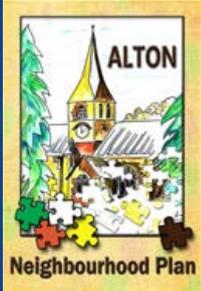


# Pre-submission consultation draft, February 2015



# Alton Neighbourhood Development Plan

# Foreword

## **Commenting on the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan**

Comments about this draft Plan should be sent to one of the following:

Email: [plan@alton.gov.uk](mailto:plan@alton.gov.uk)

Post: Neighbourhood Plan,  
Alton Town Council,  
Town Hall,  
Market Square,  
Alton,  
Hampshire,  
GU34 1HD.

They should arrive with Alton Town Council by 5pm on Friday 27th March 2015.

## **Status of the document**

When commenting on this draft, please note that, in line with guidance the text has been written as if the Plan is a finalised document. In practice various steps are yet to be completed including this consultation, an examination and a referendum. These are likely to result in some amendments or refinements.

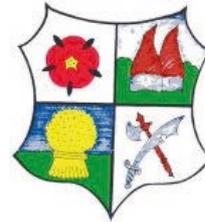
## **Housing development sites**

The context for this Neighbourhood Development Plan is one of considerable uncertainty where the outcome cannot be predicted. Sites have been identified for new housing without consideration of planning applications during the period December 2013 to January 2015. There have, however, been five major applications which could impact the final Neighbourhood Development Plan, dependent upon planning decisions to be made by the District Council. Applications could be deferred, approved or refused. Even if approved, there is a six week legal challenge period and there is no certainty that physical development on sites will proceed. This document does not attempt to second guess what might or might not happen, but rather allocates preferred development sites that have been identified from the Neighbourhood Development Plan process.

## ALTON TOWN MAYOR

Town Hall  
Market Square  
Alton  
Hampshire  
GU34 1HD

Telephone 01420 83986



Dear Fellow Altonians

As your Town Mayor, it is my honour and pleasure to present to you the Alton Neighbourhood Development Plan. This Plan is a new type of planning document and is part of the Government's enlightened approach to planning which aims to give local people far more say about what goes on in their area. This approach is set out in the 'Localism Act' that came into force in April 2012. The Plan provides a vision for the future of the town and sets out clear planning policies and actions to realise this vision. These policies accord with higher level planning policy as required by the Localism Act.

The Alton Neighbourhood Development Plan has been developed under the auspices of Alton Town Council and started back in December 2013. The Town Council wanted all the people of Alton to have a say in many aspects of the town's future but most importantly it wanted local people to have their say on where new housing should go rather than leaving this decision entirely to East Hampshire District Council as the planning authority.

Alton is a great market town with a unique heritage and a dynamic future. Investment and change in the years ahead will only be worthwhile if they make a positive difference to the lives of local people and the future of their community.

On behalf of the Town Council and the people of Alton I wish to thank all members of the Steering Group who have worked tirelessly under difficult circumstances to generate and analyse all the detailed information that has gone into this Plan. I have had the privilege of being the Deputy Chairman of this group and have seen at first hand the dedication and passion plus thousands of hours that the members of the Group have given voluntarily over the last 12 months.

To everyone in Alton who has contributed through public consultations, comments and feedback I extend my thanks for being part of this Plan.

I conclude by fully commending this Plan to you and trust that you will feel able to give it your full support in the Referendum to be held later this year.

Yours sincerely  
Councillor Graham Hill



# Foreword

This Neighbourhood Development Plan has been written in response to a requirement for Alton to accept significant development over the years 2011 to 2028. It is a natural progression from the *Alton 2020* Town Plan published in 2005 and other follow on work such as the *Town Design Statement*, all of which demanded significant amounts of public consultation and feedback. The response from the public for this plan has been excellent and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) has worked hard to capture all feedback as evidence to support legally enforceable policies in the Plan.

Altonians really care about their town and want it to retain its charm, character and setting into the future whilst accepting that new development must happen. *Alton 2020* recognised that Alton needed to grow to become more sustainable. I believe that this Plan, where sometimes hard decisions have had to be taken, has ensured that Altonians continue to play a significant part in how the town evolves into the future. I thank the NPSG who have, on a voluntary basis, given up significant amounts of their spare time to pursue implementation of this Plan over a period of almost 21 months and the public for their support.



*Mike Heelis MBE, Chair of the Alton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group*

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# 1. Introduction

This Neighbourhood Development Plan has been created by Alton Town Council in Hampshire in order to shape the town's growth up to 2028. It has been written to become a part of East Hampshire District Council's (EHDC's) statutory Development Plan (the plan for the whole district) and it sets out a range of non-strategic policies which will guide planning decisions made by the local planning authority in respect of Alton. It therefore covers the same period of time as the statutory Development Plan, which is 2011 to 2028.

The Neighbourhood Development Plan makes use of powers that were brought about by the Localism Act 2011 and its subsequent regulations. They name town and parish councils as 'qualifying bodies' which may produce a Plan for their area. The intention is to ensure that Alton residents have a greater say than they otherwise would have in the way that the area grows and changes. There is a desire to see development which reflects the needs of local people and brings benefit to the town.

This document therefore takes heed of local people's views, as expressed through various means of consultation and engagement, as well as taking account of evidence about needs, existing policies in the *East Hampshire Local Plan: Joint Core Strategy*, and the *National Planning Policy Framework*, with its emphasis on sustainable development (the latter including its sister document, the *National Planning Practice Guidance*).

The remainder of this document:

- Provides information about the local planning context;
- Describes the work to produce this Neighbourhood Development Plan;
- Gives an overview of Alton;
- Outlines the Plan's scope and objectives;
- Sets out each of the Plan policies and linked action points;
- Comments on future monitoring and implementation work.

## 2. Local planning context

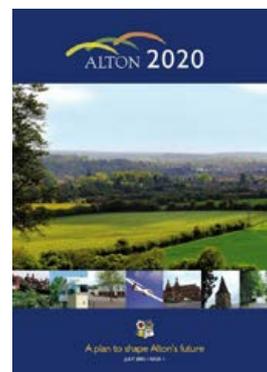
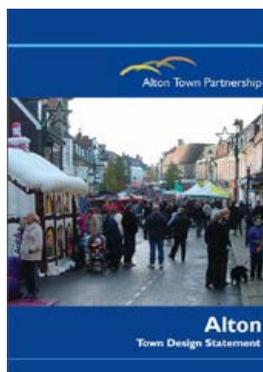
### Previous work

The work to create a Neighbourhood Development Plan has been able to draw upon a number of earlier local documents. *Alton 2020* was produced by Alton Town Council in 2005 after substantive engagement with its community. It set out a vision for the future of Alton and it proposed projects which could help to realise that. *Alton 2020* was presented to the District Council's Community Forum and was endorsed by it, as acknowledgement that it had been prepared in an appropriate way with meaningful community engagement. Although not formally recognised by the planning system, it provides valuable evidence for policy development. It also offers evidence about local issues which may be a material consideration when determining a planning application and it provides information about local needs. The *Alton 2020* vision was reviewed, with the conclusion that it is considered valid for the Neighbourhood Development Plan period to 2028.

#### *Alton 2020 vision:*

“ By 2020 Alton will be a thriving and economically sustainable market town in which all people – living, visiting or working – feel safe, and are cared for both in mind and body and are able to pursue activities of their choosing which enrich their lives and help build a stronger community for everyone, whilst respecting the local environment. ”

*Alton 2020* led to the formation of the Alton Town Partnership, which in 2008 published an *Alton Town Design Statement*. The document offered guidance to developers and planners, as well as landowners, householders and tenants, based on the views of local people about preserving and enhancing their townscape and countryside. The design guidelines within this document have been adopted by the District Council as non-statutory planning guidance.



In 2009 a further consultation document was produced by the Alton Town Partnership, entitled *a Report on Public Engagement Concerning the Development of EHDC's Core Strategy*. It was created as input to the District Council's (then) development of its emerging *Joint Core Strategy*. The consultation gathered residents' views about potential development sites around Alton and identified key considerations, which included visual impact, flooding and infrastructure needs.

## 2. Local planning context

### **East Hampshire Local Plan Joint Core Strategy**

The *Local Plan: Joint Core Strategy* was produced by EHDC and the South Downs National Park Authority. The document, which sets out its policies, was formally adopted in May and June 2014 following its successful examination in public. Therefore an up to date Local Plan with strategic policies covering Alton is in existence.

In total there is an expectation that 1,731 new dwellings will be built at Alton between 2011 and 2028. 1,031 of these already have planning permission to be built or are on sites that were previously allocated for development. The *Joint Core Strategy* (2014) cites Alton as a location which is relatively well suited to take sustainable development (policy CP2). It makes a housing allocation of 700 (minimum) new dwellings at Alton over the period from 2011 to 2028 (policy CP10). The examination of that Strategy noted a shortage of available brownfield sites within the built up area and that development would therefore probably be on edge of town greenfield sites.

1,731 dwellings represents a major expansion of the town. In 2013 an *Alton Study* was conducted by consultants commissioned by EHDC. It took a long term view of the town, beyond this plan period, and concluded that this level of development could be sustainable if local constraints were managed.

This Neighbourhood Development Plan identifies appropriate allocation sites for the 700 (minimum) new dwellings, all of them being sites which have come forward as a result of the District Council's *Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment* (SHLAA) process.

This process:

- Called for available development sites, the most recent call being that run in summer 2014;
- Undertook an initial short listing of the available sites to discount those which were clearly inappropriate e.g. unsustainable;
- Subjected the thirteen shortlisted SHLAA sites at Alton to a full Sustainability Assessment, this being conducted by external consultants to consider their environmental, social and economic pros and cons on a comparable basis.

That formed a key input to the Neighbourhood Development Plan, which considered the thirteen SHLAA sites. Further relevant evidence about sites was contained in the *Landscape Capacity Study* which was published by the District Council in 2013.

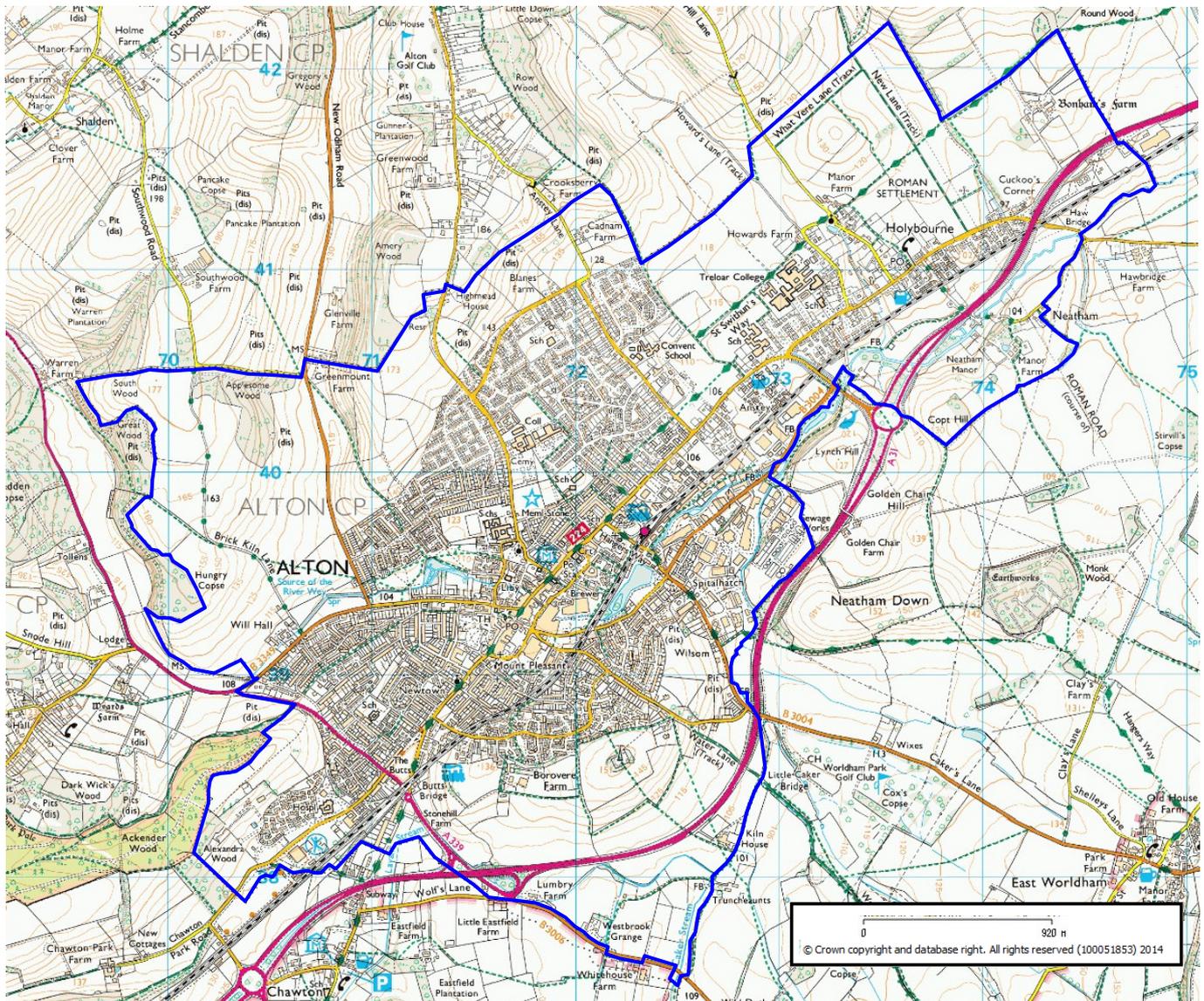
Hampshire County Council, as the Local Highways Authority with financial support from the District Council, has been undertaking an *Alton Strategic Transport Study* (publication expected 2015), which was instigated as a result of the town's Neighbourhood Development Plan work. This has been considering strategic transport needs, given the expected overall housing growth, as well as providing additional evidence in the form of traffic counts and forecasts for potential development sites and new highway infrastructure.

## 2. Local planning context

Also of note, EHDC will complete two further stages of their *Local Plan*. Part 2 will deal with the new employment land allocation, which Alton or an adjoining area will be expected to contribute about 7 hectares towards. Part 3 will update things such as Gaps between settlements, Town Centre boundaries and new school sites. All these issues have relevance to Alton and the Town Council wishes to engage with the District's work on them.

### Designated area

The designated Neighbourhood Development Plan area is all of the Town Council area except for a small strip of uninhabited farm land at the southern tip, which falls within the South Downs National Park. This designation was formally agreed by the local planning authority (EHDC) on 8th May 2014 in line with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.



Designated Area of Alton Local Development Plan

# 3. Plan development

This Neighbourhood Development Plan results from a great deal of work over a relatively short period of time. In November 2013 the Town Council decided to prepare a Plan and it established an Alton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. Membership of this group, which includes a mix of Town Councillors and other volunteers, can be found at Annex A. The group was also fortunate to benefit from support by EHDC planning officers.

A Charter for the Alton Neighbourhood Development Plan was produced proposing its scope, setting out terms of reference and suggesting a timetable. Timescales were subsequently refined with a more detailed Management Plan to guide the work and consultants were appointed to support the Steering Group. As noted above, the Town Council sought designation of the Neighbourhood Plan area, which was formally agreed by EHDC in May 2014.

Two meetings took place with local stakeholder organisations in January and a public launch event was held in February 2014 which attracted 790 attendees. This was used to capture views about proposed Plan objectives and to promote a survey. The main Community Questionnaire was completed by 894 people, with others replying to a Business Questionnaire and a Youth Questionnaire. Various engagement events were held at schools, societies and the like to supplement the surveys and reach specific groups. The analysis of this effort was written up in a published report (*Analysis of Results from Community Questionnaire and Other Public Consultation Feedback, February – March 2014*).



*A part of the Launch Event*

## 3. Plan development

The Steering Group also collated a wide range of relevant statistics, information sources and local evidence, as another means for testing the proposed objectives and to improve its understanding of local needs. This work was written up as an Evidence Base, with supporting documents either referenced or being made available on the Town Council website.

The result of this early work was a revised set of more detailed objectives for the Neighbourhood Development Plan. This was fed back to the community in May 2014 through the website and at a feedback event attended by 361 people. Objectives had been looked at alongside local and national planning policies to ensure they aligned with strategic policies in the *Joint Core Strategy* and took proper account of the *National Planning Policy Framework*.

The Steering Group met various key local stakeholders, to explore policy options for the Plan. This included healthcare providers, the County Children's Services Department with respect to schools and the County transport team with respect to road infrastructure. Letters were sent to a larger number of stakeholders at the Plan objectives stage and these elicited some informed responses regarding particular development constraints e.g. from Thames Water and English Heritage.

With objectives set and policy options being developed, Alton Town Council sought a 'screening opinion' from EHDC, whether its Neighbourhood Development Plan work should undergo a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), since such a decision is a requirement of the EU Directive on SEA and its implementation into UK planning law. The District advised, following consultation with the relevant statutory bodies, that no such assessment was needed. Nonetheless, two related pieces of Sustainability Appraisal work were undertaken. The first was a SEA compliant assessment of thirteen (shortlisted) potential housing development sites in Alton, produced by planning consultants URS and funded by the District Council. The second was an assessment by the Steering Group of the other policies (not identifying development sites) being proposed for the Plan.

This enabled a site assessment exercise to be undertaken and a set of preferred policies to be derived. The site assessment exercise drew upon a wide range of evidence sources about sustainability considerations and local preferences. These included the *Town Design Statement*, some interim information from the *Alton Strategic Transport Study* and various District or County Council reports. Sites were sought which were deliverable, would be sustainable and were generally acceptable to the public. A write up of that exercise was published by Alton Town Council, as was its assessment of other (non-allocation) policy proposals. Preferred policies were presented in an early draft to the Alton community at an all day event in November 2014, which attracted 1,000 people. Information from this enabled some further policy refinements to be made.

### 3. Plan development

It is, perhaps, unsurprising that planning applications have been submitted whilst this Neighbourhood Development Plan was in preparation. Developer proposals have informed the work to produce this Plan, not least because they indicate what is deliverable. However, planning applications (whether approved, rejected or pending) have not been the basis for selecting allocation sites for this Plan or determining what form that development should take.

The Neighbourhood Development Plan (pre-submission consultation draft) was produced and was put out for its statutory six week consultation. Alton Town Council and its Steering Group reviewed the Plan in light of comments received at this stage, so that a submission draft could go to EHDC for certain checks and consultation on the Plan production process. The Plan received an independent examination and was then put to a referendum of local residents, before being adopted by the District Council as part of its statutory Development Plan. It is hoped that this process will conclude well within 2015.

Two other documents deserve mention as having been submitted alongside the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan. They were:

- A Basic Conditions Statement, showing how the Plan met the necessary legal requirements; and
- A Consultation Statement, summarising the engagement with residents, businesses and stakeholders, and how their input was used. Throughout the process considerable emphasis was placed on reaching local people, listening to their views and testing out proposals with them.

#### Plan meets these Basic Conditions



This Neighbourhood Plan draft has been prepared in accordance with all relevant primary and secondary legislation, which is principally Schedule 4B of the *Town and Country Planning Act 1990*, as amended by the *Localism Act 2011*, and the *Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012* (as later amended). This ensures that the plan policies are procedurally sound in their preparation and meet the 'basic conditions'.

## 4. Overview of Alton

Alton is an historic and characterful market town in East Hampshire.



*Aerial view of Alton*

**Population:** at the time of the 2011 Census it had a resident population of 17,816 within the Town Council boundary. Most of these live in the town, although the boundary extends across a 'strategic Gap' in the built area to include the village of Holybourne.

## 4. Overview of Alton



**Landscape:** Alton is set within a distinctive chalk landscape setting, at the source of the River Wey. It sits relatively hidden in a hollow, which is encircled by sloping downland that provides a green skyline. Someone passing by on the A31 road could be forgiven for not realising the town lies nearby. Immediately to the south west is the northern edge of the South Downs National Park. Within the town are a number of cherished public open spaces, such as Kings Pond, Flood Meadows, Anstey Park, The Butts, the Public Gardens and St Lawrence Churchyard.



*Alton from the air, 2007*

**Built area:** although Alton has expanded in recent decades, the built-up area remains relatively contained within an area about 3 kilometres long and 2 kilometres wide. The built environment can be described as having four elements, namely: central older areas; outer residential areas; industrial areas; and Holybourne village. There are four Conservation Areas, three in Alton and one in Holybourne.

**Transport:** there is a twice hourly direct rail service in to central London, with Alton being at the end of the line. The town sits just off the A31 dual carriageway – which acts as a southern bypass – running from Guildford to Winchester, and it is connected to Basingstoke to the north by the A339. There are substantial commuting flows into, out of and through the town. At some junctions and pinch points, traffic congestion regularly occurs at peak hours.

**Town centre:** the main focus of the town centre is the High Street, which runs south west to north east, with the Market Square just off this axis in Lenten Street. It is a commercial and social hub for the town and its rural hinterland, and there is a popular weekly street market. That said, there are a number of vacant retail units. As a retail and service centre, Alton serves as many people from outside the town as from within. In particular, it attracts pupils to its secondary schools and sixth form college.

## 4. Overview of Alton



**Economy:** the town's mixed economy includes two fair sized light industrial estates. Most businesses have been long established in the area, although there is evidence of a growing number of knowledge based businesses. Brewing, which had been a significant local industry, has declined and the town's remaining brewery has plans to close during 2015. There are some tourist attractions, including the Watercress Line steam railway, and nearby are Jane Austen's house at Chawton and Gilbert White's house at Selborne.



