. This impact is primarily caused by the cumulative impact of increased recreation on the heaths from recreational use. An <i>Interim Planning Framework 2010-2011</i> has been</p>	<p>All proposed Gypsy and Traveller sites within the identified 400m and 5km boundaries of these habitat</p>

	<p>and at least 28 nationally rare wetland invertebrate species.</p> <p>3. Has a high species richness and high ecological diversity of wetland habitat types and transitions, and lies in one of the most biologically-rich wetland areas of lowland Britain.</p> <p>SPA details: Lowland heath; bog fen and swap</p> <p>Annex 1 birds: Dartford warbler, Nightjar, woodlark, Hen Harrier, Merlin</p>	<p>Non-physical disturbance: Noise and visual impact from people and dogs.</p> <p>Toxic contamination: Acid rain; pollution (unspecified); leaching from waste tips.</p> <p>Biological disturbance: Under-grazing leading to scrub invasion, non-native species including Rhododendron, predation by cats.</p>	<p>developed to help manage this risk. The framework set 400m and 5 km buffers around all heath sites, within these buffers all proposed development will need to be assessed for specific impacts related to recreational pressure.</p> <p>If new Gypsy and Traveller sites lead to a deterioration in air quality this could have an adverse impact on the site. Acid deposition level at the site are already exceeding critical loads.</p>	<p>patches will need to be individually evaluated for their potential to have an adverse impact, and the extent to which this could be mitigated against.</p> <p>For larger sites the potential to exacerbate air quality deterioration may be need to be assessed.</p>
<p>Dorset Heaths (Purbeck & Wareham) & Studland Dunes</p> <p>SAC (all coincide with Dorset Heath Ramsar/SPA sites)</p> <p>West Dorset, Purbeck, Poole, East Dorset, Christchurch</p>	<p>SAC Details: Annex 1 Primary: Embryonic shifting dunes; shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i>; Atlantic decalcified dunes (Priority feature); humid dune slacks; Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains; Northern Atlantic wet heaths; European dry heaths; depressions on peat substrates; bog woodland</p> <p>Annex 1 Non-primary: Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey silt laden soils; calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of <i>Caricion davallianae</i> (Priority feature); alkaline fens; old acidophilous oak woods with <i>Quercus robur</i> on sandy</p>	<p>Physical loss: Development pressure</p> <p>Physical damage: Fragmentation of habitats causing edge and patch size effects; erosion due to visitor pressure; wildfires; damage caused by infrastructure works; extant mineral extraction permissions</p> <p>Biological disturbance: invasion by conifer and introduced scrub species, especially Rhododendron; successional trends to scrub and woodland</p>	<p>New residential development, including Gypsy and Traveller sites, has the potential to have adverse impacts on the Dorset Heaths. This impact is primarily caused by the cumulative impact of increased recreation on the heaths from recreational use. An <i>Interim Planning Framework 2010-2011</i> has been developed to help manage this risk. The framework set 400m and 5 km buffers around all heath sites, within these buffers all proposed development will need to be assessed for specific impact.</p> <p>If new Gypsy and Traveller sites lead to a deterioration in air quality this could have an adverse impact on the site. Acid deposition level at the site are</p>	<p>All proposed Gypsy and Traveller sites within the identified 400m and 5km boundaries of these habitat patches will need to be individually evaluated for their potential to have an adverse impact, and the extent to which this could be mitigated against.</p>

