

Respondent: 68 / 1 Name: Mrs Jennifer John Organisation:

Do you have any evidence or information about any of the sites set out in the Preferred Options document which will help Bath and North East Somerset Council to determine whether they are available, suitable and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision?

GT1. This appears to be a suitable site if it is in current use and there is no local objection, although it is in the greenbelt.
GT2. Totally unsuitable as in greenbelt. Too large - small sites are preferable to large ones.
GT4. A good site - not too large and close to facilities e.g.. Schools
GT8. Too many adverse constraints, e.g. greenbelt, WHS, LNR, SNCI.
GT14. Appears to be suitable site. 6 pitches would be a good size.

Site commenting on: All Sites

Do you agree with the Council's assessment of opportunities and constraints on this site?

Do you agree that the potential pitch provision be taken forward as a formal allocation?

I am concerned about sanitary conditions in all unauthorised sites. Pollution etc.
Greenbelts should be respected unless local residents are happy with the situation.

Do you have any other general comments on the Preferred Options paper?

I agree with CP11
Sites which are no controversial should be developed asap. Do not wait for long documents proposing all 22 pitches.
Small is beautiful, and easier to manage.

Respondent: 121 / 1 Name: Mrs Ann Dolan Organisation:

Do you have any evidence or information about any of the sites set out in the Preferred Options document which will help Bath and North East Somerset Council to determine whether they are available, suitable and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision?

I used to work with the Manager of a Gypsy Site in Devon and recognise the importance of finding suitable places, accessible and not too far from town. It was also necessary at that time to keep the residential sites away from the Irish travellers. The suggested sites for Bath seem appropriate, though I am sure that many of the residents near by will not be happy.

Site commenting on: All Sites

Do you agree with the Council's assessment of opportunities and constraints on this site?

Do you agree that the potential pitch provision be taken forward as a formal allocation?

Do you have any other general comments on the Preferred Options paper?

Respondent: 152 / 1 Name: Mr Malcom McDowall Organisation: Corston Parish Council

Do you have any evidence or information about any of the sites set out in the Preferred Options document which will help Bath and North East Somerset Council to determine whether they are available, suitable and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision?

Please note that Corston Parish Council has no objections to the proposed sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

Site commenting on: All Sites

Do you agree with the Council's assessment of opportunities and constraints on this site?

Do you agree that the potential pitch provision be taken forward as a formal allocation?

Do you have any other general comments on the Preferred Options paper?

Respondent: 239 / 1 Name: Mr Roger Busby Organisation:

Do you have any evidence or information about any of the sites set out in the Preferred Options document which will help Bath and North East Somerset Council to determine whether they are available, suitable and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision?

Site commenting on: All Sites

Do you agree with the Council's assessment of opportunities and constraints on this site?

Ellsbridge House

Totally inappropriate site adjacent to a kindergarten requiring the removal of existing woodland. Close to a very busy road.

Stanton Wick

Too close to an existing community.

Whitchurch

Just needs to be excised from the Green Belt.

Newbridge

Potentially a suitable site, already being used. Needs to be excised from the Green Belt and provision made for a proper access, screening and waste disposal.

Do you agree that the potential pitch provision be taken forward as a formal allocation?

Ellsbridge and Stanton Wick – No

Whitchurch and Newbridge - Yes

Do you have any other general comments on the Preferred Options paper?

I am not convinced that a robust assessment has been made of the demand for travellers sites in the area.

Respondent: 246 / 1 Name: Mr Peter Duppa-Miller OBE Organisation: Combe Hay Parish Council

Do you have any evidence or information about any of the sites set out in the Preferred Options document which will help Bath and North East Somerset Council to determine whether they are available, suitable and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision?

Site commenting on: All Sites

Do you agree with the Council's assessment of opportunities and constraints on this site?

Do you agree that the potential pitch provision be taken forward as a formal allocation?

Do you have any other general comments on the Preferred Options paper?

1. Combe Hay Parish Council recognises, and fully supports, B&NES Council's commitment to the identification of sufficient authorised sites in Bath and North East Somerset for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People (GTTSP) – in particular, in order to significantly reduce the number of unauthorised encampments with all their attendant problems.

2. Combe Hay Parish Council recognises, and fully supports, the principle that authorised GTTSP sites must be suitable, available and achievable.

3. Combe Hay Parish Council is not qualified to comment concerning the individual sites identified in the consultation document.

4. Combe Hay Parish Council strongly recommends that serious consideration be given to reviewing the 2007 West of England Gypsies and Travellers Accommodation Assessment, in the light of today's different circumstances.

5. Combe Hay Parish Council also recommends that the search for sites in the south of North East Somerset (and thus outside the Green Belt) be pursued with vigour, in order not only to comply with "Planning Policy for Traveller Sites" (DCLG March 2012) but also to preclude any need to attempt to establish "very special circumstances" for sites in the Green Belt.

6. Combe Hay Parish Council notes the categorical statement by the Leader of B&NES Council at the Parishes Liaison meeting on 20 June 2012 that sites identified as "Rejected" or "Discarded" in previous documents will NOT return to any future list of sites.

Respondent: 274 / 1 Name: Mr Gary Parsons Organisation: Sport England

Do you have any evidence or information about any of the sites set out in the Preferred Options document which will help Bath and North East Somerset Council to determine whether they are available, suitable and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision?

Site commenting on: All Sites

Do you agree with the Council's assessment of opportunities and constraints on this site?

Do you agree that the potential pitch provision be taken forward as a formal allocation?

Do you have any other general comments on the Preferred Options paper?

Unless there are playing fields or other sports facilities affected, then Sport England have NO COMMENT to make.

Respondent: 314 / 1 Name: Ms Helen Woodley Organisation: B&NES Allotments Association

Do you have any evidence or information about any of the sites set out in the Preferred Options document which will help Bath and North East Somerset Council to determine whether they are available, suitable and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision?

Site commenting on: All Sites

Do you agree with the Council's assessment of opportunities and constraints on this site?

