

Basic Conditions Statement

Prepared on behalf of Gillingham Town Council

GILLINGHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

MAY 2017

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Basic Conditions Statement (the Statement) has been prepared by the Gillingham Neighbourhood Plan Group, under the auspices of the Town Council, to accompany the submission of the Gillingham Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) to North Dorset District Council under regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (“the Regulations”).
- 1.2 The independent examination of the Plan is intended to ensure that it meets four Basic Conditions set out in Paragraph 8(2) Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). In order to meet the Basic Conditions the Plan must:
 - I. Have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
 - II. Be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area;
 - III. Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
 - IV. Not breach, and be otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.
- 1.3 The Plan must also comply with several legal requirements included in sections 38A, 38B and 38C of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and sections 61G and Paragraph 10(2) of Schedule 4B Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). To comply with these legal requirements the Plan must:
 - Specify the period for which it is to have effect;
 - Not include provision relating to ‘excluded development’;
 - Not relate to more than one neighbourhood area;
 - Have been prepared for an area that has been properly designated; and
 - Have been developed and submitted for examination by a ‘qualifying body’.
 - In addition, the policies must relate to the development and use of land for the designated neighbourhood area.
- 1.4 The following sections of this Statement explain how the Plan meets the legal requirements and basic conditions i, ii, iii and iv.

2. Legal Requirements

The Plan specifies the period for which it is to have effect

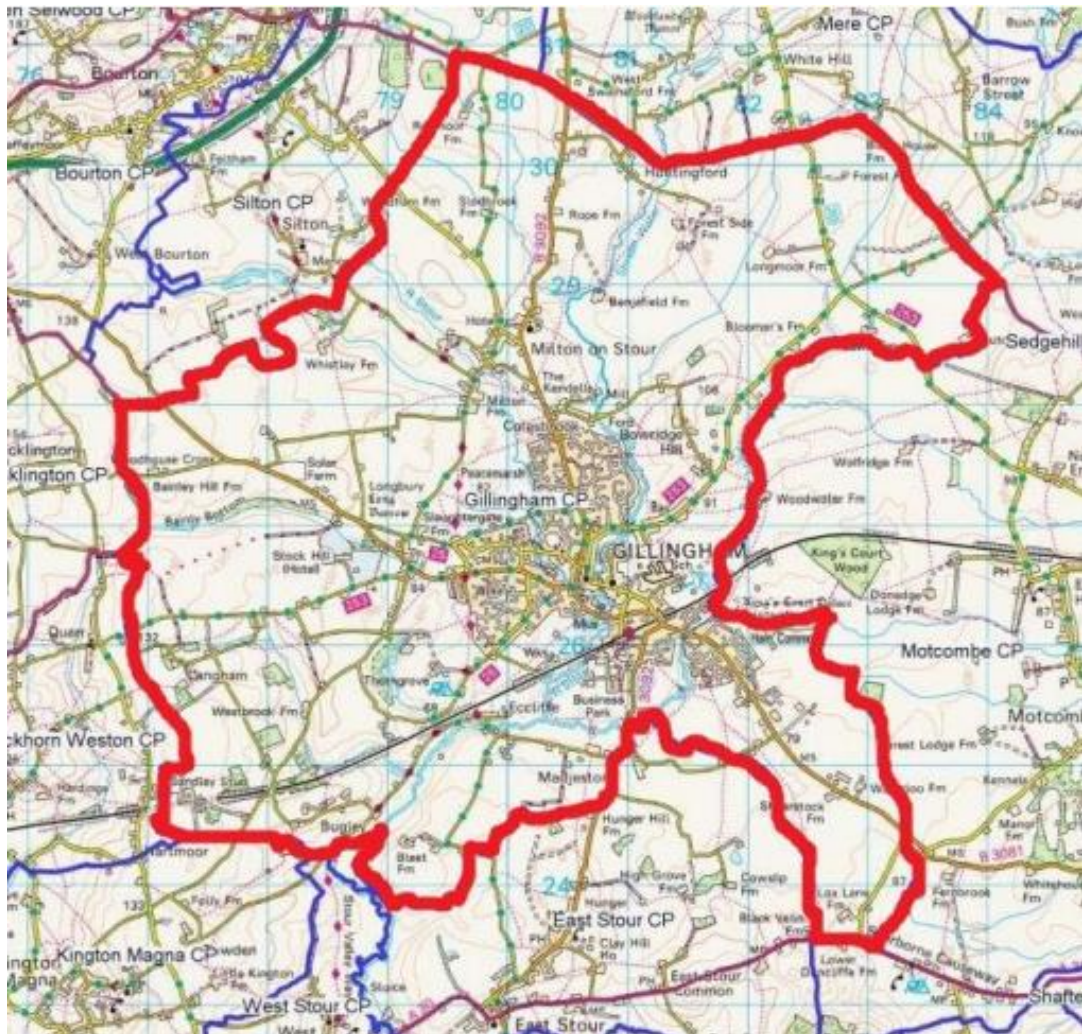
- 2.1 The Plan specifies that it relates to the period from 2016 until 2031.

