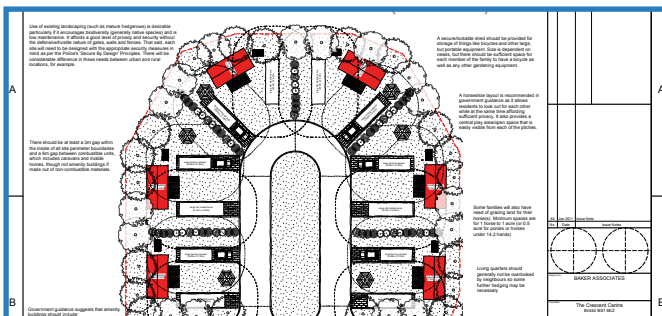


Dorset-wide Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Site Allocations Joint Development Plan Document

Consultation – November 2011

Site Options Report: Part 1 Summary Report



Produced by Baker Associates on behalf of Dorset councils

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Dorset County Council, Bournemouth Borough Council, Christchurch Borough Council, East Dorset District Council, North Dorset District Council, Borough of Poole, Purbeck District Council, West Dorset District Council and Weymouth and Portland Borough Council have decided to prepare a Dorset-wide Gypsy and Traveller (including Travelling Showpeople) Site Allocations Joint Development Plan Document (DPD) to allocate Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites within Dorset.
- 1.2 Baker Associates has been appointed as planning consultants to assist the Dorset authorities in the preparation of the DPD and to support the DPD at examination as the lead witness.
- 1.3 This site options report sets out the site requirements for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople based on a review of national policy, best practice and the views of stakeholders and communities. Using appropriate site criteria, a two stage site assessment process was developed to identify a shortlist of potential sites for further consideration through the DPD process.

Background

- 1.4 Gypsies and Travellers have been resident within England for many hundreds of years. Within Dorset the total residing population is estimated to be between 2,400 and 3,000 people, although it is thought that this figure probably underestimates the numbers of the travelling community living in housing. There are marked seasonal differences with increased number of Travellers during the summer months.
- 1.5 Government policy relating to Gypsies and Travellers has changed over time. The Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 allowed local authorities to stop the unlicensed development of caravan sites and prohibit encampments on commons and resulted in the closure of many sites traditionally used by Gypsies and Travellers up until that time. The Caravans Act 1968 (Part 1) then required local authorities to provide adequate accommodation for Gypsies and for those authorities that did, provided additional powers to remove unlawful encampments. Dorset was the first county to make permanent Gypsy site provision under this Act. The 1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act then abolished any statutory obligation for local authorities to provide accommodation and made it a criminal offence to camp on land without the owner's consent.
- 1.6 As a result of this last Act, most local authorities stopped identifying new sites for Gypsies and Travellers in Local Plans during the 1990s and relied instead upon criteria based policies to manage the future provision of sites. Many of these were very restrictive and fewer sites than required came through the planning process. This has resulted in an overall backlog of need, resulting in unauthorised developments and encampments.
- 1.7 Since the Housing Act in 2004, there has been a requirement for local authorities to identify sufficient sites through the planning process to meet identified needs.

- 1.8 Travelling Showpeople do not in general share the same culture or traditions as Gypsies and Travellers but have a separate rich tradition associated with the holding of fairs and circuses across the country. Generally across the country the number of Showpeople sites have diminished and remaining sites have had a tendency to become overcrowded as single family units have expanded. The 2004 Housing Act and subsequent legislation place a similar requirement on local authorities to provide for the site requirements of Travelling Showpeople.
- 1.9 The intention of the Dorset councils is to seek to make positive provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople through the allocation of sites in a Development Plan Document (DPD). Providing sufficient caravan pitches will help meet the needs of the travelling communities and it should also reduce the number of unauthorised sites and the conflict they cause and help make enforcement more effective.
- 1.10 In August 2010, the new Secretary of State declared the intention of the Coalition Government to replace the circulars relating to Travellers with more light-touch guidance outlining councils' statutory obligations. This would include removing regional targets for the provision of sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople contained within Regional Strategies, which will be abolished. However, he went on to say that local authorities would continue to be required to identify sufficient sites in their areas to reflect local need and historic demand.
- 1.11 In April 2011, the Coalition Government published a consultation document entitled "Planning for traveller sites". This proposes a light touch policy to replace circulars 01/06 and 04/07. The policy proposes that current definitions of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople are retained, that local planning authorities make their own assessment of the accommodation needs for Travellers based on evidence and establish their own local targets for pitch/plot provision. Local planning authorities should then meet needs through the identification of land for sites. Local planning authorities should plan for a five year supply of pitches/plots.
- 1.12 The new policy contained within the consultation document aims to "ensure that local planning authorities, working collaboratively, develop fair and effective strategies to meet need through the identification of land for sites" (para. 3.5). The Dorset authorities are working together through this project to deliver on this policy approach.

Definitions

- 1.13 Gypsies and Travellers are currently defined as:
- "Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of Travelling Showpeople or circus people travelling together as such". (Circular 01/2006 para. 15)*

- 1.14 Many Gypsies and Travellers continue to pursue an active itinerant lifestyle and are generally self employed people. However, increasingly communities are becoming more settled.
- 1.15 There are three types of sites identified as required to meet Gypsy and Traveller needs. These are:
- Permanent sites – these provide residents with a permanent home;
 - Transit sites – these are permanent sites that provide temporary accommodation for their residents, normally between 28 days and 3 months; and
 - Emergency stopping places – these are pieces of land in temporary use as authorised short term (less than 28 days) stopping places for all travelling communities.
- 1.16 Sites can vary in size, although they should be at least large enough to accommodate one pitch. A pitch is an area of land where a Gypsy or Traveller household can reside; typically this may contain a building, parking space and one or more caravans with sufficient space to enable the easy maneuverability of caravans up to 20 metres in length.
- 1.17 Travelling Showpeople are currently defined as:
- “Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family’s or dependants’ more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excludes Gypsies and Traveller” (Circular 04/2007 para. 15)*
- 1.18 Travelling Showpeople have different site requirements from Gypsies and Travellers. They normally require sites which have both residential and business uses on site, to enable the storage and repair of fairground equipment. Larger sites are often subdivided into individual family ‘plots’ or ‘yards’.

Purpose and objectives of the Development Plan Document (DPD)

- 1.19 The broad objectives for the DPD are:
- To identify sufficient suitable residential and transit sites to meet the long term needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople;
 - To set out a clear delivery strategy, identifying how much development is to happen, where, when and by what means it will be delivered.
- 1.20 The main spatial issues to be addressed in the DPD include:
- The Dorset Traveller Needs Assessment and other national and local data demonstrates a need to provide a number and range of residential and transit sites to meet the differing needs of the various travelling communities;
 - There is a need to consider a spatial distribution of site provision across Dorset which meets the identified needs of the travelling communities,

creates mixed and balanced communities and conserves the open countryside and natural environment;

- Dorset is one of the most environmentally constrained counties in the country, containing significant areas of Green Belt, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, World Heritage Site Coastline, Sites of International Wildlife Importance and floodplains.