Do you agree that the potential pitch provision be taken forward as a formal allocation?

Do you have any other general comments on the Preferred Options paper?

I am very pleased to see progress at last in its provision of sites for gypsies and travelling people. I have checked that none of the proposals affect previous allotment land and therefore I would support use of any or all of these sites for the proposed usage. But that is on the understanding that if the Newbridge site were ever needed for sustainable infrastructure, such as a tramway, then it could be relocated if necessary.

Respondent: 405 / 1 Name: Mr a Richard & Janet Sweet Organisation:

Do you have any evidence or information about any of the sites set out in the Preferred Options document which will help Bath and North East Somerset Council to determine whether they are available, suitable and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision?

Parcel 7100 Woollard Lane, Whitchurch (G.T.1)
Old Colliery Buildings, Stanton Wick (G.T.2)

Both sites are in the Green Belt. Previous planning for development refused. Access to Stanton Wick site restricted. Woollard Lane access although moved on a very busy commuter road. Also site too near to dwellings and city boundary.

Site commenting on:

Do you agree with the Council's assessment of opportunities and constraints on this site?

NO. Those sites should never have been considered for gypsy and traveller sites

Do you agree that the potential pitch provision be taken forward as a formal allocation?

NO to Woollard Lane
NO to the Old Colliery Buildings Stanton Wick

Do you have any other general comments on the Preferred Options paper?

We support Cllr Malcolm Hanney in his opposition to develop old colliery buildings Stanton Wick as a totally inappropriate site.

We also support Whitchurch Parish Council in their opposition to develop parcel 7100 Woollard Lane for a gypsy and travellers site to be established.

These sites DO NOT comply with the Government guidelines.

The following stated policies are not being adhered to:

- a) B&NES Local Plan - Policy GB1, GB2 and T.1
- b) Planning Policy Guidance Note No.13
- c) National Planning Policy Framework, March 2012 items 17, 28, 37, 58, 69, 87, 109, 120, 121, 110
- d) Planning Policy for Travellers sites, March 2012 items 4, 11a-f, Policy C item 12, Policy E item 14, Policy H item 23.
- e) Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople site allocations DPD, item 2.7

We ask that the B&NES Council reconsider these sites as APPROPRIATE as they DO NOT COMPLY with the above policies

Respondent: 405 / 1 Name: Mr a Richard & Sweet Organisation:
Janet

Do you have any evidence or information about any of the sites set out in the Preferred Options document which will help Bath and North East Somerset Council to determine whether they are available, suitable and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision?

Site commenting on:

Do you agree with the Council's assessment of opportunities and constraints on this site?

Do you agree that the potential pitch provision be taken forward as a formal allocation?

Do you have any other general comments on the Preferred Options paper?

With reference to the consultation document, re authorised travellers sites to be debated on May 9th 2012.

We would like to register our objection to these proposals. Our main concern at the present time are that the two sites, ie Stanton Wick and Whitchurch Wollard Lane parcel 7100 are both in the Green Belt area.

Stanton Wick Old Colliery buildings are totally inappropriate and the council has already set a precedence by refusing planning permission on numerous occasions for other developments.

Wollard Lane parcel 7100 has had previous planning applications refused and will become an eyesore from the main gateway road from the South into Bristol.

Respondent: 821 / 2 Name: Mrs Deborah Porter Organisation: Cam Valley Wildlife Group

Do you have any evidence or information about any of the sites set out in the Preferred Options document which will help Bath and North East Somerset Council to determine whether they are available, suitable and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision?

Site commenting on:

Do you agree with the Council's assessment of opportunities and constraints on this site?

Do you agree that the potential pitch provision be taken forward as a formal allocation?

Do you have any other general comments on the Preferred Options paper?

1.0 Supply of pitches in the short, medium and long term

1.1 A very small number of pitches are to be delivered when compared with the overall housing figures for B&NES. Given this small number of pitches, and the pressing need for official sites in B&NES, I consider that it is important that considerations that would normally be taken into account at planning permission stage are considered when allocating. Not to do so risks elimination of sites at the planning application stage or elimination/delay through legal challenge by residents. Either could result in failure to deliver sufficient sites to meet the need or failure to maintain an identified 5-year supply or developable sites for the 10 year or 11-15 year periods. Any impact on the application of the Duty to Cooperate with neighbouring authorities also needs to be considered.

2.0 Criteria for consideration of sites

2.1 Government policy is that Local planning authorities should ensure that traveller sites are sustainable economically, socially and environmentally. There is a real need for provision of a sufficiently high number of good pitches, not only to give travelling communities somewhere to live temporarily, or permanently for a period of their lives, but also to prevent unauthorised pitches springing up all over the place.

2.2 It is my view that B&NES must look into the viability of the sites in much more detail now if delivery is not to be put at risk. My view is that it would be useful for B&NES to consider prospective sites at this stage in the light of considerations below (1.4 - 1.6) and also using the criteria they would use in considering planning applications, but in accordance with the most recent Government policy and guidance and in a way that does not conflict with B&NES emerging policy. The small number of sites involved should not produce too onerous a task, I would have thought.

2.3 Access to appropriate jobs is vital (Communities and Local Government document, Planning for Traveller Sites, para 2.4); this is especially important in the context of the high illiteracy rate within the travelling community and for families who have ceased to travel in connection with providing for their children's needs, including continuity of schooling and good educational achievement. These are known reasons why travelling people cease to travel for a period of their lives and travellers are no different from other people in their desire to provide for themselves and their families through income from jobs. The high illiteracy rate, however, makes it more difficult on average to secure a permanent job and so good access to appropriate jobs should be a primary consideration in site evaluation in my view. The existing jobs to dwellings ratio, out commuting rates, the job profile of the area and surrounding area, access to seasonal jobs, and any impact of forthcoming strategies should be considered.

2.4 Chronic or long-term health problems are high in travelling communities. Looking after elderly people and people with illnesses and disabilities is another known common reason for temporary or permanent cessation of travelling. A significantly higher proportion of travellers seeking a permanent pitch will have health problems than is the case for the general population and people with these problems may well not be able to travel or drive. It is important that good access to health care is ensured for travellers on permanent pitches as a priority when evaluating sites.

