

Alton Neighbourhood Plan Education Evidence Base

(revised 14th April 2015)

Part 1 (Evidence to 17 May 2014)

Introduction

Information contained in this Part 1 of the Education Evidence Base is focussed on actions and information gathered and considered up to the Consultation Feedback presentation by Alton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to the public on 17 May 2014. Evidence generated and gathered after that date is covered at Part 2 of this document from page 15 onwards.

A series of Objectives have been identified for the Alton Neighbourhood Plan. It is recognized that these and related policies should be built upon sound evidence. The present document deals with the Education domain. The Evidence Base as a whole, including the views of Alton residents and consultees, has been used to define and enlarge upon the Objectives of the Plan. The most relevant source-references regarding Education are cited in brackets in the text linked to references at the end of Part 1 on page 11 of this analysis.

The **Education** objective reads:

‘To support the provision of sufficient nursery, school and college places in Alton to meet the growing demand, in accessible locations.’

Evidence has been sought to understand two questions which underline that objective:

- Is there a growing demand for nursery, school and college places in the town? Will that outgrow the capacity of existing facilities?
- How accessible (location-wise) are current primary schools in Alton? Might that alter with new housing development?

This evidence base, along with the views of Alton residents and consultees, will be used to finalise the objectives that will frame the Neighbourhood Plan.

Is there a growing demand for nursery, school and college places in the town? Will that outgrow the capacity of existing facilities?

Alton is a popular educational centre serving East Hampshire. The Alton Profile(1) lists 8 primary schools (including 1 outside the parish boundary), 2 secondary schools and Alton College (sixth form only). 2 independent establishments, Alton Convent and Lord Mayor Treloar College, have not been included in the list. All schools and colleges accepted invitations to consultations with the exceptions of Eggars Secondary School and the 2 independent schools.

Primary Schools

While the majority of children in Alton attend primary schools within the Parish, some travel further afield to outlying village schools. All primary provision is listed in the tables below along with their current school rolls taken from the HCC website(11):

Primary schools within the Parish	School roll (2013/14)*
Alton Infants School	176
Anstey Junior School	229
Andrews Endowed School, Holybourne	202
Butts Primary School	234
St Lawrence CE Primary School	167
Wootey Infant School	133
Wootey Junior School	177
Total primary school places within the Parish	1458
Primary Schools outside the Parish	School roll (2013/14)*
Chawton CE Primary	140
Bentley CE Primary School	213
St Marys CE Primary School, Benthworth	86
Binsted CE Primary School	85
Total primary school places outside the Parish	524

We currently have no figures for the number of Alton children attending out of Parish schools but, it is probably no more than 10% of the school roll.

Consultations with the primary schools has identified that there is limited capacity to increase pupil numbers within the existing schools' infrastructure(5) and our consultations with these schools during February and March 2014 has identified that future capacity is a concern(5).

The Alton Profile (1) includes primary school intake forecasts for the next 4 years. These are shown in the table below. The first column is the Published Admission Number (PAN), the maximum permitted entry in a year. It is followed by the projected number of pupils

living within catchment that could potentially start that year. The difference between this and PAN gives an idea of how over or under subscribed the school is. DfE suggest that a school be considered full if it has less than 5% surplus capacity to give parental preference.

Primary School	PAN*	2014/15	2017/18	Available spaces
Alton Infants School	60	80	81	-21
Anstey Junior School	64	58	60	+4
Andrews Endowed School,	30	21	23	+7
Butts Primary School	34	59	51	-17
St Lawrence CE Primary School	26	20	18	+8
Wootey Infant School	60	56	60	0
Wootey Junior School	60	42	46	+14

*Published Admission Number

The above numbers do not take full account of the housing growth that is now expected in Alton. The East Hampshire Joint Core Strategy Infrastructure and Delivery Plan (appendix 2) states that the 'priority' for additional primary capacity is 'critical' (21) and says that Children's Services are undertaking ongoing school place planning assessment.

The Hampshire Demographic Profile 2013 report (4) which covers 2012-2019 says...

'The percentage aged 5-15 varies from 10.9 % to 14.1 % in 2012. With the exception of Hart all districts are expected to see a slight increase in the proportion of their population that is school aged over the forecast period.'

