



'Pop-up' Campsites and Car Parks - Planning Guidance

Some temporary uses of land benefit from 'permitted development rights' and can be undertaken without having to make a planning application.

Permitted development rights are subject to conditions and limitations to control potential impacts but in general, land can be used temporarily for many different purposes, including camping and as a car park, for up to 28 days a year. This has been extended during 2021 to allow, cumulatively, up to 56 days where the necessary criteria are met.

This suits the typical summer campsite perfectly, allowing not only tent camping but also portable buildings for ablutions, etc.

We understand that some landowners may wish to take advantage of these permitted development rights and operate temporary campsites and car parks during the summer months. We also recognise that some people may be concerned about potential sites.

Well located and effectively operated sites can broaden the range of tourist provision available and may alleviate some of the pressures experienced last summer e.g. fly-camping and parking problems. Badly located or poorly run sites meanwhile can have adverse impacts.

This page answers some of the common questions we've been getting about temporary uses from prospective operators and people concerned about sites.

What do 'Permitted Development Rights' allow?

The legislation that allows for temporary uses of land can be read here:

- [Town and Country Planning \(General Permitted Development\)\(England\) Order 2015](#)
- [Town and Country Planning \(Permitted Development and Miscellaneous Amendments\)\(England\)\(Coronavirus\) Regulations 2020](#)
- [Town and Country Planning \(General Permitted Development\)\(England\)\(Amendment\) Regulations 2020](#)

NB. Permitted development rights do not override existing planning conditions or legal agreements and there may be other reasons such rights are not available. If you are unsure whether 'permitted development rights' are available on your land, we would suggest confirming its status with our planning department.

Can I operate different temporary uses, each for 56 days (e.g. 56 days of camping and another 56 days of car parking)?

No. The 56 day limit is the total allowed for all temporary uses, cumulatively. A small number of uses are subject to shorter limits, as set out in the regulations.

If you wish to extend a temporary use of your land beyond 56 days, this will require planning permission. Details of how to submit an application can be found at:

<https://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/living-and-working/planning/planning-applications>

Can I have 56 days of camping in one field, then another 56 days in the adjacent field?

No. The 56 day limit applies to the whole land holding, not just the field or parcel.

Can I do permanent works to facilitate the temporary uses?

No. The permitted development rights for temporary uses do not allow permanent works or operations.

Can I put up tents at Easter and leave them on the land until the end of August, as long as I only let them for 56 days?

No. Each day that the tents are on the land counts towards your 28 or 56 days, even if they are not occupied. Since there is no requirement for the 28 (currently 56) days to run consecutively, many landowners may choose to 'cherry pick' the busiest periods, sacrificing some of the summer to open over spring bank-holiday weekends. In order to do this however, the land must be restored to its original condition between the periods of use, and any tents or moveable structures

removed. Because of this, some landowners may consider a continuous period of 56 days to be more viable.

Can I bring facilities onto my land and leave them there for the season?

'Moveable structures' or facilities (e.g. portable toilets) used in connection with a temporary campsite benefit from the same permitted development rights. However, any day when such a temporary structure is on the land will count as one of the 56 days permitted, even if the site is unoccupied.

Do sites need to provide toilet, shower and other facilities?

There is no requirement under 'permitted development rights' to provide sanitation or other facilities. However, operators should ensure that their sites comply with all relevant requirements, licences, etc., not just planning regulations. Further advice on the need for a site licence can be obtained from the Environmental Health Office at your local District or Borough Council.

What about glamping?

There are a wide range of glamping units on the market e.g. bell tents, safari tents, shepherds huts and yurts. Their legal position varies. Some may constitute a 'use of land', some 'buildings', others may be regarded as caravans. Some may be 'permitted development', and others may not, depending upon their specification and circumstances.

If 'operational development' i.e. building, engineering or other works is involved, for example the construction of a solid base or levelling of the land, planning permission will be required. Whether something is a building operation depends on factors such as the size, permanence and physical attachment to the ground. To determine whether planning permission is required you can submit an application for a Certificate of Lawfulness to obtain a formal decision from the Authority as to whether a glamping proposal would require full planning permission, or, for an informal opinion, you can discuss the matter with one of our planning officers.

