

**ALTON TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PLANNING & TRANSPORT COMMITTEE
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 14th JULY 2021**

at 7.00 p.m. in the Town Hall, Market Square Alton

Present: Councillor Graham Titterington Chair
Matthew Bayliss
Christopher Lawrence
Richard Platt

In attendance:

Leah Coney – Town Clerk
Pat Harris – Finance & Administration Manager

44 Chairman’s Announcements

The Chairman:

1. Welcomed all councillors to the first meeting since the AGM and extended a special welcome to those councillors who are new to this Committee.
2. Advised that this was the last hybrid meeting to be undertaken with committee members meeting in person and up to three members of the public attending with the opportunity to attend via zoom if over the limit for in person attendance. With effect from the August meeting (and subject to prevailing Government recommendations at the time) the council will revert to members of the public being able to attend in person with no limit being applied. However, it will be recommended that masks/visors are to be worn and councillors further advised to take a test before arriving for meetings.

45 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Paul Crossley Amanda Durley & Sharon Cullen.

46 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16th June 2021 were approved as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

47 Declaration of Interest & Dispensations Requested

The Chairman reminded members of their obligation to disclose any pecuniary interest in items on the agenda. No Dispensations were requested.

48 Questions/Representations/Correspondence to the Committee

1. Questions and representations from the Public relating Chawton Park Road are contained in Annex 1 of the Minutes.
2. E-mail correspondence from Mr. Roger Ingle requesting that Alton Town Council pass on his concerns to the police regarding being “harassed” by wheeled vehicles on the pavement

such as bicycles, electric disability carts and now electric scooters and that it is only a matter of time before inevitably users of such vehicles run into someone causing injury.

In response, the Chairman requested that this matter to be taken to the next meeting of the Community Partnership.

NOTED

49 Applications

49.1 **Planning Applications:** On the proposal of Councillor Graham Titterington seconded by Councillor Richard Platt it was

RESOLVED

That the views of the committee in respect of each application are as set out in the appendix to the minutes.

49.2 **Licencing Applications:** On the proposal of Councillor Graham Titterington seconded by Councillor Matthew Bayliss it was

RESOLVED

That the views of the committee in respect of each application are as set out in the appendix to the minutes.

49.3 **Tree Applications:** On the proposal of Councillor Graham Titterington seconded by Councillor Paul Crossley it was

RESOLVED

That the views of the committee in respect of each application are as set out in the appendix to the minutes.

49.4 Other correspondence/reports/information: There was no other correspondence to report.

50 Emerging Local Plan – including Chawton Park Farm, update following EHDC Planning Policy Meeting held on Tuesday, 6th July 2021

Representations and correspondence relating to this Agenda item had previously been circulated to councillors and full details can be found in the Appendix to these minutes.

The Committee considered their approach given that the recommendation to include this site is due to go before the District Council's Full Council on 29th July.

On the proposal of Councillor Graham Titterington seconded by Councillor Matthew Bayliss it was

RESOLVED to

- 1. request the Town Clerk write to EHDC to seek further clarification on the following points:**
 - (i) Procedural process – how officers arrived at their recommendation that Chawton Park Farm is the preferred option for a larger development site**
 - (ii) Duty to co-operate – what consideration has been given to the disproportionate calculation in respect of the**

South Downs National Park versus the remainder of the East Hampshire District Council boundary in taking housing numbers

- (iii) **Housing Needs Assessment, requesting full disclosure on calculations used and data source and why alternative calculations have not been used,**
- (iv) **Windfall development – how has this been factored in to the calculation**
- (v) **Advise East Hampshire District Council that legal opinion is being sought in case they may wish to defer the Full Council motion pending the outcome of the advice.**

2. Enquire of Counsel costs associated with legal opinion on the above points

51 To consider any matters or reports pertaining to Highways/ Parking/Public Transport, Housing, Street Naming and any current Public Exhibitions/Consultations

51.1 Street Naming: Former Molson Coors site, Manor Park, Lower Turk Street. EHDC have been asked for suggestions for potentially 8-10 possible roads plus names for blocks of flats. Local historian, Jane Hurst had been consulted and her recommendations for names associated with beers that were brewed on the site, together with brewing aids are considered appropriate for the site. It was also recommended that an interpretation panel on the brewing history associated with the site be erected at a suitable location within the development.

