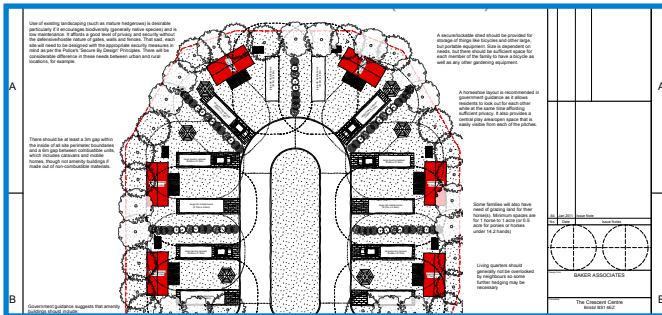


# Have your say: finding sites in Dorset for Gypsies and Travellers

Consultation – November 2011

Site options summary and response form (Christchurch)



Produced by Baker Associates on behalf of Dorset councils

## Introduction

Councils in Dorset (including Bournemouth and Poole) are working together to identify sites to meet the current and future needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in the area.

The councils would like to hear your views on the content of the site options included in this booklet.

We would also like to hear your views on the full Issues and Options Consultation Document which is available to view, together with other background documents, at council offices and at [www.dorsetforyou.com/travellerpitches](http://www.dorsetforyou.com/travellerpitches)

Public exhibitions to explain the need for this plan and the options suggested are being held at the following places in Christchurch:

- 24 November 5-8pm, Council Chambers, Civic Offices, Bridge Street, Christchurch,
- 28 November 10am-2pm, Monday Market, High Street, Christchurch. If the market is cancelled, it will be held in the Committee Room, Civic Offices, Bridge Street, Christchurch

You can have your say by:

- Completing and returning the attached response form
- Completing the online questionnaire at [www.dorsetforyou.com/travellerpitches](http://www.dorsetforyou.com/travellerpitches)
- Completing the questionnaire available at the public exhibitions

The deadline for comments to be received is **10 February 2012.**

## Background

Gypsies and Travellers have been living in England for hundreds of years. The number living in Dorset is estimated at between 2,400 and 3,000 people. There are seasonal differences, with more Travellers arriving during the summer months. Many Gypsies and Travellers move around the country and need temporary transit sites in the areas they travel to. However, travelling communities are becoming increasingly settled and need

permanent residential sites which also act as a base from which to travel.

Travelling Showpeople play an important role in the leisure economy, travelling the country to hold fairs and circuses. They need secure, permanent bases in which to live and store their equipment. There are established family businesses currently based in Dorset.

## Why should councils find places for Gypsies and Travellers to stay?

The Government wants to significantly increase the number of Traveller sites with planning permission and address the shortage of sites in recent years.

It's important that local councils plan for the needs of all of their communities, including Gypsies and Travellers. Councils will help meet the needs of the travelling communities by producing a plan that identifies enough sites for them. This should help reduce the number of illegal camps. It should also reduce tension and help make enforcement by councils and the police more effective.

More generally, councils have a duty to promote good race relations, equality of opportunity and community cohesion.