	plains; mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide; annual vegetation at drift lines; fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation. Annex II Primary: Southern damselfly; Great Crested Newt		already exceeding critical loads.	For larger sites the potential to exacerbate air quality deterioration may be need to be assessed.
Fontmell & Melbury Downs SAC North Dorset	Annex 1 Non-primary: Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies: on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) Annex II Primary: Early gentian Annex II Non-primary: Euphydryas aurinia	Biological disturbance: Invasive species such as nettles and ragwort due to adjacent intensive farming; over-grazing; scrub encroachment	There may be the potential for a new site in close proximity to the site to have a minor disturbance impact.	If any Gypsy and Traveller site is proposed near this location further assessment may be needed.
Great Yews SAC outside County (Salisbury)	Annex 1 Primary: <i>Taxus baccata</i> woods of the British Isles (Priority Feature) Annex I Non-primary: Semi-dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates	Physical loss: None identified	The site is well beyond the County boundaries and due to the nature of the protected features it is very unlikely any impacts could be directly related to the development of new Gypsy and Traveller sites in Dorset.	Screened out from further assessment.
Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs SAC Weymouth and Portland	SAC Details Annex 1 Primary: Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts; Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates. Annex I Non Primary: Early gentian Annex II Non Primary: <i>Titurus cristatus</i>	Physical damage: Coastal erosion; recreational pressure; exant quarrying permissions. Biological disturbance: Loss of grazing	There may be the potential for a new site in close proximity to the site to have a minor disturbance impact.	If any Gypsy and Traveller site is proposed near this location further assessment may be needed.

<p>New Forest</p> <p>SAC, Ramsar, SPA</p> <p>outside Borough, (Hampshire/Wiltshire)</p>	<p>Annex I Primary Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>); Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the <i>Littorelletea uniflorae</i> and/or of the <i>Isoëto-Nanojuncetea</i>; Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i>; European dry heaths; Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinia caeruleae</i>); Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion; Atlantic acidophilous beech forests with Ilex and sometimes also Taxus in the shrublayer (<i>Quercion robori-petraeae</i> or <i>Ilici-Fagenion</i>); Asperulo-Fagetum beech forests; Old acidophilous oak woods with <i>Quercus robur</i> on sandy plains; Bog woodland (Priority feature); Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (Alno-Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae) (Priority feature)</p> <p>Annex I Non Primary: Transition mires and quaking bogs; Alkaline fens</p> <p>Annex II Primary: Southern damselfly <i>Coenagrion mercuriale</i>; Stag beetle <i>Lucanus cervus</i></p> <p>Annex II Non Primary: Great crested newt <i>Triturus cristatus</i>; Barbastella Bat <i>Barbastella barbastellus</i>; Bechstein Bat <i>Myotis bechsteini</i> Otter <i>Lutra lutra</i> Lamprey <i>Lampetra planeri</i> Bullhead <i>Cottus gobio</i></p>	<p>Physical Loss: Afforestation of heathland habitats with conifers and other non-native species (data form)</p> <p>Physical Damage: Increased recreational pressure (data form)</p> <p>Non Physical Disturbance: Light pollution (prof judgement); Human presence (prof judgement); Water Table: Drainage of wetland habitats for improved grazing and forestry (data form); light pollution; recreational pressure</p> <p>Biological Disturbance: Afforestation of heathland habitats with conifers and other non-native species (data form); Essential grazing by commoners' animals is vulnerable to current economic trends (data form)</p>	<p>The New Forest is around 5km from the boundary of the County. It is very unlikely that any increase in recreational pressure will be directly identifiable and attributable to new Gypsy and Traveller.</p> <p>Similarly, deterioration in air quality due to increased car travel may have an adverse impact on the site. However, it is unlikely this will be caused by new Gypsy and Traveller development in Dorset.</p>	<p>Screened out from further assessment.</p>
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	<p>Ramsar details: Woodland; lowland heath; bog, fen and swamp</p> <p>SPA details: Annex 1 Birds: Dardford Warbler; Honey Buzzard; Nightjar; Woodlark; Hen Harrier Migratory species: Hobby <i>Falco subbuteo</i>; Wood Warbler <i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i></p>			
<p>Poole Harbour Ramsar, SPA Poole, Purbeck</p>	<p>Ramsar criteria: 1. Best example of bar-built estuary in Britain. 2. Two species of nationally rare plant and one nationally rare alga. At least three British Red data book invertebrate species. 3. Examples of natural habitat types of community interest – Mediterranean and thermo Atlantic halophilous scrubs, as well as calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i>. Transitions from saltmarsh through peatland mires are of exceptional conservation importance. Nationally important populations of breeding waterfowl including Common fern, <i>Sterna hirundo</i> and Mediterranean gull <i>Larus melanocephalus</i>. Over winter</p>	<p>Physical loss: Urban and infrastructure development pressure Physical damage: Dredging (data form) Bait digging (data form) Non physical disturbance: Recreation pressure (prof judgement), increased population Water Table Drainage of grazing marshes (data form) Toxic Contamination Oil spills (prof judgement) Non toxic contamination Eutrophication (data form) Sewage discharge (data form) Biological Disturbance Introduction/invasion of non-native animal species esp Manilla clam (data form); wildfowl hunting</p>	<p>New Gypsy and Traveller sites in the vicinity of Poole Harbour have the potential to cause some increase in recreational pressure.</p>	<p>If any Gypsy and Traveller site is proposed near this location further assessment may be needed.</p>