2 Site requirements

The number of pitches required to meet needs

- 2.1 The first Dorset Traveller Needs Assessment was prepared by Anglia University for Dorset County Council in 2006. The assessment involved a survey and face to face interviews with 143 Gypsies and Travellers on sites of all types and in housing, within Dorset in 2005.
- 2.2 The assessment identified the current supply of council and private pitches to be 58 pitches across the survey area, derived from the six monthly caravan count returns and local information provided by the councils.
- 2.3 Taking account of the existing supply, the assessment estimated the need for additional Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople pitches to be between 585 and 609 from 2006 to 2011.
- 2.4 The Coalition Government has resolved to remove Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) through the Decentralisation and Localism Bill. However, during the preparation of the South West RSS in 2007-8, a number of bodies including local authorities and representatives from the travelling communities submitted evidence relating to local needs. This evidence remains relevant to this proposed DPD.
- 2.5 The Dorset authorities' initial submission to the RSS examination reviewed the requirement for Gypsies and Travellers as being 228 pitches to meet needs from 2006 to 2011.
- 2.6 The Panel appointed to conduct the examination recommended that 425 pitches should be provided to meet needs to 2011 and this figure appeared in the Secretary of State's Proposed Modifications to the draft RSS in July 2008.
- 2.7 Subsequently the Dorset authorities submitted a response which identified some errors in the translation of the Panel recommendations into the Proposed Changes. This joint response recommended that the number of pitches to be provided to meet local need should be 255 to 2011, a reduction of 40% on the RSS figures.
- 2.8 Table 1 summarises the different estimates of Gypsy and Traveller pitch requirements for 2006 to 2011.
- 2.9 The principal differences between the various estimates related to whether double counting had occurred in the original assessment, how growth factors should be applied beyond 2011, differing assumptions of the desired movement between housing and sites and the extent to which overcrowding requires additional pitches.
- 2.10 The Dorset Traveller Needs Assessment recommended that regular 5 year reviews of pitch numbers should be undertaken to take into account variations in travelling patterns and the demand for transfer from housing to caravan pitches.
- 2.11 All of the above indicates that the DPD will need to review the findings of the Dorset Traveller Needs Assessment taking account of the latest upto date evidence of the

Table 1: Estimates of additional Gypsy and Traveller pitch requirements 2006 to 2011

Authority	Dorset Traveller Needs Assessment (Anglia Ruskin University) 2006	Draft RSS Additional Pitch Requirement (Table 4.3) 2007		Dorset Authorities Submission to RSS EiP January 2008		Secretary of State's Proposed Modifications to draft RSS (Table 4.3) July 2008		Dorset Authorities Joint Committee Response October 2008	
	(a)	(b)		(c)		(d)		(e)	
	Residential and Transit	Residential	Transit	Residential	Transit	Residential	Transit	Residential	Transit
Bournemouth	48-51	28	20	8	10	28	12	13	12
Christchurch	48-51	33	27	11	13	33	16	12	16
East Dorset	88-92	50	38	12	20	50	30	13	20
North Dorset	165-168	37	128	20	20(*)	37	20	20	20(*)
Poole	48-50	35	13	8	7	35	8	13	8
Purbeck	79-83	44	35	20	17	44	21	20	21
West Dorset	80-84	44	36	20	17	44	22	20	22
Weymouth and Portland	29-30	0	29	0	25	0	25	0	25
DORSET	585-609	271	326	99	129(*)	271	154	111	144(*)

After 2011, a compound growth of 3% per annum on residential pitches had been proposed in RSS

(*) Plus 100 pitches for Steam Fair

existing supply and local needs in the light of historic demand when determining the number of pitches and plots to be provided to meet needs beyond 2011.

- 2.12 However, in the interim, there is a need to identify a potential longer term requirement as a basis for the allocations in the DPD. The South West RSS process resulted in recommendations that where updated data on needs is not available a 3% compound growth rate should be applied to residential pitches per year as a basis for assessing longer term requirements beyond 2011. National policy PPS3 states that DPDs should identify broad locations and specific sites to enable continuous delivery of housing for at least 15 years from the date of adoption.
- 2.13 Therefore, table 2 below sets out a preliminary estimate for the DPD period, using the Dorset authorities' position in 2008 on overall pitch requirements for the period 2006 - 2011 and applying a 3% compound growth per year to residential pitches from 2011 until 2028, which is 15 years from the date of adoption of the proposed DPD. There is no evidence to support applying a particular growth rate to transit pitch needs and so this element of future pitch needs will need to await a local assessment of future needs in the light of historic demand.

Table 2: Preliminary estimate for additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches required 2006 to 2028

Authority	Pitch requirements		
	2006-2011		2012-2028 (3% compound growth p.a.)
	Residential	Transit	Residential
Bournemouth	13	12	8**
Christchurch	12	16	8**
East Dorset	13	20	8**
North Dorset	20	20(*)	13**
Poole	13	8	8**
Purbeck	20	21	13**
West Dorset	20	22	13**
Weymouth and Portland	0	25	0**
DORSET	111	144(*)	71**

(*) Plus 100 pitches for Steam Fair

** Plus transit pitches to meet needs 2012-2028

- 2.14 The Dorset Traveller Needs Assessment made no specific recommendations regarding the provision of plots to meet the needs of Travelling Showpeople and it was recognised by the RSS Panel that further work on identifying the needs of Travelling Showpeople needed to be carried out. At the RSS examination a Report on Travelling Showpeople was considered which was based upon data from the

Gloucestershire and West of England GTAA's, a local authority questionnaire and consultation with representative bodies. The Secretary of State's Proposed Modifications to the draft RSS in July 2008 subsequently proposed that 2 plots should be provided in Dorset to meet needs to 2011.

- 2.15 Applying a 3% compound growth rate per year to this requirement, would mean a possible preliminary target for the period 2006-2028 of 3 plots.

Net provision since 2006

- 2.16 At the time of the 2006 Dorset Travellers Needs Assessment the Council residential Gypsy site at Mannings Heath, Poole contained 4 occupied pitches. A new permission for 15 pitches was granted in January 2008 and the pitches are now occupied. Therefore, since 2006 an additional 11 residential pitches have been provided within Poole Borough. In addition, permission for 1 pitch was granted in April 2011 at King's Stag in North Dorset.
- 2.17 A number of other sites within the Dorset area have gained temporary and/or personal consents for Gypsy and Traveller use since 2006. However, no further permanent permissions have been granted which can contribute towards the targets set out above.
- 2.18 The DPD will therefore need to seek to identify and deliver sufficient sites to meet the needs set out in table 2 above, taking account of permanent provision made since 2006.