Although it only covers East Hampshire district and is not Alton-specific, it indicates that the school age cohort in the district is expected to rise between 2012 and 2019. As Alton is the largest residential centre in the District, and is about to take on over 1,000 new homes, this suggests there will be a serious shortfall of school places in Alton by 2019. This is supported by HCC's 'Schools Places; Framework and Analysis 2012-16' document(13) which states that:

In line with national trends, the District(East Hants) saw a slight decline in births in the latter half of the 1990s, but this has reversed and is showing a slightly increasing trend

(4% since 2001). This, coupled with the impact of housing development, will lead to an increasing demand for primary school places.

Our discussions with Primary Head Teachers(5) have clearly highlighted concern about school capacity once SHLAA sites are developed. The only schools that currently have available places are Wootey Junior and Infant Schools. The Head Teacher of the Butts Primary School said she was already oversubscribed for the Sept 2014 entry (7). Further discussion with Martin Shefferd, the School Organisation officer for HCC,(17) supports these findings and we will continue to liaise with him during the development of the Alton Neighbourhood Plan.

Secondary School Provision

The Alton Profile(1) lists 2 secondary schools and Alton College (sixth form only). All secondary provision is listed in the tables below along with their current school rolls taken from the HCC website(11):

Secondary School:	School roll (2013/14)*
Amery Hill School	850
Eggars School	789
Total for Secondary Schools	1639

* HCC website

The Alton Profile (1) also includes secondary school intake forecasts for the next 4 years.

Secondary School	PAN*	2014/15	2017/18	Available spaces
Amery Hill School	200	155	n/a	n/a
Eggars School	170	153	n/a	n/a

*Published Admission Number

Martin Shefferd had said that currently there was some spare capacity in the Alton secondary schools but this would change as the children from the new homes work their way up the education ladder. In his recent comments in response to the Cadnams Farm planning application he said..

‘Given the number of other developments being brought forward in Alton there will also be a need to expand the secondary provision within Alton. Assuming that the other developments already seeking planning will fill the two secondary schools I anticipate a contribution towards the expansion of secondary provision from this development of £1,692,350. ‘

We also discussed the catchment of Amery Hill and Eggars Schools and HCC will provide the ‘in/out’ document which relates to pupils movement as within catchment areas for the secondary school

Alton College

This is government funded and is currently very popular.

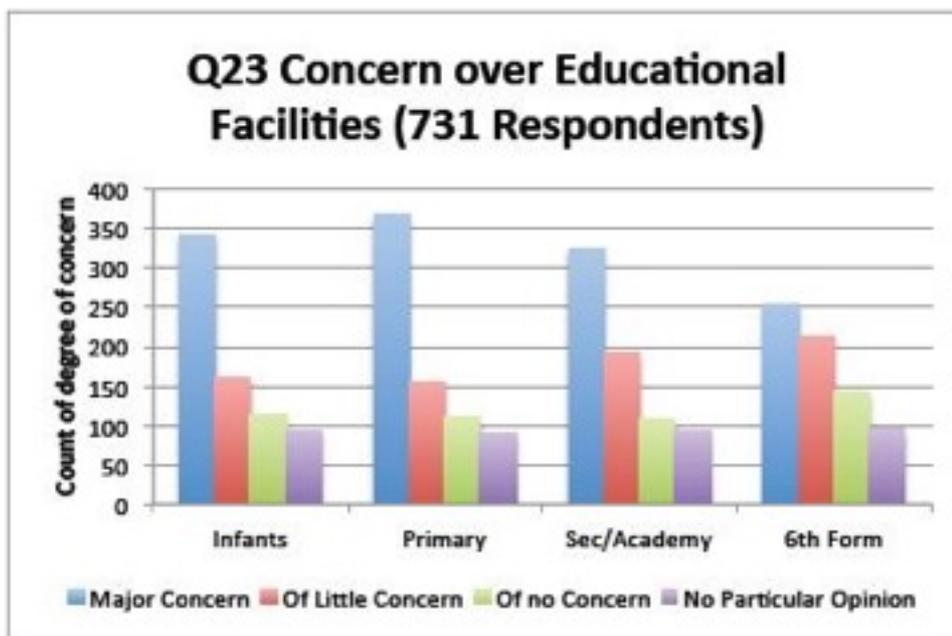
Alton Colleges:	Student roll (2013/14)#
Alton College	2024

#Personal communication

However, several out of catchment secondary schools are introducing 6th Forms, so intake at Alton College may suffer as a consequence.