The policies do not relate to excluded development

- 2.2 The Plan does not include policies dealing with mineral extraction and waste development which are county matters, nationally significant infrastructure, or any other matters set out in Section 61K of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. It does make reference to Household waste recycling facilities in section 10, but only as an informative and referencing the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Waste Plan.

The Plan does not relate to more than one neighbourhood area and has been prepared for an area that has been properly designated;

- 2.3 The Plan does not relate to more than one neighbourhood area and there are no other neighbourhood development plans in place within the Neighbourhood Area. The map below shows the neighbourhood area. The Neighbourhood Plan Area was designated on 20 August 2012 by North Dorset District Council.



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The Plan is being submitted by a qualifying body

- 2.4 The Plan has been submitted by Gillingham Town Council, which is a qualifying body as defined by the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). The Plan has been prepared by the Gillingham Neighbourhood Plan Group (GNPG) under the auspices of the Town Council.

What is being proposed is a Neighbourhood Development Plan

- 2.5 The Plan relates to planning matters (the use and development of land) and has been prepared in accordance with the statutory requirements and processes set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012.

3. Basic Conditions

i. National policy

3.1 The first of the Basic Conditions states that the Plan must have regard to national policies and advice. Government policy is set out primarily in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which should be read alongside other national planning policies, for example regarding waste, travellers, and starter homes. The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) sets out government advice on how to interpret and use the NPPF and advises other aspects of planning such as neighbourhood planning. The NPPF includes a set of 12 core land-use planning principles which should underpin plan-making and decision-taking. Table 1 demonstrates how the policies in the Plan support the principles in the NPPF.

NPPF Core Principle		How the Neighbourhood Plan addresses the Core Principle
1	Set out a positive vision for the future of the area.	The Neighbourhood Plan includes a vision for the future. This has been formulated from views expressed by residents and others who have a stake in the area (for example, local businesses and land owners) and from research/fact finding sources
2	Enhance the places in which people live.	The Neighbourhood Plan includes a series of objectives and policies to enhance the Neighbourhood Area and deliver the vision of a place that combines the best of town and country living.
3	Drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places.	The Neighbourhood Plan does not include any new allocations given the extent of development already proposed in the 2016 Local Plan. This includes the provision of 2,200 new homes in Gillingham mainly through the allocation of the strategic southern extension allocated in the Local Plan, but also on land at Station Road (mixed use site) and Land at Bay (which although not formerly allocated in the Local Plan has outline consent). The Neighbourhood Plan policies take into account local needs and opportunities, and are not intended to be inflexible, to allow for changes in the economy.
4	Secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for existing and future occupants of land and buildings.	Section 11 of the Neighbourhood Plan includes details on the green infrastructure strategy appropriate for the area, and Section 12 identifies character areas across the built-up area and sets out an assessment of each area, and the design principles that should be applied.

NPPF Core Principle	How the Neighbourhood Plan addresses the Core Principle
<p>5 Recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and support thriving rural communities.</p>	<p>The settlement boundary defined for Gillingham in the Local Plan and Local Plan policies on the countryside provide the main basis for this aim. Section 11 also identifies how the countryside around the town plays a key role as green infrastructure, and seeks to provide improved recreational access where appropriate. The Neighbourhood Plan takes forward the Gillingham Royal Forest Project that recognises the unique heritage of this area.</p>
<p>6 Support the transition to a low carbon future, taking account of flood risk and encouraging the reuse of resources and the use of renewable resources.</p>	<p>This matter is largely covered in the Local Plan, with the Neighbourhood Plan in a supporting role. For example, section 12 identifies and highlights what National and Local Plan policies say about climate change adaptation and mitigation and encouraging transition towards renewable energy use and generation. Section 11 has a section identifying particular flood risk protection zones within Gillingham to mitigate potential future building in these areas exacerbating local flooding. The plan aims to reduce the use of cars locally by ensuring that daily needs – such as grocery shopping, health and education facilities are located close to where people live and are accessible by foot and cycleway as identified in section 9 policies 12 and 13. Improvements to public transport are also identified in section 9 policy 10 Station Road Transport Hub.</p>
<p>7 Contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution. Allocations of land for development should prefer land of lesser environmental value, where consistent with other policies in this framework.</p>	<p>The green infrastructure policies in section 11 of the Neighbourhood Plan and the alternative pedestrian and cycle links promoted in section 9 together help achieve this objective. The main allocations for the area have been decided through the Local Plan process.</p>
<p>8 Encourage the effective use of land by reusing previously developed land provided that it is not of high environmental value.</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan encourages development on previously developed land, most notably through policy 8 – Station Road mixed use area which seeks to regenerate a core area of the existing town (as already identified in the Local Plan).</p>

NPPF Core Principle		How the Neighbourhood Plan addresses the Core Principle
9	Promote mixed use developments and encourage multiple benefits from the use of land, recognising that some open land can perform many functions (such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, carbon storage, or food production).	The Neighbourhood Plan supports mixed use development, including Policy 7 which allows residential uses on upper floors in the town centre, and again policy 8 Station Road mixed use area that will see underutilised land redeveloped.
10	Conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.	Section 13 of the Neighbourhood Plan (containing policy 27 and 28) provides measures for the protection and enhancement of local heritage assets and their setting, a number of which have been identified for the first time through the Neighbourhood Plan process.
11	Actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling.	Section 9 of the Neighbourhood Plan covers transport, in particular policy 10 and 12 seek the improvement of public transport facilities and an alternative pedestrian and cycle network to encourage sustainable travel.
12	Take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs.	Policies 14 to 17 in the community facilities section of the Neighbourhood Plan and policies 18 to 23 provide measures for protecting, enhancing and providing community, leisure, reaction and cultural facilities/space.