The size of sites

- 2.19 National evidence, the result of the Dorset Traveller Needs Assessment and initial consultations would suggest that Gypsies and Travellers prefer small sites containing a small number of pitches to accommodate their immediate and extended family. Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites (CLG, 2008) states that "a maximum of 15 pitches is conducive to providing a comfortable environment, which is easy to manage. However, smaller sites of 3-4 pitches can also be successful, particularly when designed for one extended family" (para. 4.7).
- 2.20 The DPD will therefore need to investigate whether small sites or a range of site sizes is the best approach to meeting the needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Dorset, having regard to other planning requirements including respecting the scale of the nearest settled community.

General approach to location

- 2.21 Circulars 01/2006 and 04/2007 identify the following locations as being appropriate for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites:
- Sites on the outskirts of built up areas; and
 - Sites within rural or semi-rural settings.

- 2.22 However, “local authorities should first consider locations in or near existing settlements with access to local services, e.g. shops, doctors and schools.” (Circular 01/06 para. 65).
- 2.23 For Travelling Showpeople, sites “in the open countryside away from existing settlements, or outside areas allocated in development plan documents, should be strictly controlled: however rural areas may be acceptable for some types of Travelling Showpeople sites. For example, circuses” (Circular 04/07 para. 45).
- 2.24 The draft Planning Policy Statement (PPS) issued in April 2011 for consultation states that local planning authorities should strictly limit new development in open countryside that is away from existing settlements or outside areas allocated in the development plan, but some rural areas may be acceptable for some forms of Traveller sites. (Draft PPS, para. 22).

Policy designations

- 2.25 Sites within international environmental designations, such as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) or Ramsar sites, are not appropriate and will be rejected during the assessment process. However, all sites within proximity to these designated sites will be surveyed and assessed to assess their impact on these designated sites. Any potential sites will need to be discussed with Natural England.
- 2.26 Sites can be located within nationally recognised designations but only when “the objectives of the designation will not be compromised by the development” (Circular 01/06 para. 52). This would apply to the following national designations:
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
 - Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
 - Scheduled Ancient Monuments;
 - Conservation Areas;
 - Registered Historic Parks and Gardens.
- 2.27 Circulars 01/06 and 04/07 state that new sites in the Green Belt would normally be inappropriate development. Very special circumstances have to be demonstrated to justify allowing development in the Green Belt.
- 2.28 Flood risk is covered by national planning policy in PPS 25. Caravans are identified as highly vulnerable to flooding (Table D2). PPS25 states that caravans should not be sited in areas that have a high probability of flooding or in the functional floodplain. For sites with a medium flood probability the ‘exceptions test’ must be passed. Any potential sites in the floodplain will need to be discussed with the Environment Agency.
- 2.29 “Local landscape and nature conservation designations should not be used in themselves to refuse planning permission for Gypsy and Traveller sites. (Circular 01/06, para 53). Rather, sites should be assessed for their actual impact on landscape and biodiversity.

- 2.30 The draft PPS states that Traveller sites in the Green Belt are inappropriate development, although a local planning authority can make an exceptional limited alteration to the defined Green Belt boundary to meet a specific identified need, through the plan making process. (Draft PPS, para. 14 & 15).

Access to services

- 2.31 Circular 01/06 identifies that local authorities “should first consider locations in or near settlements with access to local services, e.g. shops, doctors and schools” (para. 65). In particular, there is a need to provide easy access to a doctor’s surgery and other health services and to ensure children attend school on a regular basis.
- 2.32 Sites should have good means of access to the local highway network but in terms of the availability of transport modes, the circulars state that “local authorities should be realistic about the availability, or likely availability, of alternatives to the car in accessing local services” (Circular 01/06 para. 54 and Circular 04/07 para. 45).
- 2.33 The draft PPS states that policies regarding Traveller sites should promote easier access to health services, ensure that children attend schools on a regular basis and provide a settled base to reduce the need for long distance travelling. (Draft PPS, para. 11).

Relationship to surrounding land uses

- 2.34 The Government is keen to promote a peaceful and integrated co-existence between a Gypsy and Traveller site and the local settled community. In order to facilitate this, Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites (CLG, 2008) states that “where possible, sites should be developed near to housing for the settled community as part of mainstream residential developments” (para 3.7). However, “sites should respect the scale of, and not dominate the nearest settled community” ((Circular 01/06 para. 54 and Circular 04/07 para. 45). The draft PPS reiterates this concern (Draft PPS, para. 12).
- 2.35 Designing Gypsy and Traveller sites also emphasises the importance of locating sites away from heavy industry and states that locations adjacent to industrial areas are unpopular because of their relative isolation, distance from local facilities and because of safety fears.
- 2.36 An important consideration is avoiding noise and disturbance. This can relate to the disturbance to the local settled community, in terms of the movement of vehicles to and from the site, from the stationing of vehicles on site and on-site business activities. However, it can also be the disturbance of the caravan occupants from adjoining uses, such as from industrial areas, railway lines or from highways, given the greater noise transference through walls of caravans than through the walls of conventional housing.

Site conditions

- 2.37 Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites identifies that, in terms of living conditions, “sites should not be identified for Gypsy and Traveller use in locations that are inappropriate for ordinary residential dwellings, unless exceptional circumstances apply” (para. 3.6).

- 2.38 Consequently the following are not considered acceptable locations:
- Sites in areas at high risk of flooding, as discussed above;
 - Sites located on contaminated land on or near landfill sites; and
 - Sites near other hazardous places.
- 2.39 In addition, sites should be capable of safe access, be reasonably level and should have sufficient space to accommodate a mobile home, touring caravan, and a small building (e.g. a wash block) and adequate manoeuvring space.
- 2.40 The Showmen's Guild has produced a Travelling Showpeople's Sites Model Planning Package (2007) which states that sites may have existing buildings located on them which can be used for the storage, maintenance and repair of equipment.

Essential services

- 2.41 Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites states that sites must have access to water, electricity, drainage and sanitation, with electricity and sewerage for permanent sites through mains systems, although in some locations alternative provision maybe appropriate. However, the document does state that the guidance contained within it may not be appropriate for all New Traveller sites and project team discussions with New Travellers did indicate that many prefer low impact and more environmental solutions to the provision of site infrastructure.
- 2.42 The Showmen's Guild's Model Planning Package states that sites should provide amenities normally expected for human occupation.
- 2.43 Circulars 01/06 and 04/07 state that sites should avoid placing an undue pressure on the local infrastructure (para. 54 and para. 45 respectively).