2.5 Government publications (e.g. Communities and Local Government document, Planning for Traveller Sites, para 2.15) and training documents sent to councillors (e.g. Gypsies and Travellers, published by Friends Families and Travellers) stress the need to address the particular problems of the travelling community in order to address inequalities and promote equality of opportunity, which is relevant to the Equality Act 2010. I cannot see how this will be achieved unless the matters in 1.4 and 1.5, above, are considered during site selection.

2.6 Wood burning stoves can be linked to/part of the cultural identity of travelling people; outdoor fires and 'wooding' (collecting wood for fires) are particularly strongly associated with New Travellers (originally a lifestyle choice in the 1960s, but now an established way of life). Although nationally the majority of travellers are Gypsies and Irish Travellers, this is not the case in B&NES, where New Travellers make up the bulk of travelling people. Whilst travellers travelling through the landscape taking some wood as they come and go may not have a significant impact on any one area, a permanent site or a transit site does have a significant impact. Invertebrate species that live on dead wood and the health of woodland or partial woodland SNCIs (including through the role of fungi in the woodland ecosystem) is an element that may be overlooked when considering location of sites. Travellers may lack the means, or the will (for cultural reasons), to purchase farmed wood, which is expensive. There is a real risk that locating travellers sites, even small sites, in B&NES close to woodland SNCIs, especially where a significant deciduous element is present, will risk their quality, risk important species, and act against B&NES objectives and policies regarding protection and enhancement of the natural environment and biodiversity.

4.0 MoD site, Bath

4.1 The argument against use of the MoD site in Bath, that housing allocations must be fulfilled, applies to all areas of the authority and may now be a moot point, as the authority is now being forced to re-think its Core Strategy housing provision. When traveller sites are introduced into an existing developed area, it can spark off reductions in house prices in the locale. B&NES may wish to consider that if a site is to be developed simultaneously alongside new build, it could have the effect of helping to fulfil a need for affordable housing through impact on sale price. The award of the New Homes bonus associated with traveller sites can be used positively. Good access to jobs, health care, public transport and other services are important elements that apply to any development, and there is arguably a greater need to consider these carefully in the case of travellers, who have poorer health and more limited job options than average.

5.0 Alternative or additional sites - Land in the vicinity of Lower Whitelands

5.1 Land near Lower Whitelands, which is known locally simply as Whitelands, is to be suggested for consideration, I am told. Government advises that Local Planning Authorities should ensure that traveller sites are sustainable economically, socially and environmentally. A development for travellers in the vicinity of the Whitelands cottages would have an adverse impact upon the Conservation Area, the natural environment, and the role that Whitelands and surrounds plays in boosting visitor footfall. This would run contrary to the Core Strategy's aim to encourage tourism and visitors in connection with mining and industrial heritage in the Somer Valley area and the town of Radstock (ref: CS 4b Vision; para 4.08; para 4.09, Strengths; para 4.16; policy SV1 1a; policy SV1 4b, if traveller sites count as housing; para 4.25, Green Infrastructure). The most recent Government policy statements have emphasised the increasing importance of biodiversity conservation and enhancement relative to other considerations, and these matters are pertinent to the vicinity of Whitelands. It is my opinion that use of land near Whitelands is not a sustainable option for traveller pitches for a variety of reasons, below, and feel that the area is better suited to use as a Local Green Space.

5.2 Access to these parcels of land by large vehicles is poor; pinch-points, lack of pavements and blind corners on the access road make it unsuitable for higher levels of traffic. The top of Whitelands lies on the top of a steep hill at the edge of the town. Whitelands has no bus service, and the only route out by road is via Radstock Town Centre, which is already dominated by traffic and suffers from congestion.

5.3 Out-commuting for jobs from the town of Radstock is very high already and it is difficult to see how any seasonal work could be provided in the surrounding area for any transit pitch residents.

5.4 Whitelands comprises two distinctive, historic, unusually long ranks of 3-storey miners' cottages that were the first purpose-built miners' cottages in Radstock. The cottages are out on a limb, separated geographically from the rest of the town, firmly planted within a rural landscape with former industrial features that have been returned to nature and add interest to that landscape. By way of illustrating this distinction, the Whisty Community Centre is so named because it stands for the 'Whitelands and Tying Community Centre', for it was residents of the two settlements that raised money that enabled it. The cottages lie within the Radstock Conservation Area and their isolation is a historic feature in itself, in that it is recorded that the reason they were built so far out was originally so that they would not detract from the tone of the existing town at that time. The ranks of cottages are a feature of one of the four official Radstock history trail walks.

The area to the west and north of Whitelands is a former 'batch' (spoil heap) which has become a valuable and interesting nature conservation feature. It is an important part of the industrial and natural heritage of the area.

5.5 Government advises that the scale should not dominate the nearest settled community. The B&NES document suggests that large sites preferable, as they can include a mix of types, play space, landscaping and mitigation. A large site north of Whitelands would dominate Whitelands in scale, but it would be difficult to prevent illegal expansion of a small site in that location.

5.6 There is no local shop or other facility in this small, yet distinct, 'settlement' of about 50 dwellings (52?).

5.7 The same environmental considerations apply to traveller site development as apply to other forms of development and Whitelands is in an environmentally sensitive location. Landscape, Conservation area and natural environment policies apply to use of sites in the vicinity of Whitelands.

5.8 Whitelands is close to a number of Sites of Nature Conservation Importance, mostly wooded or partially wooded. Past experience with travellers in the vicinity is that a significant increase in the removal of standing and laying dead wood (for firewood) within the SNCIs took place, resulting in denudation of the SNCIs of this important resource and an associated decrease in the health and value of the SNCIs. They are now recovering. Rare invertebrate species that live on dead wood have been recorded in Radstock - important species may be present.