51.2 South East Water Dry Weather Plan Consultation 7th June – 2nd August – full details of the Plan and how to respond can be viewed via the link below:
[Dry weather plans | South East Water Corporate](#)

51.3 South Downs National Park Authority - Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Consultation – opportunity to comment on draft SPD. The consultation will run for a period of ten weeks, starting on Monday 28 June 2021. All comments must be received by 11.59pm on Monday 6 September 2021.

51.4 Response from County Councillor R.J. Oppenheimer, Executive Member for Highways Operations, HCC to a question posed by a local resident as to when the re-painting of the 20 mph roundels will be undertaken in the 20 mph zones in the town:

The request for the roundel refresh came in from Andrew Joy last month. The local highway engineer is looking to raise an order for this work asap. I have spoken to the lining contractor and he says they are flat out with keeping up with the resurfacing and surface dressing programme county wide, and it has been very poor weather for line painting, but he will do his very best to accommodate us. I am sorry but I can't give a firm timescale at this stage.

Adding I think we can take a positive from this in that the request is in the system and has been chased. It will get done. I wish we could give a clearer timescale but we do have to be understanding about the difficulties in the current period.

The meeting finished at 8.43 p.m.

Appendix 1

EHDC Planning Policy decision re: Chawton Park Farm

Questions & Representations received from members of the public:

1. Question from Mr. Duncan Kenny, 38 Shipley Close Alton GU34 2RW.

Dear Sirs,

Could you please raise the following question on behalf of myself, at the next town council planning committee meeting?

'What action are the town council going to take in order to oppose the Chawton Park Farm Development Plan'.

2. Public Questions: A Proposal for the 14 July ATC Planning Committee from Mike Heelis and David Allan

The recent news that EHDC intend to include the Chawton Park Farm “large site” into the draft Local Plan has shocked Altonian’s. The unseemly haste in which this is now being pursued is unacceptable and must be called out. We believe that there is another way and herein ask the Town Council Planning Committee to consider our proposal as set out below.

The “large site” principle for the District was first established when the Northbrook and Bordon sites were identified as a possible stand-alone and sustainable developments. They were included as part of the Draft Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation in February 2019. Chawton Park Farm was not.

In September 2019, EHDC issued the Large Site Development Consultation which contained ten potential (?) development sites. The output from this large site consultation was claimed by EHDC to identify large sites to accommodate up to 2000 dwellings (which was the figure identified in the Regulation 18 draft plan for Bordon and Northbrook). When challenged face-to-face as to why this consultation was taking place, the most senior planner in EHDC stated that, “in order to justify selection of the Northbrook site, EHDC had to demonstrate that they had considered other large site options in the District”. It is our view that the Northbrook site was in itself highly contentious and had raised objections at a very high level, therefore pushing EHDC into a costly and unwanted further consultation.

The results from the consultation showed significant opposition to the Chawton Park Farm site with more support leaning toward the Northbrook site.

There was then a long delay between the September 2019 consultation and the shock announcement for selection of the Chawton Park Farm site in July 2021. Some of this delay

may be attributed to Covid-19, but in our view not all. We suspect that awkward discussion has been ongoing “behind closed doors”.

During this twenty-two month period the Town Council, ADRA and the Alton Society all wrote to EHDC asking what had become of the Draft Local Plan and its timetable. These requests brought no clear answers and there appeared to be a deliberate “stonewall” with the only positive indication given that a likely site was “along the A31 corridor.”

We believe that EHDC have become fixated on large sites when there are other options available.

The developable area within East Hampshire is very small, due to around 80% of the land being taken up by the National Park, with its very limited capacity to accept housing development. Therefore, it is inevitable, with the Government forcing EHDC to develop even higher levels of housing, that our towns and villages outside of the National Park are going to significantly grow in size – a fact we all have to face.