3 Site criteria and assessment process

Site criteria

- 3.1 PPS3 identifies three key criteria for determining appropriate housing sites for delivery through the planning system. To be deliverable, sites should:
- Be available - the site is available now;
 - Be suitable – the site offers a suitable location for development now and would contribute to the creation of sustainable, mixed communities; and
 - Be achievable – there is a reasonable prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years. (para. 54).
- 3.2 Circular 01/2006, in addition, states that “local planning authorities will need to demonstrate that sites are suitable, and that there is a realistic likelihood that specific sites allocated in DPDs will be made available for that purpose.” (para. 33).
- 3.3 The approach to identifying appropriate site selection criteria for the site assessment process has therefore built upon the framework:
- Is the site available?
 - Is the site suitable?
 - Is the site achievable?
- 3.4 A key consideration, again based upon Circular 01/2006, is that criteria should be “fair, reasonable, realistic and effective” (para. 32). Many previous studies and local plan criteria based policies across the country have used very restrictive criteria which have prevented many reasonable sites from coming forward. This is one of the principal reasons why the Government is no longer relying simply upon criteria based policies to bring forward suitable sites for Gypsies and Travellers.
- 3.5 Broad site criteria identified from national policy, best practice and initial consultation were developed into a set of draft site assessment criteria. These were designed to reflect the overall site requirements set out above.

Site selection process

- 3.6 At the same time, consideration was given to the process by which sites would be assessed and when the criteria would be applied. The approach proposed recognises that certain constraints are clear cut and are absolute, whilst others require more detailed site examination and may be capable of mitigation.

Stage 1 assessment

- 3.7 It was proposed that sites would be subject to an initial stage 1 assessment, using desk based/GIS information. This would be designed to remove sites which are clearly unsuitable (e.g. within international environmental designations) and to identify issues which will require further investigation at stage 2. Sites would be assessed against each criteria using a simple colour coding system consisting of a rejection

(red), acceptance but where further investigation and/or mitigation is required (orange) and acceptance (green).

3.8 Those sites which are not rejected at stage 1 would be considered further at stage 2.

Stage 2 assessment

3.9 All sites which are not rejected at stage 1 would be subject to survey and a more detailed assessment of suitability, availability and achievability. All sites would be assessed taking a balanced approach towards performance against all of the criteria.

3.10 All sites which are not rejected at stage 2 would go forward for further consideration at stage 3.

Stage 3 assessment

3.11 Sites which have not been rejected at stage 2 would be identified in the site options report in a shortlist of potential sites to be further investigated through the DPD process, having regard to the following considerations:

- Meeting the overall pitch requirements
- Spatial strategy
- Traveller patterns
- Cumulative impact
- Site needs of different traveller groups
- Types of sites required (permanent, transit)
- Site capacity
- Delivery models

Consultation and feedback

3.12 The draft site criteria and site assessment process were published for consultation during September 2010.

3.13 A number of stakeholders responded with comments:

- Rigid application of site selection procedure based on a sieve system can mean that otherwise suitable sites (when a balancing procedure is undertaken) can be rejected at an early stage.
- Many other councils have found that current unauthorised sites represent an 'easy win' when seeking to meet allocations and certainly have huge benefits for the Travelling community who occupy them.
- Green Belt: the issue of very special circumstances has been recognised but as this includes whether or not enough sites are available elsewhere (case law) then sites in Green Belt should not be rejected until it is clear that enough sites can be found elsewhere. If enough sites are not available then Green Belt and other national designations may be able to provide needed sites.

- All sites which are not in Flood Zone 3 should go forward to stage 3 where a suitable assessment can be carried out. It is becoming increasingly apparent that EA flood indicative maps can be very wrong.
- Site access and safety: To reject sites on the basis of an initial assessment of unknown degree of detail may miss out sites where access road standard is capable of amelioration.
- Access to facilities: The establishment of distance thresholds is problematic and may mean the rejection at stage 1 of quite suitable sites.
- Residential amenity: Challenge the rejection of sites because there may be a potential impact. Opens the door to NIMBY objections based on prejudice.
- Sewerage only - Any site which would be located within a sewage treatment odour consultation zone should be rejected - to protect the inhabitants from odour and fly nuisance.
- Utilities: Something best left until later in the process. New Travellers will form a significant part of the demand for sites to be met and their wish to develop low impact sites makes the availability or otherwise of utilities less important at an early stage in the site selection process.

3.14 As a result of this feedback from stakeholders, changes were made to take account of comments and a final set of recommended assessment criteria were prepared by the project team and approved by the Dorset Joint Liaison Committee in February 2011. These are set out below in table 3.

Table 3: Site assessment criteria

Criteria	Stage at which criteria considered	Designation/Issue	Reject	Accept but further investigation/mitigation required	Accept
Availability	Stage 1	Promoted sites, public land ownership etc.	Not applicable.	There is no evidence that the site is available for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople (GTTS) use or land ownership is unknown. There may be legal or ownership problems, such as multiple ownerships, ransom strips, tenancies or operational requirements which will require further investigation at stage 2.	There is evidence that the site is available in principle for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople (GTTS) use.
Suitability					
<i>Policy constraints</i>					
International environmental designations	Stage 1	Special Protection Area Ramsar Sites Special Conservation Area World Heritage Site	Within the international designation.	Not within an international designation but is within its buffer and further investigation is required at stage 2 to determine whether it is likely to have a significant effect, individually or cumulatively on the designation objectives.	Not within the international environmental designation or its buffer.
National designations (1)	Stage 1	Site of Special Scientific Interest National Nature Reserve Geological Conservation Review Site Scheduled Ancient Monument Listed Building	Within the national designation.	The site is within close proximity and further investigation is required at stage 2 to determine whether it has an unacceptable negative impact.	The site is not within the national designation or within close proximity.

Table 3: Site assessment criteria

Criteria	Stage at which criteria considered	Designation/Issue	Reject	Accept but further investigation/mitigation required	Accept
		Registered Historic Parks and Gardens			
National designations (2)	Stage 1	Area of Outstanding Beauty Groundwater Source Protection Zone Conservation Areas	Not applicable.	The site is within the national designation or is within close proximity and further investigation is required at stage 2 to determine whether it has an unacceptable negative impact.	The site is not within the national designation or within close proximity.
Local environmental designations	Stage 1	Local Nature Reserves Tree Preservation orders Ancient woodland Sites of Nature Conservation Interest Regionally Important Geological or Geomorphological Site Heritage Coast Land Instability Zones Heritage assets (local lists) Sewage treatment odour consultation zones	Not applicable.	The site is covered by a local designation or is within close proximity and further investigation is required to determine whether it has a negative impact and whether this can be mitigated.	The site is not within a local designation or within close proximity.
Land use allocations	Stage 1	Open space Community facilities Employment areas Other allocations	Within an area protected / allocated/ safeguarded for another use where policy requirements do not allow use of the site for GTTS use.	Within an area protected / allocated/ safeguarded for another use where the policy criteria can be satisfied (e.g. surplus to requirements or loss can be mitigated).	Outside an area subject to a land use designation.
Green Belt	Stage 1	Green Belt	Not applicable.	Located in the Green Belt and further investigations are required at stage 3 to identify if any very special	Located outside the Green Belt.