5.9 The area to the west and north of Whitelands is a known Greater horseshoe bat foraging area (Geoff Billington report for B&NES on Radio-tracking bats from the Coombe Down Stone Mines), and so it is vital that this area and commuting routes associated with it remain dark. The area to the north of Whitelands may well be used by greater horseshoe bat and lesser horseshoe bat and is certainly used by other species of bat as a foraging resource. Lighting is very limited in the immediate vicinity; there are dark corridors important to certain species of bat for commuting. The two areas are well used by a range of invertebrates, which is very likely to include UK BAP species, and nesting birds, including red list birds. Lack of surveying due to the owner's unwillingness to allow such surveying within the bounds of his land, has led to the ecological value of these parcels of land not being assessed, but it is likely to be significant, for they are naturally regenerated areas of mixed habitat types that have not been improved or farmed and so are of high potential.

5.10 The area to the north of Whitelands, in particular, is used by local people for informal recreation and has a public footpath through it. It is a significant element of the local green infrastructure, with more than one existing use and good potential for enhanced use. Attempts to reverse the status of the land from greenfield land (returned to nature) to brownfield by digging up former footings is not a valid means of establishing brownfield status. Even though the land would have to be developed again before it could become brownfield again, the claim that it is a brownfield site has recently been reiterated in representations to Radstock Town Council.

5.11 Government advises that the scale should not dominate the nearest settled community. The B&NES document suggests that large sites preferable, as they can include a mix of types, play space, landscaping and mitigation. A large site north of Whitelands would dominate Whitelands in scale, but it would be difficult to prevent illegal expansion of a small site in that location.

Respondent: 1347 / 1 Name: Mr Philip Wise Organisation: Monkton Farleigh Parish Council

Do you have any evidence or information about any of the sites set out in the Preferred Options document which will help Bath and North East Somerset Council to determine whether they are available, suitable and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision?

Site commenting on:

Do you agree with the Council's assessment of opportunities and constraints on this site?

With reference to your letter 26th June, a recent meeting of Monkton Farleigh Parish Council had 'no comments' to make on your options for these sites.

Do you agree that the potential pitch provision be taken forward as a formal allocation?

Do you have any other general comments on the Preferred Options paper?

Respondent: 1525 / 1 Name: Mr Geoff Davis Organisation: South Stoke Parish Council

Do you have any evidence or information about any of the sites set out in the Preferred Options document which will help Bath and North East Somerset Council to determine whether they are available, suitable and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision?

No

Site commenting on: All Sites

Do you agree with the Council's assessment of opportunities and constraints on this site?

N/A.

Do you agree that the potential pitch provision be taken forward as a formal allocation?

The Parish Council supports Bath & North East Somerset Council in addressing this very important issue. We agree that the principles of the proposals and in particular the potential pitch provision be taken forward as a formal proposal.

Do you have any other general comments on the Preferred Options paper?

The Parish Council wishes to point out that under planning policy such provision should not take place within the Green Belt or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

We recognise that the best way to protect these areas from illegal occupations is for these proposals to be taken forward and adequate legal provision made to met the need set out in the draft core strategy.

Respondent: 2241 / 1 Name: Dr & AE & S Neill Organisation:

Do you have any evidence or information about any of the sites set out in the Preferred Options document which will help Bath and North East Somerset Council to determine whether they are available, suitable and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision?

No. I have no firm ideas on any of the preferred sites

Site commenting on: All Sites

Do you agree with the Council's assessment of opportunities and constraints on this site?

I am neutral on the matter.

Do you agree that the potential pitch provision be taken forward as a formal allocation?

I regret I cannot offer an opinion.

Do you have any other general comments on the Preferred Options paper?

So far as I am aware, the national guidance as factors to be considered for any site, to me seem reasonable.

Respondent: 2570 / 1 Name: Mr Joseph P. Jones Organisation: Gypsy Council

Do you have any evidence or information about any of the sites set out in the Preferred Options document which will help Bath and North East Somerset Council to determine whether they are available, suitable and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision?

Site commenting on: All Sites

Do you agree with the Council's assessment of opportunities and constraints on this site?

Do you agree that the potential pitch provision be taken forward as a formal allocation?

Do you have any other general comments on the Preferred Options paper?

The Gypsy Council would like to see more site provision, whether this be in the form of public or private sites. There is also the need to keep looking at the continued growth rate of your local population and to provide more pitches for those in need, we also need to look into the way these sites are managed, are they unmanageable, because they are too big, are the families comparable with each other, will there be opportunities for education, training, employment, health care and so on. Be fully integrated into the surrounding population. Eric Pickles has said in the past, that he would like to see more smaller family run sites, these are more manageable, there is also the fact of, would you live there, if not, then is this the right place for them, the provision of sites is not a new idea, this has been about ever since the late fifties, but it has been the lack of will over the years, that has added to the problems we face today, local MPs and Councillors using the situation as election cannon fodder, we all have to work in partnership with each other, all public and private service providers need to be in it, but most of all, don't forget to bring your local Gypsy and Traveller community to the table too. The Gypsy Council is working in partnership with others to try and bring every one together, in the provision and management of more public and private affordable accommodation, if you feel we can help in any way, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Respondent: 2589 / 1 Name: Ms Dawn Griffiths Organisation: Bristol City Council

Do you have any evidence or information about any of the sites set out in the Preferred Options document which will help Bath and North East Somerset Council to determine whether they are available, suitable and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision?

Site commenting on: All Sites

Do you agree with the Council's assessment of opportunities and constraints on this site?

Do you agree that the potential pitch provision be taken forward as a formal allocation?

Do you have any other general comments on the Preferred Options paper?

We do not wish to make any observations on the content of this document at this stage.

Respondent: 2593 / 1 Name: Ms Judi Grant Organisation:

Do you have any evidence or information about any of the sites set out in the Preferred Options document which will help Bath and North East Somerset Council to determine whether they are available, suitable and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision?

Site commenting on: All Sites

Do you agree with the Council's assessment of opportunities and constraints on this site?

