



Welcome to the Alton Neighbourhood Plan Public Consultation

We are a community led volunteer group chaired by a volunteer and supported by the Town and District Councils

We hope you will give us some good input and feedback today, on this, our second public engagement session, in order for us to begin drafting a new plan.

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Please use the post it notes provided to give us your views and comments relating to the various subject areas covered by the plan. If you wish to leave more detailed comments please use the cards on the comments table and post in the box once completed.



What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

Neighbourhood Planning is a process which enables communities to have a shared vision and a stronger role in the shaping their area. Plans are developed by community volunteers supported by Town and District Councils. A high level of public engagement and consultation is required to formulate a draft plan.

Areas which can be covered are:

- Allocation of sites for housing.
- Design and look of development.
- Infrastructure requirements.
- Transport and parking.
- Other issues deemed appropriate for inclusion by the community.

Once drafted plans have to follow a process:

- They have to be formally consulted on for a period of 6 weeks (known as Regulation 14).
- Be submitted to the planning authority for a further 6 week consultation.
- Be formally reviewed and passed by a Government Examiner.
- Finally, be voted into acceptance by local referendum.

A lot of effort in terms of time and grant funding are required to achieve full acceptance.



Introduction to Alton Neighbourhood Plan

First Alton Neighbourhood Plan (ANP1) was adopted post public referendum in 2016.

An amended NP was confirmed in November 2021 and will expire in November 2023.

Main benefits of the Alton NP are:

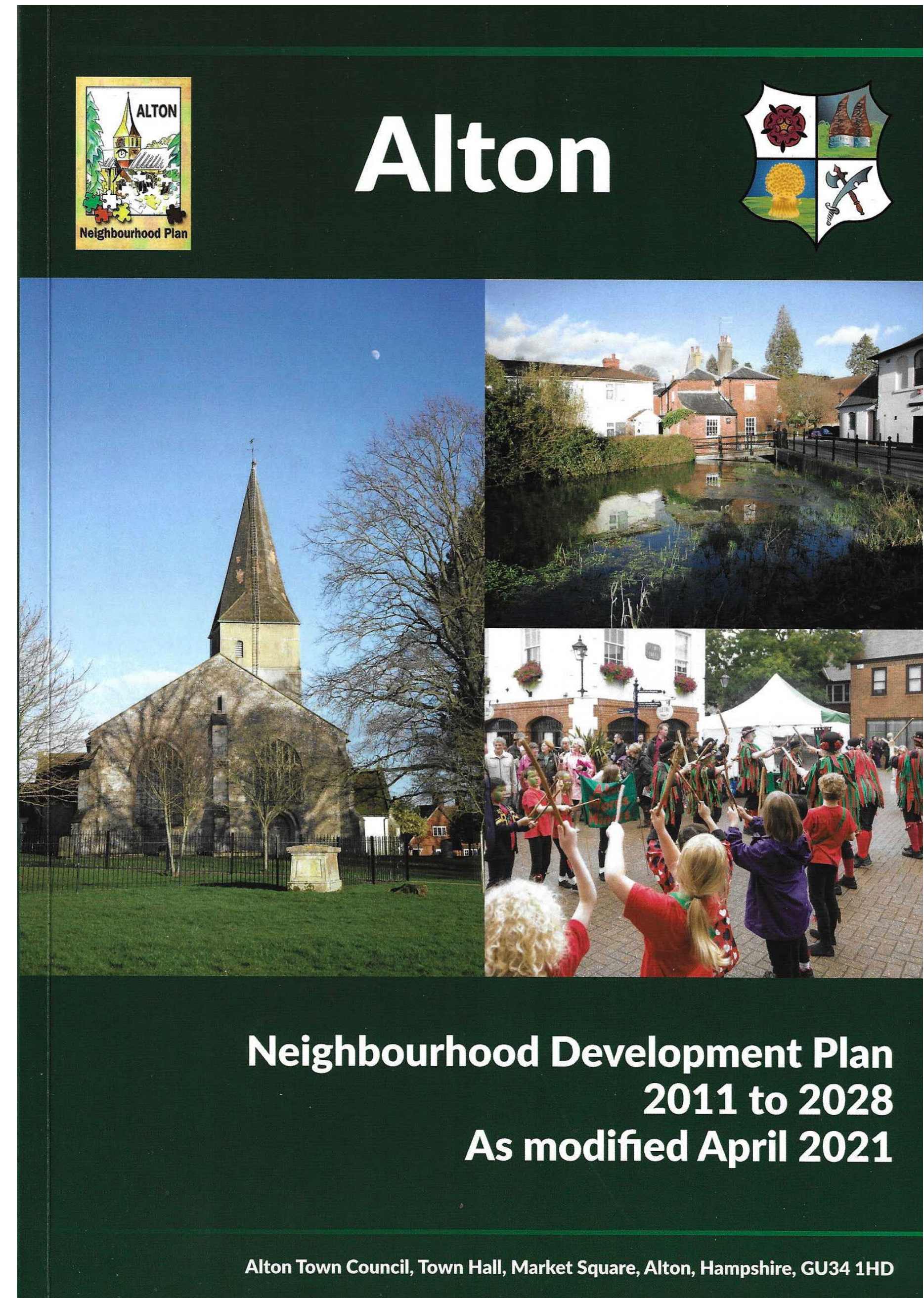
- With a formal NP in place Alton receives a proportion of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) from development.
- Money coming from CIL to Alton since adoption in 2016 has been £576,422.34
- Influence over where housing is to be located and how much.
- A guide on architectural design of new development.
- Parking standards for developments.
- Protection and provision of Green Spaces.
- Influencing town health and education provision.
- Supporting the economic viability and sustainability.
- Influencing town infrastructure
- Action Points to be delivered where possible by Town Council.