*A typical scene in the industrial area*

**Community:** Alton can boast a generally high quality of life and it is a popular, safe place to live. As well as the schools, facilities include various health care facilities, a Community Centre and a Sports Centre. There is a strong sense of community and the people who live here identify with Alton. It has an active Town Council, based at the Town Hall in the Market Square, which manages local assets such as open spaces, sports pitches, games pavilions and the Assembly Rooms. There are various residents' associations, an Alton Society and Alton Charities Together, amongst other groups.



*The Assembly Rooms*

# 5. Plan scope and objectives

The Alton Neighbourhood Development Plan covers the period to 2028 and so is aligned with the timescale of the *East Hampshire: Joint Core Strategy*.

The prime driver for this Plan is to manage growth positively. Taken together, developments which are already underway and those that will result from the *Joint Core Strategy* allocation represent a significant expansion of Alton. The town's population could increase by as much as 25% in a period of thirteen years. It is clear from the level of developer interest and recent planning applications that this scale of growth is likely.

This raises both opportunities and challenges for sustainable growth. Alton Town Council and its residents want to ensure that:

- Development takes place in appropriate locations;
- It happens in ways which contribute to meeting local needs; and
- Local infrastructure is able to expand at the same pace.

Growth needs to respect various constraints in the area, for example those associated with the landscape, flooding, and transport networks. It could equally boost town centre viability and help deliver better facilities and services.

### Key constraints:

- Maintaining landscape setting
- Areas of significant flood risk
- Limitations of current road network
- Capacity of existing sewerage system

### Main opportunities:

- Providing homes to meet local needs
- Boosting town centre viability
- Improving services and facilities
- Enhancing public open spaces

The Neighbourhood Development Plan seeks to balance these constraints and opportunities, taking into account the preferences of local people and the practicalities of creating a deliverable Plan.

The Alton Charter set out the scope of the Alton Neighbourhood Development Plan. It sought objectives and policies against five themes, which are:

- Housing, including development site preferences;
- Transport and parking;
- Health, community and recreation facilities;
- Schools and education;
- Economic sustainability and viability.

Under these themes some 14 objectives were set and they are listed in the table below. The themes and objectives draw upon the earlier work in Alton and were finalised after assessing the evidence base, consulting widely and checking their alignment with local and national planning policies.

## 5. Plan scope and objectives

Themes	Neighbourhood Development Plan objectives	Related Joint Core Strategy policies	Main NPPF or NPPG references
<b>Housing (including general design issues)</b>	<b>1a.</b> To ensure that future housing development in and around Alton respects the character of the town and the surrounding countryside.	CP2, CP20, CP29, HE2, HE4, HE5, HE6, HE7, HE8	NPPF Paragraphs 58, 60-61, 63-65, 113, 115
	<b>1b.</b> To ensure that new housing contributes to the needs of the town in terms of the mix and design of dwellings.	CP10, CP11, CP13, CP29	NPPF Paragraphs 50, 58
	<b>1c.</b> To influence the location, scale and pace of housing development over the plan period (to 2028).	CP2, CP10, CP20, CP21, CP23, CP25, CP26, CP28, H1	NPPF Paragraphs 30, 32, 34, 43, 47, 50, 58, 70, 73, 75, 99, 103, 113, 115, 118, 120, 121, 128, 132
	<b>1d.</b> To ensure that, in the context of sustainability requirements specified by the NPPF, the necessary infrastructural improvements will be implemented in a manner appropriate to the location, scale and pace of the proposed development.	CP31, CP32	NPPF Paragraphs 32, 34, 103
<b>Transport</b>	<b>2a.</b> To encourage and influence improvements in the town's infrastructure – particularly to manage traffic – in order to meet current needs and those arising from development.	CP31	NPPF Paragraphs 31, 32, 35
	<b>2b.</b> To encourage walking and cycling.	CP31, T3	NPPF Paragraphs 30, 32, 35, 39
	<b>2c.</b> To encourage the provision of public transport services, both within the town and beyond.	CP31, T2	NPPF Paragraphs 30, 32
	<b>2d.</b> To achieve appropriate levels of parking both on and off street.	CP31	NPPF Paragraph 39
<b>Community, health and recreation</b>	<b>3a.</b> To support the development of a new/ refurbished Community Centre and a new Sports & Leisure Centre in the town.	CP8, CP16, CP17, HC2, HC3	NPPF paragraphs 70, 74
	<b>3b.</b> To support the provision of adequate health services for a growing population.	CP8, CP16, HC3	NPPF paragraph 70
	<b>3c.</b> To support the retention of existing public open spaces and the provision of new ones capable of offering sport/ recreational opportunities in line with population growth.	CP17, CP18, CP28	NPPF paragraphs 70, 73-74, 76-78
<b>Education</b>	<b>4a.</b> To support the provision of sufficient nursery, school and college places in Alton to meet the growing demand, in accessible locations.	CP16, CP32	NPPG paragraphs 69, 70, 74
<b>Economic sustainability and viability</b>	<b>5a.</b> To protect and enhance the role of Alton town centre as a retail, tourism and hospitality hub which is vibrant and adaptable to future needs.	CP7, CP8, CP9	-
	<b>5b.</b> To develop and enhance the business economy of Alton and Holybourne, to ensure that the town is economically sustainable.	CP3, CP4	NPPF Paragraphs 19, 22, 23, 58, 111

## 6. Plan policies

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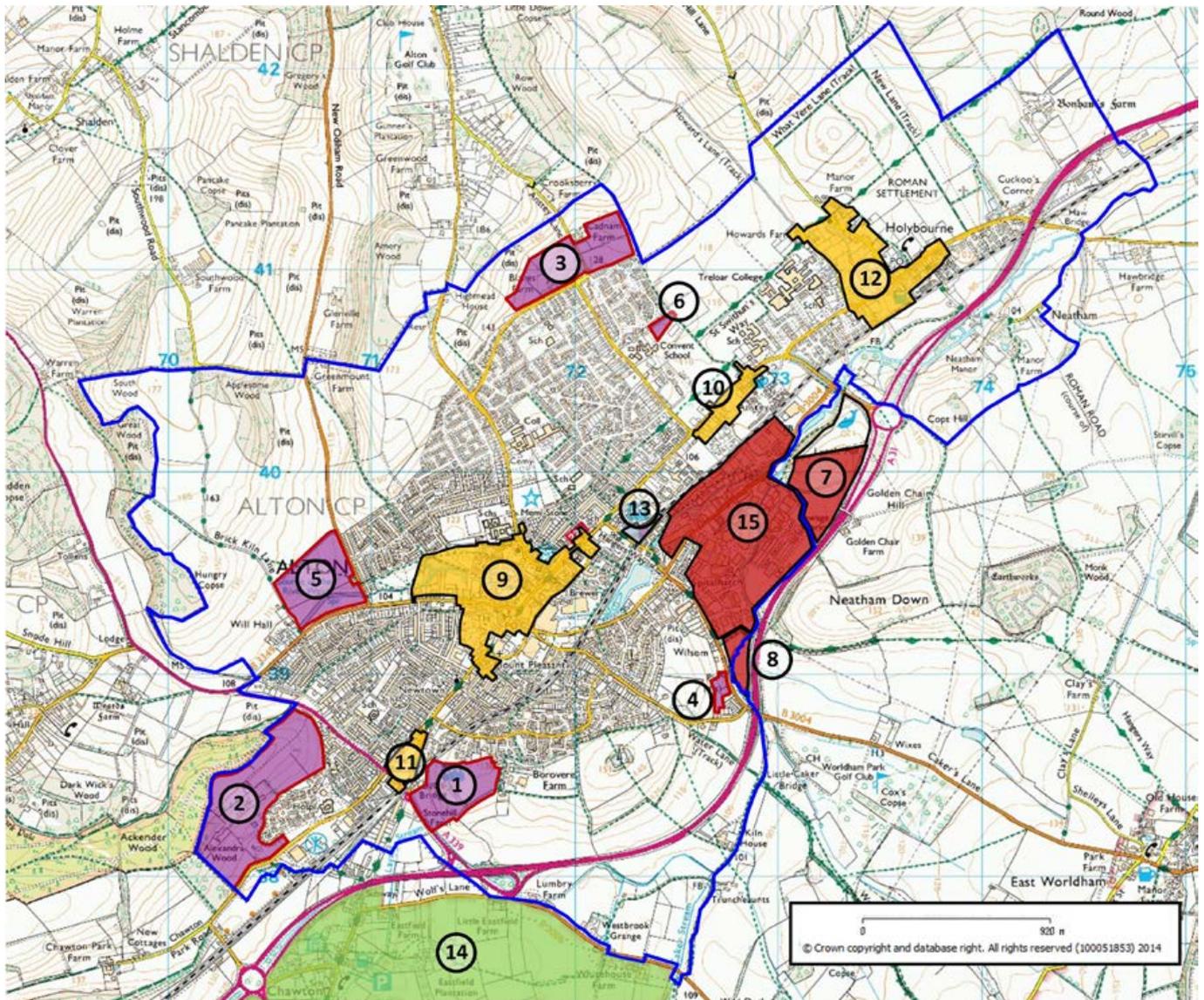
This section sets out the Alton Neighbourhood Development Plan policies. The focus here is necessarily on issues concerning land use and development.

During the course of the work to produce the Plan a number of other actions were identified which could not be framed or were best not framed as planning policies. Some were simply not land use or development issues. They were, nevertheless, considered important given the views expressed by local residents and given their fit with the Plan's objectives. These have become action points (instead of policies) which we, Alton Town Council, have agreed to take forward. For ease of reference they are shown under the appropriate objective within this section of the Plan.

Furthermore, this Plan does not attempt to cover every land use and development issue. This is partly to retain focus. It is also because it does not need to address issues considered to be dealt with sufficiently by existing (district wide) policies in the East Hampshire Local Plan. Those policies will still apply where this Neighbourhood Development Plan is silent.

This Plan contains no policy for designating new employment land at Alton. Key potential sites lie just outside or astride the Alton Town Council boundary and, as such, could not be designated by this Plan. That designation task has therefore been left to EHDC, with whom Alton Town Council will liaise.

# 6. Plan policies



*Summary Map of Allocated Sites also Including proposed Employment Sites and Existing Conservation Areas*

**Overall SHLAA Sites within which Housing is planned:**

1. Boverve Farm
2. Treloar
3. Cadnam
4. Wilsom Road
5. Will Hall Farm
6. Land Adjacent to Convent.

**Sites proposed by EHDC for Employment Use:**

7. Lynch Hill
8. Wilsom Road

**Existing Conservation Areas:**

9. Alton (Town Centre)
10. Anstey
11. The Butts
12. Holybourne

**Other Areas:**

13. Railway station/transport hub
14. South Downs National Park

# 6. Plan policies

For each policy listed below, there is text explaining its justification and its intent. The policy wording is shown in boxes.

## Design policies

Policies in this section apply both to housing and other forms of development.

### Objective 1a: To ensure that future housing development in and around Alton respects the character of the town and the surrounding countryside.

#### DE1: Town setting and natural assets

Justification:

Alton's setting, contained and largely hidden within a valley bowl in the North Hampshire Downs landscape, is a defining feature which underpins its sense of place and is highly valued. The following quotation, which is taken from the Alton Study (2013) written by consultants for the District Council, sums it up well.

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*"The essence of Alton resides in the fact that the town is 'hidden' from the landscape whilst being an integral part of it. Development has been constrained from breaking the green skyline formed by the neighbouring hills, which can be seen from all parts of the town. The undulating, yet open, nature of the land allows panoramic views which give a sense of space, freedom and tranquillity. From most viewpoints surrounding Alton, the town disappears within the landscape as development has not been extended to the skyline."*

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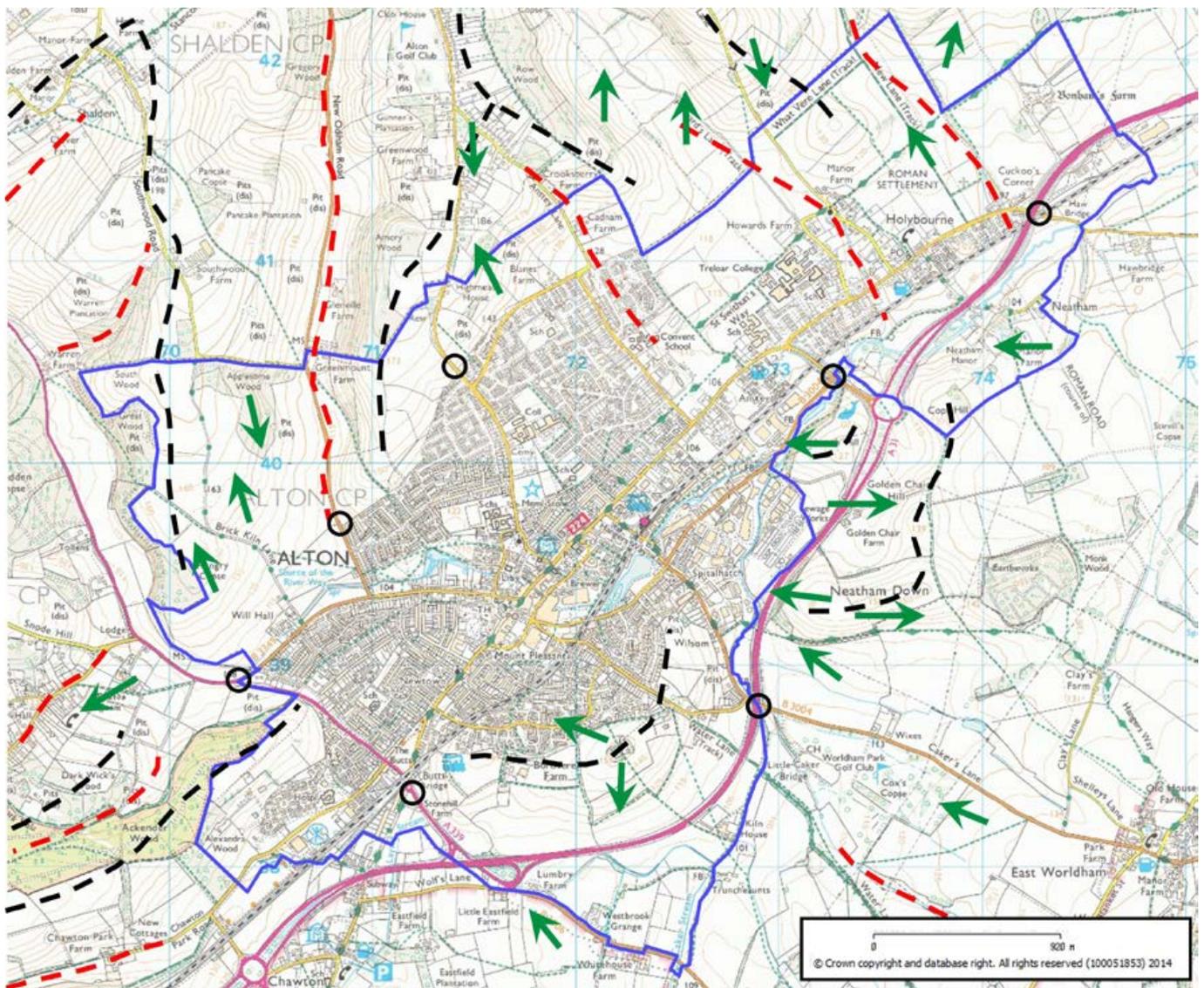
*Hampshire Integrated Character Assessment - Alton Townscape Assessment (2010)* describes the historic core of the town as lying in the river Wey valley with the church and market place standing on higher ground either side of the river source to the town's western side. The valley has been the defining influence on the growth of Alton. To its north is the 'Lasham downland mosaic', comprising rolling chalk landforms and with long views across the Wey valley. To its south is the 'Worldham greensand terrace' which is in transition to chalk hills at this point, again with views across the River Wey. Landscape sensitivities that are noted include the river course, areas of hanging woodlands and copses on the valley sides, and the skyline and slopes of adjacent downland, where development and loss of tree cover would be very visible from the valley floor. Such distinctive features should not be harmed.

The South Downs National Park (SDNP) was designated and became operational in April 2011. Alton sought to be included within the park boundaries, but this was not accepted and only a very small part at the southern boundary of the town is included. However, Alton is a gateway town and has a topography which delivers important views into and out of the park. All efforts have been made within this Plan not to compromise this setting with development on higher ground.

# 6. Plan policies

The landscape and setting is fully described in the *Alton Town Design Statement*, a document which is already used by the EHDC as a material consideration in determining planning applications. Key elements include:

- River and flood plain: the river Wey rises naturally just west of the town, then runs through flood meadows, before passing through the town and meandering north east. A map of high and medium risk flood zones (3 and 2 respectively) can be found on page 10 of the *Alton Study (2013)*;
- Vistas: the most important vistas into and out of the town were defined for the TDS and mapped at page 5 of that document, showing their direction of view;
- Skylines: the hill top ridges that surround much of Alton and which create the effect of it sitting within a bowl;
- Gateways: six gateways where roads enter the town are defined and shown on page 24 in the *Alton Study (2013)*.



Map of Alton Showing Important Views into and out of Town, Gateways, Ridge and Valley Lines



Important views into and out of the town



Ridge Lines



Valley Lines



Gateways into Alton

## 6. Plan policies

These characteristics were considered by the formal Sustainability Assessment of allocation sites, which was undertaken in 2014 to consider potential housing development sites. They were also considerations within the *Landscape Capacity Study* (2013) for East Hampshire District.

A further consideration is the area's geology. If development were to extend up the hillsides as far as the clay-with-flint capping, it could lead to surface water run off and compromise sustainable drainage. There are several sites where development would need to pay particular attention to drainage.

The Community Questionnaire conducted for this Neighbourhood Development Plan found that the impact of new housing development upon the landscape and skylines was a major concern for almost three quarters of respondents and a lesser concern for most of the remainder. Its impact on town gateways was a major concern for over 60% of respondents and a lesser concern for over 30%. Key issues from the *Alton Town Design Statement* are still seen as highly relevant.

Intent:

Policy DE1 gives statutory weight to a number of guidelines in the *Alton Town Design Statement*. Schemes which can be considered as sustainable development will have taken proper account of these guidelines. Guideline 3.1 protects flood plains and river corridors from encroaching development, so they fulfil their natural drainage purpose, provide visual amenity and provide a wildlife corridor. Guideline 3.3 seeks to maintain panoramic views both into and out of the town, which give it a sense of space, freedom and tranquillity. Guideline 3.5 protects natural skylines around the town from being breached or compromised by development. Viewed from within the town or at the town edge, a development should not be seen rising above a natural skyline on the hills which surround Alton. Nor will new development generally be permitted which approaches a topographic skyline. Guideline 3.6 protects gateways to the town from inappropriate new development. Any development at or adjacent to gateway sites must be sensitively designed and screened.

This policy aligns with *East Hampshire: Joint Core Strategy* policy CP20 which seeks to: protect and enhance local distinctiveness and sense of place; protect and enhance settlements in the wider landscape, land at the urban edge and green corridors extending into settlements; and incorporate new planting to enhance the landscape setting of new development. It also respects *East Hampshire: Joint Core Strategy* policy CP2, which expects new development to make the best use of previously developed land and buildings within built up areas.

### **DE1 Town setting and natural assets**

*All new development in Alton must ensure that it is able to at least maintain and wherever possible enhance the appearance and setting of the town.*

*Development proposals must ensure that the discreet setting of Alton within the surrounding landscape is maintained. Development on the fringes of the town must respect and maintain the green skyline that frames the town formed by the neighbouring hills.*

*New development must respect key views into and out of the town, in particular from the National Park to the south, through the preservation or preferably the enhancement of the important views afforded by the vistas and gateways leading into and out of Alton. The location of these are identified on map Figure 3. Any new development should demonstrate how it has reacted positively to opportunities to enhance the appearance of key entrances to the town.*

*New development proposals should avoid encroaching on flood plains or river corridors with designated wildlife value.*

Conformity: NPPF paragraphs 58, 64, 113, 115; EHDC policy CP20

### **DE2: Building design and town character**

Justification:

Alton is an attractive market town, full of character and with a long history. Residents are proud of their town and its heritage, whilst equally recognising that the town needs to grow to become more sustainable into the future. It is vital, therefore, that the planning system supports new development which respects and contributes to that character in terms of its design, architecture, layout and integration with the rest of the town.

Alton has four Conservation Areas, together with many statutory Listed Buildings. There is also a supplementary (non-statutory) Local List of buildings worthy of some protection. This was originally prepared by the Alton Society and then recognised by EHDC before being updated in 2014. Furthermore, a decade ago Altonians took the opportunity of creating a general vision and plan for their town (*Alton 2020*), and a key output from this was the development of a *Town Design Statement* (TDS) published in 2008. Both of these documents were the product of extensive public consultation, making use of a widely recognised Market Towns Healthcheck approach. The guidelines in the *Town Design Statement* are used by EHDC as a material planning consideration.

## 6. Plan policies

The built environment of Alton and Holybourne is described in some detail in Chapter 5 (Architectural Overview) of the TDS. This distinguishes key features in different neighbourhoods, which are: the three historic areas (historic centre, New Town and Normandy Street/Anstey Street); the three outer residential areas (western area, southern area and northern area); industrial areas; and Holybourne. Design considerations which were identified as being important through the work to create the TDS include:

- Setting and landscape;
- High quality design and respect for town character;
- The provision of amenity spaces;
- Complementary design of buildings;
- Respect for architectural surroundings e.g. scale, materials and form;
- Appropriate building heights;
- The provision of public open space.