ii. Strategic Local Policy

- 3.2 The NPPF explains that the ambitions of the neighbourhood area should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the local area. Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. To facilitate this, local planning authorities should set out clearly their strategic policies for the area and ensure that an up-to-date Local Plan is in place as quickly as possible.
- 3.3 It is explained in National Planning Practice Guidance (ID: 41-009-20140306) that a neighbourhood plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan in force.
- 3.4 The North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 (2016) is generally considered to be strategic in nature, and the Local Plan makes clear (3.44) that “A neighbourhood plan for one of the four main towns will have to generally conform with the proposals for the growth

of that town, as set out in the Local Plan Part 1”. The Local Plan goes on to clarify that there is scope for Neighbourhood Plans to “include specific policies or guidance on how new development should be designed”. In many cases it also makes clear that there is an opportunity for Neighbourhood Plans to review the policy elements ‘saved’ from the 2003 Plan, such as settlement boundaries and IOWAs, and to look to meet their own needs – for example employment, housing and community facilities.

3.5 The NPPG states that ‘It is important to minimise any conflicts between policies in a neighbourhood plan and an emerging Local Plan. This is because section 38(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the conflict must be resolved by the decision maker favouring the policy which is contained in the last document to become part of the development plan’. In addition, ‘the reasoning and evidence informing the Local Plan process may be relevant to the consideration of the basic conditions against which a neighbourhood plan is tested’ (ID: 41-009-20140306).

3.6 The following table sets out the policies of the Plan and explains how each is in general conformity with the strategy established by the policies of the North Dorset District Local Plan Part 1, and related national policy context.

NPPF and guidance	Development plan	Approach taken in the NP
VISION AND OBJECTIVES		
<p>Plan making and decision taking Set out a positive vision for the future of the area, and provide a practical framework within which decisions on planning applications can be made with a high degree of predictability and efficiency Neighbourhood plans and orders should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies.</p>	<p>Para 3.44-45 A neighbourhood plan for one of the four main towns will have to generally conform with the proposals for the growth of that town... [and] can allow greater levels of growth (by allocating additional sites for development) or include specific policies or guidance on how new development should be designed. LP Policy 17: Gillingham Sustainable Development Strategy: Gillingham’s role as the main service centre in the north of the District will be maintained and enhanced through: a) development and redevelopment within the settlement boundary , including the enhancement of the town centre and the mixed-use regeneration of the Station Road area; and b) the development of a strategic site allocation (SSA) to the south of the town; and c) the development of a range and choice of employment sites, including</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan includes a vision for the area. The Summary contained at the front of the Plan explains clearly what it hopes to achieve through the policies: - to support the type of housing that people particularly want to see in this area. This includes affordable homes, more custom or self-build housing, and more flexible living accommodation that can adapt to all ages and lifestyles. - to help our town centre thrive through flexibility to adapt, and the likely pressures for expansion as our population increases - with the regeneration around the Station Road area linking to and supports the High Street. - to support businesses with opportunities for businesses to locate or expand in the main employment sites, and supported by further educational and vocational training - to improve the station as a transport hub, and the key pedestrian and cycle links around the</p>

NPPF and guidance	Development plan	Approach taken in the NP
	<p>the southern extension of Brickfields Business Park; and</p> <p>d) an enhanced green infrastructure network focused primarily on the three river corridors through the town.</p> <p>Growth will be taken forward in ways which respect the town’s environmental constraints, support its role, function and identity and contribute to making it more self-contained. The complementary approach of the Local Plan and the Gillingham Neighbourhood Plan will ensure the town benefits from growth to become a more vibrant and thriving place to live and work.</p>	<p>town.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to have a range of community buildings and venues, and make sure new facilities come forward in core locations as the town grows. - to safeguard the network of green spaces within and around the town and provide more spaces where there is likely to be a deficit as the population grows. - to ensure that new development reinforces the town’s character, largely intact and the policies look to make sure future designs cherish the best of the past whilst looking to the future.
HOUSING		
<p>Deliver a wide choice of high quality homes</p> <p>Support the strategic development needs set out in Local Plans, including policies for housing (para 16) to deliver the homes and thriving local places that are needed (para 17)</p> <p>Recognise that residential development can play an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres and set out policies to encourage residential development on appropriate sites (para 23)</p> <p>The supply of new homes can sometimes be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as extensions to existing towns that follow the principles of Garden Cities (para 52)</p>	<p>LP Policy 6 – Housing refers to Gillingham delivering at least 2,200 dwellings over the plan period.</p> <p>LP Policy 7 - All housing should contribute towards the creation of mixed and balanced communities, and sets out guidance for sites of 10 or more dwellings, although a different mix may be permitted if it can be soundly justified by local circumstances or viability considerations. The Council will seek to meet the needs of different groups in the community both through the provision of a suitable mix of market and affordable house sizes and by working with partners</p> <p>People wishing to build their own home can do so either on an infill plot in a town or village, or by replacing an existing dwelling in the countryside. (para 5.57)</p> <p>LP Policy 8 - 25% of houses should be affordable, most of these should be affordable / social rented, with 15% to 30% provided as intermediate housing.</p> <p>LP Policy 17 - In addition to infilling</p>	<p>NP Policy 1 seeks to ensure that some custom and self- build plots are made available where practical on the larger development sites – the supporting text makes clear that this is likely to apply to sites of 20 or more homes but will depend on viability and other considerations, and that these homes may count towards the affordable housing quota if meeting an affordable housing need. Given this flexibility there is no apparent conflict with the Local Plan.</p> <p>NP Policy 2 provides guidance on a further factor that may be considered in the planning balance, which is providing flexibility to adapt to changing lifestyles in the design. This is in keeping with the basis for Local Plan Policy 7.</p> <p>NP Policy 3 seeks to retain and encourage residential use of accommodation on upper floor levels in the town centre, on the basis that this may provide further housing opportunities and support the vitality of the town centre. There is no apparent conflict with the Local Plan</p>

