

Gypsy and Traveller Site Provision In Plymouth

Plymouth is in the process of assessing land that could be used for developing Gypsy and Traveller sites. Currently, we have no transit site where visiting Gypsies and Travellers can stop and there is a shortage of residential sites.

Initial assessments on some pieces of land in Plymouth have been carried out, and detailed evaluations would be required.

Locations	pitches (max)	Grazing	Play area	Amenity blocks	Business area	Access	Proximity to schools	Proximity to GP, Dentist, hospital	Proximity to local shops	Space for turning area	Sufficient parking for residents and visitors	Existing potential for natural screening	Ease of connection to mains services	Proximity to residential dwellings	GT travelling routes	Health and Safety	Transport	Ward	Neighbourhood	Map Location
Efford Warren	8																	Efford and Lipson	Efford	Efford
Goodwin Park	8																	Southway	Widewell	Goodwin park

Criteria fully met

Criteria partially met/full assessment pending

Explanation of Site Criteria

The Government recommends that similar considerations that apply to development of social housing should be applied when developing Gypsy and Traveller sites. The above sites have been initially assessed by Plymouth City Council based on the recommended criteria. The assessment criteria is as follows:

Objectives and Criteria	Comments
Pitches	Criteria is based on 195m ² per pitch (including internal circulation, residents and visitor parking).
Grazing	The recommended size is 0.8ha per horse
Play Areas	The National Playing fields Association recommends a minimum standard for outdoor playing space of 2.4 hectares (6acres) per 1000 people.
Shared amenity blocks	The Government recommends that the site should have spare capacity beyond its minimum requirement for number of pitches.
Business Area	Where possible, the site should have spare capacity beyond its minimum requirements for number of pitches to accommodate business premises.
Access	The site should be designed to have vehicular access designed to highway adoptable standards.
Traveller Routes	The site should have good, reasonably direct access to the key routes out of the city. The predominant route is the A38 to the west and east and A386 northwards.
Public Transport	Sites should be within walking distance of bus stops and/or train stations.
Education	Crèches, primary and secondary schools and colleges should be located at appropriate distances from the site.
Health	Health centres and dentists should be located at appropriate walking distance from the site.

Why do we need Gypsy and Traveller Sites?

- **The Housing Act 2004** Requires local authorities to assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers along with the rest of the population. In 2006, Plymouth requested the University of Plymouth to do an independent assessment of housing needs for Gypsies and Travellers. The assessment found that to satisfy the need, Plymouth needs to provide at least 40 permanent pitches (approximately 2 to 3 sites depending on size) and 15 transit pitches (approximately 1 site depending on size).
- **The Regional Spatial Strategy and the Local Development Framework (LDF)** requires local planning authorities to identify the level of need within the area, estimate future need until 2026, and identify specific locations in the Local Development Framework to meet the need.
- **The South West Housing Strategy 2005 –2016** includes specific targets for increased provision for Gypsies and Travellers.
- **The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000**¹ places a duty on local authorities to promote good race relations between communities. The most significant cause of poor relations between settled communities and Gypsies and Travellers is the impact of unauthorised encampments on all communities involved.
- **National Best Value assessments** have shown that it is more cost effective for LA's to provide sites rather than continuously pay for the eviction, management and clear up of unauthorised encampments. Plymouth experiences up to 20 unauthorised encampments per year. It is estimated that each encampment costs circa £6500 to manage.
- **Management of Unauthorised encampments and Police powers** – The development of authorised stopping places will increase the powers available to the police to move people on to 'suitable pitches' within the area under s62 a-e of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act.

¹ Romani Gypsies and Irish Travellers are recognised as ethnic minority groups under Race Relations Legislation