Current Alton Neighbourhood Plan.
Can be viewed at:

<https://www.alton.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan/>





Why we need a new Neighbourhood Plan

- Without a NP Alton would not continue to receive a proportion of Community Infrastructure Levy money.
- There is considerable pressure on East Hants to take even more development than it has to date.
- There is resistance to place housing developments within the National Park and so the rest of East Hants is under pressure to take proportionally more to compensate.
- East Hants District Council (EHDC) is producing a new Local Plan and we as a community want to have our say in how the NP area develops.
- Presently, EHDC are expecting to allocate sites for 3,405 additional homes more than currently planned in East Hants (outside of the National Park).
- The level of detail which our NP will go into will be of a much more locally focused level than the Local Plan.
- We understand the Alton must grow and evolve, but we want this to happen without destroying its heritage, setting, character and charm.



Milestones

EHDC Local Plan Timetable

Regulation 18 Part 1 public consultation - November 2022 (complete)

Regulation 18 Part 2 public consultation – February 2024

Regulation 19 public consultation - September 2024.

Regulation 22/23 submission - December 2024.

Regulation 24 examination – January 2025

Inspectors report August 2025.

Adoption - Autumn 2025.

Alton Neighbourhood Plan Timetable

Formation of working group, definition of Charter & program plan
February 2023 (complete)

Initial informal public engagement - 19/20 May 23.(complete)

Analysis of input and plan drafting - May to September 2023.

Second informal public engagement - September 2023.

Third informal public engagement – November 2023

Formal Regulation 14 Consultation - February 2024 - March 2024.

Town Council Approval – 26 June 2024.

Submission to EHDC – 27 June 2024.

EHDC public consultation - dates to be confirmed.

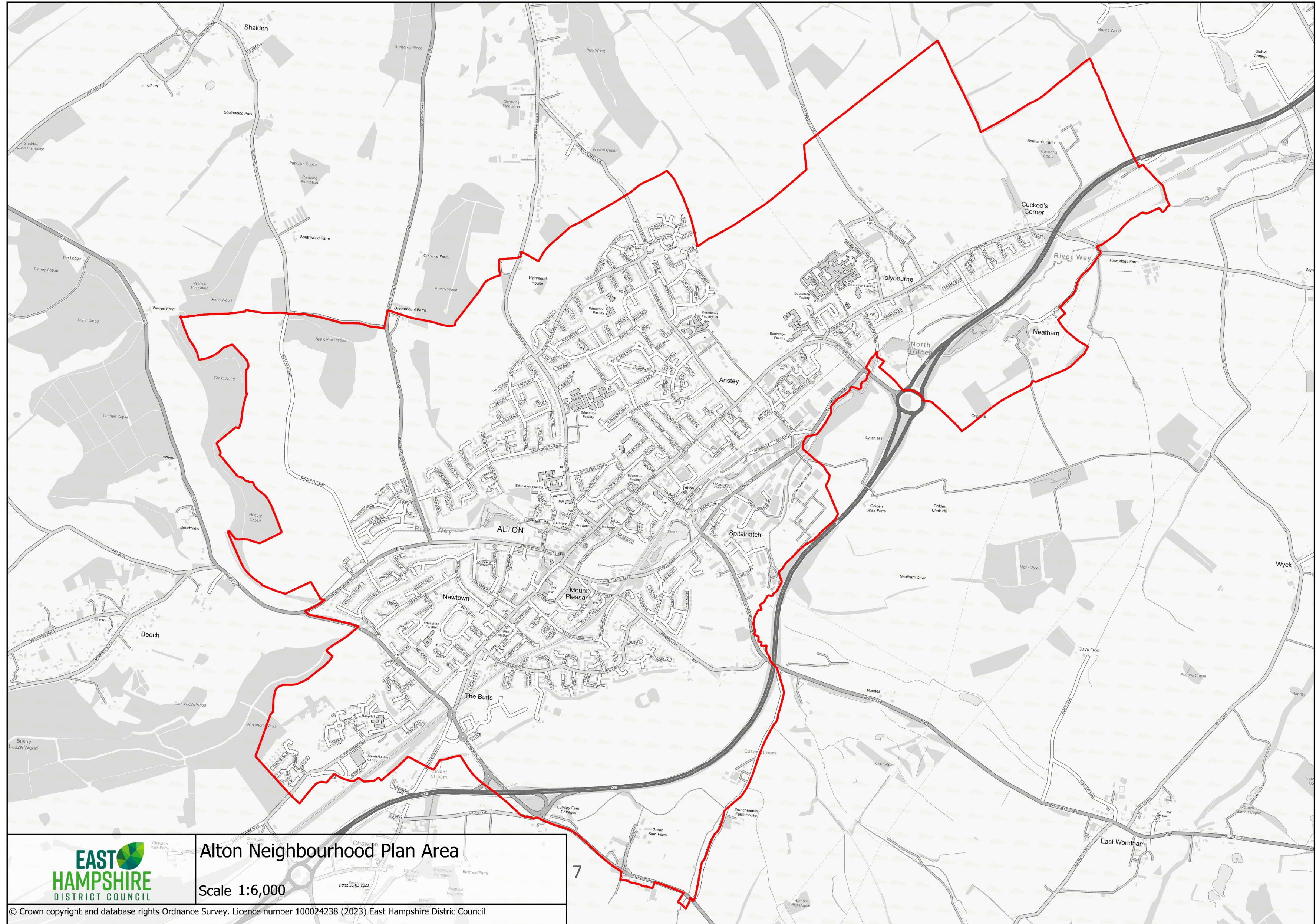
EHDC approval and submission to examiner - dates to be confirmed.

Inspectors report - date to be confirmed.

Alton Parish referendum for Alton Neighbourhood Plan acceptance - date to be confirmed.