GT1- Although greenbelt, it is an extremely small site and already occupied successfully. I agree that it is sustainable but not for future expansion or increased numbers.
 GT2- Inadequate access. This would become too large a community and would swamp the existing number of residents. I do not agree with the provision of separate educational facilities for travellers. Since the introduction of the National Curriculum it should be easy to move from school to school and must be a more economical use of scarce resources.
 GT4- No opinion. Prefer to leave the decision to local people.
 GT6- I agree that this could be a good area for storage of vehicles and equipment for Trav. Showpeople but not sure about pitches unless for security of vehicles/equipment. Ask local residents.
 GT8- Yes
 GT14- No, Ellsbridge house was offered for sale and sold without any suggestion that GT14 should be developed as a traveller's site. Outrageous behaviours by Local Authority particularly knowing that E.H. is to be a children's nursery. Severe impact on the setting of a listed building.

Do you agree that the potential pitch provision be taken forward as a formal allocation?

GT1- Yes
 GT2- No
 GT4- Don't Know
 GT6- Yes to storage- reservations about pitches (see above)
 GT8- Yes with greater protection of LNR/SNCI. This site is a total mess and needs regulation and the maximum necessary LA funds to make it official and policed.
 GT14- Absolutely not. It would involve destruction of mature wooded area providing a suitable for a screen for a listed dwelling and would have great impact on E.H. and its setting. Impossible shared access and total lack of security for nursery children and staff. Inappropriate in the extreme.

Do you have any other general comments on the Preferred Options paper?

It is not at all clear to me just how the short list of suggested sites was chosen or by whom. I understood that, for example, Ellsbridge House was very low on the original list. How has it become promoted into the top six.

Respondent: 2689 / 1 Name: Mr Chris James Organisation:

Do you have any evidence or information about any of the sites set out in the Preferred Options document which will help Bath and North East Somerset Council to determine whether they are available, suitable and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision?

There is evidence that the list of 6 Preferred Sites results from a flawed selection and consultation process.

1. The Site Selection Scoring Matrix is "a method of applying a consistent and objective methodology to the selection" (BANES' documentation). Yet this has been gnored in the final selection and sites which scored highly on the Matrix have been permanently excluded and others which had low scores are now in the Preferred Sites list.
2. This Response Form forms part of the Council's consultation process and the Council's DPD states : It is important to note that no decisions have been made on final site allocations. Yet two decisions have already been made, one to ignore the Matrix and the second to permanently exclude the remaining 17 sites from reconsideration. These decisions have far-reaching consequences , because, if the Old Colliery site, for example, were to be withdrawn, it would be impossible using only the remaining 5 sites to meet the intended target of 22 permanent pitches, 20 transit pitches and 1 showman's yard. Therefore, in order to achieve its target, the Old Colliery site has to be selected, or the previously excluded sites reconsidered or new sites added. So by default the Council has made a decision which means that the Old Colliery Site has to be selected – unless by chance new sites are proposed which are considered more suitable or the target reduced which is not the Council's stated policy.
3. The 6 Preferred Sites are all west of Bath: there are no sites south or north. This represents an imbalance in selection.
4. Two of the Preferred Sites are already occupied by Gypsies/Travellers, one with temporary planning permission, the other site at Lower Bristol Road is a tolerated encampment. The remaining 4 sites all present planning problems relating to Green Belt, proximity to residential properties or businesses, road access and access to local amenities which make them unsuitable and unachievable as Gypsy and Traveller Sites.

Site commenting on: All Sites

Do you agree with the Council's assessment of opportunities and constraints on this site?

The Council's own Selection Scoring Matrix placed this site 17th out of 23 sites considered. This objective and consistent methodology highlighted a number of planning issues which make this site unsuitable for development for anything other than consent already granted for conversion to a single dwelling.

The Council's planners have in the past consistently refused planning permission on the site, both to the present owner and to the adjacent Coach firm. The main reasons given were" inappropriate development in the Green Belt and therefore harmful to the Green Belt by definition" (for residential development) and inadequate road access (for storing additional vehicles by the Coach firm). Application 10/01429/FUL was refused partly because its "location was remote from public services and community facilities".

It is inconceivable that an application for a caravan park would succeed on this site given this planning history.

Yet the Council is considering doing exactly that by including the Old Colliery in the shortlist of Preferred Sites for Gypsies and Travellers.

New guidelines issued in March 2012 by the Government state:

The Government is committed to the protection of the nation's green spaces and this policy will protect Green Belt land and countryside. Traveller sites are an inappropriate development on Green Belt land and the new guidance makes clear that there should be due regard for the protection of the local environment and amenities when local authorities set out their criteria for allocating sites (<http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/2114100>)

In order to allow this site to be developed as a Gypsy and Traveller site an exception will have to be made to BANES and government policies and guidelines, particularly planning. Gypsies and Travellers would, therefore, be treated differently from BANES residents.

Do you agree that the potential pitch provision be taken forward as a formal allocation?

With a proposed 15 permanent and 5 transit pitches the Old Colliery would be larger than the maximum size (15 pitches) in the Government's guidelines. It would dwarf the nearest settled community of Stanton Wick and again breach government guidelines on the effect of sites on the local community and infrastructure. It is remote from local amenities and public services. For example the nearest doctor's surgery is 5 miles away and there is no public transport.

In addition there are significant health and safety and ecological issues in relation to the development of the site.(e.g contaminated land, mine shafts, no safe walking routes to local amenities, bats and badgers)

The Council does not intend to buy the land. As it will remain in private ownership, how can the Council effectively prevent future unauthorised expansion as happened at Dale Farm?

Do you have any other general comments on the Preferred Options paper?

BANES own DPD on Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocations states:

1. Any sites in the Green Belt will be considered less favourably than those outside the Green Belt. In accordance with national planning policy, Gypsy and Traveller sites are normally considered inappropriate development on Green Belt land. Draft Policy Statement Planning for Traveller Sites removes the word 'normally' from the above policy.
2. Locations in or near existing settlements are prioritised in Circulars 01/2006 and 04/2007. Such locations are generally more sustainable than those in remote areas, with better access to health and education services, shopping facilities, transport networks and employment opportunities. They are also more likely to reduce the need for car travel.