	<p>the site also supports a nationally important population of Avocet.</p> <p>5. Species with peak counts in winter: 24,709 waterfowl</p> <p>6. Species with peak counts in winter: Common shelduck, Black tailed godwit.</p> <p>Annex 1 Birds Common Tern; Mediterranean Gull; Aquatic Warbler; Little Egret; Avocet</p> <p>Migratory Species Black-tailed Godwit; Shelduck</p> <p>Article 4.2 of the Directive (79/409/EEC): regularly supporting at least 20,000 waterfowl</p> <p>Over winter, the area regularly supports 28,426 individual waterfowl.</p>			
<p>Prescombe Down</p> <p>SAC</p> <p>Salisbury</p>	<p>Annex I Non-primary Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies: on calcareous substrates</p> <p>Annex II Non Primary Marsh fritillary butterfly</p>	<p>Biological disturbance: Inappropriate grazing regimes; increased stocking of game birds</p>	<p>Gypsy and Traveller sites within Dorset are unlikely to create extra recreational pressure on these site, due to distance from County boundary.</p>	<p>Screened out from further assessment.</p>
<p>River Avon</p> <p>SAC</p> <p>East Dorset, Christchurch</p>	<p>Annex I Non Primary: Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and Callitriche-Batrachion vegetation.</p> <p>Annex I Non-Primary: Alkaline fens; Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i></p> <p>Annex II Primary: Desmoulin's whorl snail; Sea lamprey; Brook lamprey; Atlantic salmon; Bullhead</p> <p>Annex II Non-Primary:</p>	<p>Physical damage: Channel modifications causing changes to sediment processes</p> <p>Water table: Abstraction, already a serious problem will be exacerbated by new development at Bath, Trowbridge and Salisbury.</p> <p>Toxic contamination: Water pollution</p> <p>Non-toxic contamination: Nutrient enrichment.</p>	<p>New Gypsy and Traveller sites, as with any new residential development, will require a potable water supply. Over-abstraction can have adverse impacts on the protected features of the River Avon.</p> <p>Flood risk issues are likely to limit Gypsy and Traveller development on the river banks, therefore preventing direct physical damage. Recreation and visitor pressure from nearby site may risk damage to riverbanks.</p>	<p>The cumulative impacts of water abstraction to supply new development needs to be considered as part of strategic planning for Dorset. Gypsy and Traveller sites alone are unlikely</p>

	Otter; Freshwater Crayfish			to have a significant effect. The potential for recreational impacts needs to be considered on a site by site basis.
River Axe SAC West Dorset boundary	Annex I Primary: Water courses of plain to montane levels with <i>Ranunculus fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation Annex II Primary: Sea lamprey, Brook lamprey, Bullhead, Atlantic Salmon	Non-toxic contamination: Nutrient enrichment	As with all development sites new Gypsy and Traveller development may increase the quantity of treated waste water being discharged into the River Axe. The Environment Agency Review of Consents have ensured that phosphate levels from existing discharge sites are lowered ¹ . Management of discharges should be able to mitigate any impacts from new Gypsy and Traveller development.	Management of discharge consents by the Environment Agency are likely to be effective in avoiding significant impact.
Rooksmoor SAC North Dorset	Annex I Non Primary: Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils Annex II Primary: Marsh fritillary butterfly	Non-physical disturbance: Traffic Biological disturbance: scrub invasion due to lack of grazing	New Gypsy and Traveller sites could increase local traffic and have an adverse impact on these protected sites.	If any Gypsy and Traveller site is proposed near this location further assessment may be needed and if necessary management/development criteria put in place.
Sidmouth to West Bay	Annex I Primary: Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts; Tilio-Acerion forests of slopes, screes and	Physical loss: None identified Non-physical disturbance: light pollution; human presence	There is the risk that new Gypsy and Traveller sites in close proximity to the protected site could cause some	If any Gypsy and Traveller site is proposed near