Neighbourhood Plan Area





Policy Areas for Plan – Feedback from May

- Thank you to everyone who came to the drop-in sessions in May this year.
- Over 330 visitors came along
- Hundreds of post-it notes and postcards were written by attendees
- This were collated, typed up and analysed and can be seen at:
<https://www.alton.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan/>
- As a result, we have now started to shape some of the policies and action points for the new draft Alton Neighbourhood Plan
- We would now like your further thoughts on these emerging policy ideas.





Summary of May 23 Consultation Outputs

- You told us.....that we should “*Build houses to the highest standards of sustainability*”.
- We had a huge response to the question of residential site allocations and you told us:
 - *The huge proposed Holybourne development will destroy the character of the village.”*
 - *“We need to preserve the skyline and ensure that the development sits within the Alton bowl”*
 - *“Not higher up around Windmill Hill”*
 - *“Neighbourhood Plan should specify a contour height limit”*
 - *“Brownfield sites should be developed over Greenfield”*
- You also told us.....new developments should have “*wildlife friendly planting and green spaces*”

Summary of May 23 Consultation Outputs

- You told us.... "*Local cycling/ walking infrastructure needs to be improved to encourage people out of their cars, to give more choice of how to travel within the town*"
- You told us... "*there are not enough doctors and dentists etc to cope with increased demand*".
- You told us.. "*To protect all Green spaces, especially informal ones on existing housing estates.*"
- You told us..."*There should be 20 MPH speed limits all through Alton and Holybourne*"





Summary of May 23 Consultation Outputs

In reviewing the comments and considering the existing plan, the following Proposed draft policies list has been developed:

DESIGN AND CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

- DE1 Town setting and natural assets
- DE2 Building design and town character
- DE3 Local heritage assets
- DE4 Retrofitting in Conservation Areas
- DE5 Zero carbon building

HOUSING

- HO1 Housing mix, type and tenure
- HO2 New housing site allocations

TRANSPORT

- TR1 Sustainable travel
- TR2 Parking provisions and standards

EDUCATION

- ED1 Schools' expansion

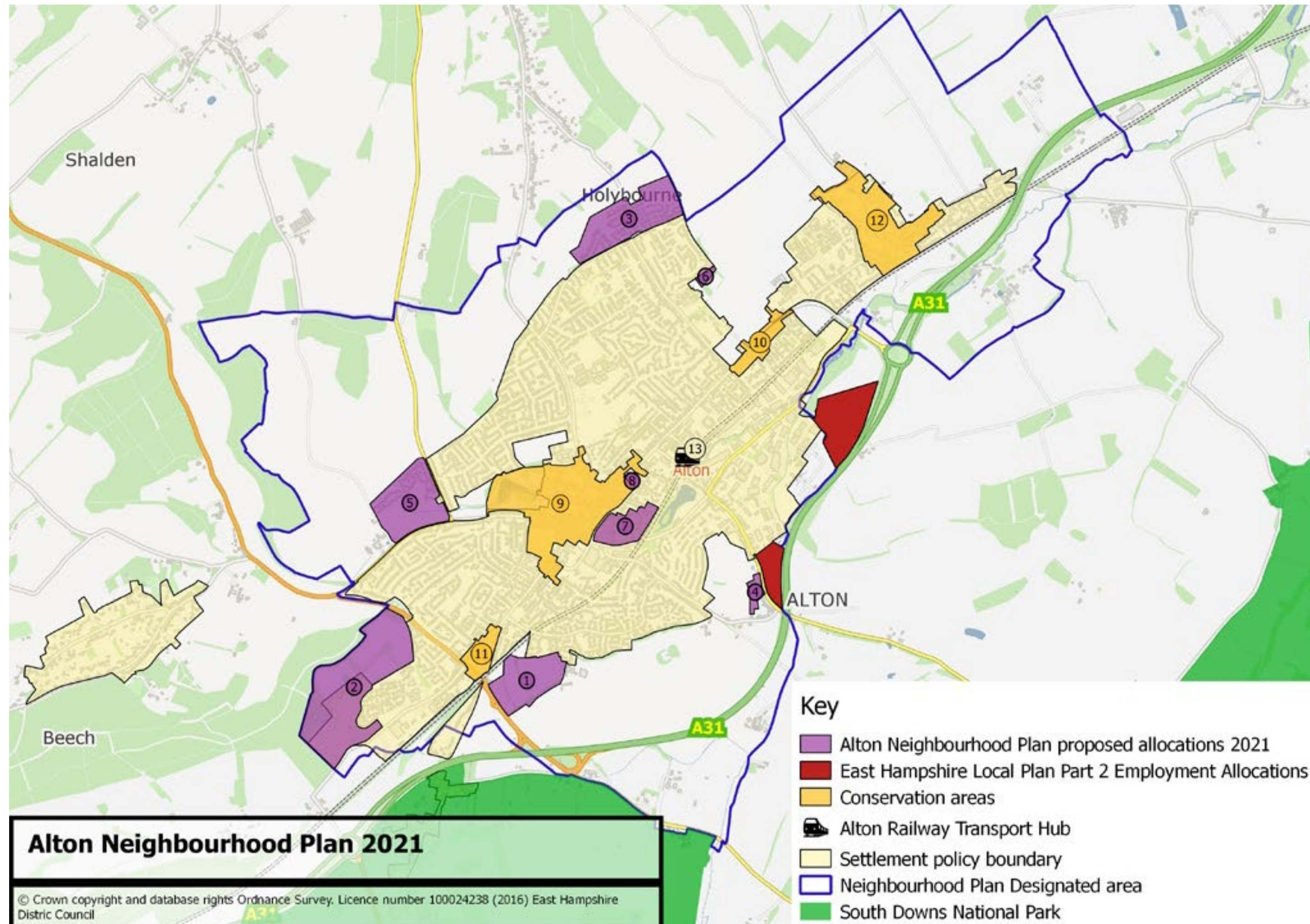
COMMERCIAL BUSINESSES AND SERVICES

- CBS1 Alton town centre
- CBS2 Local shops and services

COMMUNITY, HEALTH AND RECREATION inc CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION

- CH1 Community facilities
- CH2 Health facilities and the community hospital
- CH3 Local green spaces
- CH4 Green and blue infrastructure

Current Housing Development Areas in Alton (built and in progress)



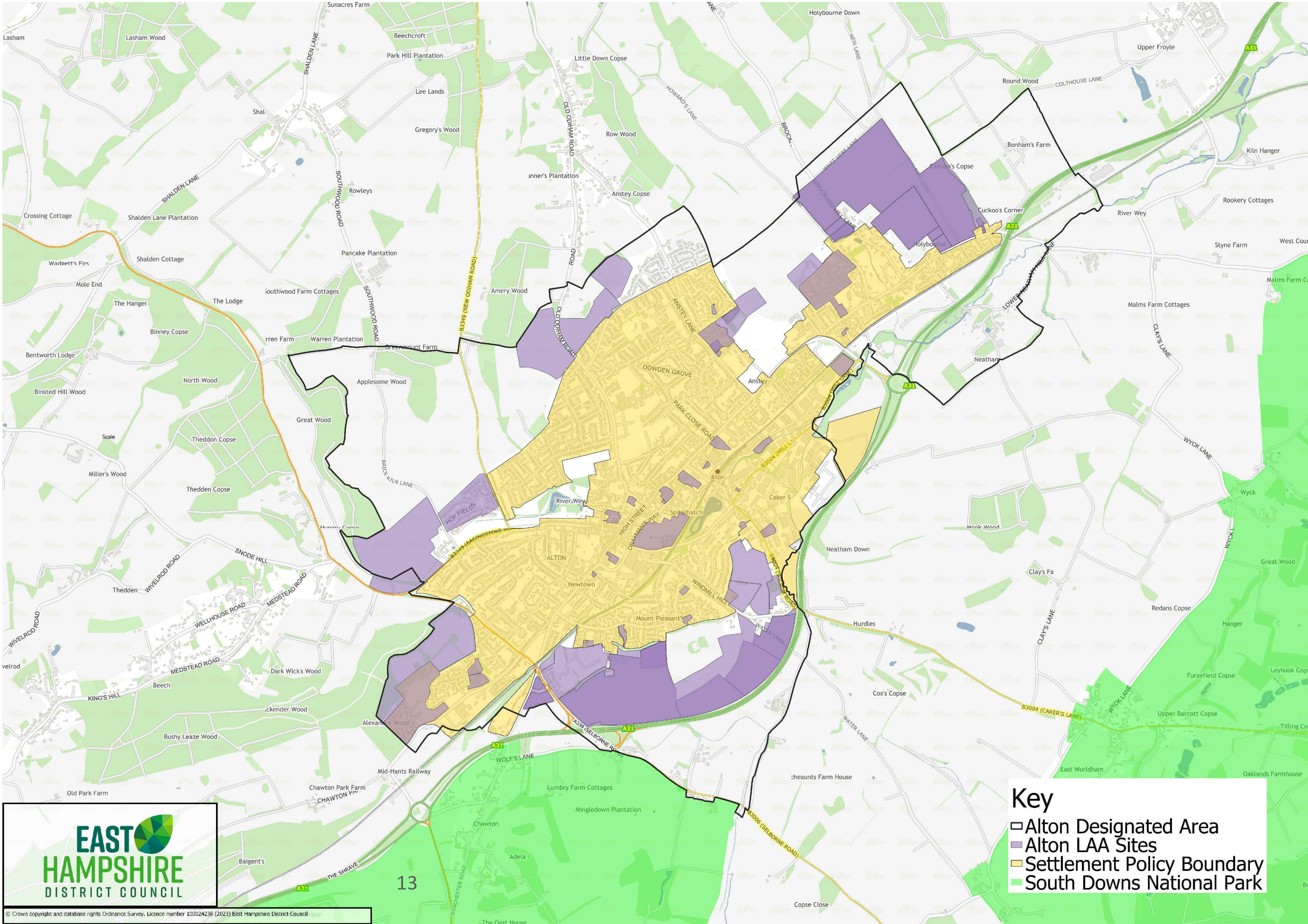
***Summary Map of Already Allocated Sites
also Including proposed Employment
Sites and Existing Conservation Areas***

Overall LAA Sites within which housing is planned:
1. Land East of Selborne Road
2. Treloar
3. Cadnam: As at April 2021 at an advanced stage of build out or almost complete
4. Wilsom Road
5. Will Hall Farm: As at April 2021 at an advanced stage of build out or almost complete
6. Land adjacent to Convent
7. Molson Coors
8. Alton Magistrates Court
Sites proposed by EHDC for Employment Use:
Lynch Hill
Wilsom Road
Existing Conservation Areas:
9. Alton (Town Centre)
10. Anstey
11. The Butts
12. Holybourne
Other Areas:
13. Railway station/transport hub
South Downs National Park



EHDC Land Availability Sites for Housing as at 2022

See wall chart for a large scale version of the map.