The baseline for development of the draft plan was the EHDC-sponsored call for development sites, and the resultant publication of the Land Availability Assessment (LAA) in December 2018. Within this document there are many sites in and around Alton which have been discounted by EHDC as being undevelopable for various reasons. Due to the ever-increasing pressure to take more development, we believe that the criteria for selection or non-selection of sites in Alton and the surrounding area has changed. We cannot therefore now afford to apply all of the restrictions and limitations EHDC has done to various sites in the past. So, we believe that there is another way.

We have done an assessment of the 2018 EHDC LAA and believe that, given the changed criteria as set out above, some sites within the Alton town boundary now merit reconsideration of their develop-ability. We have identified potential sites for 1147 dwellings which could be built in a more sustainable locations than Chawton Park Farm (whose sustainability credentials are straining credulity).

Our draft and very early work is set out at Annex A below. Development of these alternative sites could provide a more acceptable solution for the town, particularly if coupled with a new access to A31 from Wilsom Road (as per Hampshire County Council current proposals).

We ask the Town Council Planning Committee to give this option serious consideration, so that development of the Chawton Park Farm site can be prevented while still providing the required housing numbers for the EHDC Local Plan large site in the Alton area.

M C Heelis MBE

D Allan MBE

EHDC LAA Extract Modified

EHDC LAA ID	Site address	Size in Ha	Potential for housing at 37 dwellings per Ha	Sift of doable sites - Heelis/ Allan	EHDC Analysis of Deliverability	Why EHDC Assessment given
LAA/AL-004	Land off Cowdray Park, Alton, GU34 2TT	2.5	92.5	92.5	Undevelopable	The area has a rural character and is visible from a distance forming the brow of a hill. Development would have an adverse impact on the intrinsic character of the countryside and landscape.
LAA/AL-013	Land at Weysprings, Alton	7.4	273.8	273.8	Undevelopable	The area has a rural character and is visible from a distance. Development would have an adverse impact on the intrinsic character of the countryside and landscape.
LAA/AL-014	Land at Weysprings Park, Windmill Lane, Alton	4.9	181.3	181.3	Undevelopable	Development would have an adverse impact on the intrinsic character of the countryside.
LAA/AL-019	Windmill House, Windmill Lane, Alton	2.9	107.3	107.3	Undevelopable	The area has a rural character and is visible from a distance. Development would have an adverse impact on the intrinsic character of the countryside and landscape.
LAA/AL-020	Lindsey's Field (N), south of Water Lane, Alton	6.8	251.6	251.6	Undevelopable	Development would have an adverse impact on the intrinsic character of the countryside.
LAA/AL-021	Lindsey's Field (S), south of Water Lane, Alton	6.5	240.5	240.5	Undevelopable	Development would have an adverse impact on the intrinsic character of the countryside.
	Totals	28.5	1054.5	1147		

3. Councillor Graham Titterington's (as Chair of the Planning & Transport Committee) wrote to District Councillor Angela Glass re the proposed Chawton Park site as being the preferred large site allocated under the Local Plan:

Subject: RE: New site proposed as Local Plan enters next phase

Dear Cllr Glass

I am Chair of the ATC Planning and Transport Committee. The Committee considered a number of potential sites for large scale housing development and contributed to EHDC's review in 2019. We expressed a number of concerns with the Chawton Park Farm site, all of which remain or are increased by the new proposal. We are also dismayed by the sudden announcement and short time period between the publication of this proposal and the EHDC Planning Policy Committee meeting on July 6th, and question the need for adopting the proposal in such haste and without further consultation.

A large development in this area goes a long way to joining up the existing towns and villages of Alton, Beech, Chawton and Four Marks – contrary to long established planning policy. The particular site encroaches on precious ancient woodland and it is very difficult to see how it contributes to the legal requirement for increasing bio-diversity. Before any decision is taken to adopt this site a full Environmental Impact Assessment should be carried out.

Your meeting notes promise a development including public facilities, but stop short of any specific proposals other than a primary school. Our experience with developers across the region is that they are very reluctant to provide anything other than housing, and that even in established residential areas most shops, pubs and other public buildings are closing. We need only look at the now large town of Four Marks to see how development has failed to deliver public amenities. ATC has recently had a long battle to secure a small community facility in the new brewery development and while we very much welcome this facility, it fails to come close to the visions offered in the public consultation process for this site. The concept of putting 1,200 houses on a single site in the hope that this will deliver a sustainable community is fanciful.