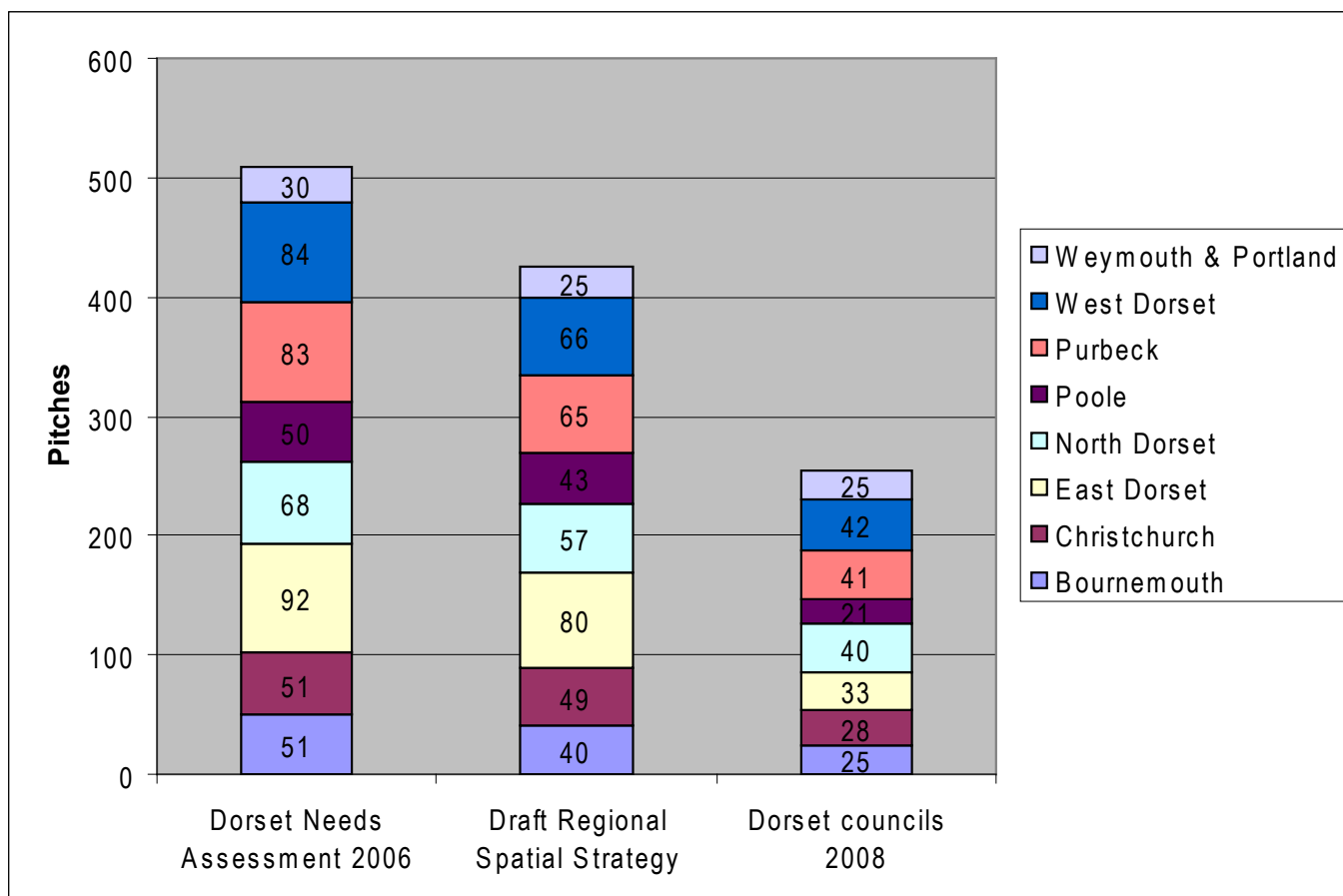
## Meeting needs

There is currently a shortage of permanent residential and transit Gypsy and Traveller pitches<sup>1</sup> in Dorset. A site can contain up to 15 pitches, although travelling communities prefer small sites with up to six pitches.

A number of estimates have been made for the current needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Dorset, mainly based on local surveys of need.

The following table shows three different recent estimates of need. In addition a further 100

## Recent estimates of Gypsy and Traveller need in Dorset



transit pitches are required on a temporary basis each year for the annual Great Dorset Steam Fair in North Dorset<sup>2</sup>.

A regional report on Travelling Showpeople in the South West has estimated that two plots<sup>3</sup> should be provided in Dorset to meet current needs.

More work will need to be done to identify future needs. The plan will need to identify local targets for 5, 10 and 15 year periods.

### Site options

The councils have started to assess potential sites within their areas. Independent planning consultants Baker Associates have identified a site which may be potentially suitable,

available and achievable for Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople in Christchurch.

Two other sites within Green Belt could be investigated further if sufficient suitable sites outside Green Belt cannot be found.

The councils have yet to decide which, if any, of the identified sites are appropriate for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople uses.

Your views are sought to help the councils come to an informed decision.

1. Gypsy and Traveller site needs are measured in terms of pitches. A pitch is an area of land where a Gypsy or Traveller household can reside. Typically, this may have a building, parking space and one or more caravans, with sufficient space so that caravans up to 20 metres in length can be moved around.

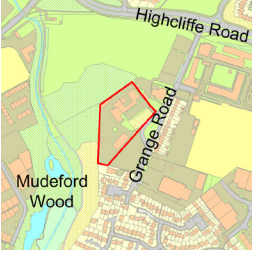
2. In July 2011, Dorset County Council granted planning permission for five years for a site off the A354 to be used during a three week period around the dates of the Steam Fair each year.

3. Travelling Showpeople needs are measured in terms of plots. A plot contains both residential and business uses for a household. It allows for the storage and repair of fairground equipment.