Responses to ‘Education’ questions from Altonians, through the Questionnaire, also indicated that availability of school places was a major concern. Question 23 asked....

‘Are you concerned over the need for any additional educational facilities that should be provided in Alton over the next 14 years to cater for the growing population?’



Results clearly reflect an overriding concern that the education provision should be increased to keep pace with population growth

Parents at the Stepping Stones Toddler group (9) were concerned about the availability of places and similar concerned responses were received via Facebook and email(15) following a letter to the Alton Herald(14).

Early Years Provision

Education includes Early years provision (EYE). According to information from Alton Buckle (6), Alton is served by 11 preschools/nurseries and 1 Children's Centre. (**Appendix 2** – Pre-School location map)

HCC: Early Years Places Planning document 2013 states...

'It is suggested that developers should consider 80 early years places for each 1000 houses and that this is offered through a mix of facilities where possible. The childcare planning should allow for flexible hours of opening and covering at least 7am to 7pm for full day care

HCC recent practice has been to suggest that the planners / developers should make provision for early years and childcare facilities for children 0- 5 years within their plans for the housing developments. Childcare facilities should either be associated within/

alongside community facilities or in dedicated space identified and available for development. In either case, we suggest that there are advantages with locating adjacent to, or combined with, primary school sites.'

Martin Shefferd (17) explained that while HCC do not fund pre-school provision, they are commissioners of new places to ensure a sufficiency of places, with third parties to provide and run. If there is perceived to be a need this is flagged up with EHDC to be included in Community provision.

Discussions with the Pre-school co-ordinators for the area (22) demonstrated that currently there were in.....

'Alton; Eastbrooke, Westbrooke, Whitedown, Wooteys wards approximately 130 pre-school places plus 78 nursery places who will also offer the 38 week pre-school option to families. These numbers are approximate as Ofsted no longer indicate a number of registered places in reports. There is also the possibility of a further 70 places coming on in the near future.

(This does not include Ashdell or Holybourne wards)

It was also suggested that extra places could be found if existing providers open all day and offer places during both morning and afternoon: many only open in the morning at present. Alton is also well served by registered child minders who offer a great service.

Many private providers have voiced an interest in setting up pre-school provision in Alton but the lack of suitable accommodation is a stumbling block.

How accessible, location-wise, are current schools in Alton? Might that alter with new housing development?

To aid references to locations of schools it is necessary to use the following information:

*The main spine of the town (Butts Road – High Street – Anstey Road – London Road) lies on a diagonal South-West to North-East axis, which makes for difficulties in describing locations. **For the purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan, this Axis will be taken as running West to East**, with North Alton and South Alton lying respectively above and below the spine. Holybourne is therefore considered to lie in the East, and the Sports Centre in the West, of the Plan area.*