The notes place great reliance on the "sustainability" of this site. It is hard to imagine a site with worse access. Northfield Lane is narrow, and single track under the Mid Hants Railway bridge. In the other direction Chawton Park Road is very narrow and does not have room for a pavement or footpath. It already experiences congestion at its junction with Whitedown Lane and this will deteriorate as the new development on the site of the former Treloar's Hospital is built out. You may recall that Hampshire Highways prevented the installation of traffic lights at this junction because they would create a tailback of stationary traffic that would block the new Butts roundabouts. Adding even more traffic to this junction is not sustainable.

Widening Northfield Lane, including a new railway bridge, would be very expensive, based on recent experience with the Butts Bridge. It could also be fatal to the Mid Hants Railway as it struggles to recover from a year's closure for the Butts Bridge rebuilding and followed by 2 years of Covid shut downs and restrictions. The potential economic impact on the region's tourist economy has to be considered.

The new site is a long way from Alton town centre and realistically almost all journeys to and from the site will be by car. The situation in relation to the Aldi and (proposed) Lidl stores shows a total reliance on car transport. In the 2019 consultation exercise, the plan proposed circling the 64bus service around the estate. This is unlikely to happen as Stagecoach is driven by commercial considerations. The service runs on a tight timetable and such a detour would require either an additional vehicle to be allocated to the route, or a reduction in the service frequency of the entire route. Stagecoach abandoned the existing extension of the route around the Manor, Wooteys and Eastbrooke estates for this reason, leaving the entire north/east of Alton without a regular bus service. It will hardly introduce a similar detour to serve a much smaller number of predominantly car-owning houses. It must be remembered that the 64 route provides the only bus service to Four Marks and Ropley, and the main service to Alton and Alresford. The overall viability of this route is of far greater importance than serving one more housing estate. This site cannot be considered as “sustainable” from a transport perspective.

The overall housing numbers that EHDC is aiming to satisfy need to be examined. East Hampshire has a peculiarly difficult situation because the majority of its land falls within the SDNP. Furthermore, numbers calculated on the basis of affordability of housing are distorted by higher prices in areas with the national park. This situation is unusual, but not unique. It does appear that areas such as Central Bedfordshire and South Lakeland have found some flexibility in calculating numbers that has not happened in East Hants. This major proposal needs to be subjected to greater scrutiny than is possible before July 6th, including a full environmental impact assessment.

Regards

Graham Titterington

Chair, Alton Town Council Planning and Transport Committee

4. Reply from EHDC in response to District & Town Councillor Richard Platt re housing calculations for the Local Plan:

Dear Councillor Platt,

Many thanks for your question. The answer was highlighted by Adam in his opening address last night and relates to the planning practice guidance, specifically paragraph: 015 for housing and economic development needs assessments (Reference ID: 2a-015-20190220).

I presume that the interest in using a different approach stems from the idea that it will deliver a lower housing requirement for our planning area. In this scenario, paragraph 015 is clear that: Where an alternative approach results in a lower housing need figure than that identified using the standard method, the strategic policy-making authority will need to demonstrate, using robust evidence, that the figure is based on realistic assumptions of demographic growth and that there are exceptional local circumstances that justify deviating from the standard method. This will be tested at examination.

We have a large number of parties interested in development across our planning area. For any party aggrieved at not being included in the Local Plan - and there will be many - they will have the opportunity at Regulation 19 to object to our plan on the grounds that it does not comply with national planning policy regarding its ability to meet objectively assessed needs. Grounds for such an objection would appeal (e.g.) to paragraph 11 of the NPPF, the presumption in favour of sustainable development, and would rely on claiming that our

figure is not based on realistic assumptions of demographic growth and/or that there are no exceptional local circumstances that justify deviating from the standard method. Regarding the last point and as Adam explained last night, EHDC has a long history of working with the SDNPA to consider the housing needs of East Hampshire as a whole, with agreements subsequently being made over the degree to which housing supply will be provided in the National Park and in the remaining areas of East Hampshire. So, it not credible to say that we can't continue with such an approach (other things being equal), this being one that could involve the standard method (which applies to districts as a whole). Notwithstanding a view on this, the first point about needs being based on "realistic assumptions" already opens the door to challenge. There would also be grounds to suggest that we'd not be meeting un-met needs from the National Park (i.e. if our method were to exclude the consideration of housing needs in this area and taking account of the inability of the current SDNP Local Plan to meet all of the housing needs in its area that are projected for the period to 2038). This is another requirement of national policy.