The four Conservation Areas have their own characteristics. The Historic Centre (designated in 1970 and extended in 1982) has a medieval street pattern, many historic buildings, the market square, St Lawrence Church and surviving brick pavements. Anstey (designated 1995) is a largely residential area with buildings that mostly date from the 18th or 19th centuries, the predominant building material being red brick, although many are rendered or white washed. Street side and large gardens are a feature. The Butts (designated 1975) is the grassed mediaeval archery ground surrounded by mature trees and some late Victorian housing, mostly rendered and colour-washed. Listed 18th century buildings include a current public house (The French Horn) and a former public house (Butts House). Holybourne village (designated 1977) contains some thirty Listed Buildings from the 16th to 19th centuries and the partly Norman Church of the Holy Rood. Mature trees, flint walls and high hedges along the narrow lanes are features.

Relevant comments most frequently made by those responding to the Community Questionnaire were that new development should be of high design quality and should fit in with its surroundings.

Intent:

Policy DE2 gives statutory weight to a number of guidelines in the *Alton Town Design Statement*. In so doing it seeks high quality design which is in keeping with its surroundings. Development schemes should seek to create neighbourhoods with an identity through the use of good layout, design, building materials, planting and other such features.

## 6. Plan policies

Schemes which can be considered as sustainable development will have taken proper account of these guidelines. Guideline 4.2 expects new development to respect or enhance the character of the town area in which it takes place. It should avoid the appearance of overcrowding and care should be taken with design quality. Guideline 4.3 expects appropriate amenity space to be provided for all new dwellings. Guideline 5.3 looks to new development to be complementary to other buildings in its vicinity, whilst not necessarily imitating them. Similarly, guideline 5.4 expects new development to respect the architectural style of surrounding buildings in terms of its scale, form and materials. Again, innovative contemporary design may be suitable and will be considered on its merits. Guideline 5.6 expects the height of new buildings to respect that of surrounding buildings. In the context of this Neighbourhood Development Plan that guideline is extended to apply to landscape. A new building should not be significantly out of keeping with other rooflines in its locality. Guideline 5.19 expects new developments to include public open space to a landscaped quality, with agreed developer contributions to fund its maintenance by Alton Town Council.

New developments in Conservation Areas will need to pay further attention to TDS guidelines specific to those areas. These are guidelines 5.21 to 5.31 covering: character of older buildings; the street pattern and alleyways; construction materials; brickwork and render; windows; doors and porches; shop fronts; roofing; dormer windows; chimneys; and the streetscape.

This policy aligns with East Hampshire: *Joint Core Strategy* policy CP29, which expects new development to take account of Town Design Statements. It expects buildings to be of exemplary standard and highly appealing in terms of visual appearance, with all new development reflecting the character of the town. New development is required to:

- Seek exemplary standards of design and architecture, respecting the area's particular characteristics;
- Ensure that layout and design contribute to local distinctiveness and sense of place, being appropriate and sympathetic in terms of scale, height, massing and density, and in terms of relationship to adjoining buildings, spaces and countryside features;
- Ensure development makes a positive contribution to the overall appearance of an area, by using good quality materials of appropriate scale, profile, finish, colour and proven weathering ability.

# 6. Plan policies

## **DE2 Building design and town character**

*All new development in Alton will be required to seek exemplary standards of design and architecture with a high quality external appearance that respects those characteristics of its setting.*

*In the context of Alton, the following should be taken into account to ensure that new development responds to the character and distinctiveness of the town.*

- *New development should seek to maintain and wherever possible enhance the character of its locality, paying particular attention to appropriate appearance, size, scale and density. Building heights should be carefully considered in respect of their impact on the skyline of the town, landscape and streetscene;*
- *Where it is proposed to build to a higher density than that present in adjacent development high quality design must be employed to ensure that the proposal integrates harmoniously with its surrounding environment. Any high density residential developments must still be able to demonstrate access to adequate levels of private amenity space;*
- *The appearance and materials used in new development should complement, but do not necessarily need to imitate, the best examples of building and design in the local vicinity. Once again such design should make appropriate reference to the scale and form of their architectural surroundings. Quality, innovative design will be encouraged where appropriate;*
- *Where appropriate new development will be expected to provide landscaped areas of public open space to ensure a quality public realm; and*
- *Any applications for new development that are required to be supported by a design and access statement should also make reference to all other relevant design guidelines set out in the adopted Alton Town Design Statement. In particular, with development within any of the town's Conservation Areas, design and access statement should show how they have paid close attention to guidelines 5.21 to 5.31 of the Statement.*

Conformity: NPPF paragraphs 58, 60-61, 63-65; EHDC policies CP20, HE2, HE4, HE5, HE6, HE7, HE8

The action point for Alton Town Council which relates to this objective is:

**DEAP1:** We should ensure that the Alton Town Design Statement is maintained in line with the East Hampshire: Joint Core Strategy and with the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

## Housing policies

**Objective 1b: To ensure that new housing contributes to the needs of the town in terms of the mix and design of dwellings.**

### **HO1: Housing mix on new development sites**

#### Justification:

It is important that new developments cater for the range of local housing needs, offering an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes and an appropriate mix of tenures. This will help ensure that developments promote more sustainable communities, with people from different age groups and backgrounds.

The *East Hampshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2013)* acknowledged that the district faces “acute pressures for affordable housing need”. The affordable housing need across the whole district, based on net changes in household formation, was for 461 affordable dwellings per year over the next 5 years and for 256 affordable dwellings per year over the next 17 years. According to the 2011 Census 68% of Alton households are owner occupiers.

The district’s Homechoice list of those in housing need contained 1,985 households (April 2014). Of the 492 who expressed a need in relation to Alton, 286 (58%) were assessed as needing a 1 bedroom dwelling, 138 (28%) as needing two bedrooms, 52 (11%) as needing three bedrooms and 16 (3%) as needing four bedrooms. There is therefore a particular need for smaller dwellings. This reflects the demographic profile of Alton, which consists of 30% one person households (2011 Census).

Responses to the Community Questionnaire similarly found many with housing affordability issues. Asked about difficulties finding suitable accommodation in Alton, almost a fifth cited a lack of affordable housing for sale and around a fifth cited a lack of affordable housing for rent. (These two groups may overlap.) A large majority thought it important that new housing should help local people (including young people) to stay living in Alton and Holybourne. The types of new housing that gain most support from residents are starter homes, small homes and affordable homes.

#### Intent:

Policy HO1 therefore expects all new residential developments at Alton to include a mix of dwellings, both in terms of size and tenure. Sustainable developments will include a good proportion of smaller dwellings with one or two bedrooms.

The *Joint Core Strategy* policy expects 40% of the total number of dwellings being provided on a site to be affordable dwellings. Affordable housing can include various tenures suited to those whose needs are not met by the market, including social rented, affordable rented and intermediate (or mixed tenure) housing. The affordable housing should be spread across a new residential development, being located adjacent to market housing and not simply clustered in distinct areas.

# 6. Plan policies

This policy aligns with *East Hampshire: Joint Core Strategy* policy CP11 which expects new residential development to deliver a range of dwelling tenures, types and sizes to meet housing needs. It is also aligned with Joint Core Strategy policy CP13 which sets a target for 40% of all new dwellings to be affordable housing, normally to be provided on site. The tenure, type and size of affordable dwellings is to be negotiated with EHDC. Policy HO1 gives Alton Town Council the ability to maintain a local register of housing needs to further inform planning requirements.

### **HO1 Housing mix on new development sites**

*All new housing development in Alton will be required to:*

- *Maximise the delivery of affordable housing;*
- *Provide a range of dwelling tenures, types and sizes to meet housing needs; and*
- *Provide housing that meets a range of community requirements including retirement, extra care housing and other housing for the elderly, those with special or supported needs and those wishing to build their own home.*

*Where robust and up to date local evidence, such as a housing needs survey, can be identified for Alton new housing developments will be required to demonstrate how they seek to contribute towards meeting the specific needs of the town.*

Conformity: NPPF paragraph 50; EHDC policies CP10, CP11

### **HO2: Storage facilities for household waste**

Justification:

Modern refuse and recycling practice means that households will have a number of bins and containers which they need to store. If there is inadequate provision of storage for them, they may be left in open view and detract from the quality of the street level environment. Recent experience in Alton is that adequate storage facilities have not always been provided at new developments. Guideline 5.10 of the Alton TDS also identified space for refuse and recycling bins as important.



*Waste Bin Storage at Barley Field Estate, Alton*

## 6. Plan policies

### Intent:

Policy HO2 therefore expects all new development, whether residential or non-residential, to provide storage facilities for household waste and recycling bins and containers of a size and form which means they can be hidden from direct view from the street. Where storage facilities are to service communal flats, provision should be in proportion to the number of dwellings. Where existing properties are being converted or subdivided, provision should similarly be adequate for the number of dwelling spaces being created. This policy aligns with *East Hampshire: Joint Core Strategy* policy CP29, which expects new development to make provision for waste and recycling bin storage and collection within the site.



*Waste Bin Storage at Barley Field Estate, Alton*



*Waste Bin Storage at Anstey Road, Alton*

### ***HO2 Storage facilities for household waste***

*New waste generating development, including conversions or subdivisions, will be expected to provide adequate off street refuse storage hidden from public view. In the case of residential development, the provision of off street refuse storage must not be to the detriment of the provision of an appropriate level of private amenity space for either existing or future residents.*

Conformity: NPPF paragraph 58; EHDC policy CP29

# 6. Plan policies

The action points for Alton Town Council which relate to this objective are:

**HOAP1:** As a statutory consultee, we should ensure that adequate emphasis is given to the provision of affordable housing and the priority of its allocation to local residents.

**HOAP2:** The Alton Local List (of buildings of architectural merit but which do not warrant national listing, as endorsed by the Town Council and District Council), should be taken into consideration when dealing with planning applications or other issues which may impact the integrity and merit of such buildings. This List should be maintained and updated.

**HOAP3:** We will prompt EHDC to ensure that the highest environmental and energy conservation standards are met.

**Objective 1c: To influence the location, scale and pace of housing development over the plan period (to 2028).**

**Objective 1d: To ensure that, in the context of the sustainability requirements specified by the NPPF, the necessary infrastructural improvements will be implemented in a manner appropriate to the location, scale, and pace of all proposed development.**

## **HO3: New housing site allocations**

Justification:

Based on a *Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Local Housing Requirements Study* (2013), EHDC made provision in its *Joint Core Strategy* for 10,060 new dwellings to be built throughout the district over the plan period from 2011 to 2028. As a market town and the district's largest settlement, Alton received a strategic allocation of 700 (minimum) of these new dwellings. As noted earlier, this is in addition to 1,031 dwellings previously allocated or with existing planning permission. Given the shortage of currently available and deliverable brownfield sites, this required development will largely need to take place on edge of town greenfield sites.

EHDC runs an annual call for available sites for such development, to which any landowner can respond. This process, including a call in summer 2014, resulted in a database of available sites. As part of its *Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment* (SHLAA), EHDC sifted out clearly inappropriate sites and shortlisted thirteen potential sites around Alton. These were then subjected to a Sustainability Assessment by specialist consultants, to review each site's likely opportunities and constraints, taking account of a range of environmental, social and economic factors. This was available to the Alton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, as were other useful reports such as the *East Hampshire Landscape Capacity Study* (2013).

## 6. Plan policies

The Community Questionnaire provided an initial set of views from residents. It found that the main concerns with regard to new housing development were: adequate infrastructure (a major concern for 91%); environmental impact (87%); traffic generation (80%); and impact on the landscape and skylines (74%). Residents felt strongly that infrastructure (roads, schools, etc) must keep pace with and be in place for housing growth. Residents also commented frequently on the potential for water run off from slopes around the town to impact development sites.



*Evidence of rain water run off leading to flooding from high ground in North Alton across Gilbert White Way*



*Evidence of rain water run off leading to flooding from high ground in North Alton*

Residents were asked about specific larger SHLAA sites. There was (net) support for development at only one (Lord Mayor Treloar), although opposition to another was relatively modest (Borovere). The scale of the allocation to Alton means, of course, that other significant sites must be identified for development. Selecting them, however, took particular account of residents' views about infrastructure, environment, traffic and landscape, including where impacts could be minimised or mitigated. It also took account of views expressed at a further community engagement exercise in November 2014, when more useful information about preferences was generated in response to a presentation on emerging site allocations.

## 6. Plan policies

Comments provided to date by statutory bodies have been taken carefully into account. Perhaps the most important are comments from Thames Water about public sewerage and waste water infrastructure. Most development sites at Alton will require works to upgrade and increase capacity in the current infrastructure.

Weighing up the preferences, evidence and constraints, sites have been selected which meet the necessary criteria by being available for development, deliverable (built) within the plan period and capable of development in a sustainable way.

Intent:

Policy HO3 allocates six sites at Alton with a total capacity for 781 new dwellings over the plan period to 2028. Those sites are as follows.

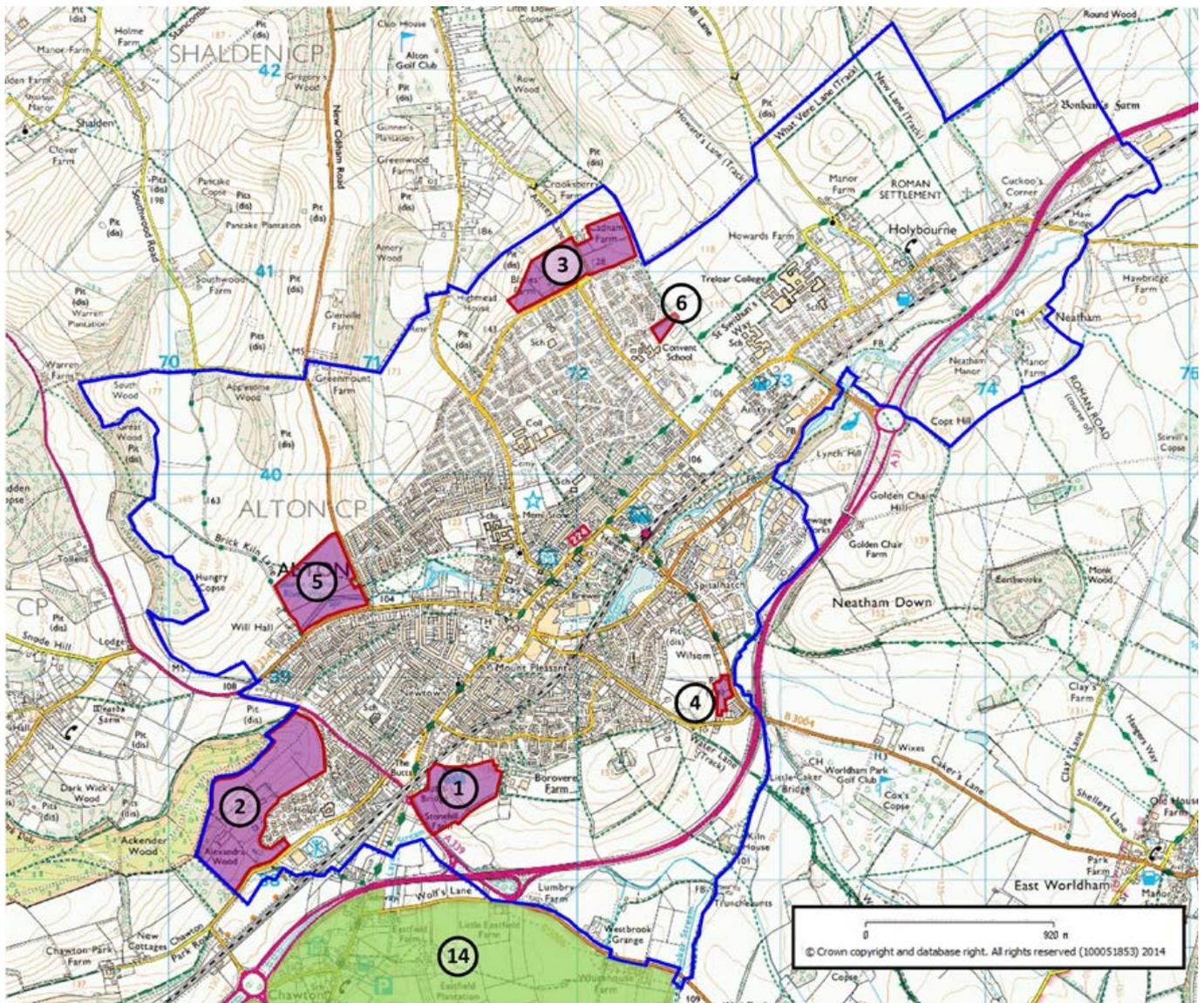
Site name	Site (SHLAA) code	Dwelling allocation
Land at Borovere Farm	AL001	100
Land at Lord Mayor Treloar (phase 2)	AL002	183 (see paragraph below)
Land at Cadnam, Upper Anstey Lane	AL005	275
Land off Wilsom Road (between 60 and 86)	AL026	25
Land at Will Hall Farm	AL033	180
Land adjacent to Alton Convent School, Anstey Lane	AL042	18
<b>Total allocation</b>		<b>781</b>

The total allocation above takes account of two factors. First, the need to provide a buffer (over and above the minimum 700), in line with good planning practice and in case some sites do not come forward as expected. Second, a requirement placed on this Neighbourhood Development Plan to compensate for a reduction by 60 in the number of dwellings expected to be built on part of Lord Mayor Treloar which was allocated some years ago. That earlier allocation had been for 150 dwellings, but after review of appropriate building densities it is now expected to deliver only 90 dwellings. The allocation of 183 made in this Plan means that the entire Lord Mayor Treloar site now has an overall allocation of 273.

# 6. Plan policies

The Neighbourhood Development Plan is not in a position to specify the exact phasing of development on these sites. The speed at which new housing can be built will be largely dictated by infrastructure constraints, which will in practice spread delivery over much of the Plan period.

The location of the six allocated sites is shown on the following proposals map of Alton.



Summary Map of Allocated Sites

**Overall SHLAA Sites within which Housing is planned:**

- 1. Boverve Farm
- 2. Treloar
- 3. Cadnam
- 4. Wilsom Road
- 5. Will Hall Farm
- 6. Land Adjacent to Convent.

## 6. Plan policies

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The aim is to ensure sustainable development at each of these sites. The following therefore provides, for each of the allocated sites in turn, a description of the development that would be permitted, information on constraints that must be addressed and information about public benefits which they will be expected to deliver. It notes certain infrastructure requirements that will have to be addressed before dwellings can be built or occupied. These will need to be fully addressed within the documentation for site planning applications and after having been properly considered to the satisfaction of the relevant statutory bodies. In particular, developers should demonstrate there is adequate waste water/sewerage capacity and surface water drainage, both onto and off the site, to serve their specific development proposal and that it would not lead to problems for existing or new users. In some circumstances this may make it necessary for developers to carry out appropriate site specific drainage studies to ascertain whether the proposed development will overload existing infrastructure. Where there is a capacity problem and no improvements are programmed by the water company, the developer needs to agree required improvements with the water company and their funding, prior to any occupation of the development.

## **Specific Housing Sites**

The following provides policy information for each allocation site and a map showing site boundaries, indicating any specific areas of land that are expected to be left as open green space.