Can I have caravans on a 56 day site?

Caravans are subject to different rules. Caravans may only be sited if an exception in Schedule 1 of the Caravan Site and Control of Development Act 1960 applies. In all other cases, using land for caravans needs planning permission.

The most common exceptions that apply to touring caravans are:

- On holdings of under 5 acres, one touring caravan/motorhome/campervan is permitted for not more than two nights for up to 28 days over the last 12 months. Any more units or days require a site licence and planning permission.
- On holdings of over 5 acres, up to three touring caravans/motorhomes/campervans are permitted for up to 28 days over the last 12 months. Any more units or days require a site licence and planning permission.

Can I have motorhomes on a 56 day site?

Motorhomes are treated the same as caravans and are subject to the rules referenced above (see caravans above). It should also be noted that a 'caravan' includes static caravans, touring caravans and motorhomes/campervans, but can also typically include camping pods, shepherd's huts, gypsy caravans and moveable lodges.

Can I have a temporary site in my garden?

Permitted development rights do not normally allow temporary uses within the curtilage of a building, however, until 31 December 2021:

- Land that is within the curtilage of a non-listed building can operate a temporary use for 28 days.
- Land within the curtilage of a listed building has no temporary use rights.

Why is the national park allowing 56 day sites?

The permitted development right to use land as a campsite for 56 days during 2021 falls under national planning regulations, that includes all National Parks and other protected areas.

Is there a limit on the number of campers on a site under the 56 day permission?

No. Permitted development rights do not impose any limit on the number of people who can camp on a temporary site.

Is there a limit on the number of cars on a temporary car park site under the 56 day permission?

No. Permitted development rights do not impose any limit on the number of cars on a temporary site.

Do pay and display machines need permission?

Yes. Permanent pay and display machines require planning permission.

Can I create a new hard surface for a temporary car park?

The formation of permanent areas of hard surface requires planning permission. Temporary hard surfaces, such as a plastic cellular grid system, used in connection with a temporary car park may be regarded as incidental to that use of the land. However, any day when such a hard surface is on the land will count as one of the 56 days permitted, even if the carpark is not used.

I am concerned about a site near me. What should I do?

If, having read this guidance note, you believe a site is operating in breach of planning control you should report this at <https://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/living-and-working/planning/enforcing-planning-control/planning-breach-form>. It would significantly assist us in investigating alleged breaches if you had kept a diary of:

- Dates that tents/caravans/glamping/toilets etc were sited/present/or removed from the land,
- Dates that a site was in use, and
- Dated photographs showing the above.

A temporary site near me has a dangerous access. Can the Local Planning Authority shut it before the 56 day limit?

No. Permitted development rights do not include any restrictions in terms of highway safety and do not require any works to improve an access. We can only investigate alleged breaches of planning control.

A temporary site near me is unneighbourly. Can the Local Planning Authority shut it before the 56 day limit?

No. Providing the site is complying with the relevant 'permitted development rights', as the Local Planning Authority we cannot take any action against unneighbourly or antisocial behaviour. We can only investigate alleged breaches of planning control.

If you believe the occupiers of a campsite are causing a nuisance through, for example, noise or bonfires, you can contact the Environmental Health Office at your

local District or Borough Council, or in more serious cases of antisocial behaviour you can call the police non-emergency number 101, or complete its online [101 non-emergency form](#). Please note that the police will not attend to investigate a complaint of noise.

A temporary site is causing litter and pollution, is this a planning matter?

No. As above, we cannot take action against a temporary site unless it is being operated in breach of planning control.

What will happen if a site operates in breach of planning control?

Operating a temporary site in breach of planning control is unlawful, and at risk of formal enforcement action being taken. We will investigate the allegation and contact the landowners in order to resolve the situation. Whether that be through formal enforcement action or a planning application to extend their camping season may depend on the circumstances of each case. Landowners should note however that we will not delay enforcement action to pursue voluntary resolution where ongoing uses are clearly in breach and unacceptable on their planning merits.