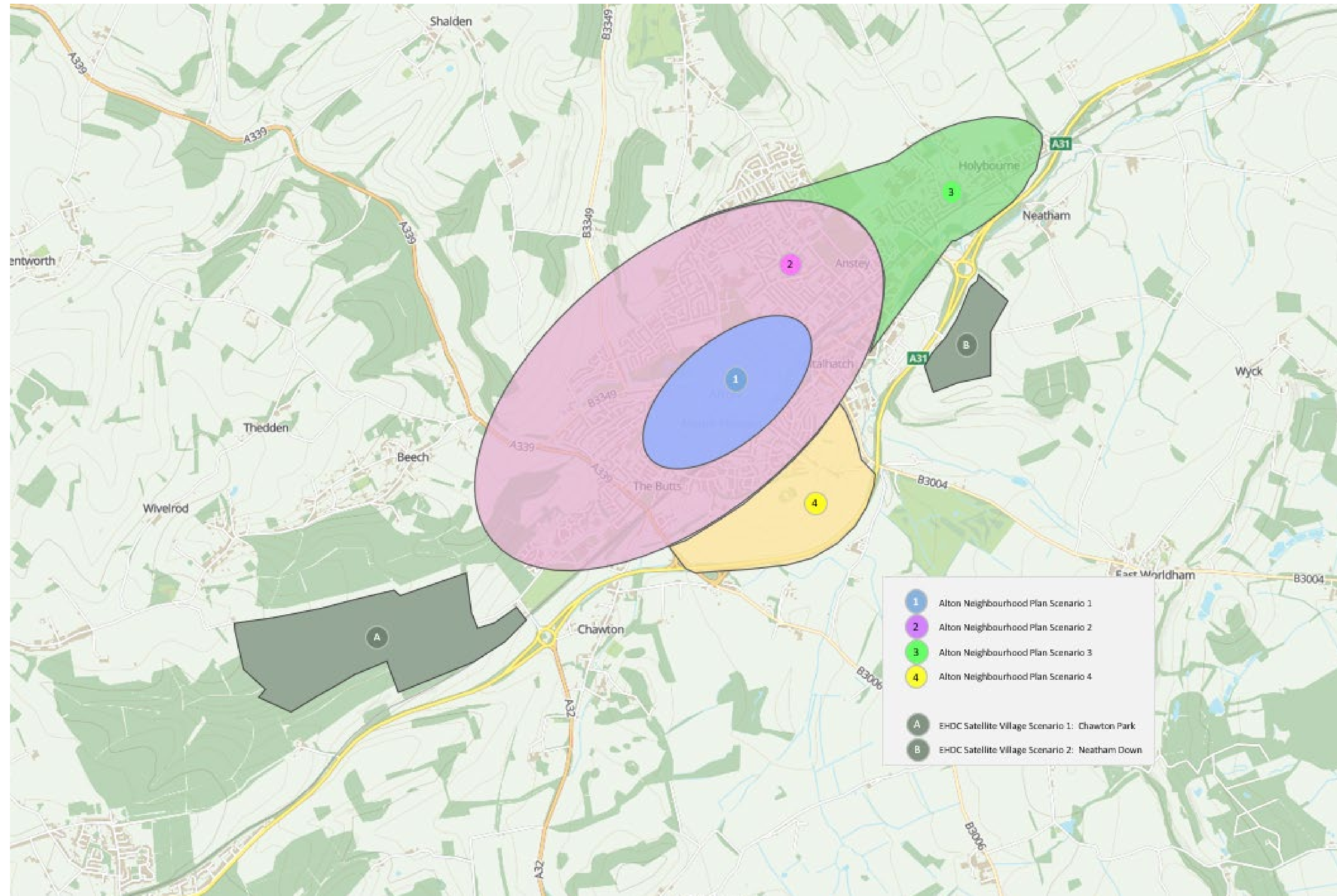




NP Potential Residential Site Allocations

- We are awaiting more information from EHDC updating the Land Availability Assessment (LAA), ready for publication in September.
- However, we have used the last published LAA from 2022 to shape our thinking for future housing sites.
- In order to facilitate this, we have used a process called “*Scenario Planning*” which aims to look forward to how the town might develop out to 2050.
- It is not about predicting the future but looking at the different ways the town could evolve, to inform a choice about which path to take.
- We have defined 4 scenarios through which the town may grow.
- Importantly these begin with a number of brownfield sites close to the town centre and then build cumulatively to produce a practical maximum housing number. These brownfield sites do not currently appear in the EHDC Land Availability assessment.
- A key tenet of our analysis was the wish to keep Alton within the Wey valley setting and not to break the skyline.
- A schematic of the areas these scenarios cover is on the following board. It is emphasised that these are only concepts at this time.

Map Summary of Four Considered Scenarios



Scenario 1 Brownfield First

- This is a '*brownfield first*' response to growth. It uses redevelopment of vacant, under-used or future redundant land within the defined town boundary only and it assumes the ability to rationalise public car parking on to fewer sites. It is anticipated that this scenario will deliver up to approximately 300 to 400 new homes across a dozen or more sites, not all of which have yet been made available for redevelopment.
- This Scenario will lead to a relatively small loss of some employment land but need not mean a net loss in the number of jobs in Alton. Development will need to be brought forward at higher densities, especially on sites in and close to the town centre where there may be a shift from commercial uses to housing on the town centre fringes and on some current car parking land behind the town centre frontage. It may need a lower level of residential car parking as a result.
- The sites are shown on the large map titled Map Summary of Four Considered Scenarios.
- A detailed positive and negative points chart follows

Scenario 1 Brownfield First

Positive effects?	Harmful effects?
Less impact on the open countryside and wider National Park landscape	Higher density may lead to harm to the character and appearance of the local area and heritage assets
Majority of homes will be smaller than average and located to suit older downsizers and younger, first-time buyers and renters	Fewer, larger family sized housing and fewer ‘affordable homes’ given brownfield redevelopment economics and sites of < 10 homes being exempt from provision
Less car-dependent development as most schemes are within walking distance of the town centre	Any net loss of parking may undermine the role the town centre plays in serving surrounding villages
Residential uses in the town centre increasing footfall and providing greater surveillance and vitality in creating a stronger day time and nighttime economy leading to low unit vacancy rates	Lower parking standards to achieve higher density might displace parking and create pressures in other parts of the town
Up to £2.0million of CIL to invest in upgrading local public realm and other infrastructure (less any discount for reusing existing space)	Loss of an opportunity for planning gain e.g. affordable housing, new or improved infrastructure beyond what CIL could fund
	May result in more demolition – embodied carbon release – retention and re-use of existing buildings could lead to fewer dwellings
	Potential strain on GP services is an impact on town scenarios
	Potentially exacerbate flooding issues in the town.

