

West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan Examination

Educational Provision in Bridport – Vearse Farm Development

Arising in Matter 11

Prepared by

Ed Denham

Sufficiency School Places Manager

Strategy, Service Planning and Commissioning

Dorset County Council



West Dorset District Council and
Weymouth & Portland Borough Council

Educational Provision in Bridport – Vearse Farm Development

Background

The Vearse Farm development at 760 houses, using Dorset County Council's methodology, will generate 133 children across the Primary Sector.

Bridport Town currently has a capacity for 120 children per year group, spread through 3 schools (Bridport Primary (60), St. Catherine's RC (30) and St. Mary's Bridport).

Current projections of likely children in catchment are as follows:

2015 – 129

2016 – 132

2017 – 126

2018 – 158

DCC assume a transfer rate of 80%+ into mainstream education.

In order to respond these birthrates and to the new housing, Dorset County Council has identified the need for a minimum of 1 additional form of entry in the town with the capacity to further extend to another 1FE if required in the future.

To this end DCC identified the need for a new school site on the Vearse Farm development – which could either be a new school or an enlarged replacement for an existing school.

St. Mary's Primary Bridport

Dorset County Council did consider the possibility for the extension of the St. Mary's Primary School site to 2 FE though this was subsequently rejected.

The net site area – i.e. that area that is used for the external play and sports spaces required for a 1FE school is between 8,100m² and 8,993m² for 210 pupils. A net site area for 420 children is between 14,400m² and 15,986m² based on the latest DfE Building Bulletin 103.

The net site area of the school is approximately 10,300m². The area also has some land drainage issues limiting the use of the soft play and pitch areas. Though this area is sufficient for a 1FE school, were the building to enlarge to accommodate additional children, further outside area would be lost and the minimum required of 14,400m² would not be achievable on the site for the 420 children in a 2FE school.