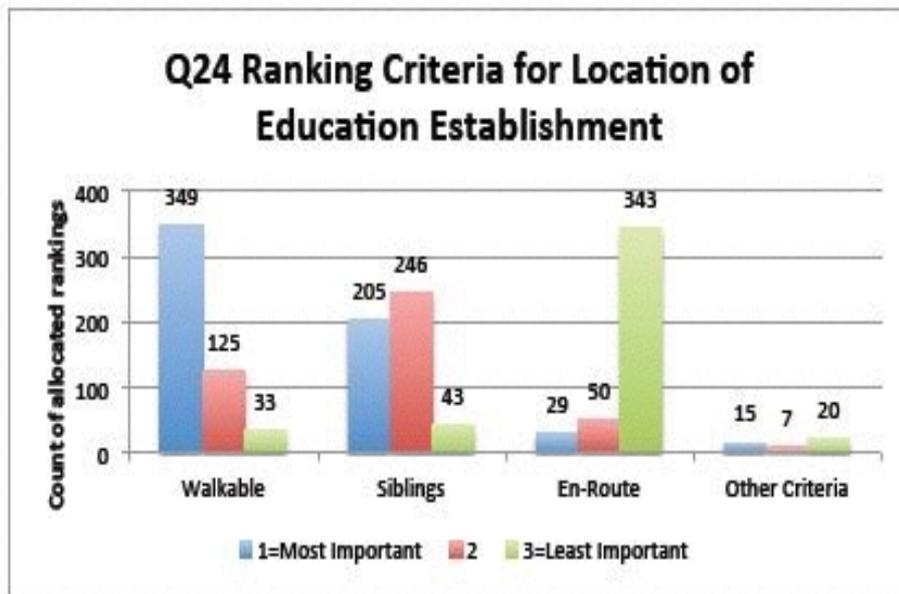
The Alton study(19) says there should be.....

'Easy access to excellent schools'

Through the various questionnaires and consultations, both parents and children indicated a preference for the location of education provision being within walking distance of home (8,9,10).

Qu. 24 of the Questionnaire asked people to prioritise the importance of the following

- School is within walking distance of where I live.
- School can offer places to siblings
- The school is close to a direct route from home to where I work

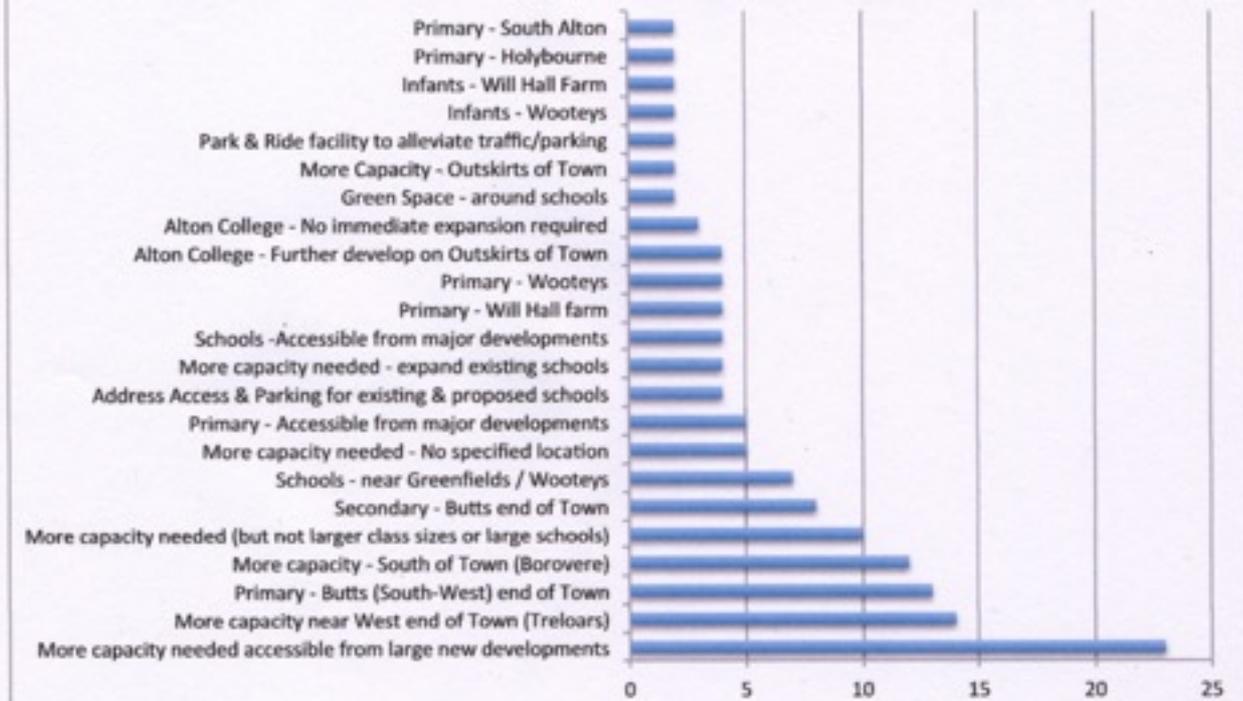


It is clear from the graph, that while offering places to siblings is important, the major priority was given to a school being within walking distance of home. Respondents were also asked to give preferred locations for possible new education provision taking into account the location of proposed new development.....