¹ Environment Agency: Fact Sheet: River Axe Special Area of Conservation – implementing the Habitats Regulations Directive (no date)

<p>SAC</p> <p>West Dorset and Devon</p>	<p>ravines (Priority feature)</p> <p>Annex I Non Primary: Annual vegetation of drift lines; Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide; Perennial vegetation of stony banks</p> <p>Annex II Non primary: Rhinolophus hipposideros; Gentianella anglica</p>		<p>disturbance impacts, including through light pollution.</p>	<p>this location further assessment may be needed and if necessary management/development criteria put in place.</p>
<p>Solent and Southampton Water</p> <p>SAC, Ramsar, SPA</p> <p>Hampshire</p>	<p>SAC Details</p> <p>Annex I Primary</p> <p>Estuaries; <i>Spartina swards (Spartinion maritimae)</i>; Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>)</p> <p>Annex I Non Primary:</p> <p>Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time; Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide; Coastal lagoons (Priority feature); Annual vegetation of drift lines; Perennial vegetation of stony banks; Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand; Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes)</p> <p>Annex II Non Primary:</p> <p>Desmoulin's whorl snail <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>; European Otter <i>Lutra lutra</i>; Harbour Seal <i>Phoca vitulina</i></p> <p>Ramsar criteria:</p> <p>1: One of the few major sheltered channels between a substantial island and mainland in European waters, exhibiting an unusual strong double tidal flow with long periods of slack</p>	<p>Physical Loss: Existing and proposed flood defence and coast protection works; Coastal erosion/ sea level rise 'coastal squeeze' (data form); Development pressure (data form) (data form); land claim;</p> <p>Physical Damage: Dredging to provide/improve deep water access (data form); erosion; recreational pressure</p> <p>Toxic Contamination: Oil/chemical spills (data form); Heavy industrial activities (data form); Former waste disposal sites (data form); Waste-water discharge (data form)</p> <p>Non-toxic Contamination: sewage discharge</p> <p>Biological Disturbance: Introduction of non-native species e.g. from shipping activity.(data form)</p>	<p>This protected site is outside the County boundary. However, non-toxic water pollution from rivers discharging into the Solent and Southampton water could have an adverse impact on the protected site. It is unlikely Gypsy and Traveller development in Dorset would have an impact on the quality of this site.</p> <p>Any increased recreational pressure created by new Gypsy and Traveller sites is likely to be very marginal compared to current visitor pressure and increased pressure from other sources.</p>	<p>Screened out from further assessment.</p>

	<p>water at high and low tide. Includes many wetland habitats characteristic of the biogeographic region: saline lagoons, saltmarshes, estuaries, intertidal flats, shallow coastal waters, grazing marshes, reedbeds, coastal woodland and rocky boulder reefs.</p> <p>2: Supports an important assemblage of rare plants and invertebrates. At least 33 British Red Data Book invertebrates and at least eight British Red Data Book plants.</p> <p>5: Species with peak counts in winter: 51343 waterfowl</p> <p>6: Species with peak counts in spring/autumn: Ringed plover , <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> Species with peak counts in winter:</p> <p>Dark-bellied brent goose, <i>Branta bernicla bernicla</i> Eurasian teal , <i>Anas crecca</i> Black-tailed godwit <i>Limosa limosa islandica</i></p> <p>SPA Details: Common Tern <i>Sterna hirundo</i>; Little Tern <i>Sterna albifrons</i>; Mediterranean Gull <i>Larus melanocephalus</i>; Roseate Tern <i>Sterna dougallii</i>; Sandwich Tern <i>Sterna sandvicensis</i></p>			
Solent & Isle of Wight Lagoons	<p>Annex 1 Primary: Coastal lagoons</p> <p>Annex I Non Primary: Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand;</p>	<p>Water table: Sea-level rise – coastal defenece (Coastal Squeeze)</p> <p>Toxic contamination: Industrial waste</p>	<p>The site is well beyond Dorset's boundaries and the vulnerabilityes to not relate to the type of impacts Gypsy and</p>	<p>Screened out from further assessment.</p>