I hope the above establishes the significant potential for challenge through Regulation 19 and the subsequent local plan examination. The relatively high risk of failure in terms of these challenges is based on the fact that there is no further guidance available to Planning Inspectors that would enable them to decide what is reasonable and what is not regarding demographic change, beyond the information supplied on the standard method. Where the standard method is used, Inspectors don't need to delve into this matter at examination - that's why the standard method was proposed in the first place, i.e. to reduce uncertainty and lengthy arguments during examination. Avoiding the standard method therefore recreates uncertainty and arguments at the examination stage. In some ways, we'd be in a worse position than before, because there was at least national guidance on acceptable approaches before the standard method was provided.

In summary, deviation from an approach that uses the standard method is likely to generate multiple, significant questions over whether we were meeting our objectively assessed needs. There would also be questions around un-met needs. A planning inspector would be faced with no substantive guidance over how to resolve these arguments - and, frankly, I don't think that we'd be in strong position for our lone voice around the examination table to hold sway. To play devil's advocate: if the needs of the National Park area of East Hampshire - an area that shares a housing market geography with parts of our planning area - cannot be met within the National Park, why should they not be met in our planning area, given that our land availability assessment will show that we have the land available? We do not have the evidence to show that they should not, per the requirements of the NPPF. For example, the parishes of Four Marks and Medstead are particularly lacking in major environmental constraints and there is much developer interest there.

I trust that the above clarifies this issue.

Kind Regards

Kevin

**COMMENTS ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS CONSIDERED BY THE
PLANNING & TRANSPORT COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 14th JULY 2021**

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Notification of Full Planning Application:

1. 27354/005 Site Address: 17 Market Street, Alton, GU34 1HA
Proposal: Change of Use from E(A) Retail to Sui Generis (Taxi Office)
NO OBJECTION

2. 31372/010 Site Address: Saxon House, Drayman's Way, Alton, GU34 1AY
Proposal: Removal of the existing first and second floor timber framed vertical sliding sash windows to the front elevation and replacement with new timber framed double glazed vertical sliding sash windows.
**OBJECTION for the following material reason:
Replacement fenestrations should be in keeping with the original windows.**

3. 59328 Site Address: Apollonia House, 2 Amery Street, Alton, GU34 1HN
Proposal: Change of Use from Class E (formerly Class D1 Clinic) to Class C3 (dwelling-house)
**NO OBJECTION to the change of use but with the following additional comment:
The building will need to be re-designed as in its current format the building is not habitable and changes will be required.**

Notification of Advertisement Consent application

1. 20350/010 Site Address: Lloyds TSB Bank Plc, 40 High Street, Alton, GU34 1BQ
Proposal: 1no New Non-Illuminated TSB Logo, 1no New Non- Illuminated Projecting Sign with TSB Logo and 1no New double sided A frame
NO OBJECTION subject to a condition that the use of an "A" Board is granted for a temporary period of 3 months only as Alton Town Council is concerned re the proliferation of "A" Boards in the town centre.

2. 57035/001 Site Address: Land at Montecchio Way and, Mill Lane, Alton
Proposal: Display of illuminated totem sign
OBJECTION for the following material reasons:
 1. **This application appears premature as it should be linked to the planning application**
 2. **Alton Town Council concur with the comments of the Highways Authority on highway safety concerns**
 3. **The height and brightness of the sign is out of keeping with that already granted permission in the locality**

Notification of Pre-Decision Amendment - Consultation of Householder application

1. 22766/040 Site Address: Alton House Hotel, Normandy Street, Alton, GU34 1DW
Proposal: Two blocks of 5 flats (10 in total) with car parking and landscaping (amended description and plans received 18 June 2021)
Amendment Details:
Revised proposal to form two blocks of five flats with associated amended plans and layout.
HOLDING OBJECTION until such time as the application documents submitted are consistent and with the following comment:
There is no provision for renewable energy