## 6. Plan policies

### **HO3(a) Land at Borovere Farm**

*This 7.12 hectare site, adjacent to the A339 Selborne Road and with an indicative net developable area of 3.69 hectares, is allocated for residential use.*

*The site will deliver a high quality master planned development that will:*

- *Make provision for approximately 100 dwellings with an indicative net density of around 27 dwellings per hectare;*
- *Be delivered in accordance with a phasing plan and master plan to be agreed by the Local Planning Authority as part of any planning application;*
- *Have a design and layout of a quality and character that respects the site's visible location adjacent to one of the key gateways to Alton. This should be achieved in part through the provision of a planted and landscaped screen along the boundary of the site adjacent to the A339 Selborne Road;*
- *Respond positively to, and respect the, topography of the site. In particular, development on what is in parts a steeply sloping site should not breach the existing green skyline and compromise views of Alton from the south west and from the National Park. It is proposed that this should be achieved by providing for the development of the lower portion of the site (net area 3.69 hectares) only, leaving the more prominent upper slopes undeveloped;*
- *Draw its primary vehicular access from the A339 Selborne Road;*
- *Provide links into and out of the site, and enhanced links off site, to allow safe pedestrian and cycle access to the surrounding network. Ensure by physical works or a financial contribution that safe pedestrian and cycle access can be achieved between the site and areas lying to the north of the railway line, taking account also of pedestrian movement along St Swithun's Way;*
- *Deliver a road layout, to be approved by the Local Highway Authority, at the Butts Road, Whitedown Lane and Winchester Road junction, with sufficient capacity to accommodate the vehicular traffic generated by development on this site and other committed developments in the town. These works must be completed prior to first occupancy of any new units on site;*
- *Contribute appropriately to improvements on the wider highway network of the town in order that traffic generated by development at this site can be properly accommodated;*
- *Ensure that wayleaves are provided of 3 metres either side of the sewers crossing the site unless otherwise agreed with the relevant statutory undertaker; and*
- *Ensure adequate drainage and flood management provision as well as sewerage infrastructure and capacity is in place and available locally prior to the first occupancy of any units on site.*

Conformity: NPPF paragraphs 30, 32, 34, 47, 50, 58, 103, 113, 115: EHDC policy CP10

## 6. Plan policies



*Borovere Farm Site showing in Blue the proposed area to be built and in Green the open space (not developable due to skyline issues)*

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## 6. Plan policies

### **HO3(b) Land at Lord Mayor Treloar (phase 2)**

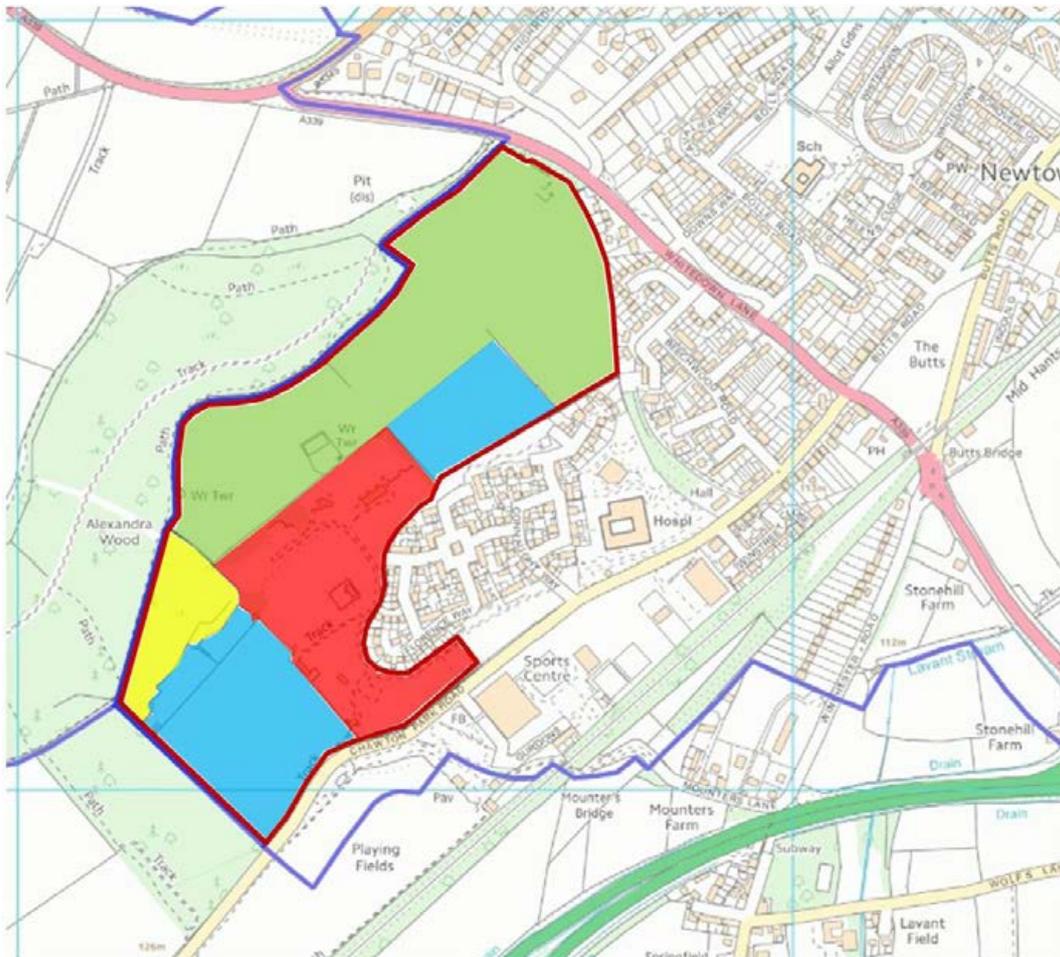
*This 13.85 hectare site, with a net developable area of 5.8 hectares, at the far south west corner of Alton is allocated for residential use alongside the provision of an area of landscaped, publicly accessible open space.*

*The site will deliver a high quality master-planned development that will:*

- Be delivered as part of a comprehensive development scheme that also includes the land previously allocated under Policy H1 of the Saved East Hampshire Local Plan (Lord Mayor Treloar Phase 1);*
- Make provision for approximately 183 dwellings on site with an indicative net density of around 31 dwelling per hectare;*
- Be delivered in accordance with a phasing plan and master plan to be agreed by the Local Planning Authority as part of any planning application;*
- Include a new scheme of vehicular access into and out of the site. This will include various off site works to Chawton Park Road and along Northfield Lane, between the site and the A31 Chawton roundabout, to allow a new junction from Chawton Park Road to serve as the primary vehicular access to the site;*
- Provide around 8 hectares of landscaped, publicly accessible open space at the north east corner of the site, accessible on foot from the development and from the A339 Whitedown Lane;*
- Respond positively to, and respect the, topography of the site. In particular, development on what is in parts a steeply sloping site should not breach the existing green skyline and compromise views of Alton from the south and from the National Park. It is proposed that this will predominantly be achieved through the reuse of the north and north west parcel of the site as public open space. It will also be expected that any buildings over 2.5 storeys in height will be located on the lower slopes, at the southern end of the site;*
- Respect and preserve the nature conservation value of the adjacent designated Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) known as Ackender and Alexandra Woods, Chawton Park Row 1 and Lord Mayor Treloar Hospital;*
- Protect and retain the existing mature trees and hedgerows, particularly those covered by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) on or adjacent to the site;*
- Provide links into and out of the site to allow safe pedestrian and cycle access to the existing network leading to the town centre and the railway station;*
- Deliver a road layout, to be approved by the Local Highway Authority, both at the Whitedown Lane and Chawton Park Road junction, and at the Butts Road, Whitedown Lane and Winchester Road junction, with sufficient capacity to accommodate the vehicular traffic generated by development on this site and by other committed developments in the town. These works to provide adequate access for pedestrians and cyclists (particularly on NCR224), and to be completed prior to first occupancy of any new units on site;*
- Contribute appropriately to improvements on the wider highway network of the town in order that traffic generated by development at this site can be properly; and*
- Ensure adequate drainage and flood management provision as well as sewerage infrastructure and capacity is in place and available locally prior to the first occupancy of any new units on site.*

Conformity: NPPF paragraphs 30, 32, 34, 47, 50, 58, 70, 103, 113, 115; EHDC policies CP10, H1

## 6. Plan policies



**Treloar Site showing:**  
**In Blue, the developable areas allocated under the NP; in Red, the area pre-allocated by EHDC for development; in Green, the open space (not developable due to skyline issues; in Yellow, existing wooded area.**

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## 6. Plan policies

### *HO3(c) Land at Cadnam, Upper Anstey Lane*

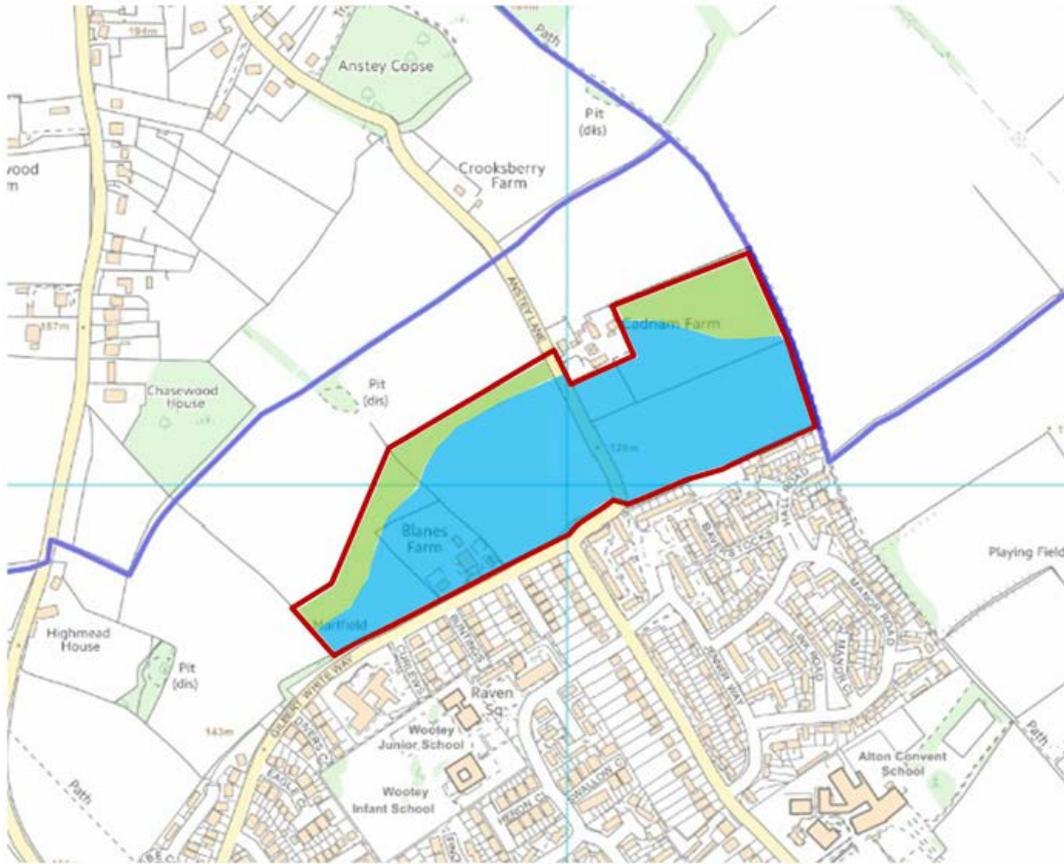
*This 12.6 hectare site, straddling Upper Anstey Lane and with an indicative net developable area of 7.9 hectares, is allocated for residential use.*

*The site will deliver a high quality master-planned development that will:*

- Make provision for approximately 275 dwellings with an indicative net density of 35 dwellings per hectare;*
- Be delivered in accordance with a phasing plan and master plan to be agreed by the Local Planning Authority as part of any planning application;*
- Respond positively to, and respect, the topography of the site and the site's prominent position overlooking Alton. In particular, development on what is one of the highest points of the surrounding area should seek to maintain the concealed setting of Alton within the local landscape. This should be done by leaving the northern boundary portion of the site undeveloped and locating new residential development within the natural bowl created by the lower slopes of the site;*
- Provide a scheme of landscaping that will soften the appearance of the development from both the surrounding area as well as longer views from the south. This will include a belt of mature planting along the northern fringe of the site;*
- Protect and retain the existing mature trees and hedgerows covered by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) on or adjacent to the site;*
- Include a new scheme of vehicular access into and out of the site from Gilbert White Way, as well as off site improvements to Anstey Lane and the junction of Anstey Lane with Anstey Road, with a potential requirement for further off site contributions towards the creation of greater highways capacity within the town. Any application will also include measures to increase the access afforded to residents to existing or future public transport services;*
- Satisfactorily address concerns relating to traffic movement on Upper Anstey Lane either through road closure or the restriction of future use by motor vehicles;*
- Provide links into and out of the site to allow safe pedestrian and cycle access to nearby shops and services; and*
- Ensure adequate drainage and flood management provision as well as sewerage infrastructure and capacity is in place and available locally prior to the first occupancy of any new units on site.*

Conformity: NPPF paragraphs 30, 32, 34, 47, 50, 58, 103, 113; EHDC policy CP10

## 6. Plan policies



*Cadnam Site showing in Blue the proposed area to be built and in Green the space not developable (due to skyline issues).*

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## 6. Plan policies

### *HO3(d) Land off Wilsom Road (between numbers 60 and 86)*

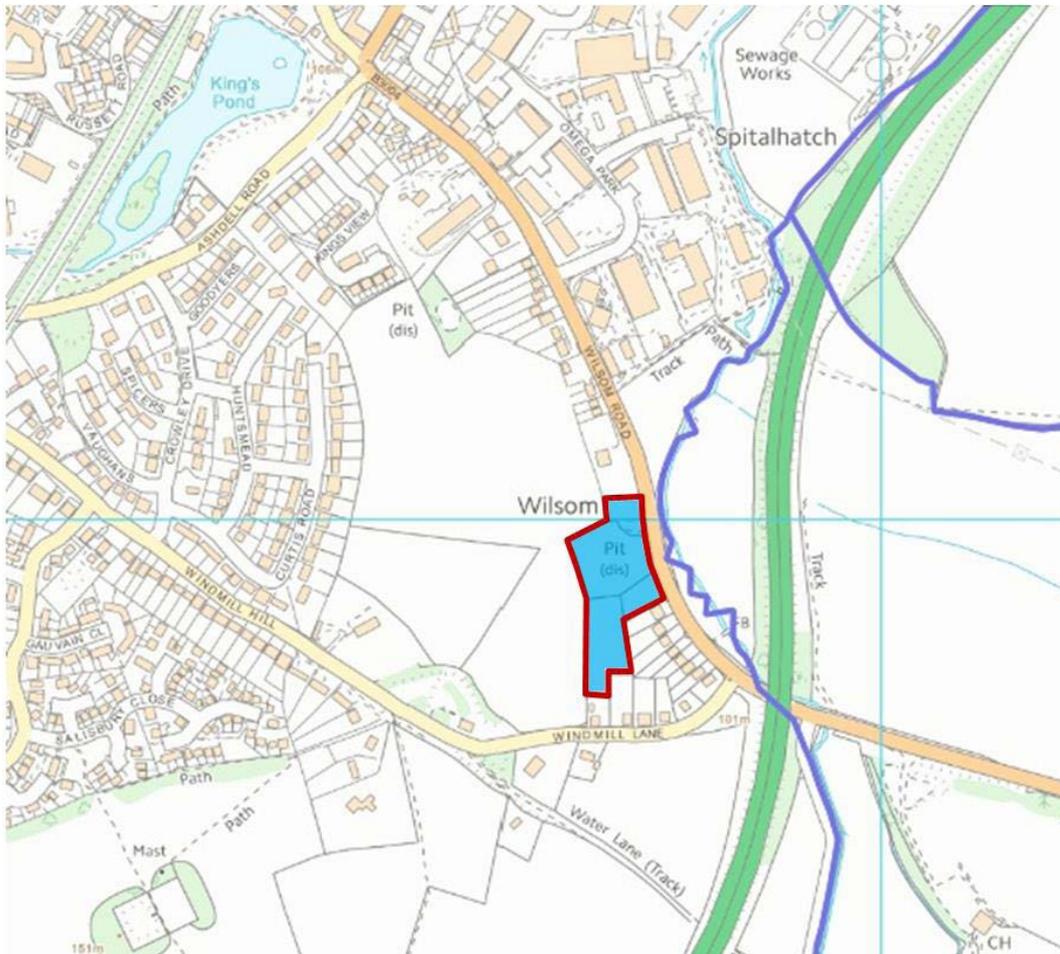
*This 1.4 hectare site, adjacent to the B3004 Wilsom Road to the south of Alton, is allocated for residential use.*

*The site will deliver a high quality development that will:*

- Make provision for approximately 25 dwellings with an indicative net density of 18 dwellings per hectare;*
- Provide an acceptable scheme of vehicular access taken from Wilsom Road;*
- Respond positively to, and respect, the topography of the site ensuring that new development is delivered in such a way that retains the semi-rural character of the site as far as possible;*
- In light of the former use of Wilsom Road for mineral extraction, ensure the future stability of the land to protect the structural integrity of both neighbouring and future properties on the site;*
- Ensure adequate drainage provision as well as sewerage infrastructure and capacity is in place and available locally prior to the first occupancy of any new units on the site; and*
- Ensure that a programme of remediation covering any existing contamination is agreed by the Local Planning Authority prior to work commencing on site.*

Conformity: NPPF paragraphs 30, 34, 47, 50, 58, 103, 113, 120,121; EHDC policy CP10

## 6. Plan policies



*Wilsons Road site showing in Blue the proposed area to be built.*

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## 6. Plan policies

### **HO3(e) Land at Will Hall Farm**

*This 12.88 hectare site, bound by the B3349 Basingstoke Road, New Odiham Road and Brick Kiln Lane, is allocated for residential use with a net developable area of 6.06 hectare.*

*The site will deliver a high quality master-planned development that will:*

- *Make provision for approximately 180 dwellings with an indicative net density of 30 dwellings per hectare;*
- *Be delivered in accordance with a phasing plan and master plan to be agreed by the Local Planning Authority as part of any planning application;*
- *Respond positively to, and respect, the topography of the site and the site's prominent position. This should be done by ensuring that development is of an appearance and scale that, as far as possible, helps maintain the semi-rural character of the site and includes a scheme of landscaping that softens the visual dominance of the site;*
- *Have a design and layout of a quality and character that respects the site's visible location adjacent to one of the key gateways to Alton. This should be achieved in part through the provision of a planted and landscaped screen along the northern and eastern boundaries of the site adjacent and through a proposed scale of development that is in keeping with the character of the Greenfield Estate, opposite. A scheme of landscaping for the site should also include measures to enhance the attractiveness of the water meadows at the southern end of the site;*
- *Ensure that an appropriate parcel at the southern end of the site remains undeveloped in light of its location in Flood Zone 3. This southern parcel will be retained and made accessible to the public as a water meadow and recreation space;*
- *Ensure adequate drainage and water run off flood management provision as well as sewerage infrastructure and capacity is in place and available locally prior to the first occupancy of any new units on site;*
- *Be supported by a hydrology study, covering the potential impact on the river Wey prior to work commencing on site;*
- *Ensure that it preserves the adjacent Grade II Listed Building, its setting and any features of special or architectural interest;*
- *Protect and retain the existing mature trees and hedgerows covered by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) on site;*
- *Draw its main vehicular access from the B3349 New Odiham Road to the east of the site;*
- *Maintain the public footpath link running across the site and provide additional pedestrian and cycle links around the periphery of the site to allow safe access to the existing network;*
- *Make an appropriate contribution towards the upgrade of off site highways infrastructure to create additional highways capacity at the New Odiham Road and Basingstoke Road junction; and*
- *Continue to accommodate the existing powerlines crossing the site by relocating them underground and make provision for any wayleave required by the local network operator.*

Conformity: NPPF paragraphs 30, 34, 43, 47, 50, 58, 73, 75, 99, 103, 113, 120, 128, 132;  
EHDC policy CP10

## 6. Plan policies



*Will Hall Farm Site showing in Blue the proposed area to be built and in Green the area not developable due to River Wey.*

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## 6. Plan policies

### *HO3(f) Land adjacent to Alton Convent School, Anstey Lane*

*This 0.5 hectare site, comprising surplus and overgrown land to the rear of Alton Convent School, is allocated for residential use.*

*The site will deliver a high quality development that will:*

- Make provision for approximately 18 dwellings with an indicative net density of 36 dwellings per hectare;*
- Provide an acceptable scheme of adoptable vehicular access, preferably taken from Manor Road to the north;*
- Ensure that the need to remove any of the mature trees on site is kept to a minimum; and*
- Where viable, make an appropriate contribution towards the upgrade of off site highways infrastructure to create additional highways capacity in the north and east of Alton.*

Conformity: NPPF paragraphs 30, 34, 47, 50, 58, 118; EHDC policy CP10

## 6. Plan policies



Convent Site showing in Blue the proposed area to be built.

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# 6. Plan policies

## Transport policies

The policies in this section seek to ensure that Alton's future transport needs are properly met, making allowance for the town's planned growth. The road network will require adaptation and improvement, and new housing developments will realistically need to provide sufficient parking space. Policies will also make it easier for people to walk, cycle or take public transport, thus reducing the demand for motorised transport.

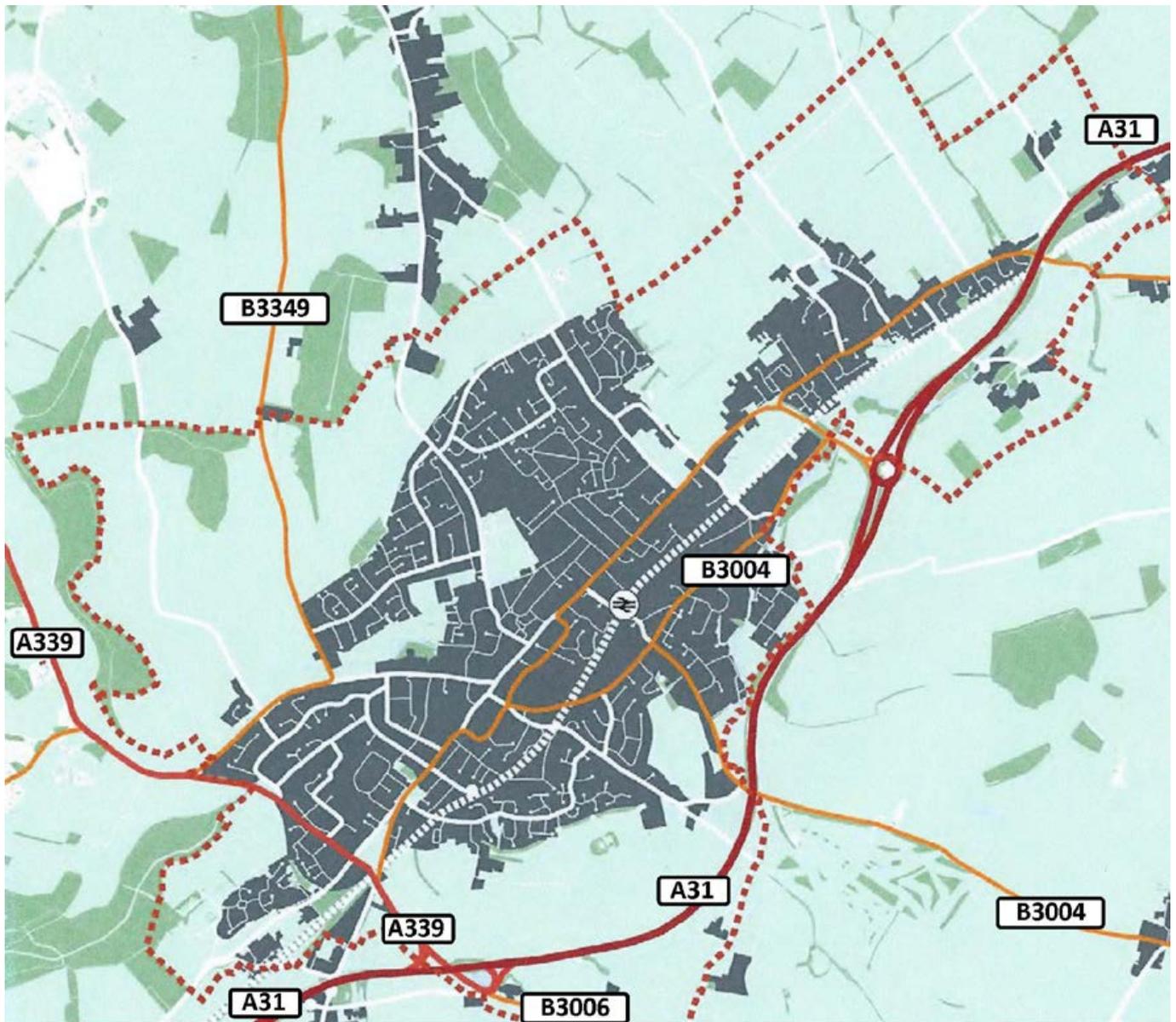
**Objective 2a: To encourage and influence improvements in the town's infrastructure – particularly to manage traffic – in order to meet current needs and those arising from development.**

### **TR1: Transport infrastructure**

Justification:

Alton is served by two A classified roads, the A31 (dual carriageway) and the A339. The A31 forms a southern bypass, heading east to Farnham, Guildford and the A3, and heading west to Four Marks, Winchester and the M3. The A339, the only A road to pass through the town, heads north to Basingstoke and Newbury. Three other B classified roads enter the town, one from the north, one from the east and one from the south east. The main spine of the town itself is Butts Road – High Street – Anstey Road – London Road, which lies along a south west to north east axis and was formerly the A31.