SAC Hampshire (outside County)	Atlantic salt meadows	diposal/landfill /discharges; diffuse pollution occurring off-site	Traveller sites could have.	
South Wight Maritime SAC Isle of Wight (outside County)	Annex I Primary Reefs; Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts; Submerged or partially submerged sea caves Annex I Non Primary: Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time; Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide; European dry heaths; Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies: on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) Annex II Non Primary: Early Gentian <i>Gentianella anglica</i>	Physical Loss: Development pressure (data form); Erosion (data form) Physical Damage: Dredging/dredge spoil disposal (data form); Fishing (data form); Boating (data form); Marine aggregate extraction (data form); Erosion (data form) Intensive agriculture in the hinterland (data form); Existing and proposed coast protection works (data form) Toxic Contamination: Oil/chemical spills from shipping activity (data form) Non Toxic Contamination: Sewage discharge (data form) Biological Disturbance: Introduction of non-native species, e.g. from shipping activity (data form)	This protected site is outside the County boundary. However, non-toxic water pollution from rivers discharging into the Solent and Southampton water could have an adverse impact on the protected site. Development within Dorset will need to take into account the need to ensure there is no decline in the quality of water bodies, following advice from the Environment Agency. All new development will need to ensure there is sufficient waste water treatment capacity to protect water quality. Any increased recreational pressure created by new Gypsy and Traveller sites is likely to be very marginal compared to current visitor pressure and increased pressure from other sources.	Development in Dorset as a whole needs to follow advice from Environment Agency and to ensure sufficient waste water utility capacity is in place prior to occupation. Screened out from further assessment.
St Albans Head to Durlston Head SAC Purbeck	Annex I Primary Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts; Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies: on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (important orchid sites) (Priority feature) Annex II Primary: Early gentian <i>Gentianella anglica</i> Annex II Non Primary: Greater horseshoe bat <i>Rhinolophus</i>	Physical Damage: Climbing activity (data form) Non Physical Disturbance: Light pollution (prof judgement); Human presence (prof judgement) Biological Disturbance: Scrub invasion (data form); Threat of <i>Brachypodium</i> becoming dominant (data form)	Development of Gypsy and Traveller sites is very unlikely to have a direct physical impact on these sea cliffs and scrubland. However, new Gypsy and Traveller sites in close proximity of the protected area could increase visitor pressure.	If any Gypsy and Traveller site is proposed near this location further assessment may be needed and if necessary management/development criteria put in place.

	ferrumequinum			
<p>West Dorset Alder Woods</p> <p>SAC</p> <p>West Dorset</p>	<p>Annex I Primary: Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i>, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>) (Priority feature)</p> <p>Annex II Primary Marsh fritillary butterfly</p> <p>Annex II Non Primary Great crested newt</p>	<p>Physical damage: Game management; recreation; development pressure</p> <p>Water table: abstraction</p> <p>Toxic contamination: Agricultural runoff</p> <p>Biological Disturbance: Deer browsing</p>	<p>There is the risk in this location of Gypsy and Traveller sites causing increased recreational pressure on woodlands.</p>	<p>If any Gypsy and Traveller site is proposed near this location further assessment may be needed and if necessary management/development criteria put in place.</p>

Appendix 2: Dorset Heathlands

Dorset Heath – Interim Statement

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/387392>

To avoid residential development causing significant adverse impacts to the Dorset Heath Ramsar and Special Protection Area (SPA) a statement has been jointly prepared by the relevant Dorset Councils and Natural England. The statement is called *The Dorset Heathlands: Interim Planning Statement 2010-2011*, and was published in April 2010. However, the Interim Statement only runs until the end of 2011 by when a joint Heath Land Development Plan Document (DPD) to provide a set of planning policies to guide development in the area.

The risk to the heaths arises from the recreational pressure created by growth in residential development near the site. The quality and location of these areas make them an ideal location for walking, dog walking and other outdoor pursuits. Studies have found that public access to lowland heathland, from nearby development, has led to an increase in wild fires, damaging recreational uses, the introduction of incompatible plants and animals, loss of vegetation and soil erosion and disturbance by humans and their pets amongst other factors.

