



**ALTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP
MEETING NOTES
WEDNESDAY 21st FEBRUARY 2024**

In attendance:

Mike Heelis – Chair (MH)
David Allan – Vice Chair (DA)
John Bound – Community Representative (JB)
Rob Fowell – Community Representative (RF)
John Grace – Community Representative (JG)
Peter Holden – Community Representative (PH)
Richard Parratt – Community Representative (RP)
Councillor Suzie Burns – EHDC Representative (SB)
Councillor Graham Hill - ATC Representative (GH)
Pat Harris – Interim Town Clerk (PMH)

Adam Harvey – EHDC Officer (AH)
Jenny Wood – EHDC Officer (JW)

1. Apologies – No apologies as all members present

Ex-officio - Councillor Annette Eyre & Councillor John Chubb

Not required: Leah Coney – O’Neil Homer (Consultants)

2. Updates since Last Meeting

- 2.1 MH welcomed both Adam & Jenny to the meeting
- 2.2 RF advising that he was meeting with LC in the morning to go through the amenity land mapping and that this would be circulated once completed. RF apologized that this had not happened as yet.
- 2.3 Steering Group actions in taking photographs of buildings in the Local List – only 4 photographs received from the list that was circulated. Those who had indicated they would assist with the taking of photographs assured the group that these would be forthcoming as soon as there was a “break” in the weather in order to achieve good quality photographs for inclusion in the Plan. AH enquired whether the Conservation Officer had been consulted on the Local List and requested that once completed that details were provided to the Conservation Officer. PH advised that the Conservation Officer had been consulted and were aware of the Listing.
- 2.4 The Chair of the Holybourne Village Association had sent in a FOI request to the Town which had been satisfied with the publication of all of the meeting notes of the Steering Group, which had been redacted as appropriate. The Steering Groups Terms of Reference were already published on the Town Council’s website, but this was also provided to avoid any confusion as to the terms under which the SG operates.
- 2.5 Ashdell Road Residents Association had approached MH for clarification on a number of matters relating to misinformation on some websites which had been satisfied
- 2.6 The Chair of the Holybourne Village Association had issued a letter to advise that it was joining the Windmill Hill pressure group – which was acknowledged
- 2.7 Original Scenario Planning document is the current document being applied pending an outcome decision today (see item 4 site allocations)

- 2.8 JB had worked on a Press Release but it had been agreed that nothing would be released until after the meeting taking place today.

3. Review of Housing Allocation Approach

- 3.1 MH acknowledged that there were 4 pressure groups namely Chawton Park Farm; Windmill Hill, Holybourne & Neatham Down and that as a result of his presentation to District Councillors in January that concerns mounted over the allocation approach being followed by the SG which the consultants had worked up namely the 4 scenarios:

- Scenario 1 Brownfield sites
- Scenario 2 Will Hall Two; Pertuis Avenue & Travis Perkins
- Scenario 3 Holybourne
- Scenario 4 Windmill Hill & fields (South Alton)

In November 2023, ANLSG were given by District a target allocation of 700 with the District Local Plan allocating a strategic site for 1,000 which made up the total of 1700 allocated to Alton.

4. Site Allocations

- 4.1 The Steering Group, following lengthy discussion and input from all attendees were requested to determine which of the 3 options as advised by District they wished to take forward.

Option A: As is evident by a number of ‘made’ Neighbourhood Plans in East Hampshire, the plan does not need to include site allocations. All relevant applications are still determined by the policies within the neighbourhood plan and the increased CIL contributions (if applicable) still apply. The main significant difference is paragraph 14 in the NPPF (December 2023) would not apply. As a result, in situations whereby the LPA cannot demonstrate a sufficient supply of housing, the tilted balance is engaged and the presumption in favour of sustainable development would apply. However, Alton is currently in a favourable position, as the updated NPPF has extended the protection afforded by paragraph 14 to five years (from the Neighbourhood Plan being ‘made’) from the previous two, meaning the paragraph 14 applies until November 2026. Similarly, changes to the NPPF now mean the LPA are not required to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years’ worth of housing for decision making purposes if the following criteria are met:

- their adopted plan is less than five years old; and
- that adopted plan identified at least a five-year supply of specific, deliverable sites at the time that its examination concluded.

Therefore, following adoption of the Local plan, for a five-year period the tilted balance would not be engaged.

Option B: As determined by the Draft Local Plan, a housing requirement of 700 dwellings as well as a strategic allocation of about 1,000 has been proposed in and around Alton. As detailed in previous correspondence, growth of a strategic nature, such as Neatham Manor Farm, should be addressed by the Local Plan process. However, the 700 dwelling figure could be met via the Neighbourhood Plan. Three sites have been included in the Draft Local Plan, where they fall outside (or partly outside) the designated Neighbourhood plan area. We welcome your comments on those sites as part of the current consultation.

Option C: The final option would be to allocate some sites in the Neighbourhood Plan. We would need to work together to determine how the 700 dwelling figures is addressed by both plans, but similar to the 2021 Modification, the Neighbourhood Plan could concentrate on those

sites within the settlement policy boundary. The scenario planning in September identified up to 600 dwellings that could be delivered from existing sites in the SPB. Whilst EHDC raised concerns on the deliverability of some of those sites, it would be useful if more detailed work was done as part of the neighbourhood plan to fully realise those sites that could be developed in such locations, making the best use of existing brownfield opportunities in the SPB. This approach would result in paragraph 14 being engaged.

By a majority decision, the ANPSG voted for Option A: Do not allocate sites and therefore the ANP3 would go forward without site allocations.

5. Confirmation of Policies

- 5.1 This work on updating and refining of the Policies continues and (LC) will carry on with producing the Draft NP plan in readiness for the Reg 14 Consultation scheduled for 26th/27th April
- 5.2 AW & JW requested that once updated, a copy to be forwarded to them which was agreed

6. Update on Public Engagement/Communication

- 6.1 Approximately 200 residents attended the Local Plan engagement session at The Maltings
- 6.2 JB would work up a Press Release to be circulated to the group Monday, 26th but will await publication of the Agenda for the Extra-ordinary Meeting of the Alton Full Council due Thursday/Friday of this week.

7. Next steps in the Project Plan

- 7.1 An updated Project Plan will be drawn up given the decisions of the meeting today
- 7.2 The Alton Neighbourhood Plan Reg 14 consultation will take place on Friday, 26th & Saturday 27th April – the location to be confirmed but hopefully the Assembly Rooms.

8. Any Other Business

- 8.1 There was none

9. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on **Wednesday, 13th March at 2.00 p.m.**

Meeting concluded at 16:05 p.m.