Table 3: Site assessment criteria

Criteria	Stage at which criteria considered	Designation/Issue	Reject	Accept but further investigation/mitigation required	Accept
				circumstances apply.	
Agricultural land	Stage 1	Agricultural Land Classification Note: Data only held for grade 3, not 3a and 3b.	Not applicable.	Located on higher quality agricultural land (Grades 1, 2 or 3) which should be a lower priority location for development, except where inconsistent with other sustainability considerations.	Located on lower quality agricultural land (Grades 4 or 5) where loss has little weight.
Flood risk	Stage 1	Environment Agency Indicative Flood Mapping and SFRA	Not applicable.	Within flood zone 2 or 3	Within flood zone 1.
<i>Physical constraints</i>					
Flood risk	Stage 2	SFRA Flood risk assessment / evidence	Within flood zone 3b (for potential transit sites) and flood zone 3a or 3b (for permanent sites) where no site specific evidence that the development will be safe and/or will not increase flood risk elsewhere.	Within flood zone 3a (for potential transit sites) and flood zone 2 (for potential permanent sites), to be subject to the exception test at stage 3.	Not applicable.
Safety	Stage 1	HSE Land use planning zones MoD firing zones Air public safety zones	Within a zone where the appropriate authority advises against development.	Within a zone where the appropriate authority advises mitigation measures required.	Outside zones.
Contamination and unstable land	Stage 2 Note: Will be considered at stage 1 if information available	Contaminated Land Unstable Land	Contains an area of unstable or contaminated land that is likely to undermine the site's suitability and achievability.	Could contain unstable or contaminated land that should be subject to further investigation (stage 1) and capable of mitigation (stage 2).	Not located on unstable land. Not located on contaminated land.

Table 3: Site assessment criteria

Criteria	Stage at which criteria considered	Designation/Issue	Reject	Accept but further investigation/mitigation required	Accept
Air quality	Stage 1	Air Quality Management Area	Not applicable.	Site within Air Quality Management Area.	Not within Air Quality Management Area.
Topography	Stage 2	Topography	Steep slopes which make the site unsuitable and/or unachievable.	Sloping or undulating land which may require works to achieve a suitable development.	Level or gently sloping site.
Site access and safety	Stage 2	Access Proximity to major roads	Poor access and/or road of poor standard. Likely to be subject to safety issues from surrounding uses incapable of mitigation	Access poor but capable of being improved. Road of adequate or good standard. Likely to be affected by safety issues but this is capable of mitigation.	Adequate or good access off adequate or good standard of road. Not affected by safety issues.
Accessibility to facilities	Stage 2	Access to facilities: GP Surgery Primary School Shop Access to public transport: Bus stop Train station Frequency of service	Not applicable. Actual distances to be measured and sites to be considered at stage 3.	Not applicable. Actual distances to be measured and sites to be considered at stage 3.	Not applicable. Actual distances to be measured and sites to be considered at stage 3.
Utilities	Stage 2	Water Electricity Sewerage Telecommunications	No access to mains water without considerable expense.	No on-site access to mains water or electricity but connection points within vicinity.	On-site access to mains water and mains electricity.
<i>Potential impacts</i>					
Green Belt (continued)	Stage 3	Green Belt	No very special circumstances exist to justify harmful impact on Green Belt.	Very special circumstances exist to justify harmful impact on Green Belt, but mitigation measures also required.	Very special circumstances exist to justify harmful impact on Green Belt.

Table 3: Site assessment criteria

Criteria	Stage at which criteria considered	Designation/Issue	Reject	Accept but further investigation/mitigation required	Accept
Landscape	Stage 2	Landscape impact and visual containment	Unacceptable impact of site upon landscape not capable of mitigation.	Impact capable of mitigation. Potential cumulative impact with other identified sites.	No unacceptable impact on landscape.
Biodiversity / Protected Species / Important hedgerow	Stage 2	Impact on biodiversity resources or known protected species Site of Special Scientific Interest National Nature Reserve Geological Conservation Review Site	Significant effect and unacceptable impact of site upon ecology or protected species or habitats not capable of mitigation where no overriding public interest.	Impact capable of mitigation. Potential cumulative impact with other identified sites.	No significant effect or unacceptable impact on ecology, protected species or habitats.
Historic environment	Stage 2	Scheduled Ancient Monuments Listed Buildings Historic Parks and Gardens Conservation Areas Heritage assets (local lists)	Adverse impact upon a designation not capable of mitigation.	Adverse impact on a designation but this is capable of mitigation.	No adverse impact on any designation.
Water quality	Stage 2	Groundwater Source Protection Zone	Unacceptable risk to the supply and quality of water resources.	Risk to the supply and quality of water resources capable of mitigation.	No risk to the supply and quality of water resources.
Noise	Stage 2	Noise pollution from surrounding uses e.g. road, rail and air transport	Likely to be adversely affected by noise pollution from surrounding uses that could make for an unacceptable residential environment - Noise exposure categories C & D.	Likely to be affected by noise pollution but this is capable of mitigation - Noise exposure category B.	Not affected by noise issues - Noise exposure category A.
Odour	Stage 2	Proximity to and relationship with the direction of odour from sewage treatment	Likely to be adversely affected by odour from sewage treatment works that would make an	Not applicable.	Residents on site could reasonably co-exist with nearby sewage treatment works.

Table 3: Site assessment criteria

Criteria	Stage at which criteria considered	Designation/Issue	Reject	Accept but further investigation/mitigation required	Accept
		works	unacceptable residential environment.		
Residential amenity (Impact of site on adjoining uses)	Stage 2	Relationship with existing adjacent uses	Close proximity to existing adjacent uses esp. residential properties where any potential impact (light, visual, other disturbance) on adjoining uses is not reasonably capable of mitigation.	Close proximity to existing adjacent uses esp. residential properties but any potential impact (light, visual, other disturbance) on adjoining uses is capable of mitigation.	Unlikely to adversely affect existing adjoining uses.
Residential amenity (Impact of adjoining uses on site)	Stage 2	Relationship with existing adjacent uses	Close proximity to existing adjacent uses and any potential impact from these uses (light, visual, other disturbance) on the site is not reasonably capable of mitigation.	Close proximity to existing adjacent uses but any potential impact from these uses (light, visual, other disturbance) on the site is capable of mitigation.	Unlikely to be adversely affected by existing adjoining uses.
Availability	Stage 2	Promoted sites, public land ownership etc.	There are known legal or ownership problems, such as multiple ownerships, ransom strips, tenancies or operational requirements which cannot be resolved.	There continues to be doubt over whether the site is genuinely available for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople (GTTS) use after further investigations.	There is evidence that the landowner is willing to sell and/or a developer is interested in developing within the timeframe of the DPD. There are no known legal or ownership problems, such a multiple ownerships, ransom strips, tenancies or operational requirements which are not capable of being overcome within the timeframe of the DPD.
Achievability	Stage 2	Deliverability Viability	Has hope value for housing. Extensive buildings on	Site constraints capable of being overcome but where extent and cost of mitigation	In a location where housing development is contrary to spatial policy.