Government policy states:

3. "local planning authorities should allocate the number of pitches to the surrounding population's size and density." And that "sites in rural areas and the countryside should not dominate the local population."
4. Traveller sites are an inappropriate development on Green Belt land and the new guidance makes clear that there should be due regard for the protection of the local environment and amenities when local authorities set out their criteria for allocating sites. (March 2012)

Respondent: 2958 / 1 Name: Faulkner Organisation:

Do you have any evidence or information about any of the sites set out in the Preferred Options document which will help Bath and North East Somerset Council to determine whether they are available, suitable and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision?

Keynsham site will be next door to a children's nursery.

This business will not be able to function if the site allowed in this area.

It will have a huge detrimental effect on the area and the jobs the business could bring in will be lost, (as well as rates,

taxes etc..)

Both Station Road Newbridge & Lower Bristol Road I consider to be in too populated areas not to have detrimental effects upon neighbours in the area.

Site commenting on:

Do you agree with the Council's assessment of opportunities and constraints on this site?

Do you agree that the potential pitch provision be taken forward as a formal allocation?

Do you have any other general comments on the Preferred Options paper?

I would like to point out that the unofficial site in Twerton is already an eyesore. Should for instance this be approved it will not be long until it grows & grows taking over the playing fields next door and causing a great many problems.

Whilst I understand that it is a legal requirement for the Council to provide a site, can this not be found in less populated areas so as to cause less disruption and bad feeling. Surely that would be for the good of everyone?

Respondent: 3033 / 2 Name: Mr Chris York Organisation:

Do you have any evidence or information about any of the sites set out in the Preferred Options document which will help Bath and North East Somerset Council to determine whether they are available, suitable and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision?

Site commenting on:

Do you agree with the Council's assessment of opportunities and constraints on this site?

Do you agree that the potential pitch provision be taken forward as a formal allocation?

Do you have any other general comments on the Preferred Options paper?

We write to advise you that we do not support the proposal for a Travellers site in Bath Old Road. We believe the consultation and selection process is flawed in that it did not follow the new planning guidance for these sites; furthermore the site as proposed is inappropriate for a conservation area, the screening scheme is not considered achievable and the access and road are not suitable from a safety and practical point of view.

Please make our views known to the BANES council authorities responsible for this proposal.

Respondent: 3100 / 1 Name: Liz Stanbury Organisation:

Do you have any evidence or information about any of the sites set out in the Preferred Options document which will help Bath and North East Somerset Council to determine whether they are available, suitable and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision?

Site commenting on:

Do you agree with the Council's assessment of opportunities and constraints on this site?

Do you agree that the potential pitch provision be taken forward as a formal allocation?

Do you have any other general comments on the Preferred Options paper?

Whilst totally agreeing that Banes should provide suitable sites for travellers, I will oppose in every possible way any attempt to encroach on green belt land.

Respondent: 3100 / 1 Name: Liz Stanbury Organisation:

Do you have any evidence or information about any of the sites set out in the Preferred Options document which will help Bath and North East Somerset Council to determine whether they are available, suitable and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision?

Site commenting on: All Sites

Do you agree with the Council's assessment of opportunities and constraints on this site?

Do you agree that the potential pitch provision be taken forward as a formal allocation?

Do you have any other general comments on the Preferred Options paper?

Whilst totally agreeing that Banes should provide suitable sites for travellers, I will oppose in every possible way any attempt to encroach on green belt land.

Respondent: 3302 / 1 Name: Ms Becky Pullinger Organisation: Avon Wildlife Trust

Do you have any evidence or information about any of the sites set out in the Preferred Options document which will help Bath and North East Somerset Council to determine whether they are available, suitable and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision?

General Issues

The Planning Policy for Traveller Sites states that Green Belt land should be protected from inappropriate development. In Policy E it then goes on to state that "Traveller Sites in the green belt (both temporary or permanent) in the Green Belt are inappropriate". The statements have clearly not been given as much weight as 3 of the six sites are in or partially inside the Green Belt (GT.1, GT.2 and GT.8).

The Planning Policy documentation also states that planning authorities should have due regard to "the protection of local amenity and local environment". All of the sites, except GT.6, are adjacent or on important wildlife sites. These sites should therefore be informed by an ecological assessment of likely impacts to these sites. The Trust objects in principle to development on these designated sites.

Site commenting on: All Sites

Do you agree with the Council's assessment of opportunities and constraints on this site?

- GT.2 Old Colliery Buildings Stanton Wick

Whilst the Trust supports the use of brownfield sites in development (an issue highlighted in Policy Planning documentation), it is essential to acknowledge that these sites can hold their own unique ecology, therefore the site's allocation should be informed by an ecological survey.

The site appears to overlap with around 90% of the Pensford Complex SNCI, a Post Industrial Site and Priority Habitat. The potential impacts that such an overlap will have could effect the site's ability to play a role in BANES wildlife network, and thus not be in line with the National Planning policy framework which says that the country's wildlife network should be created, protected, enhanced and managed.

BRERC data shows that a number of bat species have been cited in the area. A gypsy and traveller site, here, thus represents the inappropriate development discussed in the Planning Policy for Traveller sites as increased lighting will impact their foraging.

- GT.6 Station Road, Newbridge

This site appears to be adjacent to the Bristol to Bath cycle network, with BRERC records showing the presence of slow

worms, bats, badgers and birds. An increase in disturbance to these species needs to be considered, with an ecological assessment to inform development.

- GT.8 Lower Bristol Road, Twerton

As highlighted as a constraint in the DPD the site is within the green belt and Bath World Heritage Site, therefore the Trust objects in principle to this development. Furthermore the site is within, the boundary of, and not adjacent to, Carrs Wood, SNCI and Local Nature Reserve, as well as Newton Brook SNCI.

The impact of the current unauthorised travellers on the areas ecology should be examined before the site is taken forward.