Scenario 2 Brownfield + Sites in the Valley

- This includes all sites in Option 1, plus sites which meet the Alton Design Code criterion that Alton remains as contained within the natural Wey Valley running South West to North East and development does not exceed the 145 metre contour line, thereby keeping below the skyline at built height.
It therefore excludes a small number of sites lying above the 145m line that have been submitted to East Hampshire under its 'Call for Sites', as well as sites that lie outside the Alton town settlement boundary.
- It is anticipated that this Option could provide between 500 and 600 homes.
- A detailed Positive and negative points chart follows.

Scenario 2 **Brownfield** + **Sites in the Valley**

Positive effects?	Harmful effects?
As Scenario 1	As Scenario 1
More affordable housing (as per NPPF definition)	Potential strain on town GP services
Broadens the mix of homes to provide family homes	Loss of agricultural land
Connectivity with existing town so can share infrastructure	Potential loss of strategic gap with Beech Village
The provision of a variety of open market and affordable homes of all types	Detrimental effect on appearance of town approach from Selborne Road
Landscape sensitivity of edge locations would require lower density schemes using a mix of larger homes than in Scenario 1 that may be more suited to families	Releasing carbon from the land and losing that land's ability to capture carbon

Scenario 3 **Brownfield** + **Sites in the Valley** + **Holybourne**

- This includes all sites from Scenarios 1 and 2, and includes Holybourne. It is being treated as a separate Scenario, as Holybourne has its own settlement boundary under the expiring EHDC Joint Core Strategy; this position is currently under review at EHDC.
- Land on the edge of Holybourne has been made available for development through the EH LAA 2022 for an extension consisting of 223 houses to the north of the existing village. The land cannot be discarded through using national or local spatial planning policy considerations, and it therefore needs to be considered as a logical and plausible development.
- It is anticipated that this Scenario could provide between 700 and 800 homes.
- Holybourne is being treated separately as it has its own unique settlement hierarchy at this time.
- A detailed Positive and negative points chart follows.

Scenario 3 Brownfield + Sites in the Valley + Holybourne

Positive effects?	Harmful effects?
As Scenario 2	As Scenario 2
Potential to safeguard land that is currently used for community benefit being secured for the long term and/or create additional green space.	Potential for increased traffic on London Road and on the narrow lanes in the conservation area, leading to increased congestion and safety issues within the village
Increased trade to local community facilities, such as village shop, local pub, church, village hall.	Possibility of a net loss for community existing amenity space
Walking distance to local primary and secondary schools	Possibility of increased traffic and congestion into Alton town, impacting the town and surrounding roads.
Access to St Swithuns Way and local footpath network for recreation and exercise on foot.	Potential harm to character of village, including, but not limited to, the Conservation Area setting
Additional affordable housing to enable younger members of families to stay in the village.	Holybourne is already a car dependent village; the development will potentially exacerbate this issue without a significant upgrade to public transport services.
	Potential for significantly harmful landscape effect if developed up the valley slopes
	Potential environmental harm through loss of green space and country footpath access
	Potential impact on wellbeing of village residents caused by above ²¹ harmful effects

Scenario 4 **Brownfield** + **Sites in the Valley** + **Holybourne** + **Sites Close to A31**

- This includes all the sites in Scenario 1, 2 and 3 plus all other land that meets the following criteria:
 - lies within the Alton Neighbourhood Plan area
 - adjoins the defined Alton town settlement boundary
 - has been submitted to East Hampshire under its 'Call for Sites'
 - lies below the 145m contour line
- It is anticipated that this Scenario will be capable of delivering up to approximately 1800 new homes across a large number of sites, including those lying between the town and the A31 bypass.
- The Scenario is significantly different from the previous Scenarios, and is considered to represent the fullest practical extent to which the town could expand for decades to come as it reaches its physical limits as dictated by constraints such as flood risk, landscape, and car-dependency. This may be planned for now, not just to change the population and demographic profile of the town, but also to enable investment in new infrastructure to make it more self-sufficient. It is therefore not inherently implausible.
- This overall scale of development would seem to be capable of being accommodated within the overall capacities of primary and/or secondary school places, but the inclusion of a number of sites between the town and the A31 may result in a requirement for new primary school capacity in that specific area.
- A detailed Positive and negative points chart follows.

Scenario 4 Brownfield + Sites in the Valley + Holybourne
+ Sites Close to A31

Positive effects?	Harmful effects?
As Scenario 3	As Scenario 3
More affordable housing (as per NPPF definition)	Greater car dependency without (or even with) investment in upgrading public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure
Possibly enabling the provision of new community facilities to the south of the town	Likely need for new junction to access A31 from B3004
Potential to attract incoming investment and significant commerce	Difficulties in creating walking and cycling access from the south through to the town centre due to topography
Significant improvements to local infrastructure	Difficulty of accessing existing community facilities in the town
The provision of a variety of open market and affordable homes of all types	Negative impact on very limited views out of SDNP to the development on rising east-facing land
	Results in Alton “bursting out of the Wey valley setting” and making it significantly more visible and sprawling from many viewpoints

Post-it notes on potential residential site allocations

Neighbourhood Development Orders (NDOs)

- NDOs are intended to grant outline planning permission for specific development sites.
- They are defined under a similar process as for a neighbourhood plan (NP) i.e. with evidenced public support and confirmed at referendum. They may cover sites that are not currently identified, which have the potential, when taken together to enable a more comprehensive redevelopment of brownfield land.
- NDOs have real potential, especially when carried out in parallel to the preparation of a neighbourhood plan. E.g. the neighbourhood plan could allocate sites for housing in the town centre and the NDO could be used for granting outline consent for those sites, helping to meet housing need and also increasing the catchment population, making the centre more viable.
- Such permissions could be subject to development or design guidelines, to ensure sustainability and good integration with the surrounding area.
- The Alton NP team have identified specific sites as an output from the scenario planning process. These sites are identified as scenario 1 on our map summary of considered scenarios out to 2050.
- **Would you support the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group considering an NDO for the centre of Alton to help maximise brownfield development sites and reduce the reliance on greenfield sites to provide additional housing in the future?**

Post-it notes on Neighbourhood Development Orders

Design and Design Coding

We have now prepared a draft Design Code.