NPPF and guidance	Development plan	Approach taken in the NP
<p>The Self-build and Custom House-building Act 2015 also places a duty on district councils to assess the demand in their area for all types of housing, including custom build, and to have regard for that demand in carrying out planning and other functions (para 159).</p>	<p>and regeneration within the settlement boundary, Gillingham’s housing needs will be met through the development of a strategic allocation to the south of the town, the mixed-use regeneration of land at Station Road to the south of the town centre; and the development of the land to the south and south-west of Bay</p>	<p>on this matter.</p>
ECONOMY		
<p>Build a strong, competitive economy and prosperous rural economy Support economic growth through the planning system (para 19) Economic investment should not be over-burdened by planning policy expectations (para 21) Planning policies should avoid the long term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose (para 22) Support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside (para 28)</p>	<p>LP Policy 11 – refers to the development of Brickfields Business Park, the mixed-use regeneration of the Station Road area (with a focus on comparison retail and office uses), and the improvement of town centres as the main focus for retail, leisure and other commercial activities. The policy makes clear that existing employment sites and sites identified for future employment uses will be protected from other forms of development, but permission may be given for community uses, such as community halls, healthcare facilities, such as doctors’ and vets’ surgeries, education and training facilities; and small-scale retail, which is ancillary to a B Class use. Economic development in the countryside will be supported by enabling rural communities to plan to meet their own local needs, particularly through neighbourhood planning and the re-use of existing buildings, the retention and small-scale expansion of existing employment sites; the provision of certain forms of tourist accommodation, and equine-related developments.</p> <p>LP Policy 17 – also refers to the development of land on Kingsmead Business Park for a local centre and /</p>	<p>Policy 4 is a positive policy that is aimed at supporting new or expanding businesses on the existing employment sites. It does not raise any obvious conformity issues.</p> <p>Policy 5 is similar to the Local Plan strategy on the retention of existing employment sites, but provides some flexibility to allow key transport infrastructure that would support the economy to such an extent that it would clearly further the objectives in this Neighbourhood Plan. Given the economic and social benefits of transport infrastructure improvements, and the latest workspace study findings on the overall level of employment sites to meet future needs, this is not considered to raise a serious conformity issue.</p> <p>Policy 6 updates the saved 2003 Local Plan Policy GRF1. Policy GRF1 is worded as follows: Within the Gillingham Royal Forest Project Area it is proposed to; (i) enhance the landscape and aid the diversification of agriculture through the provision of additional woodland planting (ii) provide and co-ordinate additional countryside recreational facilities (iii) provide interpretative /tourism</p>