Qu. 25 asked respondents...

'If you have any concerns over educational facilities as per the above question, and you believe there should be new ones in addition to this already provided, where should they be located bearing in mind the potential location of new housing?'

Qn 25 - Education Establishments (156 Comments - Singletons omitted from chart)



The responses collectively demonstrated a perceived need for more education provision much of which was primarily focussed at the SW of the town.

It is obvious from the position of all current schools on the SHLAA map (**Appendix 1**) that there is a lack of primary and Secondary school provision at the southwest end of the town; the Butts Primary School is the only school in the area. The imminent planned development of over 550 homes at Chawton Park Road and Borovere Farm will seriously escalate the demand for places. The extra housing along Alton's northern fringe will also place extra pressure on nearby Wootey Infant and Junior Schools.

Martin Shefferd (HCC)(17) said there was room to expand the Butts School and both Wootey Schools and funding for this would be available through developers contributions(24). However, any overall housing increase of more than 1,400 in the town (excluding 1 bed dwellings) would require the building of a new primary school. With the total proposed housing increase in Alton exceeding 1,400 a new primary school will be needed. A new primary school with easy accessibility would also ease traffic problems in the town as well.

The HCC consultation comment on the recent planning application for the Hybrid development at Lord Mayor Treloar/Borovere (SW Alton)(25) states..

'The application on the website does not give the number of dwellings proposed but as a guide I would anticipate a sum of £5,057 per dwelling towards the cost of an expansion to the primary places in the town. If a new school is required I will be seeking a site of 2ha (at nil cost) together with a contribution of £6,278 per dwelling towards the cost of the new provision'.

HCC's 'Schools Places; Framework and Analysis 2012-16' document(13) states that:

The County Council considers that new primary provision should be located within new developments that are large enough to support their own provision. School provision should be within reasonable walking distance of the homes of all pupils within the area to be served by the new provision, with safe (preferably segregated) routes for journeys on foot or bicycle and related to public transport. Wherever possible, new school provision should be located in proximity to local shops and other community facilities, as part of a focus for new development.

Similar principles apply to the location of new secondary provision, where a more peripheral site may be acceptable so that the school's playing field forms a buffer between urban and countryside areas.

As stated earlier, the School location map (**Appendix 1**) clearly indicates a lack of primary provision in the SW of Alton, so the obvious place for a new build would be in this area. Building a new school in SW Alton would also take pressure away from Alton Infants. Alton Infants has no room for expansion and as many of its pupils come from the Ridgeway, a new school in the SW would reduce the pressure on places as well as reducing further pressure on the Butts Primary School.

The Hampshire Strategy Infrastructure Statement Version 1 (Feb 2013) states that:

Where new development takes place, it is the County Council's policy that new primary schools be provided within major new housing areas, where justified by the number of children likely to be living there when the development is complete. Where the additional demand is not enough for a new school, in the interests of integrating new development into existing communities and to promote sustainability principles relating to reducing reliance on the motor car, it is expected that a new development will be served by its nearest schools. Therefore the provision of new schools is often brought forward through master-planning of major developments. In addition contributions from smaller developments have been collected and pooled under the County Council's developer contributions scheme.

In the short term, expansion of both the Butts and Wootey Junior and Infant Schools may provide sufficient primary school places, but in the long term the Neighbourhood Plan should include the need for a new school, preferably in the SW of the town. Feedback Stickies response FB 2002/FB098 suggested that the Church of England diocese might be

willing to provide funding for a new primary school. This will be investigated further in consultation with the local vicar.

Expansion of secondary places would most likely have to be at Eggars, given the size of their site. The need for a new secondary school has not been suggested by HCC. Extra provision for nursery and pre-schools should be associated with any school expansion or new build.