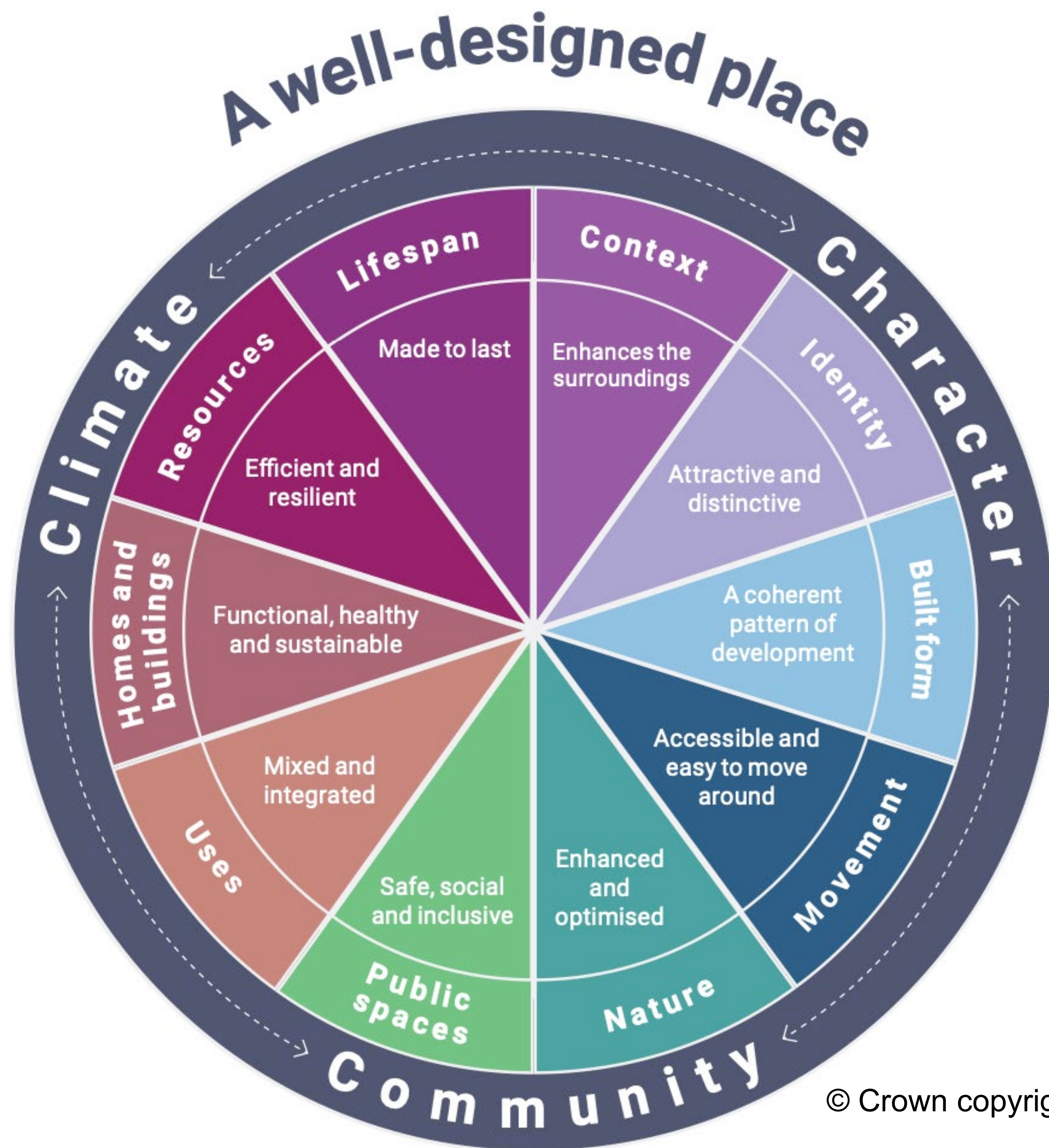
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A design code provides detailed design guidance for a site or area. They prescribe design requirements (or 'rules') that new development within the specified site or area should follow.

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We would like your views on this draft code. A sample copy is available to view at this drop-in session or you can find it at:

<https://www.alton.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan/>



Post-it notes on design and design coding



Transport and Travel

Although transport issues are outside the scope of a Neighbourhood Plan, we have considered the responses made at the last session and will seek to include the following within the Plan:

- i) A comprehensive **parking standards** policy that is appropriate for our town,
- ii) Action points to address key **congestion points** on the highway network (with Hampshire County Council)
- iii) An Action point on the LCWIP (**Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan**) which we believe is not yet fit for purpose (with East Hampshire District Council)
- iv) Plan Policies and Action Points to encourage the use of **sustainable transport**
- v) Action points to address deficiencies in **public transport**, improve facilities for **pedestrians** and lower vehicle **speeds**(within the constraints of the Plan process)

Please let us have your views to help us in the drafting of these policies and action points.