Table 3: Site assessment criteria

Criteria	Stage at which criteria considered	Designation/Issue	Reject	Accept but further investigation/mitigation required	Accept
			site requiring demolition. Other constraints incapable of resolution without considerable expense.	are unclear at this stage.	No site constraints needing to be overcome.

4 Impacts assessment

Sustainability appraisal and strategic environmental assessment

- 4.1 Integrating sustainability into the process of site selection from the earliest opportunity will help choose sites that contribute to more sustainable development in Dorset. Demonstrating how sustainability has informed the selection of sites from alternatives is also an important part the sustainability appraisal process. This is not only to satisfy regulatory requirements of Strategic Environmental Assessment, but also good practice in the iteration of options to allow sustainable choices to be made.
- 4.2 A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Scoping Report for the DPD has been produced and is available to view on the dorsetforyou website <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/397367> This sets out the principal sustainability issues for the DPD and a set of sustainable development objectives for appraising the plan. These objectives have helped in testing the suitability of criteria for assessment and will be used in the assessment of site impacts.
- 4.3 There is a need for SA to be integrated into the process of site selection to help make sure the sites chosen for development are compatible with sustainable development. The criteria used in site selection already closely relate to sustainable development, covering environmental protection and meeting social needs. To help make sure the criteria covered sustainability concerns in as much detail as possible the initial stage of the SA was to compare the sustainability objectives developed for the SA with the proposed site selection criteria. A matrix was prepared comparing proposed site selection criteria to the sustainability objectives to check for the coverage of issues and make recommendations where necessary. This resulted in a number of changes to the site selection criteria to provide a better fit with sustainability.
- 4.4 Changes to the criteria included:
- Incorporating locally important buildings in reviewing built environment impacts
 - Using the noise exposure categories in PPG24 to assess noise impacts
 - Making sure amenity impacts for future residents of Gypsy and Traveller sites and existing settled residents are covered by separate criteria.
- 4.5 The SA of sites is ongoing and once the list of sites has been approved to be included in the Issues and Options consultation stage, an SA report will be prepared. This will ensure that each of the proposed sites is compatible with sustainable development, which will involve re-assessment of the sites using the sustainable objectives developed for the SA.

Habitats regulations assessment

- 4.6 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is also being undertaken of the emerging DPD. This will assess sites' to identifying their potential for impacts on internationally designated nature conservation sites in and around Dorset. The initial screening report is available at www.dorsetforyou.com/travellerpitches. Further screening of

sites will be completed of the sites in the Issues and Options consultation stage of the DPD.

Health and equalities and diversities impacts assessment

- 4.7 The health and equalities impacts of the DPD proposals will be assessed as part of the SA process. These themes are essential components of delivering sustainable development. The findings of these assessments will be incorporated into the emerging DPD.

5 Sources of potential sites

- 5.1 It is important for the site assessment process to consider as many potential sites as possible so that all reasonable options can be said to have been investigated. Potential sources have therefore included the following:

Request for sites

- 5.2 Landowners, agents, councils, other public sector agencies, RSLs, other stakeholders and Gypsy and Traveller representatives were invited to put forward sites through a “request for sites” exercise, which was carried out during summer 2010.

Local authority land

- 5.3 All land owned by district, unitary and county councils was identified on GIS layers and investigated by the project team to identify potentially suitable land which could be made available by the councils to meet their agreed objectives.

Sites from previous and current land availability studies

- 5.4 Sites which had been previously rejected for housing on the grounds that they are located outside settlement boundaries, but may be otherwise suitable, were investigated.

Major landowners

- 5.5 Local agents were contacted to identify any potential from land held by large private estates, church commissioners or other public bodies.

Sites with previous planning history and/or unauthorised developments

- 5.6 Existing sites with temporary and/or personal consents and unauthorised sites were also investigated to see if they could be suitable for permanent residential or transit provision.

6 Results of the site assessment process

6.1 The following section summarises the results of the site assessment process. Appendices 1 to 4 set out the detailed breakdown of sites assessed at stages 1 and 2 per authority area.

Number of sites assessed

6.2 Table 4 below sets out a summary of the number of sites identified for site assessment, the numbers rejected during the site assessment process and the number of shortlisted sites and Green Belt sites worthy of further investigation to be considered further through the DPD process.

Table 4: Numbers of sites assessed

Authority	No. of sites rejected at stage 1	No. of sites rejected at stage 2	No. of shortlisted sites	No. of Green Belt sites for possible further investigation	Total sites
Bournemouth	3	5	1	3	12
Christchurch	2	14	1	2	19
East Dorset	2	45	0	8	55
North Dorset	4	47	17	0	68
Poole	0	20	3	0	23
Purbeck	2	99	4	0	105
West Dorset	2	68	4	0	74
Weymouth and Portland	0	18	2	0	20
DORSET	15	316	32	13	376

6.3 The number of sites identified for site assessment vary considerably between local authorities. The primary reasons for these variations relate firstly to the pattern of development within each authority area and, secondly, the extent of overriding environmental constraints.

6.4 The relatively fewer identified sites for assessment in Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Weymouth & Portland reflects the largely built up nature of these areas, where sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople have to compete with many other, often more economically valuable, land uses, such as residential and commercial uses.

6.5 In addition, there are a significant number of international and national environmental designations within parts of, particularly, eastern Dorset which again limits the number of sites entering the site assessment process.

Reasons for rejection

6.6 Those sites which were rejected at stage 1 were mainly sites located within international environmental designations or sites allocated in local plans for alternative uses where there continues to be evidence of need.

6.7 At stage 2, the reasons for rejection varied considerably from sites being subject to physical constraints incapable of mitigation, to likely adverse impacts on adjoining environmental designations and/ or landscape/townscape character, again incapable of mitigation.

6.8 Given the scale of the exercise, no sites were subject to detailed viability assessments at stage 2. However, some sites, because of the likely cost required to remove identified physical constraints, were rejected on the grounds that site assembly and development were unlikely to be achievable.

Shortlisted sites

6.9 Table 5 below and appendix 3 sets out those sites which have been identified as potentially suitable, available and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople uses.

