



**ALTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP
MEETING NOTES
WEDNESDAY 20th SEPTEMBER 2023 2PM**

In attendance:

David Allan – Vice Chair
John Grace – Community Representative
Peter Holden - Community Representative
Paul Fitzgibbon - Community Representative
Suzie Burns – Community Representative
Cllr Graham Hill – EHDC Representative
Cllr John Chubb – ATC Representative

Leah Coney – Town Clerk (LC)

- 1) **Apologies** – Mike Heelis, Rob Fowell and Cllr Annette Eyre
- 2) **Chair's Announcements.** DA wished to thank everyone for their involvement on the 8th /9th September and to Town Council Officers for their assistance with setting up, booking in and administration. In reviewing the items from the last meeting, it was noted that we will come back to a further conversation on NDOS at a later meeting.

PF had raised the issue of communications and he noted that he had introduced MH to a Marketing and Comms expert at the drop in sessions.
- 3) **Third Party updates**
 - a) **AECOM – Design Coding.** Further comments have been sent back to AECOM including those arising from the drop-in sessions around Secured By Design, some general typo corrections and comments raised by Beech Parish Council and a list of special character areas extracted from the Local List work. There was a brief discussion over low carbon design and it was noted that there is a draft “Passivhaus” policy contained within the draft list. JC noted that the draft policy was a lower standard than passivhaus.
 - b) **AECOM** – Town Centre Masterplanning inception meeting has taken place, with a site visit arranged for next week. JC asked if the scope could include consideration of shared spaces. LC also noted that a car parking study could form part of the study and has reached out to EHDC colleagues to help with the data for this. LC to send JC a copy of the Litchfields report on Alton Town Centre from 2022 by way of background reading.

c) Local List (prepared by Alton Buildings Preservation Trust). The letters have been printed ready for hand delivery. DA to sort into bundles prior to collection for distribution.

d) EHDC – Cllr Hill noted that he and Cllr Burns will be attending a briefing session this evening in respect of the spatial strategy for the emerging Local Plan which will include a high level number for the district. The group then took the time to discuss the standard methodology, why this is being used by EHDC and how the “number” is determined.

4) Drop in session feedback and analysis – review of responses (except site allocations)

The group considered the responses in terms of those post-it notes and comments attributes to the specific areas as detailed below, however it was noted that many people had provided responses to these subject areas as part of the response on site allocations (being reviewed at a later meeting) and as such these would also need to be factored in.

Neighbourhood Development Orders – 49 people expressed support for the concept. This will be revisited but the view from the group at the moment was to ask the consultants to add an action point in the draft plan to say that the Town Council will look to develop an NDO for the Town Centre after the adoption of the plan to provide additional time and resource for what is felt could be a really visionary approach to providing certainty in respect of brownfield site allocations in the future and regenerate parts of the town.

Travel and Transport. A desire for better cycle infrastructure provision and safety came through clearly; potentially an action point. Could there be a connectivity plan policy for cycling? (LCWIP?)
Public Transport – the lack of provision was very clear - add in as an action point to seek improvement.

Health and Wellbeing – lack of resourcing for GPs and healthcare including dental provision came through. LC noted that the dental surgery in Anstey Road (opposite the health centre) is now expanding to become an NHS dentist training facility, so a land use policy to safeguard this specific site alongside the GP surgeries and community hospital may be appropriate.

Mental health value of the countryside, particularly green fields was a clear theme. The group were keen to see an urban canopy policy for new development and to safeguard amenity land on existing and new developments. In respect of protecting public open space the question was raised as to the level of protection of publicly accessible but not necessarily publicly owned, could these be included (noting that RF is identifying) . Connectiveity for wildlife and green corridors was also a popular these.

Sustainability - Responses indicated a desire for a sustainable housing policy (see draft “Passivhaus”)

Other - Drainage. There were concerns raised over drinking water (low water pressure) and foul water (are we at capacity?) LC thought there may be a publicly accessible plan for South East Water

but not aware of one for Thames Water; will make enquiries and also ask AH (EHDC) to see what evidence they have for the Local Plan given the impact on the network of any local strategic sites.

Skyline issue came up. A number of responses related to this. JC questioned whether the NP is putting an artificial geographic constraint on the town inhibiting its ability to grow organically. There was a discussion over the history of planning applications/ appeals in Alton relating to the skyline.

Vision for Alton – lots of good ideas, to be reviewed further.

- 5) **Draft Policies List** – most of the group had not yet had a chance to review these and requested this be the main topic for discussion at the next meeting. PF expressed concern that the group is moving forward very quickly, he would like to take some time to look at the drafting of the policies which is very important and should not be rushed. LC was requested to review project plan to build in this time.

LC asked that if anyone was able to return any initial comments, including omissions or changes on the draft policies in the next week or so it would aid discussion at the next meeting. LC also took an action to circulate the list of current action points in advance of the next meeting so that any actions arising from the draft policies could be added/noted.

6) **Scenario Action Points**

Just a couple of points noted - Action point in respect of Healthcare – Charles Kay. LC noted that there was a visit to the community hospital with Charles has arranged to get a better understanding of the current position and what action points can usefully be framed as a result; the Town Council is sending an officer to this meeting who will take notes to add to the evidence database.

LC has not yet contacted satellite villages but would have details once the updated LAA available.

Meeting concluded at 3.45pm

Date of next meeting 4th October the Town Hall 2pm.