2. 27338/010 Site Address: 72 Anstey Road, Alton, GU34 2RF
Proposal: Single storey side extension, two storey rear extension to existing building with landscaping alterations to increase to a 10 bed HMO (amended elevations received 5/7/2021)
Amendment Details:
Amendments to elevations (side window)
Alton Town Council maintains its objection to this application and repeats its comments of 19th May 2021:

OBJECT for the following material reasons:

This is an application to turn this property into a 10-bedroom building as a “House in Multiple Occupation” and the proposed use for this is not given and therefore:
 - (i) **The application does not satisfy the parking requirements of Policy TR5 of the Alton Neighbour Plan – note it still has only 7 parking spaces and no justification has been given for this shortfall.**
 - (ii) **A number of the proposed bedsits appear very cramped and without understanding the proposed use for the building the Committee cannot satisfy itself that required standards are fully met.**
 - (iii) **There is no provision for improved energy efficiency or energy generation.**

Notification of Householder application

1. 27354/004 Site Address: Suzette, 95 Basingstoke Road, Alton, GU34 1QJ
Proposal: Removal of existing bungalow roof and add a first floor extension over existing building footprint. Add new front porch.
NO OBJECTION

2. 33327/001 Site Address: Clareville, 32 Wilsom Road, Alton, GU34 2SP
Proposal: Single storey rear extension along with a new front porch and bay windows to the front
NO OBJECTION

3. 59281/001 Site Address: 2 Bello Abbey Way, Alton, GU34 2FS
Proposal: Installation of Solar Panels to rear roofs of property
NO OBJECTION

4. 59330 Site Address: 74 Queens Road, Alton, GU34 1HX
Proposal: Proposed single storey rear extension, new window to front elevation along with facade render and cladding
NO OBJECTION

Notification of Lawful Development Certificate proposed application

Proposal: Lawful Development Certificate for Proposed use or Development

1. 59299 Site Address: 28 Windmill Hill, Alton, GU34 2SL
Proposal: Lawful development certificate proposed - single storey rear extension and installation of flue to rear under Class G
NO OBJECTION

South Downs National Park planning application: Adjoining Parish

1. SDNP/21/03544/APNB
Pepper-pot Nursery Selborne Road Selborne Alton GU34 3HL
Application to determine if prior approval is required for proposed Erection of a Building for Agricultural use for 3 Polythene Tunnels.
NO OBJECTION

LICENCING

1. Premises Licence:
McCarthy & Stone Limited have applied to East Hants Licensing Authority for a new Premises Licence at Austen Place (Retirement Living), Lower Turk Street, Alton Hants, GU34 1FZ. The applicant has applied for the following licensable activities.

Sale of Alcohol 11:00 – 23:00 Monday to Sunday. On sales only.
Hours Open to the Public 11:00 – 23:00 Monday to Sunday.
NO OBJECTION

TREE APPLICATIONS

1. 33954/006 Site Address: Westbrook, 43 Lenten Street, Alton, GU34 1HE
Proposal: 1-Hawthorn-Remove. 2-Holly-Remove
This application does not require permission as per the comments of the Tree Warden
2. 38784/013 Site Address: Open Space B at the Development of, Kings View, Alton
Re: Application for consent for Works to trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order
Proposal: Cedar-Tree 1-Crown lift to 5m.
NO OBJECTION as per the recommendation of the Tree Warden

3. 38784/014 Site Address: Open Space B at the Development of, Kings View, Alton
Re: Application for consent for Works to trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order
Proposal: Tree 2-European Walnut-Crown lift to 5m.
NO OBJECTION as per the recommendation of the Tree Warden

4. 51605/006 Site Address: 6 Anstey Mill Close, Alton, GU34 2QT
Re: Application for consent for Works to trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order
Proposal: T2-Golden Monterey Cyprus-Crown lift to 3m.
NO OBJECTION as per the recommendation of the Tree Warden