Research has shown that urban development near heathland is associated with an adverse effect on three of the SPA interest features: nightjar, woodlark and Dartford warbler. The density of nightjars on heathland sites has been found to decline with the amount of development on adjacent land. Furthermore the research indicates that the breeding success of those nightjars present also declines with the amount of development. This appears, at least in part, to be related to human disturbance from visitor pressure, especially disturbance by dogs. Research on woodlarks and disturbance has reached similar conclusions. For Dartford warblers, emerging research shows that cats are a predator of young Dartford warblers and were recorded to take over 10% of all young raised on an urban part of the Dorset Heathlands SPA.

The Interim Paper reports Natural England advice that within 400m of the boundary of a designated area of heath it will not be possible to successfully mitigate against adverse impacts. This is for residential development (Use Class C3) that includes Gypsy and Traveller sites.

To avoid the incremental damage through the cumulative impacts of urban development between 400m and 5km (straight line for the boundary) from the protected heath significant adverse impacts are still likely. However, Natural England identify that mitigation may be suitable to reduce this impact by diverting recreational pressure away from the heathland, access management measures and resources to implement this. It is this 400m to 5km distance is what the Interim Planning Framework applies.

The main provisions for mitigation will require all new residential development in the zone make a standard charge financial contribution. The contribution will be used to fund developing and managing new recreation space and be secured through a planning obligation. This will be required wherever a net increase in residential dwellings will be required.

The standard contribution was calculated using predictions on the likely increase in population from new residential development. The Interim Statement does not

specify what the cost would be for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation, only referring to houses and flats.

The Interim Planning Statement contains a list of mitigation projects proposed for 2010 to 2011 to reduce the significance of the residential development in the 400m to 5km zone. This can be found in Appendix A of the Interim Statement. These measures include:

- enhancements to existing open space and other publicly owned land
- the provision of alternative open space that would pull recreational use away from the European sites
 - local community actions similar in scope to those previously funded by the Urban Heaths LIFE Project; and
 - also measures to increase the ecological robustness of the European sites through the sympathetic use of adjacent open land.

These urban pressures have been recognised as a significant issue on the Dorset heathlands by the Standing Committee of the Berne Convention. On urban development, the Committee has formally recommended to the UK Government (No. 67 1998) among various matters to avoid any more development close to existing heathland; for new housing to provide areas for playgrounds, sport or leisure in areas other than heathlands, to avoid unwanted pressure on heathlands.

It is Natural England's view, based on recent research into access onto heathlands and other factors, that the area within about 400m of European sites is where additional small scale residential development is likely to have the most substantial further adverse effect on these sites; and where these effects cannot be mitigated.

Nevertheless residential developments beyond this area are also likely to contribute to increasing the urban pressures on the European sites. The development proposed by this application is situated in this wider area beyond the nearest part of the European sites. Natural England is concerned about the cumulative effects of this

Where mitigation would be appropriate to remove a likely addition to urban pressures on the European sites, we are not generally seeking to provide specific advice on the individual circumstances of each small scale development proposal, such as the currently proposed development. Rather this development is likely to have significant effects only in combination with other such developments and that this requires a sound package of mitigation measures that must account for their cumulative impact.

Appendix 3: Air Quality Analysis

Analysis of Effects of Air Quality on Natura 2000 and Ramsar Sites in the South West of England

(Source: Appendix 4 HRA of the Draft South West Regional Spatial Strategy)

Introduction

Air quality is an important factor in determining the integrity of a Natura 2000 or Ramsar site. Certain interest features of these protected sites can be directly and/or indirectly affected by pollutants concentrated in the air such as oxides of nitrogen (NO_x), oxides of sulphur (SO_x) or ammonia, or by pollutants deposited on the ground through acidification or terrestrial eutrophication via soil (deposition of nitrogen).

There different types of air pollutant that could affect Natural 2000 sites are described as 'aerial' pollutants or 'deposition' pollutants, together with an analysis of the extent to which the designated sites in the South West may already be affected by air pollution. Only some of the pollutants are likely to arise as a result of proposals in the Draft RSS.