Date: **August 2014**

Written by: **Cllr Pam Jones**

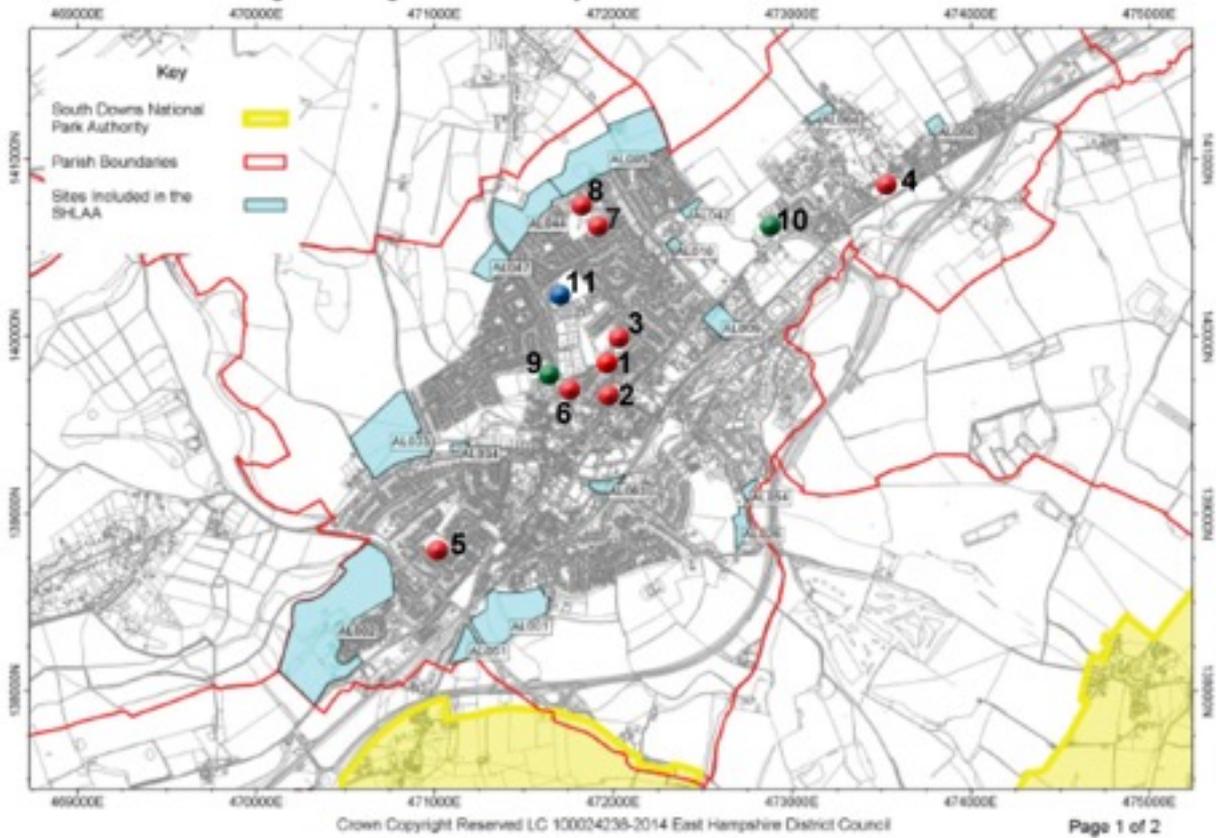
References:

1. *Alton Profile*, East Hampshire District Council (2013)
2. *HCC: Developers' Contributions towards Children's Services Facilities 2013*
3. *HCC: Early Years Places Planning document 2013*
4. *Hampshire Demographic Profile*, Hampshire County Council (2013)
5. Meeting with Head teachers ; report
6. Preschools/ nurseries in Alton (via Alton Buckle)
7. Email: Head , Butts School
8. Youth Questionnaire responses
9. Consultation Report: Stepping Stones – Mother and Toddler Group
10. Public Consultation 2014 – Analysis of Results – Alton Neighbourhood Plan (ATC)
11. HCC website <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/education/schools/schooldetails>
12. HCC Year 7 admissions data - September 2013
13. HCC: School Places: Framework and Analysis 2012-16
14. *Alton Herald* letter
15. Response to Herald/Facebook
16. Alton Schools and Colleges
17. Consultation with Martin Shefferd of HCC
18. School data figures (HCC)
19. Alton Study 2013
20. Hampshire School Place Planning Framework 2013-2018
21. East Hampshire District Local Plan: Joint Core Strategy: INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY PLAN: Interim Statement and Infrastructure Schedule, July 2013
22. Report of meeting with area Pre-school co-ordinators