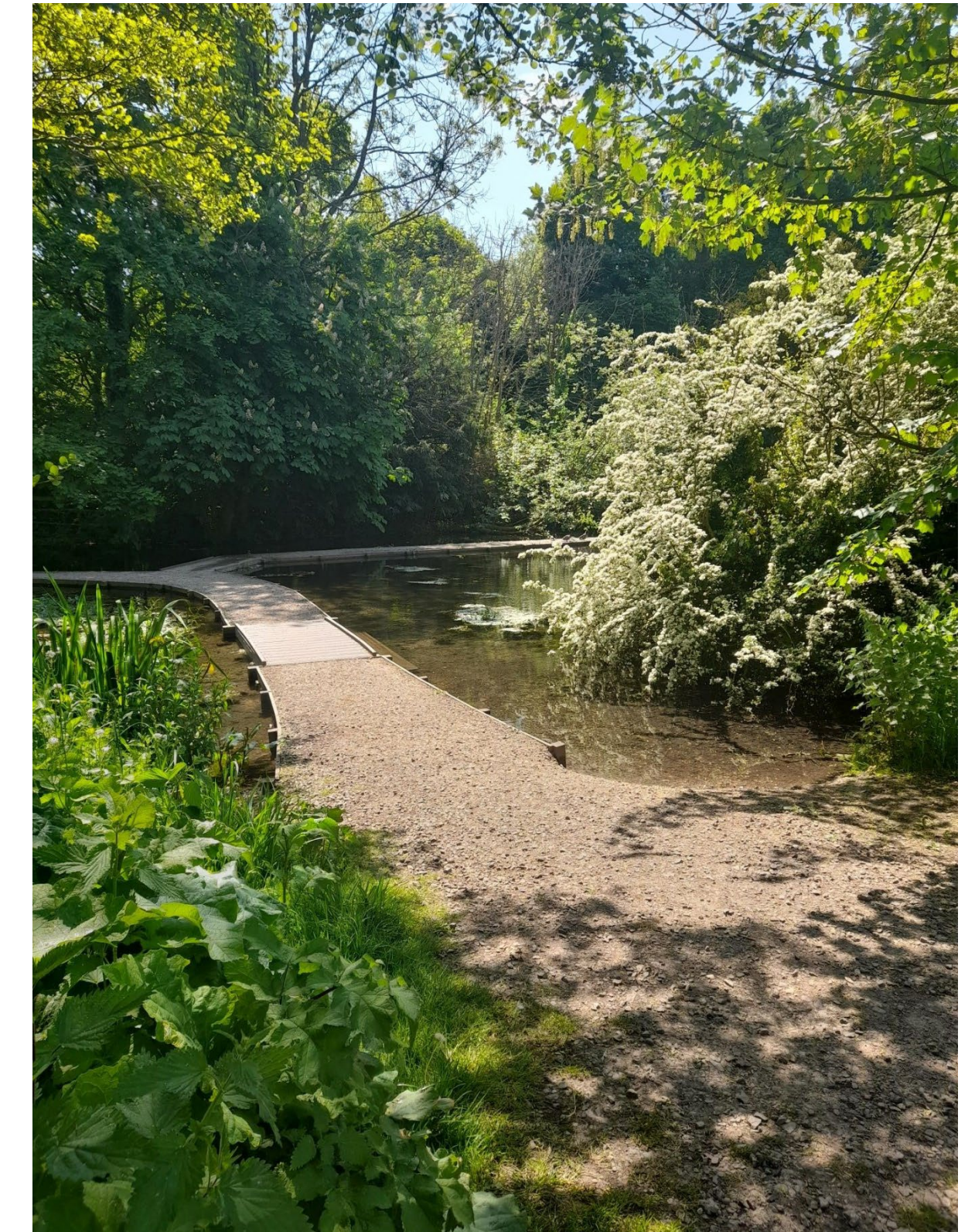
Post-it notes on Transport and Travel



Community Facilities, Open Spaces and Recreation

Following comments made at the last drop-in sessions, we will look to draft the following:

- A Local green space policy which includes residential amenity land as well as existing local green and open spaces.
- A biodiversity net gain policy to ensure developers deliver ecological improvements as part of new housing development on site and where this is not possible, supports identified projects and management plans within Alton.
- A policy to safeguard use of community facilities such as the library.
- An action point to help promote the use of community facilities for early years childcare provision.
- An action point to promote the improvement and development of sports facilities, particularly hockey and a policy to safeguard existing sports provision



Please let us have your views to help us in the drafting of these policies and action points.

Post-it notes on Community Facilities, Open Spaces and Recreation



Health and Wellbeing

Healthcare provision prompted a lot of comments at the last session.
As a result, we will look to draft the following:

- A policy which seeks to safeguard the current healthcare provision sites in Alton including the community hospital.
- An action point to encourage new NHS dental services and support the expansion of GP practices or creation of a new practice.
- An action point to promote walking for health and wellbeing and protect our footpath networks.
- An action point to encourage investment in the community hospital, widen service provision and support the use of non-GP based health and wellbeing community facilities such as Cardiac Rehab.

Please let us have your views to help us in the drafting of these policies and action points.

Other Policy Areas

Other potential policy areas include:

- Sustainability
- Climate Emergency
- Tourism
- Change of use of buildings
- Commercial Vitality of the Town Centre and essential facilities e.g banks
- Green Infrastructure (See updated map on wall) and Tree Protection
- Education (expansion of current schools and early years provision)

Please let us have your views to help us in the drafting of these policies and action points.



Post-it notes on Remaining Policy Areas



Have we missed anything important?

Please use your post-it notes to add any other comments you may have or write them on the cards provided and drop them in box.



How to Communicate with Us

- Alton Neighbourhood Plan as a page on Facebook. [altonneighbourhoodplan](https://www.facebook.com/altonneighbourhoodplan)
- Alton Neighbourhood Plan on Instagram [altonsneighbourhoodplan](https://www.instagram.com/altonsneighbourhoodplan)
- By e-mail to altonneighbourhoodplan@gmail.com.
- By phone to 0142083986.
- See our website at: <https://www.alton.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan/>.
- Please let us have your feedback and input to help with development of a new plan.

We are also keen to recruit additional members to the volunteer community group who will work over the coming months to shape the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. Please speak to one of the team or contact us using the details above, if you would be interested in finding out more about joining us.