The information has been taken from the website Air Pollution Information System (APIS) www.apis.ac.uk/index.html

Aerial Pollution

Nitrogen Dioxide: Common and increases sources including transport emissions. Nutrient enrichment from deposition, leading to changing habitat characteristics resulting from adverse impacts on plants and wildlife.

Sulphur Dioxide: From electricity generation, industry and domestic fuel combustion. Impacts on plants through soil acidification and deposition, particular adverse impacts on lichen.

Ozone: Created in the air through reactions of sunlight and NO_x and volatile organic compounds that arise from fossil fuel combustion. Causes injury to plants and changes in growth rate.

Ammonia: Primarily from decomposition of animal waste. Atmospheric ammonia can have impacts on local and international scales. It can lead to damage to plants and other adverse effects on plants.

Deposition Pollution

Acid deposition: Often referred to as acid rain, formed from a mix of atmospheric pollutants, particularly NO_x and SO_x . Impacts adversely on plants from increasing acidity can also impact on other species sensitive to acidification, such as thinning of bird eggs. Calcareous grasslands are well suited to resist impacts due to neutralising effects of calcium carbonate.

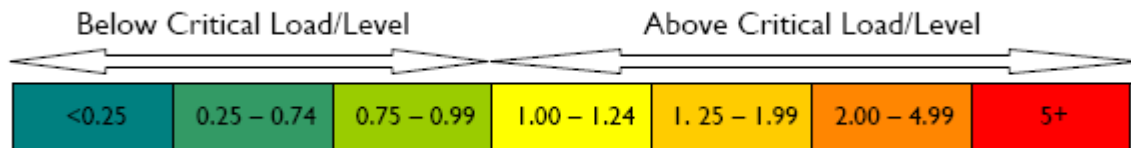
Nitrogen deposition: Sources include intensive agriculture and the output of catalytic converters. Causes eutrophication and impacts on the marine environment. Can impact on plant growth and have direct impacts on mosses, liverworts and lichens. Habitats characterised by bryophytes (mosses, liverworts, lichens) are most at risk.

Assessment of Air Quality Issues Relating to Natura 2000 and Ramsar Sites in the South West

The information is from the Air Pollution Information System (APIS). The APIS analytical tool gives national maps of air pollutant exposure and Critical Loads (deposition pollution) and Critical Levels (air concentrations). The Loads and Levels are normally given for a habitat type, as shown in the table. The table is colour coded to illustrate the relative pollutant levels at the Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites in and around Dorset.

There are some uncertainties in the analysis including:

- If the site is near a large emissions source the tool may underestimate loads/levels due to the model used
- Mapped information is only available at 1km or 5km grid resolution
- A centre point has to be used, therefore some parts of a site may not be indicative of the whole site
- The table is only based on the predominant habitat type for each site, in fact many sites are a habitat mosaic
- Occasionally the habitat type is not available and next best has to be used.
- Nitrogen deposition values are given on a range in the APIS tool – the mid-point on the range is given in this table.



Natura 2000 / Ramsar	OS Gridref (centrepoint of SAC/SPA/Ramsar – in case of sites with more than one designation, most central selected)	APIS Habitats Type	Acid deposition	Ammonia	Nitrogen deposition	Nitrogen oxides	Ozone	Sulphur dioxide
Beer Quarry and Caves	355834,173984	Bat site in mines	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Bracket's Coppice	351484,106866	Calcareous grassland	1.27	0.29	1.13	0.40	1.65	0.11
Cerne & Sydling Downs	364440,100010	Calcareous grassland	2.59	0.25	1.14	0.39	1.77	0.12
Chesil & The Fleet /Chesil Beach & the Fleet	362078,079952	Shingle, rocks and cliffs* most similar habitat type for which information is available	No info available	0.14	0.96	0.37	No info available	0.12
Chilmark Quarries	397504,131155	Bat site in quarry	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Crookhill Brick Pit	364434,079803	Great Crested Newt ponds, information not available for habitat type	No info available	No info available	No info available	No info available	No info available	No info available
Dorset Heaths/ Dorset Heathlands	397414,091394	Lowland heathland	14.50	0.15	1.03	0.73	1.69	0.19
Dorset Heaths (Purbeck & Wareham) & Studland Dunes	397789,085464	Sand dunes	12.20	0.10	0.91	0.56	1.70	0.12
Fontmell & Melbury Downs	388675,118961	Calcareous grassland	0.52	0.33	1.26	0.44	1.78	0.13
Great Yews	411978,123110	Beech woodland* information not available for Yew woodland habitat	0.28	0.23	2.97	0.50	1.68	0.17
Isle of Portland to Studland Cliffs	383620,078787	Shingle rocks and cliffs/ Calcareous grassland	No info available	0.09	0.84	0.35	No info available	0.11