NPPF and guidance	Development plan	Approach taken in the NP
	<p>or for a range of employment uses, and the development of land at Neal’s Yard Remedies, Peacemarsch for high value business</p> <p>LP Policy 20 - Development in the countryside will only be permitted if it is of a type appropriate in the countryside or there is an ‘overriding need’ for it to be located in the countryside.</p>	<p>/educational material and facilities</p> <p>Development will be approved in the area if the above objectives are met and the proposal is in keeping with the character of the area.</p> <p>It is clear that the links to the countryside and Gillingham Forest area mean that a countryside location is necessary and the policy requires proposals to be in keeping with the character of the area.</p>
RETAIL AND TOWN CENTRE USES		
<p>Ensure the vitality of town centres</p> <p>Planning policies should be positive, promote competitive town centre environments and set out policies for the management and growth of centres over the plan period (para 23). This can be achieved by a range of measures including defining the extent of town centres, primary shopping areas, shop frontages and including policies that make clear which uses will be permitted in such locations.</p> <p>Planning policies should ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise in a way that is sustainable (para 70)</p>	<p>LP Policy 11 - Supports the continued improvement of town centres as the main focus for retail, leisure and other commercial activities and specifically refers to the mixed-use regeneration of the Station Road area. Tourist facilities and larger hotels will be encouraged in town centre locations in accordance with the sequential approach to the location of town centre uses</p> <p>LP Policy 12 – makes clear that the town centre boundaries and retail frontages will shortly be reviewed unless defined in a Neighbourhood Plan. It also sets out the type of uses that will be allowed in these areas.</p> <p>Within the town centre, developments for retail will be supported provided their type and scale will maintain or enhance the role and function of the town and its catchment and respect its historic character. Other main town centre uses will also be supported provided this does not undermine the focus on retailing in primary shopping areas. The loss of retail frontage will be resisted within primary shopping frontages, and change of use away from an A-class uses will be resisted in secondary shopping frontages. The boundaries of town centres, primary shopping areas and shopping</p>	<p>The Local Plan policies for the town centre were based on comparatively ‘old’ evidence, and therefore were appropriate for reviewing.</p> <p>NP Policy 7 defines the town centre area and shopping frontages, based on a review of the available information and local knowledge.</p> <p>This may be updated further through the Local Plan when additional studies have been completed. As the area includes a wide mix of uses, including more industrial businesses towards the station (where mixed use regeneration is being encouraged) the policy encourages uses that are not compatible to relocate – but recognises that it would be unreasonable to make this a requirement. Key elements from the shop front guidance are included in the policy.</p> <p>NP Policy 8 provides guidance on the Station Road Mixed Use Area, but recognises that a more detailed masterplan would be beneficial (given the potential mix of landowners) based on the aims outlined in the policy. It recognises that a wider area than land west of the Station Road South (saved policy GH13) has potential, as highlighted by the Atkins Growth Study.</p> <p>NP Policy 9 looks to support the</p>

NPPF and guidance	Development plan	Approach taken in the NP
	<p>frontages can be defined through the Neighbourhood Plan. The Council will work with local communities to take forward proposals for town centre enhancement and will seek to retain and enhance existing outdoor weekly markets. Shop fronts should be designed having had due regard to the Council’s advice on shop front design.</p> <p>LP Policy 17 - the main focus for additional retail and other town centre uses will be within the existing Town Centre and mixed- use regeneration area at Station Road. Additional retail may also include local shops forming an integral part of the local centre to serve the SSA to the south of the town.</p>	<p>smaller local centres that serve the day to day needs of the community. This includes the existing centres as well as the new centre being created as part of the SSA. This in part reflects the Local Plan policy on the retention of community uses (included commercial uses such as local shops) provided by LP Policy 27, and the role of small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance. The main area where conformity concerns have been raised is in relation to the impact of the policies on the existing employment area east of Station Road (South) – however the policies are not prohibiting the continued use of this area for employment, but recognise that the continued use for general industrial and storage uses would detract from the regeneration aims for the town centre, and given the availability of other employment sites this should not undermine the Local Plan’s strategy.</p>
TRANSPORT		
<p>Promote sustainable transport Encourage solutions which reduce car trips and congestion (para 30) Plans should protect and exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes for the movement of goods or people (para 35) Improve the quality of parking in town centres so that it is convenient, safe and secure (para 40) Protect and enhance public rights of way and access (para 75)</p>	<p>LP Policy 13 - ensure that the necessary transport infrastructure is put into place to support growth, development and North Dorset's economy. It also proposes to develop a strategy for off-street parking, focusing on Council and other publicly owned car parks.</p> <p>LP Policy 17 - provide a new link road between the B3081 and B3092 through the SSA to the south of the town; enhance the Railway Station as a public transport hub; improve the Town Centre’s pedestrian and cycle links with the railway station and Waitrose and include pedestrian and cycle links to key destinations, such as the town centre, employment areas, schools, and other community</p>	<p>NP Policy 10 identifies the potential area for the transport hub referred to in the Local Plan policy, and the requirements for this area, and seeks to ensure that the potential for the hub is not unnecessarily prejudiced.</p> <p>NP Policy 11 encourages the rationalisation and improvement of parking areas within the town centre, in line with Local Plan policy 13.</p> <p>NP Policy 12 identifies the pedestrian and cycle network needed to support more sustainable walking and cycling trips around the town. Much of this uses existing public rights of way, and the supporting text acknowledges that Town Council will work with the local landowners and the County Council to bring forward new or</p>

