

NORTH DORSET LOCAL PLAN 2011 – 2026 PART 1

EXAMINATION

Inspector's requests and points arising during hearing sessions

Issue 8A: Gillingham town

Note to clarify Dorset County Council's position in relation to improvements needed at Gillingham Secondary School

May 2015

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 At the Hearing session on 18 March 2015 concerning Gillingham, the Council was asked by the Inspector to prepare a note clarifying the position of the County Council, as Education Authority, in respect of the improvement of Gillingham secondary school.

2. Expansion of Gillingham High School

- 2.1 Currently, Dorset County Council records¹ show that Gillingham High School has a roll of 1,765 pupils. On the basis of existing class size requirements, this gives spare capacity of 2 places.
- 2.2 Population growth in Gillingham is such that additional spaces will be required over the Plan period - the Local Plan envisages at least 1,490 houses being built.
- 2.3 Dorset County Council (the Education Authority) has identified that in principle there will be a need to develop and enhance the Secondary School facilities and accommodation. However, the Education Authority is of the view that growth of the High School can be accommodated on the existing site, without the need for a new school. This will require significant infrastructure work to accommodate children from the Gillingham area and is likely to include internal remodelling, replacement of temporary and additional classbases, external sports space and other facilities.
- 2.4 Although the Authority has been looking for additional playing field land to supplement that which is currently available adjacent to the school, specific projects are not sufficiently advanced. Care is needed in the short term to ensure that works are neither abortive nor prejudicial to future need, having regard to both baseline need and evolving growth options being developed for the town through the emerging Local Plan.

¹ As at April 2015.