- GT.14 Land near Ellsbridge Home, Keynsham

Whilst this site is within a relatively urban setting, the area is identified as being covered with mature trees. This suggests that the site, may participate in the area's wildlife network. An ecological survey, focusing on bats and birds should be implemented to assess the ecological impacts a Gypsy and Traveller Site may have and allow for appropriate buffering, and mitigation to occur.

The site appears to overlap with around 90% of the Pensford Complex SNCI, a Post Industrial Site and Priority Habitat. The potential impacts that such an overlap will have could effect the site's ability to play a role in BANES wildlife network, and thus not be in line with the National Planning policy framework which says that the country's wildlife network should be created, protected, enhanced and managed.

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Do you agree that the potential pitch provision be taken forward as a formal allocation?

Do you have any other general comments on the Preferred Options paper?

Respondent: 3333 / 1 Name: Mr Matthew Knight

Organisation: Knights Solicitors

Do you have any evidence or information about any of the sites set out in the Preferred Options document which will help Bath and North East Somerset Council to determine whether they are available, suitable and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision?

Site commenting on: All Sites

Do you agree with the Council's assessment of opportunities and constraints on this site?

Needs and the duty to co-operate

The Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation and other Needs Assessment is now quite dated. The Council ought to follow the approach of North Somerset Council in reviewing the needs.

One of the Coalition Government's reforms has been to introduce a duty to co-operate on local authorities preparing development plan documents which relate to a strategic matter. Gypsy and traveller provision is a strategic matter as it does have a significant impact on multiple planning areas. The need for provision and the suitability of sites has to be considered on a wider basis than a local authority area. The Council needs to have actively and constructively engaged with other small local authorities and statutory bodies such as Natural England, the Environment Agency and English Heritage in preparing the development plan document. From the material produced that does not appear to have happened here.

The site assessment process

The use of a matrix and scoring system in assessing potential sites is good practice. Policy sets out the criteria to be applied and site selection should follow those criteria. The final decision will not be purely mathematical: even if the scoring is agreed, it is very unlikely that the top six sites will be the six selected. Planning judgments are more complicated than that. You would expect there to be a close correlation between the correct scoring and the final sites list.

Here there is not. Three of the sites come in at 15th (Ellsbridge), 17th (Stanton Wick) and 18th (Twerton). The Preferred Options document proposes some of the worst scoring sites. This gives rise to two possibilities, neither of which involve an acceptable process. Either the criteria being applied in the scoring system were wrong, or the criteria were broadly right but sites were selected for wholly different reasons. It appears to be the latter case here - ultimately the criteria were disregarded and sites selected or omitted for different reasons; none of which are readily apparent but which may well include political convenience.

There is debate over the particular scores being applied and some of the selected sites were scored too highly. For the purposes of this meeting we wish to focus on some factors which are recognised but not scored. The Radstock Infant School site is in a conservation area yet no score is applied for that factor.

The presence of European Protected Species is not scored at all. The sustainability appraisal identifies that there is likely to be a 'very significant adverse impact' on those species (including bats) at Stanton Wick. In plan-making the Council is required to consider that impact and the likelihood of any alternatives being found which do not harm European species or sites, and whether there are Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Importance to justify the impacts.

Other 'show-stoppers' are highways impacts. The Stanton Wick site is accessed through a narrow country lane with no footway and frequent sharp bends and single track widths. It is simply unsuitable for traffic generating uses, let alone one generating goods vehicle and caravan movements.

The Preferred Options proposals ignore the interests of gypsy and traveller communities by allocating sites which are wholly unsuitable. As a group they suffer from the lowest educational achievements and the worst health of any group in the country yet the Preferred Option is to put the majority of the permanent pitches on a contaminated former colliery site in the middle of the countryside. The sustainability appraisal accepts that the Stanton Wick site has poor or very poor access to services, that the proposals would lead to the exacerbation of existing social exclusion and that putting a large site next to isolated residential properties may increase tension. Treating gypsies and travellers and the settled community in this way contravenes the Council's Public Sector Equality Duty as well as being unsound from a land use planning

perspective.

The site assessment process has unreasonably omitted a range of sites including the three former MoD sites which are coming forward.

The assessment process does need to be completely revisited. Sites have been put forward which bear no relationship to the recognised criteria.

On a matter of procedure, the Council report at paragraph 5.10 considers whether this is a full Council or Cabinet matter. The Functions and Responsibilities Regulations provide that development plan documents are shared responsibilities of Cabinet and Council. It is not simply Core Strategies which are shared. The submission draft of the DPD and its final adoption are therefore matters for the full Council to decide. At this stage if the Cabinet asks full Council for a view then the Council's view prevails, although as the Council meeting has been called by members rather than by the Cabinet that situation may not have strictly arisen. The Council's view would then be a recommendation, albeit with the ability to impose their view at the submission stage.

Do you agree that the potential pitch provision be taken forward as a formal allocation?

Do you have any other general comments on the Preferred Options paper?

Respondent: 3438 / 1 Name: Mr Taber Organisation:

Do you have any evidence or information about any of the sites set out in the Preferred Options document which will help Bath and North East Somerset Council to determine whether they are available, suitable and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision?

We have read the article in the Chew Valley Gazette July 2012. We consider it a very sensible comment and will help the council decide whether any of the sites are really suitable

Site commenting on: All Sites

Do you agree with the Council's assessment of opportunities and constraints on this site?

NO

Do you agree that the potential pitch provision be taken forward as a formal allocation?

NO

Do you have any other general comments on the Preferred Options paper?

Respondent: 3542 / 1 Name: Ms Jane Hennell Organisation:

Do you have any evidence or information about any of the sites set out in the Preferred Options document which will help Bath and North East Somerset Council to determine whether they are available, suitable and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision?

No

Site commenting on: All Sites

Do you agree with the Council's assessment of opportunities and constraints on this site?

N/A

Do you agree that the potential pitch provision be taken forward as a formal allocation?

N/A

Do you have any other general comments on the Preferred Options paper?