NPPF and guidance	Development plan	Approach taken in the NP
	facilities.	improved routes, potentially using some of the infrastructure funds for this purpose. The policy is in conformity with Local Plan policy 13.
COMMUNITY FACILITIES		
<p>Promote healthy communities Planning policies should plan positively for the provision and use of community facilities and local services, ensure that they are able to develop and modernise in a way that is sustainable, and guard against their unnecessary loss, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs (para 70)</p>	<p>LP Policy 14 – the level of social infrastructure across the District is maintained and enhanced through the retention and improvement of existing facilities and new provision, where required.</p> <p>LP Policy 17 - To support growth proposals will include the further improvement or expansion of the existing facilities at RiversMeet and the provision of a new community hall on the site; a new community hall, 2 form entry primary school and a new doctor's surgery in the local centre to be provided as part of the southern extension; and the expansion of St Mary The Virgin Primary School and Gillingham School</p> <p>LP Policy 21 – makes specific reference to the southern extension including: a local centre in the Shaftesbury Road corridor to include: small scale local convenience shops; a 2 forms of entry primary school; a pre-school nursery; a community hall; health facilities (including a doctors' surgery, a dentist and a dispensing pharmacy); and other essential local facilities; the expansion of St Mary the Virgin Primary School (from 1 form of entry to 2); and contributions towards improvements to, or the expansion of: Riversmeet (including a community hall); Gillingham Town Library; and Gillingham Fire Station.</p> <p>LP Policy 27 - supports the development of new facilities by possible change of use of part of the site while introducing viability tests before allowing changes which would result in a loss of an existing facility.</p>	<p>NP Policy 14 outlines the support to be given to improved health and social care services and reinforces the requirement for provision to be made as part of the southern extension.</p> <p>NP Policy 15 identifies preferred location for new education and training facilities, co-located with other community facilities or employment sites, and also reinforces the requirement for provision to be made as part of the southern extension</p> <p>NP Policy 16 identifies preferred location for new community, leisure and cultural venues, co-located with other community facilities, and provides further detail of the scale and location of the new multi-purpose community hall,. This updates saved policy GH21 which retained three safeguarded options for a new community building:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Land at Chantry Field, (ii) Land adj. Gillingham Leisure Centre or (iii) At redevelopment site GH13, "Oakwoods" Station Road South). <p>Policy 16 also makes clear that a pub and restaurant should be provided as part of the requirements for the southern extension to help serve the cultural and social needs of that area (also proposed in the draft masterplan)</p> <p>NP Policy 17 reflects Local Plan Policy 27 resisting the loss of existing community uses – the supporting text identifies the facilities in the area which this policy is intended to apply to.</p>

NPPF and guidance	Development plan	Approach taken in the NP
	Greater weight will be given to the retention of facilities listed as an asset of community value.	
GREEN AND URBAN SPACES, AND AVOIDING FLOOD RISK		
<p>Promote healthy communities Conserve and enhance the natural environment Planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses (including green and other public space) (para 58) Local communities through Local and Neighbourhood Plans should be able to identify for special protection green areas of particular importance to them (para 76). The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves; is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance; and is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land (para 77) Development should not be allocated or permitted if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower probability of flooding (para 101)</p>	<p>LP Policy 17 – A network of green infrastructure will be developed in and around Gillingham focusing primarily on the corridors of the River Stour, River Lodden and the Shreen Water. The impact of flooding and climate change on the town will be addressed by: taking account of the risks of fluvial, groundwater and surface water flooding in new development; and the incorporation of sustainable drainage systems into new developments. The town’s natural and historic built environment will be protected and enhanced. LP Policy 15 - Development will be required to enhance existing and provide new green infrastructure to improve the quality of life of residents and deliver environmental benefits. Neighbourhood Development Plans should consider measures that assist in delivering key green infrastructure benefits, including the designation of Local Green Space, where appropriate The supporting text makes clear that the provision of outdoor sports and play space should be in line with the Fields in Trust standards. The requirement for allotments would equate to one standard allotment plot for every 60 people in a settlement. LP Policy 4 - The landscape character of the District will be protected through retention of the features that characterise the area. Where significant impact is likely to arise as a result of a development proposal, developers will be required to clearly demonstrate that that the impact on the landscape has been mitigated and that important landscape features</p>	<p>NP Policies 18 to 21 consider the existing provision of various open space types (formal outdoor sports provision, equipped play areas and informal recreation / amenity spaces, allotments and accessible natural green space) and the policies set out the appropriate space requirements based on the standards suggested by the Local Plan, and indicate where new provision will be directed. Where this would require a change of use, specific allocations are not made due to the need for further negotiation with the respective landowners, more detailed site investigations and funding availability. NP Policy 21 also takes forward the approach towards river corridors included in the 2003 Plan which looks to safeguard their wildlife and water quality and promote recreational access (Policies 1.12 and GH18-20) and reflect Policy 17’s emphasis on the focus on the river corridors. NP Policy 22 re-affirms the continued need for cemetery provision as included in saved policy GH22 NP Policy 23 identifies those areas of the town that are considered to provide the key green infrastructure – much of this area is in public ownership, but some is in private ownership where current access is limited to public rights of way, and the text makes clear that further access will need to be negotiated. It includes the areas identified in the saved policies of the 2003 Local Plan. The policy also identifies three areas as Local Green Spaces, which are deemed to have a particularly</p>

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	<p>have been incorporated in to the development scheme.</p> <p>Para 8.59 - New development will need to: maintain a sensitive transition between the town</p> <p>LP Policy 3 - Development should seek to minimise the impacts of climate change overall through avoidance of areas at risk of flooding from all sources and the incorporation of measures to reduce flood risk overall</p>	<p>significant value and fully meet the NPPF criteria. It also seeks to protect important gaps whose role is to retain the distinct character and separation of the different settlements, and the visually sensitive higher ground at Bowridge Hill. These latter designations relate to the importance of these spaces in reinforcing the local landscape character in line with LP Policy 4.</p> <p>There are no specific policies on flood risk as these are covered by higher level policies; however the plan does contain information of flooding incidents recorded by the Town Council, in order to ensure this knowledge can be used in identifying potential risk.</p>