# 6. Plan policies



Alton's Road Network

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-  Primary
-  Secondary
-  Tertiary
-  Minor
-  Local
-  Railway
-  Station
-  Urban Structure
-  Parish Boundary

## 6. Plan policies

The 2011 Census found that 82% of Alton households had a car and for 40% of households this meant two or more cars. Similarly, 86% of respondents to the Community Questionnaire said they frequently travelled in Alton by car.

A series of origin-destination traffic surveys were carried out in Alton in 1996 and traffic counts were undertaken at various Alton locations from 2011 to 2014. These identified some links within the town's road network where the two way traffic count exceeded 12,000 vehicles per day. For much of the day road network traffic flows can be satisfactory accommodated, but in peak hours there is a capacity shortfall at several locations. Junctions identified as overloaded at peak times are:

1. Butts Road – Whitedown Lane;
2. Whitedown Lane – Chawton Park Road;
3. Basingstoke Road – Whitedown Lane;
4. Wilsom Road – Ashdell Road – Paper Mill Lane – Mill Lane;
5. Mill Lane – Montecchio Way;
6. Anstey Road – Anstey Lane; and
7. London Road – Montecchio Way.



*Junctions known to be overloaded at present during peak periods.*

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## 6. Plan policies

A further notable network constraint is Butts Bridge, an original Victorian brick railway bridge which restricts the width of the A339 for a short stretch; two private cars can pass each other, but it operates as a single lane when any larger vehicle is present; higher vehicles must also take a central road position through the curvature of the brick arch. The bridge and a number of the junctions named above appear in the *East Hampshire Infrastructure Delivery Plan* (2013) as 'priorities'.



*Butts Bridge – a brick arch structure.*

Town growth on the scale that is planned will undoubtedly place additional traffic demands on the road network. This has been recognised by the commissioning of an *Alton Strategic Transport Study* in 2014 by Hampshire County Council, supported by EHDC. Although results of this Study were not available at the time of writing this Plan, it has been informed by some preliminary information emerging from the Study, and policies have been written accordingly. In particular, it seems likely that unless some strategic highway infrastructure is constructed, many junctions identified as currently deficient will, despite maximum feasible improvement, once again become overloaded by 2028.

The Community Questionnaire found that residents have significant concerns about traffic levels and the likelihood of traffic growth as a result of housing development. This includes concern about through traffic, with two thirds of respondents saying they supported the building of a western bypass of the town for the A339. This project is included in Hampshire County Council's current *East Hampshire Transport Statement 'Live Schemes'* list, covering the period to 2028. Although it lies largely outside the designated area of this Neighbourhood Development Plan, it would undoubtedly deliver significant traffic benefits to the town, and would probably make improvements to the Butts Bridge and its junctions unnecessary.

Intent:

Policy TR1 therefore supports appropriate development which would manage the extra traffic flows generated and would address any identified traffic constraints that would otherwise directly arise. In so doing, it seeks to steer development to those sites which are or can be most sustainable in transport terms. The policy expects development schemes to address issues either by undertaking appropriate works or by means of a financial contribution to the local highways authority. Development proposals likely to generate significant movement should be supported by a Transport Assessment or Transport Statement, so planning authorities can seek a deliverable solution to any issues arising.

# 6. Plan policies

## **TR1 Transport infrastructure**

*New development proposals that give rise to a net increase in traffic movements will be expected to ensure that the local road network is capable of fully addressing the generated traffic demand.*

*In instances where upgrades to the road network will be necessary to accommodate the proposal an appropriate developer contribution (either through physical works or a monetary contribution) will be expected to help achieve improvements to the satisfaction of the relevant Highway Authority.*

*Wherever relevant, contributions will be sought towards achieving strategic road project(s) identified by the Local Highway Authority. This may be required in instances where development proposals, individually or cumulatively, are considered to contribute significantly to the predicted overloading of junctions on the road network within the town.*

Conformity: NPPF paragraph 32; EHDC policy CP 31

## **TR2: Adoptable roads**

### Justification:

The planned growth of Alton will result in a significant number of new side roads through and within new housing developments. It is important that roads on such developments are constructed to a standard which would allow them to be adopted by the Local Highway Authority. Failure to achieve this may result in delays with roads being adopted, which can lead to various issues for drivers and householders.



*Roads in new developments should be capable of adoption as public highway*

### Intent:

Policy TR2 therefore requires all new roads on development schemes to be built to prospectively adoptable standards and to be in that state before the penultimate dwelling on the site is occupied.

## **TR2 Adoptable roads**

*Any new public roads providing access to more than one residential property or with the ability to provide access to further traffic generating development in future must be constructed to adoptable standards.*

Conformity: NPPF paragraphs 31, 35; EHDC policy CP31

# 6. Plan policies

The action points for Alton Town Council which relate to this objective are:

**TRAP1:** We will press the Local Highway Authority to reduce the impact of traffic flows on A339 Whitedown Lane. A reduction in heavy traffic is most likely to be achieved through the provision of a Western Bypass.



*“Severance” - heavy traffic on Whitedown Lane cuts off the Leisure and Health facilities from the rest of the town.*

**TRAP2:** We will prompt the Local Highway Authority to prepare a timetable for works to improve operation and reduce delays at key junctions within the town, particularly:

- Anstey Road / Anstey Lane;
- Mill Lane / Paper Mill Lane / Ashdell Road / Wilsom Road (at Spitalhatch);
- Butts Road / Winchester Road;
- Whitedown Lane / Chawton Park Road;
- Whitedown Lane / Basingstoke Road;
- Basingstoke Road / New Odiham Road;
- Mill Lane / Montecchio Way.

**TRAP3:** We will work with the Local Highway Authority to improve the streetscape and reduce traffic speeds in the town centre and in the vicinity of schools.



*Enhancing the streetscape in the Town Centre remains a priority*



*Traffic speeds should be kept low near Schools*

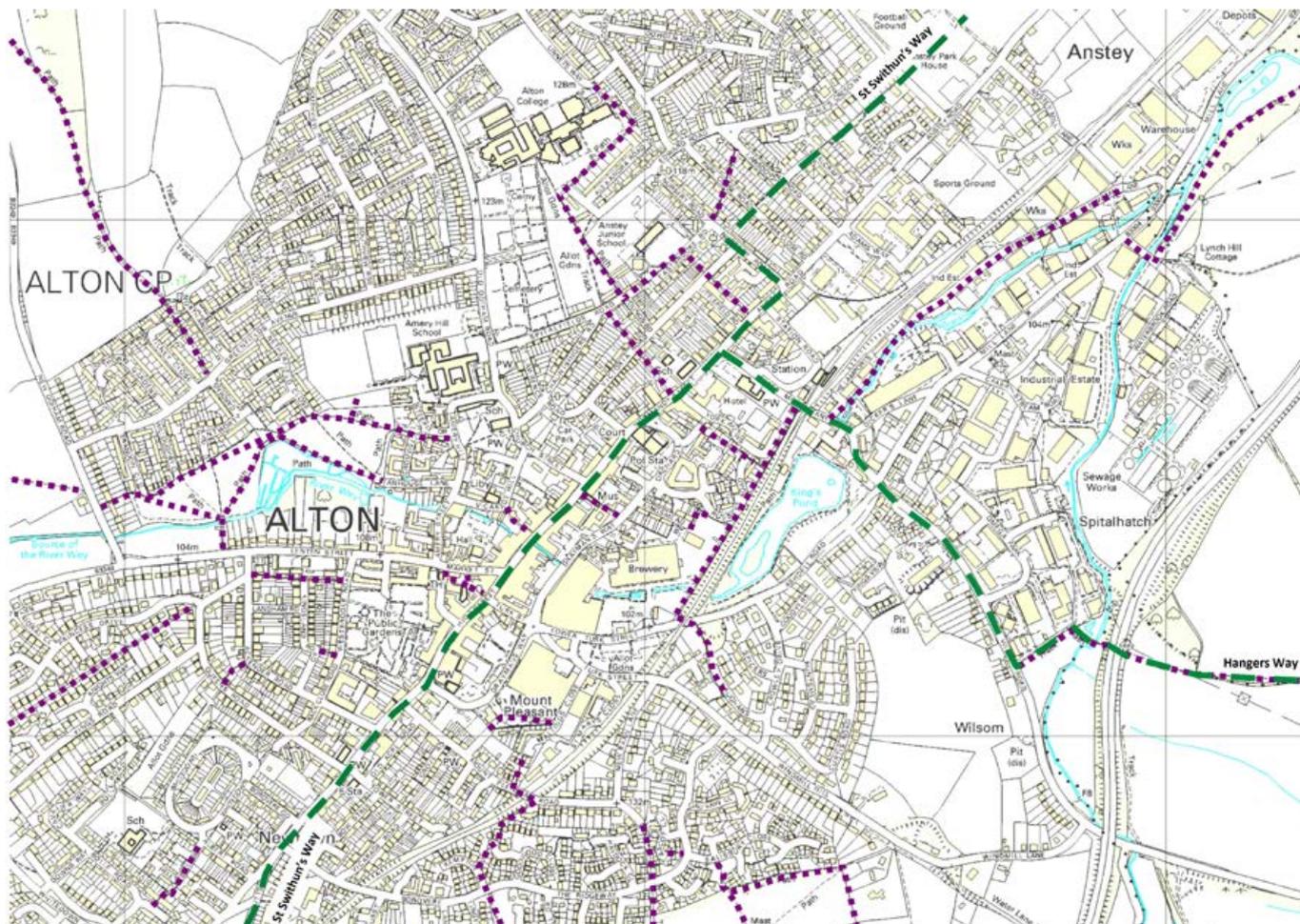
# 6. Plan policies

## Objective 2b: To encourage walking and cycling.

### TR3: Pedestrian networks

#### Justification:

Alton is fortunate to have a network of footpaths and alleys that provide good pedestrian permeability in much of the town, complemented by roadside pavements. This network includes designated public footpaths leading from the town into the surrounding countryside. Some paths connect well with public open spaces, offering attractive through routes. Because the town is fairly compact it is relatively easy to move about on foot. Alton has been accepted as a 'Walkers are Welcome' town and there is an annual walking festival. Almost all those who responded to the Community Questionnaire said that they walked at some time and over three-quarters did so frequently (an encouragingly high figure, though in some cases this may include walking in conjunction with other modes e.g. to a bus stop).



The town has many public footpaths and bridleways

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## 6. Plan policies

The questionnaire identified some impediments to walking. The main impediment to walking was parking on pavements, with others citing narrow pavements, places without pavements and a lack of safe crossing places. Asked about priorities for new provision the majority of responses related to sites for potential new housing development. Over 200 specific comments were made by residents suggesting measures to improve walking.

### Intent:

It is important that residents, commuters and visitors to the town have opportunities to move around on foot. Policy TR3 therefore expects new developments in Alton to provide traffic free routes for pedestrians, including pavements and footpaths. It expects these to link up with the existing network of pedestrian routes. This permeability will enable residents moving in to new developments to make journeys on foot and will enable other pedestrians to move easily through new development areas. It will also assist wheelchair users.

This policy is aligned with *East Hampshire: Joint Core Strategy* policy CP31, which promotes the use of sustainable transport modes. It similarly aligns with policy objective 12 in the County Council's *Local Transport Plan (2011)*.



*Footpaths can provide attractive links for pedestrians.*

### **TR3 Pedestrian networks**

*Where appropriate, development proposals will provide linkages within, into and out of the site that provide safe pedestrian access. Pedestrian links will be traffic free wherever possible. Proposals should react positively to any opportunity to broaden the local footpath network within Alton.*

Conformity: NPPF paragraphs 30, 32, 35; EHDC policies CP31, T3

# 6. Plan policies

## TR4 Cycle routes

### Justification:

Some 72% of those responding to a question about cycle use on the Community Questionnaire said that they used a bicycle and, of these, 32% frequently travelled by bicycle. This compares very favourably with figures for other towns and observation indicates that cycle usage in Alton has been growing. There is a National Cycle Route (number 224) which enters the town from Medstead at the Sports Centre, runs through the town and continues on to Farnham.

No major problem sites were identified for cyclists by the questionnaire, though some junctions are known to cause difficulties. There is a network of public bridleways, byways and quiet lanes in the surrounding countryside, but most routes to them leaving town can be considered unsuitable due to traffic speeds and/or their narrow width. Over 300 specific comments were made by residents suggesting measures to encourage cycling.

### Intent:

Policy TR4 expects new developments to offer cyclists the benefit of good connections to the surrounding road network, wherever possible avoiding busy or potentially dangerous roads. This should offer cycle routes towards the town centre and to other key destinations including nearby schools. This policy is aligned with *East Hampshire: Joint Core Strategy* policy CP31, which promotes the use of sustainable transport modes. It similarly aligns with policy objective 12 in the County Council's *Local Transport Plan* (2011).

### TR4 Cycle routes

*Where appropriate development proposals will provide linkages within, into and out of the site that provides safe cycle access. Proposals will have particular regard to ways that they can enforce cycle links to the town centre and other traffic generating development such as schools. Proposals should react positively to any opportunity to broaden local cycle networks within Alton.*

Conformity: NPPF paragraphs 30, 32, 35; EHDC policies CP31, T3

## TR5: Cycle storage and parking

### Justification:

The justification for policy TR4 provided evidence that cycling, which is seen as a sustainable mode of travel, is a popular mode of travel in Alton. If cycle use is to be encouraged among those moving into new housing or using new non-residential developments, then good storage and parking facilities need to be available.

Policies applied by other local planning authorities with a similar ambition to encourage cycling have been considered. Proposed dimensions for cycle storage are broadly based upon the Cycle Parking Guide published by Cambridge City Council. They are designed to be suitable for storing two mountain bikes or alternatively two narrower bikes plus a child's bike.

## 6. Plan policies

### Intent:

Alton wants to encourage new development schemes to include sufficient cycle storage (in the case of residential developments) or cycle parking (in the case of non-residential development), so that cycling to work, to shops or for leisure is an attractive and practical option. Residential cycle storage should be secure and convenient to access the public highway. This could be a dedicated space inside the dwelling or in a garage or a secure facility within the curtilage. In the case of flats the storage space can be a shared facility, as long as it is of sufficient size. Non-residential cycle parking facilities should be provided within or adjacent to the development scheme site.

### **TR5 Cycle storage and parking**

*To encourage the greater use of sustainable and non-motorised modes of transport, all new traffic generating development must seek to provide adequate parking or storage for bicycles.*

*All new dwellings (including conversions and sub-divisions) must demonstrate how they can achieve secure storage for bicycles that enjoys convenient access to a public highway. The minimum dimensions of any storage space serving a single private dwelling will feature a floor area of 1.5 metres by 2.2 metres and must be accessible via a doorway at least 1.0 metres wide. Shared storage of an appropriate size/form for flatted developments featuring a secure courtyard or entrance hall will be considered acceptable.*

*All new non-residential developments should provide cycle parking (Sheffield stands or similar). Employment uses will be required to provide shower and changing facilities.*

Conformity: NPPF paragraphs 30, 32, 35, 39; EHDC policy T3

The action points for Alton Town Council which relate to this objective are:

**TRAP4:** We will prompt the Local Highway Authority to prepare a timetable for works to improve conditions for pedestrians, particularly at the following locations:

- Crown Hill / Church Street / Normandy Street;
- Selborne Road / Winchester Road / Whitedown Lane / Butts Road (The Butts bridges);
- Old Odiham Road / Greenfields Avenue;
- Basingstoke Road;
- Paper Mill Lane (Station steps);
- Station Road/Forecourt;
- Mill Lane / Paper Mill Lane / Ashdell Road / Wilsom Road (at Spitalhatch).

## 6. Plan policies

**TRAP5:** We will press for footpaths and pedestrian alleyways in the town to be well maintained and clear pedestrian signposting provided, liaising with adjoining Parishes in relation to the surrounding network of public rights-of-way.

**TRAP6:** We will work with other agencies to ensure that there is adequate pedestrian signage connecting the town centre, the car parks and the railway station with places of interest including:

- Chawton village (Jane Austen’s House and Chawton House);
- Sports Centre;
- Community Centre;
- Cemetery (Fanny Adams’ grave);
- St Lawrence Church (Civil War battle site);
- St Swithun’s Way (long distance path);
- Hangers Way (long distance path);
- The Watercress Line (heritage railway).

**TRAP7:** We will seek to encourage actions that will reduce the use of cars for school pupil transport. Initiatives such as Walking Bus, or school minibus transport for those living in the outer areas of the town, will be actively supported.

**TRAP8:** We will work with schools and colleges in the town seeking to promote the use of cycling by pupils and students. Where appropriate we will seek the use of CIL contributions from developers to help achieve this objective.

**TRAP9:** We will lobby for improvements to be made to National Cycle Route 224 (Medstead to Farnham) on its route through the town.

**TRAP10:** We will work with other agencies to ensure that there is adequate direction signing for cyclists passing through the town, particularly along National Cycle Route 224 (Medstead to Farnham).

**TRAP11:** We will work with adjoining Parishes and other agencies to seek to provide safe cycle connections between the town and surrounding villages.



*Clear signposts encourage the use of footpaths*

# 6. Plan policies

**Objective 2c: To encourage the provision of public transport services, both within the town and beyond.**

**TR6: Bus service provision**

Justification:

Alton is currently served by four main bus routes, namely: a half hourly service from Alton to Winchester; an hourly service from Basingstoke to Liphook; an hourly service from Alton to Guildford; and five journeys a day from Alton to Petersfield. They also act as town services, in particular the route which runs through residential areas on the north side of town. There are also five routes serving Alton College (inbound in the morning and outbound late afternoon), which are open to wider public use.

No patronage data for bus routes could be obtained. Observation is that buses are not greatly used for travel within the town, except the Winchester service where it runs through the north side of Alton. Only the Alton to Guildford service and the Alton to Winchester service are commercially viable, other services relying upon County Council subsidy. Subsidy withdrawal has led to the discontinuation of the Saturday Alton to Petersfield service in early 2015. The most common response about buses in the Community Questionnaire was that they provide only a poor town service. Locations with no convenient bus service include Holybourne, the Industrial Estate and the Ridgeway.



*There is no bus route providing an adequate service for Holybourne*

The planned growth of Alton could make local bus services more financially viable. Given that it will involve housing development at locations on the edge of the town, bus travel into the centre could be an attractive option, if available. It would help relieve road network congestion and town centre parking demand if more residents are persuaded to switch travel mode from their cars. This aligns with *East Hampshire: Joint Core Strategy* policy CP29 which encourages use of sustainable modes of transport.

## 6. Plan policies

Intent:

Policy TR6 therefore seeks to promote bus services as an available and attractive option, in particular for residents who move in to new housing development sites. Large housing developments which are not close to an existing and regular bus route should make a financial contribution towards the establishment and initial operation of a new service, offering at least a regular weekday daytime timetable. This should ensure they do not require further public subsidy (at least in the first three years). Larger housing development schemes situated more than one kilometre from the town centre should include a through route which is suitably constructed for passage by buses or, if this is not possible, should provide a spinal route which allows a bus to be turned. Routes should include convenient stopping points agreed with the Local Highway Authority in order to serve their populations. Bus shelters should be provided at those stopping points, to a standard that has been agreed with the Local Highway Authority.

### **TR6 Bus service provision**

*Any new significant development in Alton should seek to ensure that it is located in reasonable walking distance (400 metres) to a public transport corridor providing regular bus services to and from the town centre.*

*Additionally, any new significant residential developments that propose homes that will not be within reasonable walking distance from an existing bus service will be required to provide an internal distributor road capable of accommodating the passage of an enhanced or rerouted local bus service. Such proposals, or indeed any other large proposals in the town that will generate significant additional trips, may be required to contribute funding for a new bus service for up to three years (the point of first payment will vary in relation to the phased delivery of large developments).*

*Provision will be made for an appropriate stopping point or points within the site. The developer may also be required to provide a new bus shelter to serve the route, subject to viability.*

*Any new significant residential developments that cannot provide easy access to either existing or future public transport services may be refused.*

Conformity: NPPF paragraphs 30, 32; EHDC policy T2

The action points for Alton Town Council which relate to this objective are:

**TRAP12:** We will press Hampshire County Council to improve the bus services to Holybourne and to the Mill Lane Industrial Estate. We will also give due consideration to using CIL contributions and other sources of finance to support new bus services which we may choose to promote.

**TRAP13:** We will press Hampshire County Council to improve bus accessibility between Alton and the outlying villages, using commercially provided or HCC supported services.