Thank you for consulting the Trust on this consultation, however in this instance we have no further comments to make.

Respondent: 3573 / 1 Name: Ms Mary Rogers Organisation:

Do you have any evidence or information about any of the sites set out in the Preferred Options document which will help Bath and North East Somerset Council to determine whether they are available, suitable and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision?

Site commenting on: All Sites

Do you agree with the Council's assessment of opportunities and constraints on this site?

Do you agree that the potential pitch provision be taken forward as a formal allocation?

Do you have any other general comments on the Preferred Options paper?

Dunkerton Parish Council consider that B&NES must ensure that all potential Brownfield sites are fully assessed before any Green Belt areas are brought forward for consideration. Brownfield Sites tend to be in areas that already have the appropriate local services already established such as schools, shops, doctors surgeries etc which will therefore be in a position to offer more suitable services within the locality.

Respondent: 4167 / 1 Name: Ms Sarah McAuslan-Crine Organisation:

Do you have any evidence or information about any of the sites set out in the Preferred Options document which will help Bath and North East Somerset Council to determine whether they are available, suitable and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision?

No

Site commenting on: All Sites

Do you agree with the Council's assessment of opportunities and constraints on this site?

No

Do you agree that the potential pitch provision be taken forward as a formal allocation?

No

Do you have any other general comments on the Preferred Options paper?

Why is it you think you can deviate from government guidance when choosing traveller sites?

Respondent: 4169 / 1 Name: Dr Eleanor Jackson Organisation: Meadow View Residents Action Group

Do you have any evidence or information about any of the sites set out in the Preferred Options document which will help Bath and North East Somerset Council to determine whether they are available, suitable and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision?

Site commenting on: All Sites

Do you agree with the Council's assessment of opportunities and constraints on this site?

Do you agree that the potential pitch provision be taken forward as a formal allocation?

Do you have any other general comments on the Preferred Options paper?

The pitches in question are outside the remit of the Meadow View Residents Action Group which by constitution is limited

to issues which directly impinge on Meadow View.

However, it is a general comment from the residents who were living in Meadow View in the 1990s that the presence of an illegal encampment here on the former railway lands presented no problems for them.

Respondent: 4197 / 1 Name: Mr Mathew Pearson Organisation: Economy and Registration

Do you have any evidence or information about any of the sites set out in the Preferred Options document which will help Bath and North East Somerset Council to determine whether they are available, suitable and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision?

Site commenting on: All Sites

Do you agree with the Council's assessment of opportunities and constraints on this site?

Do you agree that the potential pitch provision be taken forward as a formal allocation?

Do you have any other general comments on the Preferred Options paper?

Wiltshire Council supports the ambitions of BANES to provide the number of pitches required to meet the needs of Gypsy and Travellers in their area. The level of provision is based on the 2007 GTAA for the period up to 2016 with 3 extra permanent pitches included over and above this provision. The range of sites identified offer a number of options for BANES to fulfil this requirement and should form a sound basis for BANES to meet the needs of Gypsy and Travellers up to 2016 and potentially beyond.

However, there is a recognised relationship between demand for traveller sites in western Wiltshire and eastern areas of BANES. Given the date of the original study it may be pertinent to include in the Site Allocations DPD a commitment to review the post 2016 pitch requirements and roll forward the time period of the plan to ensure that provision in BANES continues to meet demand. This will help to identify pitch requirements over a fifteen year period in line with the latest advice from DCLG found in 'Planning policy for traveller sites (March 2012)'. This could be achieved without a comprehensive re-assessment using sources such as caravan count published by DCLG, discussion with local traveller families and the response to the various consultations run by BANES on Gypsy and Traveller sites to provide up to date local data. Wiltshire Council would be happy to work with BANES to develop this work.

Respondent: 4202 / 1 Name: Ms Harriette Dottridge Organisation:

Do you have any evidence or information about any of the sites set out in the Preferred Options document which will help Bath and North East Somerset Council to determine whether they are available, suitable and achievable for Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople provision?

Parcel 7100 Woollard Lane: is Green Belt land. Whilst potential residents could access health and education facilities due to its proximity to the A37 this part of Woollard Lane is on a dangerous bend, used as a rat run and its usage will only increase once the K7 development in Keynsham is completed. The nearby village of Queen Charlton is a conservation area and a site here could affect the maintenance of that area.

GT 14 Lane by Ellsbridge House: is next to the busy A4 which has peak hour congestion at this point. Ellsbridge House was recently sold for use as a preschool nursery. The decision to have this as a potential Traveller site was published AFTER the nursery purchase and presents a conflict of users: parents with small children accessing the neighbouring site, the safety of those children, the loss of woodland in the area, Problems of access at this point on the A4 for multiple users,

GT 2 Old Colliery Buildings, Stanton Wick: although the site itself is Brownfield, it is in the Green Belt. It is a site of nature conservation. The local road system is unsuitable for a large number of vehicles in particular HGVs. The location is very remote from both health and education facilities. The potential for 15 permanent and 5 transit pitches here together with the necessary ancillary services would radically alter the site and be unsuitable for the Green Belt. As a previous colliery site I understand that the land is potentially contaminated which would either cause a risk to the traveller residents or require decontamination at a cost to B&NES council.

GT8 Lower Bristol Road, Twerton: whilst this site is currently illegally occupied and is technically in the Green Belt, this would seem to provide the best option for access to health and education facilities and access to road networks required by residents.

Site commenting on:

Do you agree with the Council's assessment of opportunities and constraints on this site?

With regard to the sites identified I think there are serious doubts about the methodology of the scoring system by which the Council's site selection was made.

Do you agree that the potential pitch provision be taken forward as a formal allocation?

Do you have any other general comments on the Preferred Options paper?

It is vital that B&NES identify sites for travellers in its area so that enforcement can be carried out on the current illegal sites in the area.

If B&NES were to set up ONE site, which could be shown to be well run and to cause fewer than the feared problems, then B&NES tax payers might be able to accept additional sites in the area.