- 23.Hampshire Strategy Infrastructure Statement Version 1 (Feb 2013)
- 24.HCC Developers' Contributions towards Children's Services Facilities
- 25.HCC Comments on housing developments
- 26.Feedback Stickies

Appendix 1: Location of Alton Schools on SHLAA Map 2014

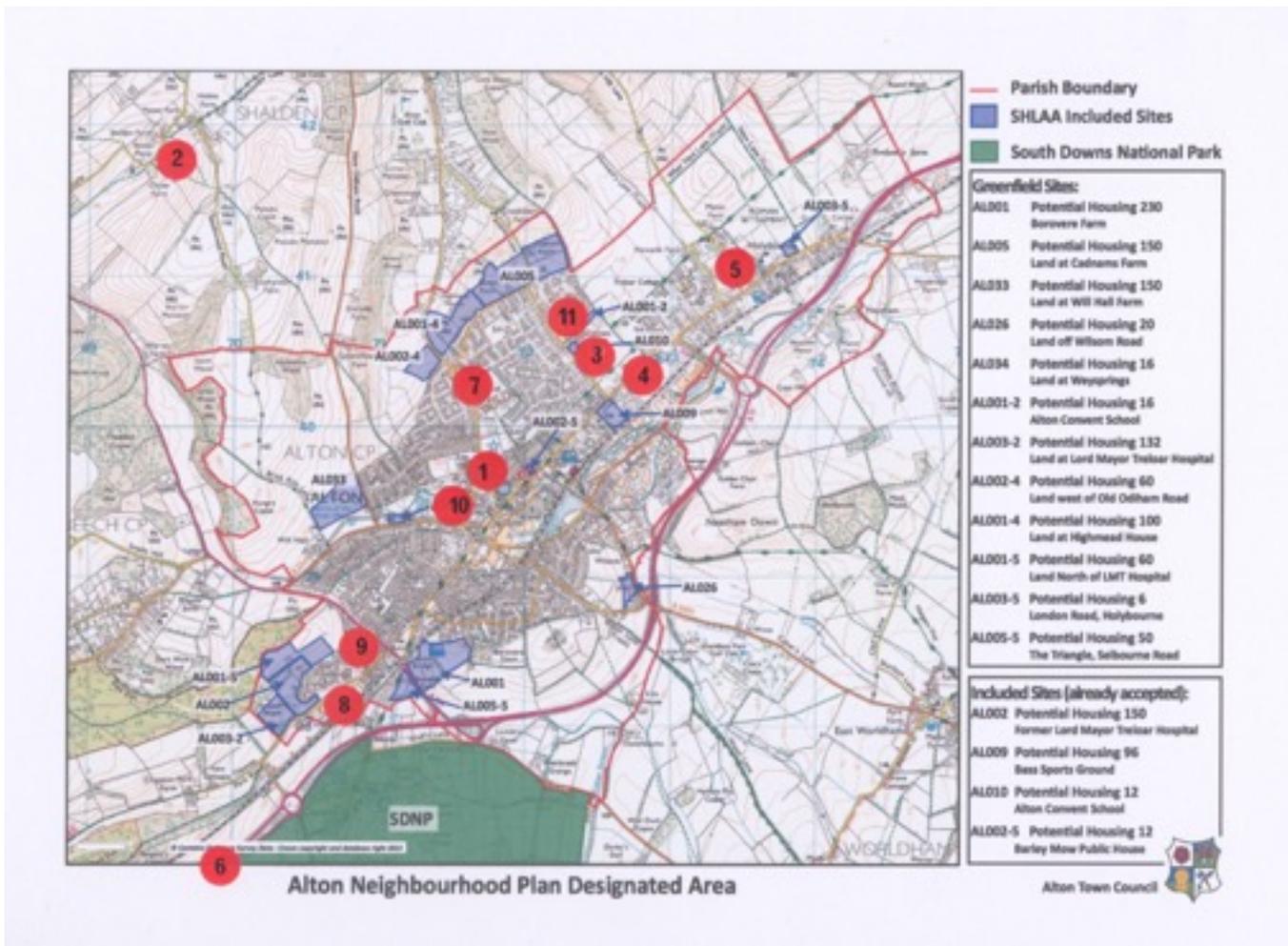
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2014 Included Sites - Alton