**TRAP14:** We will press Hampshire County Council to provide improved late evening bus services to other towns with significant evening activity (namely Guildford, Basingstoke and Winchester).

# 6. Plan policies

**TRAP15:** We will prompt Hampshire County Council, Stagecoach and South West Trains to improve co-ordination of rail and bus service timetables at Alton Station.

**TRAP16:** The provision of a direct train service between Alton and Guildford, as suggested by Surrey County Council, will be supported. We will press Network Rail to redouble the track between Alton and Farnham in order to permit better timetabling and additional services.

## **Objective 2d: To achieve appropriate levels of parking, both on-street and off-street.**

### **TR7: Parking provision and standards**

Justification:

There are nine public off street car parks in Alton town centre, providing a total of 703 spaces. The three largest (each exceeding 100 spaces) are Lady Place, Turk Street and The Bank. In the Community Questionnaire most respondents considered provision to be adequate, though very short stay parking was felt to be insufficient. In some older residential parts of the town there is no off street parking available and kerbside parking occurs, which can impede traffic flow. Similar problems occur in the vicinity of the rail station and the sixth form college. Bad parking was considered the second biggest highway safety concern by Alton residents.

Responsibility for setting parking standards for new development was transferred from the County Council to the District Council. Hampshire County Council withdrew its residential parking standards in 2011 and its non-residential parking standards in 2014. However, EHDC has adopted standards which are based on those previously used by the County. When applied by the County Council these were maximum standards to try to reduce car ownership, in line with (then) national policy; however, this is out of step with current government guidance.

Evidence from recent Alton developments where the former standards were applied is that they have led to excessive parking on street and often on verges or around junctions. This has created a poor visual environment and difficulties for drivers. The *East Hampshire: Joint Core Strategy* policy CP29 notably seeks sufficient parking to secure a high quality environment and the *Alton Town Design Statement*, at guideline 5.12, seeks adequate parking both off street and kerbside.



*Indiscriminate parking badly affects road safety ...*



*... and can cause problems for pedestrians, especially those with pushchairs or walking frames.*

## 6. Plan policies

Current levels of car ownership in Alton are over 1.2 per household and in East Hampshire are 1.4 per household. Parking standards for the allocated sites for housing growth at Alton should take account of factors set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework*, which are repeated in the *Hampshire Local Transport Plan (2011)*. A mix of housing types is sought on these sites, which implies typical levels of car ownership. Location of the sites around the edge of town implies car ownership could be above average. Similarly, the rather poor availability of town bus services may increase car ownership and parking space needs. Policies elsewhere in this Plan seek to encourage the use of travel modes other than the car, namely walking, cycling and buses.

Intent:

Policy TR7 therefore uses the former Hampshire County Council standards for residential off street parking for new residential development, but it states them as a minimum level of provision. It does not expect them to be significantly exceeded and overprovision is discouraged. It relates the number of off street parking spaces to the size of the dwelling. Where communal unallocated off street parking space is provided the number of parking spaces can be slightly reduced. Where off street parking is within a garage, this should be of a sufficient size to accommodate modern car designs and provide cycle storage, in line with County Council guidance. The policy expects new housing development schemes to identify roadways where on street parking would be appropriate and those where it should be discouraged. It also expects there to be sufficient unallocated parking provision for visitors within new housing development schemes and for this provision to be marked as such.



*Adequate parking should be provided for residents and visitors alike.*

This policy expects non-residential developments at Alton to provide some off street parking for use by employees and clients at that development. As a general guide applicants should utilise the non-residential standards until recently applied by Hampshire County Council.

### **TR7 Parking provision and standards**

#### Designated off street parking

New residential development within Alton will provide an adequate level of off street parking for residents. The following minimum standards will apply:

- 1 bedroom dwellings: 1 parking space
- 2 and 3 bedroom dwellings: 2 parking spaces
- 4 bedroom (or more) dwellings: 3 parking spaces

Where communal, unallocated off street parking is provided for eight or more dwellings, the minimum standard for 2 bedroom dwellings and above may be reduced by one space per four dwellings.

#### Garages as off street parking

Where garages are to be counted as an off street parking space the following minimum dimensions should apply:

- Single garage: 3.0 metres wide x 6.0 metres deep
- Double garage: 5.7 metres wide x 6.0 metres deep

#### Visitor parking

New residential development within Alton will provide adequate designated additional parking for visitors, at a minimum of one space per two dwellings. This can either be off-street or on-street, subject to the wider guidance set out within this policy. Visitor parking should be marked as such.

#### Additional on street parking

Additional on street parking provision will be welcomed where appropriate, but should not be used as a substitute for off street parking provision. Non-designated on street parking should be restricted along through routes within new residential developments.

#### Non-residential parking

Parking for all non-residential uses should be negotiated on a case by case basis and should propose an adequate amount of off street parking for staff and visitors to ensure there is no impact by way of parked cars on the wider highway network. When determining the amount of parking required by the development the following factors should be considered:

- Projected staff numbers:
- Projected visitor numbers, as well as the likely time and duration of the visit to establish the requirement at peak times; and
- The accessibility of the development by modes other than private car.

Conformity: NPPF paragraph 39; EHDC policy CP31

# 6. Plan policies

The action points for Alton Town Council which relate to this objective are:

**TRAP17:** We will work with East Hampshire District Council to identify future demand for off street car parking in the town centre, with the aim of ensuring that additional spaces are provided ahead of demand.

**TRAP18:** We will press East Hampshire District Council to freeze or reduce the levels of charging in their off street car parks.

**TRAP19:** We will press East Hampshire District Council to provide very short stay (maximum 1 hour) parking spaces close to the retail area, with a tariff which starts (preferably at zero cost) for a time period of 15 or 20 minutes. We will also explore with Hampshire County Council the possibility of introducing very short stay on-street parking in the town centre.

**TRAP20:** We will work with Hampshire County Council as they develop on street parking control measures for critical parts of the town. Particular emphasis will be given to the area around Alton College, and to streets on the periphery of the town centre and in the vicinity of the railway station that are affected by all day commuter parking.

**TRAP21:** We will seek to identify areas where coaches may be parked during daytime. This is necessary if tourism is to be encouraged.

**TRAP22:** We will seek to work with South West Trains to ensure that adequate levels of parking are provided at Alton Railway Station. There should be sufficient spaces to cater for both commuters and Watercress Line visitors.

## Community, health and recreation policies

The policies in this section seek to improve the quality of life for people living in and around Alton. They promote opportunities for social interaction and wellbeing, as well as for recreation, exercise and outdoor enjoyment. They also support the provision of modern health services that are easily accessible to residents.

### **Objective 3a: To support the development of a new/refurbished Community Centre and a new Sports and Leisure Centre in the town.**

#### **CH1 Community Centre**

Justification:

The *Alton 2020* document identified the desire of residents to replace both the Community Centre and the Sports Centre with modern, purpose-built facilities.

## 6. Plan policies

The current Alton Community Centre is operated by the Alton Community Association as a registered charity with a management committee of volunteer trustees. It offers a wide range of activities including a play group, youth club, live music, a leisure learning programme, the University of the Third Age, Shopmobility hire, a community club for older people, room hire for many clubs and societies, a cafe and a licensed bar.

The building is well located next to the Bank car park in the town centre. It is an interesting historic building, which spans the River Wey and dates from the nineteenth century. It has had many uses, from tannery to corset factory. The building has been extended over the years to offer ten rooms for community use. Over 1,000 people use the Centre every week. Most of those replying to the Community Questionnaire used the Centre, many of them on a frequent basis.



*Alton Community Centre  
- a former industrial building*

However, the Centre is old, in need of refurbishment and does not meet modern standards. It is not a building which could readily be altered or expanded. Previous plans were drawn up by the trustees, with support from the District Council, to deliver a replacement Community Centre, but they stalled due to lack of available funding. In the meantime some refurbishment works have been carried out at the existing Centre. This is welcome, but it is not seen by the interested parties as a long term solution.

Intent:

Policy CH1 therefore supports the provision of a new Community Centre at an appropriate and accessible site within Alton. Where this is brought forward as a funded part of a wider development scheme it would be viewed as a positive feature of that scheme.

### **CH1 Community Centre**

*Proposals for the provision of a new multi-purpose community centre or community facilities within Alton will be encouraged.*

*Any such proposals should be in a location that offers a high level of accessibility to the residents of the town.*

*The ability of new commercial or residential development to support the delivery of (above and beyond the standard level of planning contribution expected) or directly provide new community facilities will be treated as a material consideration.*

Conformity: NPPF paragraph 70; EHDC policy CP8

# 6. Plan policies

## CH2 Sports Centre

### Justification:

The Alton Sports and Leisure Centre lies on the south western side of town in Chawton Park Road. It was originally developed in the 1970s, by the (then) Alton Urban District Council, and has been added to over time. Its facilities include swimming and diving pools, a sports hall, a fitness centre, tennis courts, squash courts, a climbing wall, a synthetic turf pitch, a play zone, flexible use studios and a cafe. The Community Questionnaire found this Centre to be the most used of all the listed community facilities in Alton, with many respondents saying they were regular users. Asked what open space or leisure facilities they wanted to see in future, a sports centre was the category most often selected.



*Alton Sports Centre from the air*

It is widely recognised that the existing Sports and Leisure Centre is now nearing the end of its design life and is becoming hard to maintain. The current management contract expires in 2017. EHDC has identified a need to replace or refurbish this centre in its *Leisure Built Facilities Strategy and Action Plan (2012)*, and as a 'critical' project in its *Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2013)*. The District Council has commissioned consultants to look at feasibility and delivery options. Stage One of that work indicates that land adjacent to the existing Centre provides an option and one which need not entail any interim loss of service. That work also notes the scope to release land at the existing Centre as enabling development. The land on which the existing Centre stands is owned by the District Council with some adjacent land being leased from the Town Council. A further stage of this feasibility work is due to be completed in 2015.

### Intent:

Policy CH2 therefore supports appropriate schemes that come forward to replace or refurbish the Sports and Leisure Centre at Alton. Replacement could happen on land adjacent to the existing centre, though a proposal for another appropriate site in the town would equally be supported. This policy allows for suitable enabling development on the existing Centre site, if a replacement site is forthcoming. Facilities at a refurbished or replacement site would be expected to maintain and preferably enhance the facilities currently provided at the existing Centre.

# 6. Plan policies

## CH2 Sports Centre

*Proposals for a replacement sports centre facility providing an enhanced level of recreational provision to Alton in terms of quality and quantity on or adjacent to the current site will be supported.*

*Appropriate associated enabling development as part of the same scheme required to cross-subsidise the delivery of the new facility will be supported.*

*A comprehensive redevelopment of the existing sports centre site and the land adjacent will be supported provided that any new facility is in place prior to the old facility being redeveloped.*

*Alternatively, the ability of any large development proposal in Alton to deliver a new facility of a similar quality at an alternative suitable location within the town will be treated as a material consideration of significant weight.*

Conformity: NPPF paragraphs 70, 74; EHDC policies CP8, CP17, HC2, HC3

Action points for Alton Town Council which relate to this objective are:

**CHAP1:** In the absence of any proposal for a new Community Centre, we will continue to lobby East Hampshire District Council in order to secure funding to bring the existing Community Centre up to an appropriate standard to meet modern needs and the demands of an increasing population. We will continue to press for land and funding to build a new purpose built Community Centre to open by 2020.

**CHAP2:** We will work with East Hampshire District Council to achieve a new Sports Centre, sufficient for the needs of the population within its catchment area, being completed by 2018.

## **Objective 3b: To support the provision of adequate health services for a growing population.**

### **CH3: Health facilities and CH4: Community hospital**

Justification:

The provision of NHS services is the responsibility of the North Hampshire Clinical Commissioning Group. Alton is served by two GP practices, one located at the Health Centre at the eastern edge of the town centre, where it has a minor injuries unit and there is an independently run pharmacy. This practice has 10 doctors, 6 nurses and 3 nursing assistants. The other GP practice is the Chawton Park surgery, which lies on the south western side of town adjacent to the Community Hospital. It set up in purpose built premises in 2005



## 6. Plan policies

to meet the needs of a growing population. This practice has 10 doctors, 4 nurses and 3 nursing assistants. It has a minor injuries unit and, again, there is an independent co-located pharmacy. These practices serve a population that is larger than Alton's and which includes patients from outlying areas. Both have active Patient Participation Groups which support the development of the Neighbourhood Development Plan. Other health care provision in Alton includes two high street pharmacies and certain commercially operated services.

Patients who require hospital treatment will generally go either to Basingstoke or Winchester, both of which facilities belong to Hampshire Hospitals Foundation NHS Trust. There is, however, also the Alton Community Hospital, operated by Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust, which offers services such as an outpatient clinic, a day unit, assessments and short term care. Current health care policy seeks to treat more non-emergency and non-specialist cases close to where people live.



One of the GP practices reports that it is currently running at capacity and the other reports that it is running close to capacity. A growing number of patient visits would require an increase in GP, nurse and ancillary staff. One of the practices considers it has the building space to accommodate a 15% increase in patient numbers. Pressure on health services is likely to rise for at least two reasons. One is the significant planned growth in the town's population. The other is an ageing population. County Council projections are that in East Hampshire the 85+ age group will increase from just over 3% of the population in 2016 to well over 4% by 2026.

The Community Questionnaire found that Alton health care facilities meet most residents' needs, although a significant number noted difficulty obtaining a timely GP appointment. Views were, however, more mixed about the ease of access to hospital facilities, with many respondents citing transport difficulties. Travel to Winchester or Basingstoke hospitals currently requires a change of bus.

Intent:

Health care provision is likely to need some expansion during the Plan period, given the town's growth and an ageing population. Managing this would likely require some additional premises space, as well as additional practice staff. The *East Hampshire Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2013)*, which provides a summary list of the area's investment needs, includes the Alton Health Centre. Policy CH3 therefore supports appropriate extra provision of health care premises at Alton. This could be through expansion at existing site(s) or at a new health centre.

## 6. Plan policies

### **CH3 Health facilities**

*Proposals to expand current health care facilities in Alton to meet the needs of a growing local population will be supported, with the extension of the two health centres in the town identified as a priority.*

Conformity: NPPF paragraph 70; EHDC policies CP8, HC3

The Alton Community Hospital performs a valuable if somewhat underused role, given that major hospitals are some distance away. Policy CH4 therefore seeks to safeguard that site from change of use and supports appropriate extra provision of health care services at the site. There are no current proposals to change its use. Both CH3 and CH4 align with *Joint Core Strategy* policy CP8.

### **CH4 Community hospital**

*The Alton Community Hospital site will be safeguarded for health uses for the duration of the plan period unless it can be demonstrated that it is either no longer needed or an appropriate alternative facility can be provided elsewhere within the town.*

*Additionally, any proposal to extend the current facility to offer an enhanced level and range of health care service to the town will be actively encouraged.*

Conformity: NPPF paragraph 70; EHDC policy CP8

Action points for Alton Town Council which relate to this objective are:

**CHAP3:** We will lobby North Hampshire Clinical Commissioning Group to maximise use of a range of specialist facilities and appointment capacity at Alton Community Hospital. We will engage with local providers to ensure that capacity is increased commensurate with population growth, and that standards and levels of provision of all health services are maintained or improved.

**CHAP4:** We will assist in establishing an Alton group charged with monitoring the provision of all health and age related services.

## 6. Plan policies

**Objective 3c: To support the retention of existing public open spaces and the provision of new ones, similarly capable of offering sport/recreation opportunities in line with population growth.**

### **CH5: Local Green Space and open space**

Justification:

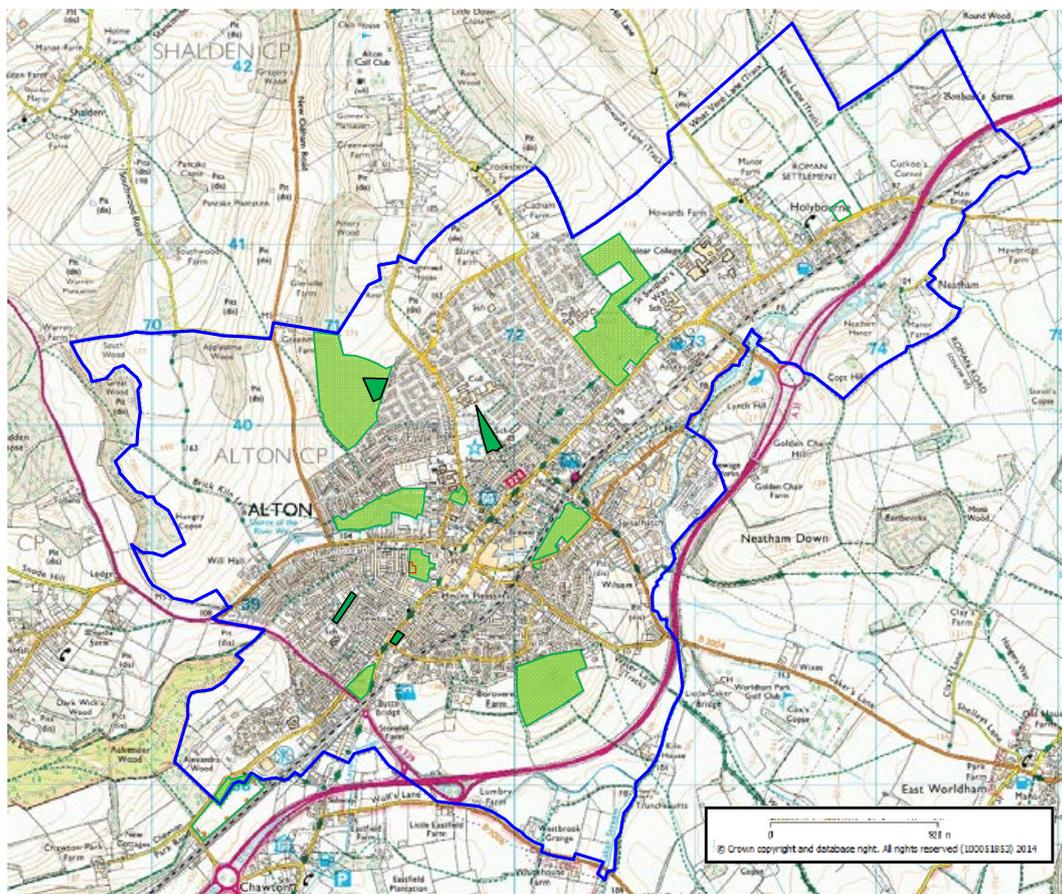
Alton is fortunate in having a number of public open spaces within or adjacent to its built area. These add greatly to the quality of the local environment and many of them are much used for recreation or leisure purposes. Indeed, the consultation undertaken for the Alton 2020 document highlighted, in particular, local residents' wish to protect and enhance existing parks, allotments and green spaces.



*The Public Gardens in the town centre*

# 6. Plan policies

A 2011 report, *Land and Other Properties Managed by the Council*, lists and describes all of those which are managed by Alton Town Council, together with their facilities. These include the Public Gardens, The Butts, Chawton Park Road, Kings Pond, Jubilee Playing Fields, Windmill Hill, Anstey Park, Holybourne Play Area, four sites for allotments (at Borovere, Hawthorns, Spitalfields and Wooteys, and Whitedown), The Dell, Greenfields Amenity Land and Flood Meadows. In addition, St Lawrence churchyard is open space maintained by the Town Council. The total of public open space in Alton is currently 67 hectares of land, which compares with a minimum of 60 hectares expected by local open space policy. It is likely that this total will increase as the town grows, as a result of public open space provided on larger housing development sites, including higher elevation land at certain sites. It would need to do so to meet the open space expectations set out by the District Council in its *Open Space, Sports and Recreation Study* (2008). It is equally important, therefore, that existing public open spaces are retained.



Alton's Open Spaces

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- |   |  |   |  |
|---|--|---|--|
|  | Allotments   |  | Jubilee Playing Field owned by Alton Town Council outside NP Designated Area |
|  | Open Space owned by Alton Town Council inside NP Designated Area |  | Holybourne Play Area not owned by Alton Town Council                         |

## 6. Plan policies

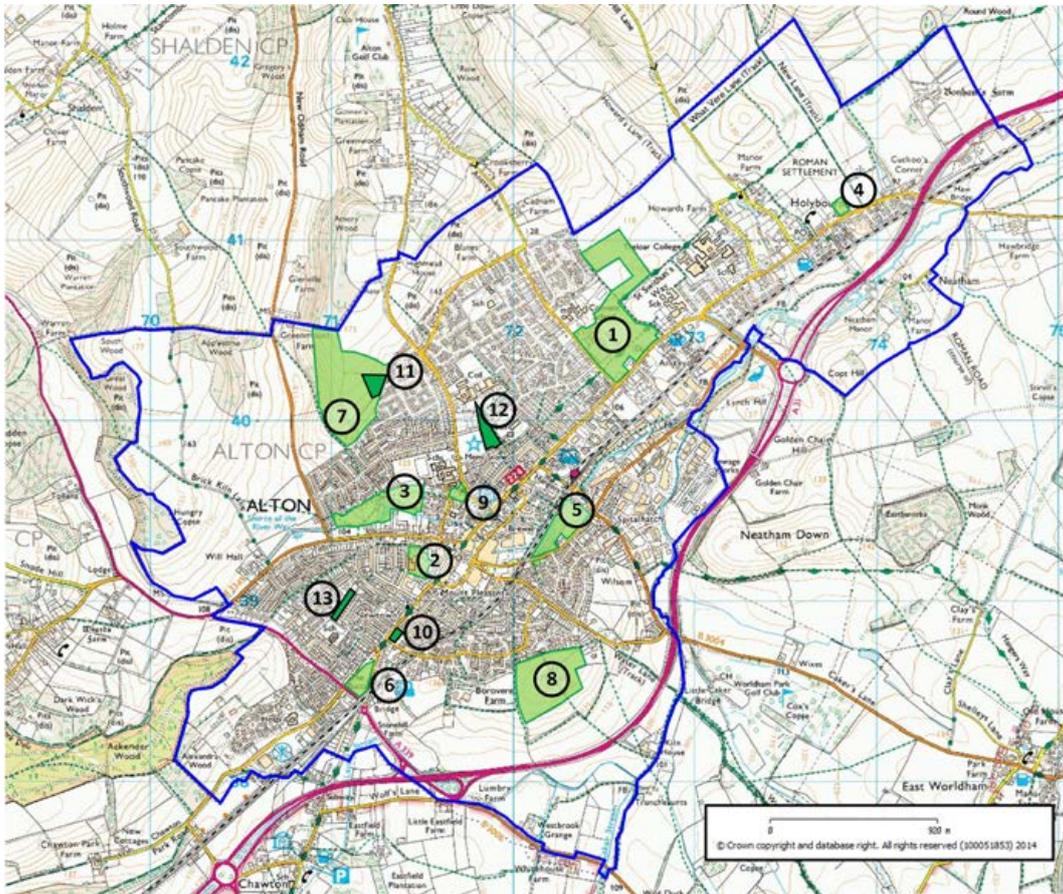
The 2014 Community Questionnaire confirmed the high value that residents place upon these sites. It asked how much residents used a number of the main facilities. Anstey Park, the Public Gardens, the Flood Meadows and Jubilee Playing Fields were all found to be used by at least half of respondents and by many of them on a regular basis. Comments from survey respondents also identified significant use of sites including Kings Pond, The Butts Green, Greenfields and Windmill Hill. When asked about the need for further green space, many residents cited allotments as being important (see also policy CH7 below). More detailed information about the significant use of sites is provided in the table below.