Table 5: Shortlisted sites

Site name	Nearest settlement
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Bournemouth

Land off Park Road	Bournemouth
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Christchurch

Grange Road DSO Depot	Christchurch
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North Dorset

Land at Woodhouse Cross	Gillingham
Land at Thickthorn Lane	Hazelbury Bryan
Little Crate Farm	Hazelbury Bryan
Land at Pleck	Pleck
Land at Military Lane	Kingston
Site at Todber Road	Marnhull
Land at Crown Road	Marnhull
PlantWorld	Milton on Stour
The Corner	Motcombe
The One Oak	Pulham

Site at Calves Lane	Shaftesbury
Land east of Shaftesbury	Shaftesbury
Stour Yard	Stour Provost
Land adj. The Old Quarry	Stour Provost
North Dorset Business Park	Sturminster Newton
Bottles (part)	West Stour
Downfield	Winterborne Stickland

Poole

Land at Former Community Centre site	Poole
Lodge Hill	Poole
Branksome Triangle	Poole

Purbeck

Land at Washpond Lane and Ulwell Road	Swanage
Land off High Street, Herston Cross	Swanage
County Farm, Burnham Lane/Washpond Lane	Swanage
Land adjacent to Meadow View, East Burton Road	East Burton

West Dorset

Shady Side	Beaminster
Piddlehinton Gypsy Site	Piddlehinton
Land south of West Stafford	West Stafford
Land east of Coles Lane	Yetminster

Weymouth & Portland

Land adj. Civic Amenity Site	Weymouth
Park & Ride site	Weymouth

- 6.10 Although all sites have been assessed for their relative accessibility to key services, such as GP surgery, local shop, primary school and bus stop, no sites have been rejected at stage 2 due to their relative remoteness from such services. This is primarily because there are no agreed distance thresholds contained within national or local policy which can be used to reject sites purely on these grounds. Local authorities are also advised in the relevant circulars to be realistic about the availability of alternatives to the car in accessing local services. Therefore, the intention will be to further examine the shortlisted sites through the DPD process and to give a preference to those sites located in or near settlements with access to these services.
- 6.11 Similarly, at this stage, the sites have not been assessed regarding their location relative to those settlements identified within adopted or emerging core strategies as suitable locations for future development. The intention will be to further examine the

shortlisted sites through the DPD process and to give a preference to those sites which are in accordance with the spatial strategies of adopted and emerging plans.

Other sites worthy of further investigation

Sites within the Green Belt

- 6.12 A number of sites identified for assessment are located within the Green Belt. The development of land for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople within the Green Belt is considered inappropriate development, as set out in national Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 2: Green Belts. However, if very special circumstances apply, development may be acceptable, as with other forms of development. The lack of suitable sites outside of Green Belt land to meet identified needs could be considered very special circumstances.
- 6.13 Therefore, table 6 below and appendix 5 sets out a number of sites located within the Green Belt which are considered otherwise suitable for development for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople uses. These are therefore identified as sites worthy of further investigation through the DPD process, should there be a requirement to do so.

Table 6: Green Belt sites for possible further investigation

Site name	Nearest settlement
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Bournemouth

Land near Erlin Farm	Bournemouth
Careys Road	Bournemouth
Throop Road	Bournemouth

Christchurch

Land at Hurn Court Farm, Parley Lane	Hurn
Plots 22B/C/D/E Dudmoor Farm Road	Christchurch

East Dorset

County farm - Candy's Lane	Corfe Mullen
Site off Pompey's Lane	Ferndown
Uddens (Cannon Hill) Plantation	Ferndown
51 Wayside Road	St Leonards
Twin Acorn	Horton
Oakley Farm	Three Legged Cross
Keith Acres	Verwood
Chipping Depot	Woodlands

Sites not currently available

- 6.14 A significant number of sites which were identified as otherwise suitable, were rejected at stage 2 purely because the landowner indicated that the site was not currently available for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople uses. These sites could potentially be revisited later in the DPD process should there be a need. These sites are included within the list of rejected sites set out in appendix 4.

7 Capacity and delivery

Site capacity

- 7.1 All shortlisted sites have been subject to an initial broad assessment of the number of pitches or plots which could be provided on site. Appendix 3 includes details of the potential capacity of shortlisted sites.
- 7.2 This has taken account, firstly, of:
- Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites: Good Practice Guide (CLG, 2008);
 - Travelling Showpeople's Sites Model Standard Package (The Showmen's Guild of Great Britain, 2007)
 - Any relevant planning history and existing unauthorised uses; and
 - Templates developed for the DPD
- 7.3 These have helped to determine the optimum size and configuration of pitches (or plots) on site. On larger sites we may assume a mix of pitch sizes to reflect the needs of different families.
- 7.4 Site capacity has taken account of on-site constraints and the need, where appropriate, for landscaping and other mitigation measures to achieve a suitable development. A generous approach to landscaping and access arrangements has been taken to ensure a high standard of design can be achieved on site. This will result in sufficient access and accommodation space to create a site which Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople find attractive. At the same time, sufficient space and landscaping will help to conserve the residential amenity of neighbouring uses.

Delivery issues

Accommodating the site needs of different travelling communities

- 7.5 Gypsies and Travellers are not a uniform homogeneous community, but rather a group of communities which share some features but have their own histories and traditions. Even within each main group there is fragmentation between different families which emphasises the lack of a cohesive community and the need to avoid over generalisations.
- 7.6 The Dorset Traveller Needs Assessment confirms that the predominant groups in Dorset are New Travellers (31.5%), English Gypsies / Romanies (24.5%), Irish Traveller (7%), Showman (3.5%) and 'other' (31.5%). The assessment assumed that most of the "other" category were New Travellers reluctant to accept classification, but included a few Welsh Travellers attending for the steam fair. Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers are recognised in law as distinct ethnic groups and are legally protected from discrimination under the Race Relations Acts.
- 7.7 The project team was told by many stakeholders that different groups do not mix on sites and have differing site requirements. The Dorset Traveller Needs Assessment concluded that "separate sites for English Gypsies and New Travellers appear to be a

practical necessity, reflecting differences in travelling patterns and cultural attitudes.” (para. 5.2.3.).

- 7.8 The DPD will therefore need to be sensitive to these dynamics when considering the relationship between identified local needs, overall pitch requirements and the number of potential sites. It will be important to ensure that sufficient sites have been identified to meet the needs of each community.

Making pitches affordable

- 7.9 The project team was told that sites needed to be made available at low rent levels to reflect low incomes within some travelling communities. There is therefore likely to be a continuing need for affordable pitches to be provided. The DPD will need to identify delivery mechanisms for appropriate sites, and this may relate to public site provision to ensure that affordable pitches will be provided to meet local needs.

The balance between public and private provision

- 7.10 National policy and initial consultation with communities has revealed a preference for private sites and the Dorset Traveller Needs Assessment states that there is significant scope for more private sites in Dorset.
- 7.11 Currently, there are 5 Council owned sites in Dorset and Poole. These sites provide pitches at subsidised rent levels. The Dorset Traveller Needs Assessment recommends that there should be further long stay public provision “at the very least to make up the pitch reductions since designation (i.e. about 30 pitches).” (para. 5.2.4). If additional public provision is to be made, the site(s) must be identified and be clearly capable of implementation, including the confirmation of funding sources.

