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The people of Gillingham are being urged to vote on plans that will dramatically shape the town’s future for the next 15 years.

By Michael Streeter

Gillingham’s future is set to be defined by this month’s referendum on the town’s Neighbourhood Plan, which covers issues such as housing, facilities, transport, and school. The plan also highlights the need for a ‘integrated hub for public transport’ at the town centre and station area.

The plan covers issues such as housing, tourism attractions and its unique position in North Dorset served both by a main line trunk road to (and from) the South West and South East.

The plan also highlights the need for a ‘integrated hub for public transport’ at the town centre and station area. The report complains, ‘At the moment, the transport services at the town centre are not well integrated and the station is not particularly user-friendly. There is poor land use and a lack of integration between the town centre and the station area.’

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Another key aspect outlined in the report is the creation of what is called a ‘merged plan area’ for public transport at the town’s station. This includes the provision of a sufficient car-parking and set-down area, enough space to accommodate waiting times and facilities for people and their belongings, and a ‘smart’ ticketing system for passengers. The report suggests that the station area will become more attractive, with shops, cafes, and bars.

Electric track to cut rail time to London – but not just yet

Journey times from Gillingham to London Waterloo could be cut under ambitious plans to electrify the town’s line to Bournemouth. The plans have been rejected by Network Rail in principle but could get the green light at the end of this year if the referendum approves the plans. If the assessment is a success, the railway line between Gillingham and London will be electrified, with electric trains said to be both quieter and more environmentally friendly.

Residents who live near the railway line are encouraged to vote yes so that the railway line can be electrified, with services between Gillingham and London and will publish a draft business case for electrifying further lines in the region. The railway line will be electrified and the business case could take some years before work starts.

However, regular rail passengers have been left with some uncertainty over electrification, as Network Rail is looking into the potential for electrification of the line between Gillingham and London. The railway line will be electrified, with electric trains said to be both quieter and more environmentally friendly.

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