Intent:

Policy CH5 designates and therefore protects valued areas of Local Green Space from development, except in very special circumstances. This policy is aligned with *East Hampshire: Joint Core Strategy* policy CP18. The areas of Local Green Space to be protected meet the specific tests which are set out within the *National Planning Policy Framework* (paragraph 77). They are close to where people live, special to local people and only constitute local areas of land. Their location is shown on the map below. Jubilee Fields is owned and maintained by Alton Town Council, but a large part is in Chawton Parish and is outside the Neighbourhood Development Plan area, so it could not be designated in this Plan.

Why the identified Local Green Spaces are special:	
Anstey Park (15.5 hectares)	Recreational use by sports and social clubs. It has cricket and rugby pitches, tennis courts, a playground and an area for general recreational use. It is crossed by St Swithun's Way long distance path.
Public Gardens (1.8 hectares)	Recreational use in the town centre, with some trees and laid out flowerbeds and containing a play area, bandstand and bowling green. Also of historical interest (Roman remains and later an asylum).
Flood Meadows (6.0 hectares)	Natural water meadows and land of considerable ecological value, with some historical value (site of death of Fanny Adams). It offers riverside walks, areas frequented by waterfowl on former watercross beds, open space for informal recreation and vistas over the town.
Holybourne Play Area (0.7 hectares)	Recreational use of the play area. There is also some historical interest from Roman remains.
Kings Pond (4.0 hectares)	A natural area and an ecological resource, with varied flora and fauna. It has a historic pond and there is a Kings Pond Trail.
The Butts Green (1.4 hectares)	Informal recreational use by the public. This is the site of the town's historic archery ground and of the annual Charter Fair.
Greenfields (16.0 hectares)	Public access land providing a view point and part is also let for cattle grazing. There is a play area, kick-about area and BMX track.
Windmill Hill (10.0 hectares)	Open land with a view point, which is crossed by a public footpath. Its ecology has been subject to an initial light touch survey.
Allotments (four sites) (6.4 hectares)	Recreational gardening use at Borovere, Hawthorns, Spitalfields & Wooteys and Whitedown.
St Lawrence Churchyard (closed to burials) (0.08 hectares)	A popular recreational spot for relaxation, which lies at the heart of the Alton (central) Conservation Area. It is the setting for a Grade I listed church and is the site of a Civil War battle.

# 6. Plan policies



*Designated Local Green Spaces*

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## Open Space

1. Anstey Park;
2. Alton Public Gardens;
3. Alton Flood Meadows (to the rear of Lenten Street);
4. Holybourne Play Area;
5. King's Pond;
6. The Butts Green;
7. Greenfields;
8. Windmill Hill;
9. St Lawrence Churchyard.

## Allotment land

10. Boverve,
11. Hawthorns,
12. Spitalfields/Wooteys
13. Whitedown

It should be noted that this policy does not deal with new public open spaces on allocated development sites, since that issue is covered within policy HO3.

## 6. Plan policies

### **CH5 Local green space and open space**

All existing areas of open space in the town with a community function should be retained. In addition, any areas of open space that enhance the character of the local area should similarly be considered for retention.

Specifically, the following areas of open space as shown on the proposals map are designated as 'Local Green Space' and afforded additional protection due to their demonstrable value to the local community:

- Anstey Park;
- Alton Public Gardens;
- Alton Flood Meadows (to the rear of Lenten Street);
- Holybourne Play Area;
- King's Pond;
- The Butts Green;
- Greenfields;
- Windmill Hill;
- Allotment land (four sites at Borovere, Hawthorns, Spitalfields/Wooteys and Whitedown); and
- St Lawrence Churchyard.

Development will only be considered in the areas designated as 'Local Green Space' where:

- It is for the provision of appropriate recreational facilities, so long as they preserve the openness of the space and do not compromise its community function; or
- It is for the extension or alteration of an existing building within the space and does not result in a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building; or
- It is for the replacement of an existing building, provided the new building is in the same use and is not materially larger than the one it replaces; or
- It comprises limited infilling around the periphery of the green space that does not compromise the openness or the community value of the designation.

Conformity: NPPF paragraphs 74, 76-78; EHDC policy CP18

### **Children's play areas**

There are a number of children's play areas across the town. The *East Hampshire Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study* (2008) identified a modest shortfall in children's outdoor play space in Alton. Open space standards set out in that document are for there to be 0.25 hectares of children's or young people's space per 1,000 residents. It expects the provision for toddler and junior age groups to be available within 480 metres of all new dwellings. This can form part of wider public open space provision (at a minimum of 3.45 hectares per 1,000 population) which the *East Hampshire: Joint Core Strategy* expects. The *Green Infrastructure Study for East Hampshire* (2011) similarly recommended that additional

## 6. Plan policies

children's play areas be created, especially in the northern, western and central parts of the town. In the Community Questionnaire over 60% of residents felt there should be more provision of children's play areas and many commented that this should be within or near to new housing developments. The issue, then, is accessibility to children's play areas.

This Neighbourhood Development Plan supports policy CP18 in the *East Hampshire: Joint Core Strategy*, which set out standards for the provision of open space, sport and recreation and built facilities, at new residential developments. It does so in accordance with the *National Planning Policy Framework*. CP18 supports the provision of well designed, high quality play spaces for children and young people, and it does so in a way which can be applied to differing circumstances at different development sites.

This should help ensure that equipped play areas are available on or near to new housing developments. In some cases this may mean upgrading and/or increasing capacity of existing provision through developer contributions. In other cases it may mean new play areas being provided on site as part of a development scheme. Developer contributions, for an initial period of time, can help to ensure that play areas are properly maintained.

### **CH6: Playing fields**

Justification:

Anstey Park is the largest area of playing fields in Alton. It has 1 cricket pitch, 4 rugby pitches, a rugby training area, 2 tennis and netball courts, and a football ground enclosure. Various sports and other clubs have leased sites for their premises within the park. Jubilee Playing Fields provides a further 2 cricket pitches and 5 football pitches.



*Anstey Park is laid out with pitches for sport*

## 6. Plan policies

The *East Hampshire Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study* (2008) identified a notable shortfall in sports and recreation grounds at Alton, in particular for junior football pitches. The need for junior football pitches then appears as a 'priority' which is listed in the *East Hampshire Infrastructure Delivery Plan* (2013).

Intent:

Policy CH6 therefore supports the provision of new playing fields, particularly where they would be suitable for junior football. Where a development proposal includes new playing fields, this will be considered as a positive feature of that scheme.

### **CH6 Playing fields**

*Proposals to provide additional playing field space and associated facilities will be supported. In particular, proposals that help meet the identified need in Alton for junior football pitches will be actively encouraged.*

*The ability of any new development to directly provide open space and associated facilities (above and beyond the standard level of planning contribution expected) that meet the identified recreational needs of Alton will be treated as a material consideration of weight.*

Conformity: NPPF paragraph 73; EHDC policy CP18

### **CH7: Allotments**

Justification:

There are four existing allotment sites in Alton, which have 254 plots between them. They are at: Borovere (26 plots); Hawthorns (45 plots); Spitalfields and Wooteys (115 plots, including 3 special needs plots and raised beds); and Whitedown (68 plots). There is a considerable and rising demand for plots as and when they become available. In December 2014 there was a waiting list of 63 for allotments in Alton. To mitigate this problem some plots have been subdivided. Additional growing spaces at the railway station and St Lawrence vicarage are provided under a separate ALFI initiative.

According to the District Council's *Open Space, Sport & Recreation Study* (2008) there is some under-provision in Alton and the *East Hampshire Infrastructure Delivery Plan* seeks further allotments. Town growth will inevitably add to any existing demand. In the Community Questionnaire over half of residents wanted to see more allotments provided and a significant number of responses commented that new provision should be easily accessible from new housing developments. This matches the East Hampshire open space standards, which seek to have allotments accessible within 480 metres.

Intent:

Policy CH7 therefore supports the provision of new allotments associated with housing development schemes. Where a development proposal includes new allotments, this will be considered as a positive feature of that scheme.

# 6. Plan policies

## CH7 Allotments

*In accordance with Policy CH5 of this Plan, allotment land will be protected for this purpose for the duration of the plan period.*

*Proposals to provide additional allotment land in the town will be actively encouraged. The ability for new residential development to directly provide allotment land (above and beyond the standard level of contribution expected towards open space) will be treated as a material consideration of weight.*

Conformity: NPPF paragraphs 70, 73; EHDC policy CP17

The action point for Alton Town Council which relates to this objective is:

**CHAP6:** We will seek to offer a co-ordinating role to local organisations in order to improve and promote the usage and financial health of the town's range of amenities.

## Education policy

**Objective 4a: To support the provision of sufficient nursery, school and college places in Alton to meet the growing demand, in accessible locations.**

### ED1 Schools expansion

Justification:

Alton is a favoured centre for education serving a wide catchment. It has 9 preschools or nurseries, 1 children's centre, 7 primary schools, 2 secondary schools and a sixth form college. The school roll at the town's primary schools was 1,458 and at its secondary schools was 1,639 for the 2013/14 academic year. There are 2 further independent establishments catering for the full school age range.



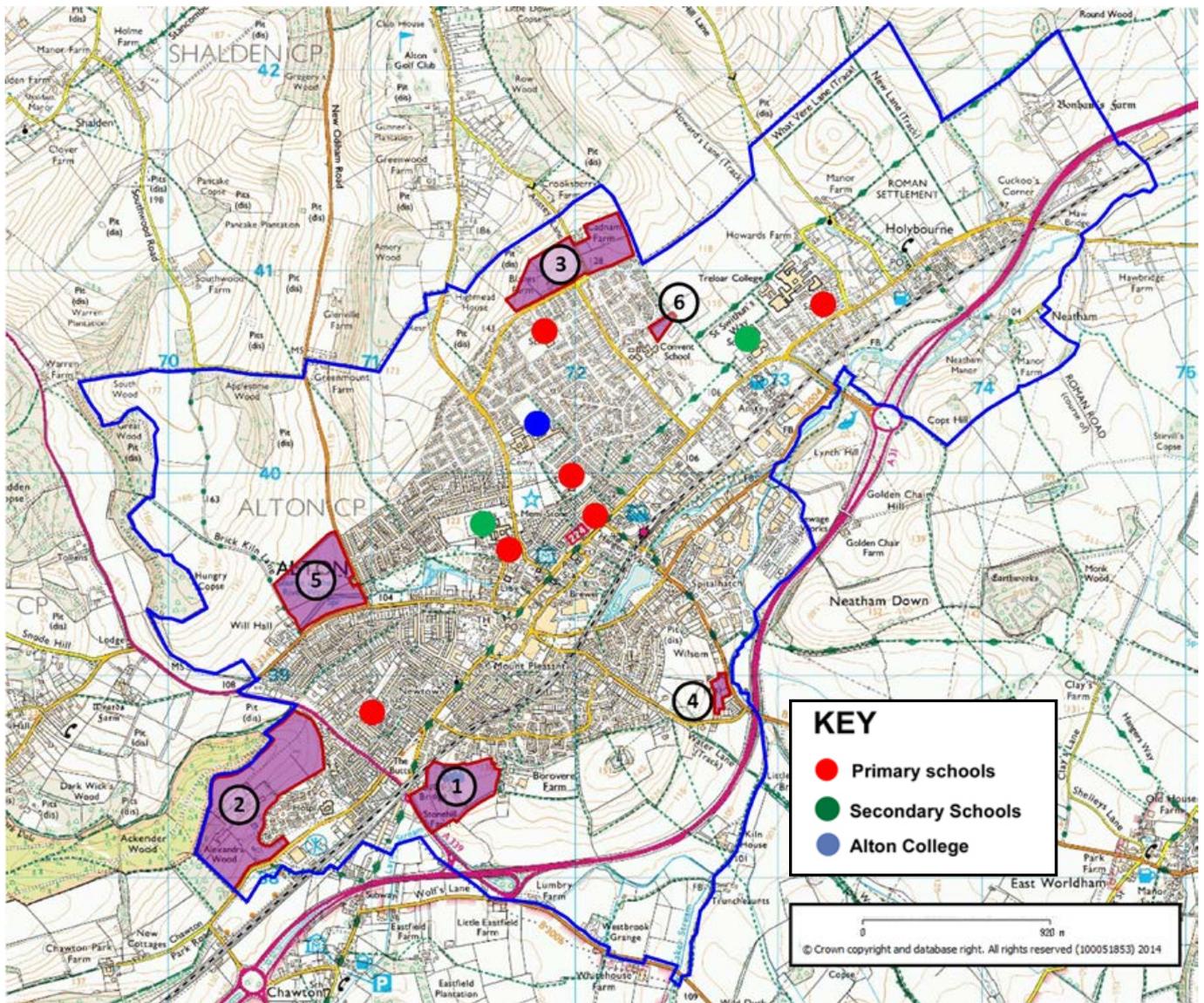
## 6. Plan policies

Guidance from the Audit Commission considers a school to be full if it has less than 5% surplus capacity, so as to allow for parental choice. The *Hampshire School Places Plan 2013-18* forecasts that surplus capacity at Alton primary schools is reducing from 7% in 2013 and will disappear altogether by 2018, when there will be 1% undercapacity. Surplus capacity for Alton secondary schools is forecast to fall from 11% in 2013 to 9% in 2018. These figures were based on an assumption of Alton growing by 500 dwellings. Over the Neighbourhood Development Plan period that level of development is expected to be very considerably exceeded. It is also noted that population projections for East Hampshire District show a growing school age cohort for the period to 2019. Discussions with schools in Alton supported this general picture and found concerns about future capacity. The Alton Community Questionnaire also identified similar widespread concern among residents, especially with regard to infant and primary schools.

The *East Hampshire: Joint Core Strategy* states that additional school places are likely to be required if the planned growth at Alton is to be accommodated. The County Council generally uses a threshold of 1,400 extra 'eligible' dwellings in an area, if provision of a new primary school it is to be considered an option (a threshold which excludes one bedroom dwellings). Alton is expecting growth of more than 1,700 dwellings (of all types) during the Plan period, taking those already with planning permission and those with allocated sites. Other housing has been built since the last school extension was completed.

Mapping the location of Alton schools shows an uneven geographic distribution, with limited provision at the south west end of the town. This is of particular note, given that allocated housing sites propose further development around the south western periphery. The Community Questionnaire and the Youth Questionnaire found a strong desire for schools to be walkable from home, which sits well with the plan objectives to encourage walking and cycling, and to manage road traffic.

# 6. Plan policies



Location of Alton's Local Authority Schools and Alton College

Intent:

The *Hampshire School Places Plan 2013-18* states that school provision in Alton is under review and discussion will take place with its schools about the best way to resolve the shortfall. The County Council's *Strategic Infrastructure Statement (2013)* lists expansion of facilities at Wootey Infant and Junior Schools as a need and this is given a 'critical' rating in the *East Hampshire Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2013)*. That school would be well placed to provide for children from households at allocated development sites on the north side of the town. The County Council has opened discussions (late 2014) with The Butts Primary School about potential expansion at that site. It would be well placed to provide for some children from households in the south west of the town. Making best use of these school sites is desirable in order to reduce the need for cross town journeys. They should maximise the potential for journeys to/from school being made on foot or bicycle. Policy ED1 therefore supports appropriate development proposals if they come forward at these two sites. It aligns with *Joint Core Strategy* policy CP14, whilst being more specific about the situation in Alton.

## 6. Plan policies

### **ED1 Schools expansion**

*The proposed expansions of the Wootey Infant and Junior Schools and the Butts Primary School in Alton are supported provided they do not result in the significant loss of playing fields or open classroom space.*

Conformity: NPPG paragraphs 69, 70, 74; EHDC policy CP32

There are no current County Council proposals to fund a new school at Alton, though future growth could trigger a reassessment. Part 3 of the *East Hampshire Local Plan* will be considering longer term planning requirements for schools across the District, including at Alton. The Town Council fully intends to engage with that process.

The action point for Alton Town Council which relates to this objective is:

**EDAP1:** We will engage with East Hampshire District Council when it considers future school (including new school) requirements under Part 3 of the East Hampshire Local Plan. We will press for this to include extra nursery and pre-school provision in the town.

### **Economic sustainability and viability policies**

Policies under this heading seek to maintain and improve the economic viability and sustainability of Alton as a retail, service and employment centre. This will help ensure the future wellbeing of the town for residents, employees and visitors alike.

**Objective 5a: To protect and enhance the role of Alton town centre as a retail, tourism and hospitality hub, which is vibrant and adaptable to future needs.**

#### **Town centre retail area**

The town centre serves as a retail and service hub both for the residents of Alton and for many others living in nearby settlements. Indeed, it is an historic market town and one of two main shopping centres within the district of East Hampshire. The importance of this role was recognised by the *East Hampshire Town Centres, Retail and Leisure Study (2007)* and is reflected in the *Joint Core Strategy* through policy CP8. The *District Council's Employment Land Review (2013)* noted that over a quarter of East Hampshire's retail jobs are located in Alton. That said, the town's role is a more localised one than that of retail centres at Basingstoke, Guildford and Winchester, which attract comparison shopping trips.

## 6. Plan policies

Alton town centre has 215 shop premises (classes A1 to A5), covering a reasonable mix of retail sectors, and with both national chains and independents represented. Some types of shop e.g. DIY/homeware, could however be considered as under-represented. There is also the popular weekly street market, which is held each Tuesday. As a hospitality centre, the town offers a good selection of pubs and a variety of restaurants, cafes and takeaway outlets. Although not a prime tourist destination, the town attracts a considerable number of visitors to local sites such as Jane Austen's house, the Watercress heritage railway line, the Curtis Museum and the Allen Gallery. It is a Gateway town to the nearby South Downs National Park and is attracting some stopover visits from passing travellers.

The Community Questionnaire found the key thing, by a large margin, which would lead residents to shop more frequently in Alton was having a better range of shops. There is a particular desire to see more small and independent retailers, and certain types of shop are felt to be in short supply e.g. DIY/homeware, electrical/white goods and quality clothes shops. Some respondents felt that charity shops were over represented.