The balance between permanent and transit provision

- 7.12 The Dorset Traveller Needs Assessment identifies that the provision of transit sites is particularly important for Dorset, given the high levels of travelling in the county during the summer months. The assessment concludes that the provision of 2 or 3 transit sites in south east Dorset may meet the needs for a wider area.
- 7.13 The Dorset authorities believe that well located transit sites could significantly reduce the cases of unauthorised encampments in the future and would enable the police and other service providers to take a more effective and consistent approach.

Deliverability of sites

- 7.14 In view of the urgency of the need for additional pitches, there must be reasonable certainty that the sites identified in the DPD will be implemented i.e. that they are genuinely deliverable. Deliverability will be a key aspect of the site assessment process.
- 7.15 A number of potential delivery models have been developed which will be investigated further during the preparation of the DPD.

Delivery model 1

- 7.16 Firstly, there may be sites which are currently owned by individual Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople families which can be developed to meet immediate family requirements. In this case, allocation in a DPD would provide the planning policy context for early progression of a planning application and for development to take place or for currently unauthorised development to become authorised.

Delivery model 2

- 7.17 Secondly, there may be sites which are currently owned by individual Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople families where there is capacity for greater use of the site for further pitches. In this case, initial discussions will be undertaken with the owners to identify whether there are likely to be future family or extended family needs requiring the allocation of the site for a greater number of pitches than is currently required. In this case, allocation in the DPD with a phasing programme to secure provision for future need would be the appropriate way forward.

Delivery model 3

- 7.18 Thirdly, there may be sites which are not currently owned by Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling families but which have potential to be developed for such uses. Allocation in the DPD would identify these sites to travelling communities and they could be purchased on the open market. Alternatively the Councils could consider using Homes Bonus or other monies to buy the site or identify their own public assets and then make them available to organised Gypsy and Traveller groups on a non-profit making basis for them to develop and manage. Such groups could also be offered the opportunity to buy stakes in the site, allowing the income from such sales to provide further sites. There are emerging examples of innovative acquisition and funding arrangements across the country.

Delivery model 4

- 7.19 Fourthly, there may be sites where the Councils consider that additional affordable pitch provision may be appropriate. In this case, the Councils should investigate the potential for either buying sites or developing their public assets using Homes Bonus or central Government site grant funding or other monies to secure or increase affordable provision. Sites could then either be managed by a Council or a Registered Social Landlord.

Delivery model 5

- 7.20 Finally, if the Council decides to pursue the longer term option of seeking Gypsy and Traveller provision on large housing urban extension sites, there is the opportunity to require large housing allocations in Core Strategies and/or subsequent allocations DPDs to provide for Gypsy and Traveller pitches. These could then be sold on the open market or affordable pitches brought forward and managed by the Councils or RSLs.
- 7.21 All the shortlisted sites have been subject to an initial broad assessment of the potential delivery model(s) which may be appropriate. Appendix 3 includes details of

the potential capacity of shortlisted sites. Potential delivery solutions will be investigated further through the DPD process with landowners and other stakeholders to ensure that sites identified in the submission DPD are capable of being developed during the plan period.

8 Conclusions and Recommendations

- 8.1 This site options report sets out the site requirements for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople based on a review of national policy, best practice and the views of stakeholders and communities. Using appropriate site criteria, a two stage site assessment process was developed to identify a shortlist of potential sites within Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole, for further consideration through the DPD process.
- 8.2 Table 5 sets out the shortlisted sites which are currently considered available, suitable and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople uses.
- 8.3 Table 7 below sets out a summary of the initial broad assessment of potential capacity from the shortlisted sites. This is set against the possible preliminary target for the DPD period, discussed in section 2.
- 8.4 It must be stressed that this is only an initial assessment of capacity and relates to a preliminary estimate of future needs based upon a 3% compound growth rate. The level of local needs in the light of historic demand for beyond 2011 will need to be identified during the preparation of the DPD, agreed by the Dorset councils and tested. Nevertheless, the table starts to flag up those local authority areas where there may be a need to identify further sites and/or consider sites within the Green Belt. It is also likely that as the shortlisted sites are tested through the DPD process, some of them will be identified as not suitable, available or achievable.
- 8.5 The table demonstrates that, for the whole of the Dorset study area, the shortlist of sites may deliver most if not all of the 5 year pitch requirements identified up to 2011. The potential capacity from Green Belt sites worthy of investigation would contribute significantly to meet needs for the period to 2028.
- 8.6 However, the situation is different for each local authority. In North Dorset and Poole, sufficient pitches have been identified from the shortlisted sites to broadly meet needs up to the end of the Plan period in 2028. In Purbeck, West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland insufficient potential sites have been identified to meet current needs to 2011.
- 8.7 In Bournemouth, Christchurch and East Dorset some provision has been identified from shortlisted sites and other sites within the Green Belt have been identified for further investigation to meet needs beyond to 2028, if required.
- 8.8 Where insufficient capacity has been identified, it is likely that these authorities will need to identify other sites, either from the list of Green Belt sites considered worthy of further investigation (table 6), from the list of suitable sites already assessed which are not currently available (contained within appendix 4), from reassessing sites allocated or identified for other uses, or from other sites which may be identified by stakeholders and communities through the DPD process.
- 8.9 Due to the small requirement for Travelling Showpeople plots for the whole of Dorset, it is anticipated that this number will be met from the shortlisted sites and should be identified during the DPD process. Shortlisted sites with particular potential for Travelling Showpeople uses have been identified in appendix 3.

Table 7: Estimates of pitch requirements and identified pitch supply

Authority	Pitch requirements			Pitch supply		
	2006-2011		2012-2028 (3% compound growth p.a.)	Capacity of shortlisted sites		Capacity of Green Belt sites for possible further investigation
	Residential	Transit	Residential	Residential	Transit	
Bournemouth	13	12	8**	0	10	16
Christchurch	12	16	8**	15	0	18
East Dorset	13	20	8**	0	0	68
North Dorset	20	20(*)	13**	45	30	0
Poole	18	8	8**	19	16	0
Purbeck	20	21	13**	11	0	0
West Dorset	20	22	13**	6	10	0
Weymouth & Portland	0	25	0**	0	5	0
DORSET	111	144(*)	71	96	71	102

(*) Plus 100 pitches for Steam Fair

** Plus transit pitches to meet needs 2012-2028

- 8.10 It is recommended that the results of this site options report are taken forward by the Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole authorities to inform the contents of an Issues and Options consultation stage for the proposed DPD, commencing during November 2011.
- 8.11 It will be important for the issues and options stage to explore the relationship between the initial shortlisted sites and the overall adopted and emerging spatial strategies for each area and relative accessibility to local services. Where there is a surplus of potentially suitable sites to meet requirements, it will be important to give priority to sites located in the most sustainable locations.



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