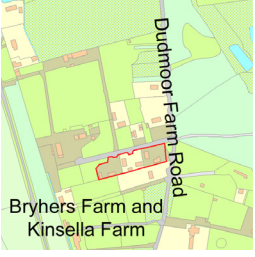
## Location of sites in Christchurch

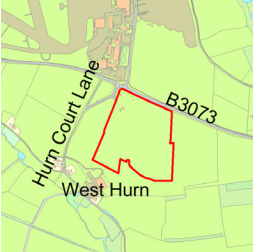


## Shortlisted site

<p><b>Site name &amp; settlement:</b> Grange Road DSO Depot, Grange Road, Christchurch</p>	<p><b>Summary of assessment:</b></p> <p>Existing Council depot including industrial style units car parking and storage areas.</p> <p><i>Is it suitable?</i> The site is previously developed land with good access and which has no impacts on landscape or biodiversity. The proximity to housing may cause amenity issues which will need to be resolved. There could be contamination at this site. The site has good access to bus stops and a shop. However, the doctors and primary school are further away. There are local sports facilities to the north.</p>	<p><b>Number of pitches:</b> 15</p>
<p><b>Site map</b></p> 	<p><i>Is it available?</i> The site is currently in use but may be available in the longer term if an alternative site is found.</p>	<p><b>Type of provision:</b> Transit or Residential</p>
	<p><i>Is it achievable?</i> Existing industrial buildings will need to be demolished.</p>	<p><b>Type of traveller:</b> Romany Gypsies, Irish Travellers or Travelling Showpeople</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Existing publicly owned site to be developed for publicly managed provision</p>

## Sites for possible further investigation

<p><b>Site name &amp; settlement:</b> Plots 22 B/C/ D/E Dudmoor Farm Road, Christchurch</p>	<p><b>Summary of assessment:</b></p> <p>Three existing plots occupied by Gypsies.</p> <p><i>Is it suitable?</i> The site is within Green Belt. The site is outside the main urban area of Christchurch, within 400 metres of Dorset heathland. However, the site has been developed for over 25 years and allocation will not result in any further adverse impact on biodiversity. Landscape quality has deteriorated in the area. However, continued use of these plots will not be damaging. Making this site permanent will give the current occupants security. The site is not located close to any key facilities or bus stops.</p>	<p><b>Number of pitches:</b> 3</p>
<p><b>Site map</b></p> 	<p><i>Is it available?</i> The site contains three plots which are occupied by Gypsy families.</p>	<p><b>Type of provision:</b> Residential</p>
	<p><i>Is it achievable?</i> The site is currently developed.</p>	<p><b>Type of traveller:</b> Existing occupants</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Existing privately owned Traveller sites requiring planning permission</p>

<p><b>Site name &amp; settlement:</b> Land at Hurn Court Farm, Parley Lane, Hurn</p>	<p><b>Summary of assessment:</b></p> <p>Land currently being extracted for sand and gravel.</p> <p><i>Is it suitable?</i> The site is within Green Belt. Large area with earth bunding and vegetation along boundaries with good road access off Parley Lane. There would be little impact on the landscape. The best location for a site would be in the north western corner near to the lit road and terminal buildings. Any redevelopment of the site would need to ensure the site is made safe and stable. The site has a nearby bus stop and a shop around 1km away. However, the doctors and schools are around 4km away. The site is also directly next to Bournemouth Airport so it may be noisy for future occupants.</p>	<p><b>Number of pitches:</b> 15</p>
<p><b>Site map</b></p> 	<p><i>Is it available?</i> The owner may be open to further discussions.</p> <p><i>Is it achievable?</i> Reclamation will be delivered by the sand and gravel company but further costs are unclear.</p>	<p><b>Type of provision:</b> Transit</p> <p><b>Type of traveller:</b> Romany Gypsies, Irish Travellers or New Travellers</p> <p><b>Delivery:</b> Purchase of land by public bodies for publicly managed provision</p>

## Other sites

A number of other sites have been assessed, but the independent planning consultants have recommended they be rejected. Details of these sites can be found in the full Issues and Options Consultation Document.

The councils would also like to hear of any other sites which you think they should be considering as part of this process.

## What next?

Please complete the attached response form and return it by **10 February 2012** to:

Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Consultation  
County Hall,  
Dorchester,  
Dorset,  
DT1 1XJ

The councils will consider the responses received and will use them to develop proposals for further public consultation next year.



# Site options response form Consultation – November 2011-February 2012

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

Please answer the questions below. You may use an additional sheet of paper if needed. Inappropriate, offensive or racist comments will not be accepted.

Do you have information about any of the sites in this booklet which will help Dorset councils decide whether they are suitable, available and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision?

Name of site: \_\_\_\_\_

Response: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Do you know of any other sites which the councils should be considering for future Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople uses?

Name and location of site: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please attach a map if possible.

Reasons why it should be considered \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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Do you have any additional comments to make on any other matter raised in this document?

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Your name \_\_\_\_\_

Your contact address \_\_\_\_\_

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Your email and/or telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Please tick here if you would like to be kept informed of progress with the plan

Please note we can only accept comments made by respondents who provide their names and contact addresses.

Thank you for taking the time to respond.