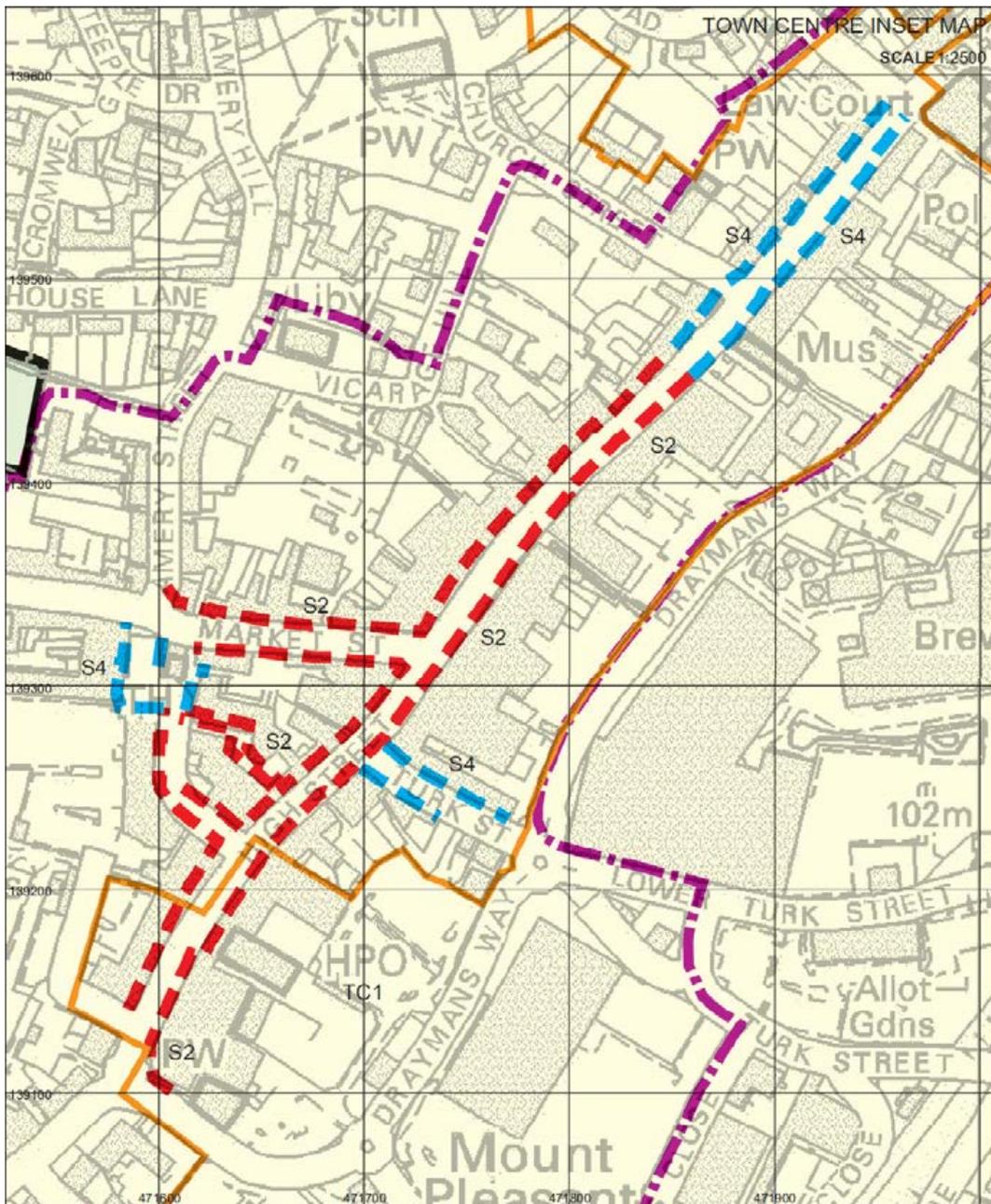
Some 32 of the 215 shop premises in the town centre were lying vacant in April 2014. At 15% the vacancy rate is slightly above the national average and considerably higher than it was at the time of the 2007 retail study. Whilst charity stores can play a valuable role, it is notable that 11 were recorded in 2014. In three cases shops which could be considered discount stores have moved into available premises. In common with a lot of towns, Alton needs to support the future of its high street. Town growth may help in that regard, though there are competing forces, such as out of town and internet shopping. It is probable that the town now has slightly more retail units than it can sustain. The *Town Centres, Retail and Leisure Study (2007)* noted that pedestrian flows are low to the more peripheral parts of central Alton.

Given changes in the retailing sector, which cannot be predicted with any certainty, a relatively flexible planning approach is required so that the town centre can adapt in ways which keep it viable and sustainable. This should seek to maintain the character of the town centre, whilst being responsive to future market needs. It may be appropriate for some secondary or peripheral shopping frontages, which lie beyond the primary or core area of the town centre, to change use in response to market conditions. This would have to happen within the framework of reserved policies S2 and S4 (on primary and secondary shopping frontages respectively) from East Hampshire's previous Local Plan, which is the current planning position.

A flexible approach should similarly be positive about permitting vacant larger retail units to be subdivided or converted into smaller retail units, if it can be shown that that is in line with market needs. Large premises which lie vacant and deteriorate can be particularly visible and detract from the appearance of shopping areas.

# 6. Plan policies

The existing definition of primary and secondary shopping frontages in Alton town centre is shown on the map below. This is due to be reviewed by Part 3 of the *East Hampshire Local Plan*. Alton Town Council wishes to engage with that District Council review to ensure the best outcome.



Zoning of Retail Premises in Town Centre (EHDC)  
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- - - Primary Shopping Frontage (S2)
- - - Secondary Shopping Frontage (S4)

## 6. Plan policies

Action points for Alton Town Council which relate to this objective are:

**ESAP1:** We will work with all interested parties to establish a Town Centre Management function in order to:

- market and promote the town to attract visitors and new business;
- co-ordinate leisure, entertainment and cultural events within the town;
- encourage town centre businesses to work together to enhance the overall retail offering;
- engage with tourism and hospitality providers in order to create a positive visitor experience;
- work with all local authorities to provide an attractive, clean, safe environment for visitors and local residents;
- work with all local authorities to ensure effective visitor infrastructure; accessibility, parking, signage (orientation & way-finding), tourist information and toilet facilities.



*Maintaining an active shopping centre is vital to the wellbeing of the town.*

**ESAP2:** We will work with landlords and the District Council to promote the development of flexible leases and other incentives to encourage new business start ups.

**ESAP3:** Owners and landlords of unoccupied high street property will be encouraged to maintain them in good decorative order and where appropriate to feature some form of window display.

**ESAP4:** We will engage with the District Council, when it reviews the defined primary and secondary shopping area boundaries of Alton under Part 3 of the Local Plan.

# 6. Plan policies

## **Objective 5b: To develop and enhance the business economy of Alton and Holybourne, to ensure that the town is economically sustainable.**

### **ES1: Access to allocated employment land**

The policy which sets the new employment land allocation around Alton is CP8 in the *East Hampshire: Joint Core Strategy*.

#### Justification:

The *East Hampshire: Joint Core Strategy*, through its policy CP3, makes an allocation of around 7 hectares of additional employment land to serve Alton over the period to 2028. The *Employment Land Review* (2013) by the District Council found that business expansion opportunities were few and this increased the risk of firms moving away from the area. A site or sites to meet the 7 hectares allocation is not identified in this Neighbourhood Development Plan, but is rather being identified by the District Council through Part 2 of its Local Plan. It is likely that some or all of it will fall outside the Alton Town Council boundary. Nonetheless, this plan recognises the importance of Alton's economic infrastructure, including maintaining a supply of sites and premises for business, appropriate to the growth of the town.

#### Intent:

Policy ES1 seeks to ensure that the scope for development on land which is allocated for employment by Part 2 of the Local Plan is not compromised or made undeliverable by any development which takes place on an adjacent site. In particular, vehicular road access to allocated employment sites should not be made difficult or unsuitable.

#### **ES1 Access to allocated employment land**

*Any proposed development adjacent to or in close proximity to allocated employment land must not prejudice the ability to deliver commercial development on site.*

#### *Particular attention should be paid to:*

- *Any development that may hinder the provision of suitable vehicular access to any future employment uses; or*
- *Any development that is noise, odour or light sensitive that may restrict the delivery of potential 'bad neighbour' uses that may otherwise be suitable on the allocated site.*

Conformity: NPPF paragraphs 19, 58

### **Loss of existing employment land**

Retaining and enhancing local employment opportunities – especially through good quality jobs – is seen as a core element of the future sustainability of Alton. Planning can play an important role in facilitating that. As well as allocating new employment land (see above) it can assist the retention and reuse of existing employment land.

## 6. Plan policies

Alton has two fair sized, light industrial estates, one at Mill Lane and another at Wilsom Road. Both of these are considered to be well located and fit for purpose. However, there are some vacant employment sites in the town and the local brewery (which occupies a roughly 5 hectare site in a fairly central location) has announced its intention to close in spring 2015.

A district wide report, the *East Hampshire Employment Land Review* (2013), concluded that most of the area's businesses are long established, few premises become vacant, much of the premises stock is relatively old and (more positively) there are a good number of knowledge based industries. The Business Survey for this Neighbourhood Development Plan identified a lack of suitable premises to rent, as well as a wish to see better transport links and broadband connectivity.

This Neighbourhood Development Plan supports the planning policy framework which is set at local and national levels. *East Hampshire: Joint Core Strategy* policy CP4 covers the loss of existing employment land, as does paragraph 51 of the *National Planning Policy Framework*. *Joint Core Strategy* policy CP2 encourages development to make best use of previously developed (or brownfield) land and buildings within built up areas, as does paragraph 17 of the *National Planning Policy Framework*. Whilst there is a wish to see available employment sites in Alton reused for that purpose, it is recognised there can be circumstances where alternative use (including the mixed use of sites) will be more realistic. Indeed, aside from the sites which are allocated at policy HO3, there is an expectation that the town's future development needs might be met on larger brownfield sites which become available.

### **ES2: Reuse of commercial brownfield land**

Justification:

It is important for the economic viability of the town centre that a balance is maintained among appropriate uses and this will include commercial office space. Buildings which could make good office space are sometimes lost to other (perhaps higher value) uses. Some of Alton's existing commercial office space can be considered poorly suited to modern business requirements. This may be due to it being in older buildings, perhaps over town centre shops and occupying relatively inflexible space. The Business Survey undertaken for this Neighbourhood Development Plan identified a wish to see more suitable rental premises. There are some former employment sites which have been lying vacant in or adjacent to the town centre, and which might be made suitable for reuse as commercial office space. Examples include the old post office, the magistrates' courts and (more recently) the brewery. Office development which is close to the town centre is more likely to be sustainable, providing occupants with easy access to a range of services and to public transport links. Providing new employment opportunities close to the town centre would help to sustain retail and service businesses located there. This would be consistent with policy CP4 in the *East Hampshire: Joint Core Strategy*.

## 6. Plan policies

Intent:

Policy ES2 therefore supports appropriate development proposals to reuse vacant or available buildings within or close to the town centre as commercial office space. Such proposals would need to take proper account of other policies within this Neighbourhood Development Plan, including TR5 and TR7. They would also need to take proper account of policies in the *East Hampshire: Joint Core Strategy*, including CP29 which promotes good design in the built environment.

### **ES2 Reuse of commercial brownfield land**

*The reuse of previously developed employment land with alternative employment uses within the town centre will be strongly encouraged.*

*Mixed use development on such sites, that may include an element of residential development where necessary and practical, will be supported in the event that such a development proposal helps maintain a varied supply of employment opportunities and commercial premises within the town centre.*

Conformity: NPPF paragraphs 19, 22, 23, 111; EHDC policy CP4

Action points for Alton Town Council which relate to this objective are:

**ESAP 5:** We will work with the Economic Development Team at the District Council to promote the town as an attractive location for business:

- identifying and targeting appropriate business sectors.
- attract high technology businesses to the Town.
- establish an Enterprise Centre to support business start-ups, providing business support services and flexible incubation space.

**ESAP6:** We will work to ensure that the business community is able to benefit from state-of-the-art communication systems such as high speed broadband.

**ESAP7:** We will work with ACCI to maintain strong relationships between business and the local education establishments, to create a mutually beneficial environment where local career opportunities can be enhanced.

**ESAP8:** We will work with East Hampshire District Council and neighbouring Parishes to ensure that a minimum of seven hectares of land is available for economic development, in the form of business parks for both industrial and commercial use.

Following its submission to EHDC, this Neighbourhood Development Plan was subject to some checks, a further District Council consultation, an independent examination and a referendum among local residents before it could be adopted as part of the statutory Development Plan.

# 7. Going forward

Although adoption is a milestone, it is not the end of the process. Alton Town Council intends to engage with various organisations and support initiatives that will help to deliver the policies in this Plan. Equally, it intends to work with those who can implement other actions which technically fall outside of this Plan.

## **Local Plan parts 2 and 3**

Further work on the *East Hampshire Local Plan*, led by the District Council, will have implications for Alton. Therefore, Alton Town Council (and, whilst it continues to exist, its Alton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group) will continue liaising with the District Council to influence that work. For example, Part 2 of the Local Plan will identify a site or sites around Alton for new employment land. Similarly, Part 3 will consider whether a site is needed for a new school and will review the settlement Gaps that separate Alton town from nearby villages (Holybourne and Chawton).

## **Strategic Transport Study**

There is expected to be ongoing dialogue with Hampshire County Council which, as the area's Local Highways Authority, commissioned a study to consider future road network needs of Alton, given the growth of the town. Alton Town Council will want to help inform decisions that are taken as a result of that study.

## **Monitoring**

Alton Town Council intends to monitor progress with this Neighbourhood Development Plan on an annual basis. The production of the Plan has involved a very significant amount of time and effort by many local people, much of it on a voluntary basis. In addition to any statutory monitoring that will be undertaken by the District Council, the Town Council therefore wishes to track whether the Plan has a positive impact on planning decisions and whether its objectives are being realised.

## Annex A / Steering Group and acknowledgements

Membership of the Alton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group was as follows:

Chairman and Lead on Housing:

Mike Heelis MBE

Housing:

Brian Alexander (December 2013 to January 2014)

Mike Biddiss (February 2014 onwards)

District Councillor Nicky Branch (also Environment and Economic Sustainability)

Deputy Chairmen and Leads on Community:

Councillor Peter Hicks (December 2013 to February 2014)

Councillor Graham Hill (March 2014 onwards)

Lead on Transport:

David Allan MBE

Leads on Environment and Economic Sustainability:

Sanya Ward (December 2013 to September 2014)

Andy Goodall (October 2014 onwards)

Lead on Health Group & Finance:

Councillor David Willoughby

Lead on Education and Communications:

Councillor Pam Jones

Assisting the Steering Group were:

Data analysis and presentation:

Charles Dixon

Minute takers:

Steve Parkinson, Town Clerk

Mark Rumsby

Sarah Bettin

Linda Munday

The Town Clerk provided regular advice and assistance to the Steering Group. The group was also pleased to receive a considerable level of support from officers in East Hampshire District Council's planning department, in particular Simon Jenkins and Robert Jackson. It also acknowledges the support received from its own consultants, who were Brian Wilson, Sue Jobbins and Alex Munro. The *National Planning Practice Guidance* provided an informative source of online advice.

Alton Town Council contributed its own financial resources towards funding this work, but it would not have been possible without grants received from both East Hampshire District Council and Locality (who had Department for Communities and Local Government funding).

A number of Town Hall support staff and volunteers helped the group, particularly with the staging of community engagement events.

We are grateful to the following for allowing us to use their images in this document:

David Allan  
Alton Camera Club (David Quick)  
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Pam Jones  
Dr John Laycock  
David Willoughby

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Finally, we need to acknowledge the very significant input from the people of Alton, who attended the events, completed the questionnaire and offered their views.

# Annexes

## Annex B / Summary list of policies in this Neighbourhood Development Plan

This annex provides a summary list of the policies covered by the Alton Neighbourhood Development Plan. They are shown by theme and objective.

The right hand column shows which policy proposals from a (non-statutory) consultation in November 2014 are now subsumed within these policies.

### Design policies

Policy number	Plan policy title	Policy numbering used in November 2014
<b>Objective 1a: To ensure that future housing development in and around Alton respects the character of the town and the surrounding countryside.</b>		
DE1	Town setting and natural assets	HS1, HS2
DE2	Building design and town character	HS3, HS4, HS6, HS8

### Housing policies

Policy number	Plan policy title	Policy numbering used in November 2014
<b>Objective 1b: To ensure that new housing contributes to the needs of the town in terms of the mix and design of dwellings.</b>		
HO1	Housing mix on new development sites	HS5
HO2	Storage facilities for household waste	HS7
<b>Objective 1c: To influence the location, scale and pace of housing development over the plan period (to 2028); and Objective 1d: To ensure that, in the context of the sustainability requirements specified by the NPPF, the necessary infrastructural improvements will be implemented in a manner appropriate to the location, scale, and pace of all proposed development.</b>		
HO3	New housing site allocations	HS9, HS11, HS12

## Transport policies

Policy number	Plan policy title	Policy numbering used in November 2014
<b>Objective 2a: To encourage and influence improvements in the town's infrastructure - particularly to manage traffic - in order to meet current needs and those arising from development.</b>		
TR1	Transport infrastructure	TP1, TP2
TR2	Adoptable roads	TP3
<b>Objective 2b: To encourage walking and cycling.</b>		
TR3	Pedestrian networks	TP4
TR4	Cycle routes	TP5
TR5	Cycle storage and parking	TP6, TP7
<b>Objective 2c: To encourage the provision of public transport services, both within the town and beyond.</b>		
TR6	Bus service provision	TP8, TP9, TP10
<b>Objective 2d: To achieve appropriate levels of parking, both on-street and off-street.</b>		
TR7	Parking provision and standards for Alton	TP11, TP12, TP13, TP14

## Community, health and recreation policies

Policy number	Plan policy title	Policy numbering used in November 2014
<b>Objective 3a: To support the development of a new/refurbished Community Centre and a new Sports and Leisure Centre in the town.</b>		
CH1	Community Centre	HC1
CH2	Sports Centre	HC2
<b>Objective 3b: To support the provision of adequate health services for a growing population.</b>		
CH3	Health facilities	HC3
CH4	Community hospital	HC4
<b>Objective 3c: To support the retention of existing public open spaces and the provision of new ones, similarly capable of offering sport/recreation opportunities in line with population growth.</b>		
CH5	Local Green Space and open space	HC5
CH6	Playing fields	HC8
CH7	Allotments	HC9

# Annexes

## Education policy

Policy number	Plan policy title	Policy numbering used in November 2014
<b>Objective 4a: To support the provision of sufficient nursery, school and college places in Alton to meet the growing demand, in accessible locations.</b>		
ED1	Schools expansion	ED1

## Economic sustainability and viability policies

Policy number	Plan policy title	Policy numbering used in November 2014
<b>Objective 5b: To develop and enhance the business economy of Alton and Holybourne, to ensure that the town is economically sustainable.</b>		
ES1	Access to allocated employment land	EC4
ES2	Reuse of commercial brownfield land	EC6, HS10

## Annex C / Glossary

### *Alton Chamber of Commerce and Industry*

A body which acts as the voice for the local business community. It is a membership organisation which exists to offer them support, to lobby and to promote business interests on their behalf.

### *Alton Local List*

A list of the buildings of historical interest in Alton, originally compiled by the Alton Society and updated in 2014 by the Town Council. This should not be confused with Listed Buildings, which are fewer in number and which have statutory protection, having been designated by English Heritage.

### *Alton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (ANPSG)*

Alton Town Council established this Steering Group to manage the work of developing this Neighbourhood Development Plan. Its membership was a mix of Town Councillors and other local volunteers.

### *Alton Town Council (ATC)*

This is the most local tier of government in the area. The Town Council has been responsible for the development of this Neighbourhood Development Plan.

### *Basic Conditions Statement*

Every Neighbourhood Development Plan must submit such a statement to explain how it meets the main legal requirements for an acceptable Plan.

### *Consultation Statement*

Similarly, every Neighbourhood Development Plan must submit such a statement to explain how residents, businesses and other interests were consulted as the plan was developed.

### *East Hampshire District Council (EHDC)*

This is the tier of local government covering the whole district of East Hampshire. It is responsible for local planning policy, so it wrote the *Local Plan Joint Core Strategy* and it generally takes decisions when planning applications are made.

### *Evidence base*

This phrase covers information of various kinds that can be used to analyse and understand needs and priorities. It might include statistics, survey questionnaires, maps, photographic evidence and local knowledge.

### *Hampshire County Council (HCC)*

This is the tier of local government covering the whole county of Hampshire (except the cities of Southampton and Portsmouth). Its policy responsibilities include education, social services and transport.

# Annexes

## *Housing allocation*

This is the number of new dwellings that the *Local Plan Joint Core Strategy* expects to be built at certain locations over a given time period, based on an analysis of housing need. In Alton's case it is a minimum of 700 new dwellings by 2028, in addition to the 1,031 already being built or with planning permission.

## *Joint Core Strategy (JCS)*

This is the main land use planning document for the administrative area of East Hampshire. It was produced jointly by the District Council and the South Downs National Park Authority. It contains planning policies that guide planning decisions in the district.

## *Local Plan*

The *Joint Core Strategy* (see above) is the Local Plan in East Hampshire. Local Plan is the generic term often used elsewhere in England, but East Hampshire have used a different term. In East Hampshire two further Local Plan parts are being prepared to deal with certain issues in further detail.

## *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)*

Central Government (the Department for Communities and Local Government) produced this important document in 2012. It sets out national planning policies. Both Local Plans and Neighbourhood Development Plans must take it into account. It is supplemented by *National Planning Practice Guidance* (NPPG).

## *Neighbourhood Development Plan (or Neighbourhood Plan)*

Since 2012 Town and Parish Councils (and, where these are lacking, Neighbourhood Plan Forums) have been able to produce these documents for their area, setting out detailed local planning policies which can help shape its future.

## *North Hampshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)*

The local administrative unit of the NHS. It is a practitioner led body (for example, by GPs) and it is responsible for purchasing health care services that will meet the needs of its area.

## *Qualifying bodies*

Are those bodies which the legislation has given power to develop a Neighbourhood Development Plan for their area, if they so wish. Qualifying bodies include Town and Parish Councils.

## *South Downs National Park*

National Parks cover parts of the country with special landscapes and where planning policies are more restrictive about allowing new development. Each one is managed by a National Park Authority.

## *Statutory bodies*

The phrase that is used to describe organisations which must be consulted at key stages in the planning process. They include Natural England, English Heritage, the Environment Agency and utility providers.

## *Statutory Development Plan*

This is the term for the suite of planning documents produced by the local planning authority (East Hampshire District Council, in this case). The *Joint Core Strategy* is one of those documents.

## *Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)*

A detailed assessment which is undertaken to examine the likely environmental impacts of a plan or a development. In some cases Neighbourhood Development Plans may need to include a SEA. All Local Plans must include a SEA.

## *Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)*

A study which is undertaken (by the District Council as the local planning authority) to identify larger sites with the potential to be developed, in order to accommodate the housing allocation.

## *Sustainability Appraisal (SA)*

In the UK the EU requirement for SEA (see above) is generally implemented by conducting a wider piece of assessment that examines social and economic considerations as well as environmental ones.

## *Town Design Statement (TDS)*

A document which identifies the main features of a town's built and natural environment, and which sets guidelines for developers, households and planning professionals, seeking to ensure that new development respects those features. The Alton TDS was produced in 2008.

## Annex D / References

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