DESIGN, CLIMATE CHANGE AND RENEWABLE ENERGY

<p>Require good design</p> <p>Plan positively to achieve high quality and inclusive design for all development (para 57)</p> <p>Avoid unnecessary prescription and concentrate on guiding the overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout, materials and access of new development in relation to neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally (para 59)</p> <p>Seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness (para 60) and allow innovation to raise the standard of design more generally in the area (para 63)</p> <p>Refuse development of poor design that fails to</p>	<p>LP Policy 3 – New buildings should be designed to make best use of solar radiation and passive cooling through the incorporation of passive solar design principles, and incorporate measures to meet the current national targets for energy performance. Development should incorporate measures to reduce water consumption, and measures to reduce the impact of excessive heat</p> <p>LP Policy 7 – design and layout of housing development should be of a density that respects local character and amenity. Infilling within settlement boundaries, should respect the amenity of adjoining properties, and local communities are encouraged to develop more detailed policies relating to infilling through Neighbourhood Plans.</p> <p>LP Policy 24 – Development should be designed to improve the character and quality of the area within which it is located, and justify how the relevant aspects of development form</p>	<p>The Section on design summarises the key characteristics of each area as identified through the Town Design Statement (and supplemented to cover the other built-up areas).</p> <p>NP Policy 24 highlights the importance of respecting the more historic street layouts and the mix of uses along these routes in the layout and design of any new developments. It also highlights the need for a sensitive transition between the urban and rural environment, and views out to the countryside. Similarly NP Policies 25 and 26 highlight general principles in relation to plots and buildings, and landscaping and boundary treatments, with reference to the local character. These are in general conformity with Policies 7 and 24 of the Local Plan.</p> <p>There are no specific policies on climate change as these are covered by higher level policies and the overarching spatial strategy and</p>
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NPPF and guidance	Development plan	Approach taken in the NP
<p>take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions (para 64)</p> <p>Take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption (para 96)</p>	<p>address the relevant design principles and standards of the Local Plan and how the design responds to the local context.</p>	<p>Building Regulations, however the plan does contain information on ideas that can be considered by developers.</p>
HERITAGE		
<p>Conserve and enhance the historic environment</p> <p>Conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations (para 17)</p>	<p>LP Policy 5 – Any development proposal affecting a heritage asset (including its setting) will be assessed having regard to the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of that asset and securing a viable use for it that is most consistent with its conservation</p>	<p>NP Policy 27 highlights the importance of the emerging Heritage Enhancement Plan, which is being devised to address the issues that have led to the Conservation Area being placed on the ‘at risk’ register.</p> <p>NP Policy 28 notes the identification of undesignated heritage assets as part of the Neighbourhood Plan process. These have been identified in line with the guidance issued by Historic England, and included in the Plan.</p>

iii. Sustainable Development

3.7 Paragraph 7 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) explains that there are three dimensions to sustainable development - economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform the following roles:

- an economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;
- a social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community’s needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and
- an environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve

biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

3.8 Paragraph 6 of the NPPF indicates that the policies in paragraphs 18 to 219 of the NPPF, taken as a whole, constitute the Government’s view of what sustainable development means, whilst paragraph 8 of the NPPF explains that the economic, social and environmental roles are mutually dependent and should not therefore be undertaken in isolation. Economic growth, for example, can secure higher social and environmental standards, and well-designed development can improve the lives of people and communities.

3.9 Each policy in the Plan has been assessed in terms of its sustainability impact, this is shown in the table below. Colours have been used to categorise the impact and to demonstrate whether this is positive (green), neutral (yellow), uncertain (grey) or negative (red).

Policy No. and Title	Economic	Social	Environmental	Explanation
Policy 1 – Custom and Self Building	✓	✓	-	Our evidence showed around 30 families considering or interested in self-build plots within the next five years. As most of the development in the plan timeframe is due to be large scale developer led construction, without this policy there would be relatively few self-build opportunities disadvantaging those with reduced means seeking the lower cost option.
Policy 2 - Flexible living accommodation	✓	✓	-	Patterns of living and working have changed rapidly over the last century leaving many older houses unsuited to modern needs such as for home working space or living longer with reduced mobility or other long term care needs. This policy addresses the need to consider future flexibility in property design.
Policy 3 – Residential uses in the town centre	✓	✓	✓	Promoting appropriate use of residential mix in the town centre should support an expansion of the evening economy in the town, reduce trips by car, and the provision of more flexible live/work units should broaden the town’s economic base.
Policy 4 – improvements in existing employment land	✓	-	?	The policy should in particular support expanding or starting up businesses.