Poole Harbour	398146,088416	Saltmarsh* most similar habitat type for which information is available	No info available	0.10	0.39	0.56	1.70	0.12
Prescombe Down	398773,125327	Calcareous grassland	0.51	0.28	1.21	0.46	1.74	0.14
River Avon and Avon Valley	414701,102703	River, information not available for this habitat type	No info available	No info available	No info available	No info available	No info available	No info available
River Axe	328501,097447	River, information not available for this habitat type	No info available	No info available	No info available	No info available	No info available	No info available
Rooksmoor	373768,229562	Calcareous grassland	1.50	0.39	1.35	0.40	1.67	0.13
Sidmouth to West Bay	329933,090383	Shingle rocks and cliffs / Ash Woodland	2.41	0.26	2.62	0.33	1.84	0.10
Solent & Isle of Wight Lagoons	432238,092154	Saltmarsh* most similar habitat type for which information is available	0.32	0.14	0.40	0.57	No info available	0.15
Solent Maritime and Solent & Southampton Water	437139,096851	Saltmarsh* most similar habitat type for which information is available	1.73	0.14	0.42	0.60	1.71	0.13
South Wight Maritime	453225,081991	Shingle rocks and cliffs* most similar habitat type for which information is available	3.83	0.15	1.20	0.50	1.79	0.15
St Albans Head to Durlston Head	400027,077019	Calcareous grassland	0.32	0.13	0.68	0.50	1.80	0.17
The New Forest	426978,107375	Beech woodland/ Calcareous grassland* most extensive habitat types, for which information is available, in a very mixed site	1.69	0.08	1.94	0.68	2.10	0.12
West Dorset Alder Woods	354379,098319	Ash woodlands	2.69	0.23	2.64	0.35	1.65	0.11

Appendix 4: Discussions with Natural England

Note of a meeting with Natural England 13 December 2010

East Dorset Offices, Furzehill

Present:

Lynda King	East Dorset District Council
Cicely Postan	Baker Associates
Helen Powell	Natural England
Mark Russell	Baker Associates
Nick Squirrel	Natural England

- Natural England would generally object to any site (any part of its curtilage) for residential use which is within 400m straight line from Dorset Heathlands.
- There should be no net increase in the number of households living on site. An existing house (whatever size) is one household. One pitch would constitute one household, so NE would object to the loss of one house and replacement by two or more pitches.
- If the site is within 400m but there are physical barriers preventing people and animals accessing the heathlands they will consider the impact of the site on a case by case basis. However, the NE 400m buffer maps already take account of major barriers when drawn.
- If there are insufficient sites outside 400m from heathlands to meet pitch requirements then NE are prepared to look at mitigation measures to identify the least damaging sites. Managed public sites will have more scope to deliver effective mitigation measures.
- For sites located between 400m and 5km of heathlands, there will be a requirement for recreational provision on-site and/or a contribution to off-site provision in accordance with the Interim Planning Statement to prevent occupants going onto heathland for recreation purposes. A precautionary approach will be taken taking account of the lifecycle of the site.
- However, NE will be flexible about the nature of that requirement. For example, if a site is large enough to contain land for a pitch and grazing land for horses, there may not be a need for a contribution towards a local park or children's play area as the occupants will have space on-site. The test will be "where will the occupants go for recreation?" (e.g. children's play, dog walking) and this will need to recognise the patterns of Gypsies and Travellers.
- NE consider that the ability to manage a site effectively should be a key consideration in site allocation, for instance risks from possible illegal use including tipping and fires.