Key

1. Bushy Leaze Early Years centre	4. Andrews Endowed, School, Holybourne	7. Wootey Infant School	10. Eggars Secondary School
2. Alton Infants School	5. Butts Primary School	8. Wootey Junior School	11. Alton College
3. Anstey Junior School	6 St Lawrence Primary School	9. Amery Hill Secondary School	

Appendix 2: Location of Pre-schools and Nurseries serving Alton on SHLAA Map 2014



Key

1.ACA Pre school	4. Enchanted Nursery	7. Alton College Creche	10.St Lawrence Playgroup
2. The Beehive Montessori	5. Holybourne Village Pre-School	8. Busy Bees Pre- School	11. Garden House Day Nursery
3. Happy Talk Nursery	6. Chawton Pre-School	9. Little Den Pre-School	

Part 2 (Evidence from 17 May 2014 onward)

Introduction

Information contained in this Part 2 of the Education Evidence Base is focussed on actions and evidence gathered and considered from 17 May 2014 and up to the conclusion of the first six-week public consultation on 30 March 2015.

The draft Objective identified for the Alton Neighbourhood Plan was confirmed as a result of feedback from 17 May 2014 Feedback consultation. This Part 2 of the document therefore summarises the material that we have reviewed under Education and sets out how the proposed Policies were defined for the 22 November 2014 NP Policy public consultation and were further refined for the initial 6 week public consultation.

Definition of policies

Draft Education Policies were defined on an iterative and ongoing basis from the confirmed Objective over a number of months from 17 May 2014 to 30 March 2015.

After presentation to the public on 17 May 2014, all feedback information was gathered, collated and then formalised as part of the CQ from page 58 onwards. Feedback was in the form of post-it notes (known as 'stickies' within the NPSG), a full commentary of which is contained in the Consultation Statement. Analysis of feedback and further emerging evidence allowed the ANPSG to begin to develop the NP policies.

The defined Policies then formed a key part of the Policy presentation to the public on 22 Nov 2014. After this presentation all information was gathered and collated in the form of the *Analysis of Comments from Public Presentation held on 22 Nov 14* (ACPP). This document is available for review on the Alton Town Council website.

As a result of the ACPP findings refinements and adjustments were made to the draft policies to reflect public responses where the weight of opinion and justification supported a change. These refined policies were then distilled into a draft NP document for consideration by Alton Town Council prior to the initial Pre-Submission Public Consultation formally conducted from 16 Feb to 30 March 2015.

This evidence base was written, reviewed and refined over a period of a year and ongoing consultation with statutory bodies continued throughout this time(Ref:Consultation log 22 & 28). The last meeting was held on 23rd March 2015 with Martin Shefferd (HCC School organisation officer) and Head Teachers of the Butts Primary School and Wootey schools; Infant and Junior. Recent initiatives taken by the statutory providers of education (HCC) to address the perceived need for more school places in the light of recent planning applications were discussed. The Butts school is to be expanded to a two form entry and

St Lawrence CE Primary School will be expanded to a one form entry. Wootey Junior and Infant Schools have recently been awarded government funding but their expansion is still under consideration. As Hampshire County Council do not perceive there is yet a need for a new primary school, the policies for a new school and associated pre-school provision (ED2 and ED3) presented to the public in November were removed. In consultation with EHDC it is now included as an action point (EDAP1) rather than a specific policy in the draft Neighbourhood Plan. However, following concerns raised at the November presentation, the one remaining policy (ED1) was amended to ensure that school expansion was not at the expense of loss of playing fields and outdoor classrooms

14th April 2015