Policy No. and Title	Economic	Social	Environmental	Explanation
Policy 5 – loss of employment land outside town centre	✓	✓	?	The policy should have positive economic impact because the aim is for there to be no loss of employment opportunities. The alternative employment opportunities could also have significant social value, with transport improvements potentially supporting alternatives to the car.
Policy 6 – Forestry and tourism/ recreation projects	-	✓	✓	This policy has strong environmental implications, as well as recreational and cultural benefits. There could well be additional economic benefits given the potential tourism benefits.
Policy 7 – Development in the Town Centre	✓	✓	✓	The policy seeks to support a vibrant town centre, and avoid uses which would detract from its vitality. The social benefits of a town like Gillingham becoming ever more self-sufficient are intrinsic to this policy.
Policy 8 – Station Road mixed use area	✓	✓	✓	Provision of coherent, well-planned development in the Station Road Mixed Use Area is intended to provide new homes, employment opportunities, improved transport hub and reflect the heritage and character of Gillingham in the design.
Policy 9 – Town centre uses outside town centre	✓	✓	✓	Each one of the local centres should have their own sustainable facilities, allowing easy access to services while not eroding the sustainability of the town centre.
Policy 10 – Station Road transport hub	-	✓	✓	Positive environmental impact is achieved by encouraging the use of public transport, with associated social and potentially economic benefits.
Policy 11 – Parking provision within and adjoining town centre	✓	✓	?	This policy aims to support the town centre and reduce congestion by rationalising the use of private transport through providing good parking facilities particularly linked to key community facilities.
Policy 12 – Road network, and alternative pedestrian and cycle link	-	✓	✓	The policy should deliver a positive social impact, promoting health and well-being and improving mobility. It could also have positive environmental impacts if it helps to reduce traffic within Gillingham.
Policy 13 – Road designs in new development	-	✓	✓	Emphasis on a safe, permeable and attractive pedestrian environment has both social and environmental benefits.

Policy No. and Title	Economic	Social	Environmental	Explanation
Policy 14 – New and improved health and social care	-	✓	-	Improved health and social care have clear social benefits.
Policy 15 – New and improved education and training facilities	✓	✓	-	Improved education and training facilities will encourage greater numbers of young people to study in the town and, with anticipated increase in business and commerce, will give more job opportunities locally.
Policy 16 – new and improved community, leisure and cultural venues	-	✓	✓	The policy directs new community facilities towards existing clusters, and identifies the preferred location for identified requirements. This should have both social and environmental benefits, where local facilities reduce the need to travel.
Policy 17 - Safeguarding existing community facilities	-	✓	-	This policy protects local facilities which are valued by the local community.
Policy 18 – Formal outdoor sports provision	-	✓	✓	This policy confirms the need for further outdoor sports provision and identifies an area of search where facilities will benefit from good access and co-location.
Policy 19 – equipped play area and recreation spaces	-	✓	✓	If the standards for recreational space are adhered to, there will be a significant improvement to the quality of life for the people of the neighbourhood area, in easy walking distance of people’s homes.
Policy 20 – Allotments	-	✓	✓	This important community resource can lead to improved local food sourcing as well as bringing people together in this endeavour.
Policy 21 – Accessible natural green spaces	-	✓	✓	Accessible natural green spaces provide a valuable social and environmental resource.
Policy 22 – New cemetery provision at Stour Meadows	-	✓	✓	New cemetery provision is an essential amenity for the neighbourhood area.
Policy 23 – Protecting important green spaces	-	✓	✓	This policy should contribute to the protection and enhancement of the natural and historic environment of Gillingham, and have a positive social impact through opportunities for healthy lifestyles.

Policy No. and Title	Economic	Social	Environmental	Explanation
Policy 24 – The pattern and shape of development	-	-	✓	This policy supports the intrinsic ethos of Gillingham as a small country town with significant amenity value, to reinforce the local character.
Policy 25 – Plots and buildings	-	✓	✓	This policy emphasises the need for positive impact with regard to design and layout, recognising the different characters of the local neighbourhoods, and reinforcing a sense of place and opportunities for positive social interaction.
Policy 26 – Hard and soft landscaping	-	-	✓	Good quality landscaping should be integral to the design of a new development, such that it integrates successfully into the local environment and is appreciated by residents for its enhanced atmosphere.
Policy 27 – Heritage enhancement area	-	-	✓	The policy should have a positive environmental impact, helping to enhance the built and historic environment and significance of the conservation area.
Policy 28 – Protection of locally important heritage assets	-	-	✓	The policy should have a positive environmental impact by helping to protect the built and historic environment, avoiding the loss of local heritage assets.

3.10 Based on the above appraisal, overall the Plan would appear to achieve positive economic, social and environmental benefits, with no obvious disbenefits identified.

iv. EU Obligations

3.11 Government guidance (NPPG) indicates (paragraph 78) that there are EU directives that may be of relevance to the preparation of a neighbourhood plan, this includes a Strategic Environmental Directive and a directive on the conservation of Habitats.

3.12 A separate Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment screening report has been prepared to accompany the Plan.

3.13 The report concludes that no significant likely effects on either the environment or on a European Site would be likely to result from the implementation of the Plan. It states that:

- The Gillingham Neighbourhood Plan does not propose to allocate further housing or employment development or amend the settlement boundary defined in the Local Plan.
- Any likely effects (including cumulative effects) of proposals within the Neighbourhood Plan are unlikely to be significant on the local environment. Any impact is likely to be local in its impact, within the parish.
- Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency are satisfied that an SEA is not required.

3.14 In relation to the potential need for a separate Habitats Regulation Assessment, this too is not needed given that the proposal is unlikely to have a significant effect on any European site.

3.15 The Town Council is not aware of any other European Directives applicable to the particular circumstances of the Plan, and none were advised by the SEA statutory consultees.

3.16 No breaches or incompatibility with EU and European Convention of Human Rights law have been identified.