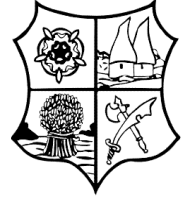


ALTON Town Council



9 June 2026

ALTON TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
Wednesday 10 June 2026 at 7.00pm

AGENDA – SUPPLEMENT

5. WRITTEN REPRESENTATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC – *see appendix*

Two representations have been received and are appended.

Recommendation: **To note written representations from the public.**

8. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN NEXT STEPS

The following amendment to the motion will be proposed by Cllr Botten, seconded by Cllr Hammond, i.e. the addition of the words underlined:

To approve the Town Clerk

1. to prepare ‘minor modifications’ to the Alton Neighbourhood Plan, consulting with the local planning authority and with the community, for consideration by the Full Council,

2. to consider the recommendations in the ‘Town Masterplan Report’ (AECOM 2024), regarding the revival of the High Street and suggest next steps, and

3. to work with EHDC planners and others as necessary to determine whether the current shortage of water supply for the future in and around Alton would constitute sufficient grounds for the sustainable refusal of speculative planning applications.

11. PATH IMPROVEMENTS AT KING’S POND

The following motion will be proposed by Cllr Quincey under Standing Order 10(a)(ii):

To defer consideration of the motion and the selection of any contractor pending clarification meetings with the bidders or a revised procurement process if deemed necessary.

ITEM 5. WRITTEN REPRESENTATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC – 1

From Jonathan Durante, 8 June 2026:

WRITTEN REPRESENTATION TO ALTON TOWN COUNCIL

Full Council Meeting — 10 June 2026

Agenda Item 8: Alton Neighbourhood Plan — Next Steps

Submitted by: Jonathan Durante

Address: [redacted]

Date: 10 June 2026

1. Standing and Interest

I am a resident of Borovere Lane, Alton, and my property directly borders Site AL-056 (Land North of the A31) as identified in the East Hampshire District Council Land Availability Assessment 2024 and assessed in the AECOM site assessment report commissioned by Alton Town Council. I am therefore an immediately affected neighbour with a direct interest in the future of the plan and the protection of this area.

I recognise the councillors have been handed a genuinely difficult task, and I want to be clear that I am writing to support the council in reaching the best outcome, not to add to its difficulties. Where I can help — including with the evidence base described below — I would be glad to.

2. Position on the Proposed Approach

I understand and broadly accept the reasoning for pursuing minor modifications to ANP2 rather than a full review with site allocations. It appears a sensible and pragmatic response to an uncertain situation.

I would simply note, and the council's own papers already recognise this, that with East Hampshire unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply, the tilted balance leaves sensitive greenfield sites — including the Windmill Hill fields — exposed to speculative applications that are hard to resist and costly to lose at appeal. The suggestions below are intended to help reduce that risk, for the council as much as for the landscape.

3. The Housing Need Must Be Met — But Not Here

I want to address the housing question directly, because I know it is the heart of the council's dilemma. The homes East Hampshire requires must be built somewhere, and I do not suggest otherwise. My point is simply that the Windmill Hill fields are, on the council's own evidence, among the least suitable locations — and that protecting them is entirely compatible with meeting the housing requirement on the more suitable sites the AECOM assessment identifies. Protecting Windmill Hill is not a refusal to accept growth; it is a request that growth go where the evidence points.

4. The Case Against Development on Windmill Hill Fields

The AECOM Site Assessment found that the fields surrounding Windmill Hill carry significant landscape constraints: medium/high landscape sensitivity, prominence in long-distance views,

impact on a view designated in the existing plan, and unsuitability for development on their own due to landscape harm and limited access. The report also noted that access could only be created if surrounding sites are developed.

I would add two observations. First, the plot of land directly behind my property, which borders Site AL-056, does not carry a Land Availability Assessment reference code; I have written to East Hampshire District Council to establish its status, which has a bearing on the developability of the wider site. Second, development on adjacent sites within the broader South Alton area — including the 243 dwellings at Land East of Selborne Road and the former Lord Mayor Treloar Hospital site — is already advancing. As those sites are built out, the access constraint that has until now protected the Windmill Hill fields is being progressively removed. The window for securing formal protection is therefore narrowing, which is why I would ask the council to act now rather than defer.

I would also draw the council's attention to East Hampshire District Council's public statement of 13 May 2026, in which the Council Leader confirmed that completing a new Local Plan by the government's December deadline has become "pointless and unjustifiable." The reasons given — sweeping changes to the National Planning Policy Framework arriving in July 2026, a new Local Plan process starting in January 2027, and East Hampshire ceasing to exist as a council from April 2028 — make clear that the planning vacuum above the neighbourhood plan level is not a temporary disruption. It is structural and likely to last the better part of a decade. The new unitary authorities will need to produce Local Plans of their own, a process that will take years. In the meantime, the neighbourhood plan is the only stable layer of formal planning protection available to this community. That makes getting the Local Green Space designation right on Wednesday more important, not less — it may be the primary protection the Windmill Hill fields have for many years to come.

I would also note that at the Extraordinary Full Council meeting of 13 May 2026, the council considered a planning application from Crest Nicholson seeking to vary the ecological mitigation conditions on the Lord Mayor Treloar Hospital site — specifically to deposit 400–500mm of topsoil across the chalk grassland meadow known locally as the Orchid Field. The council objected unanimously and in strong terms, recording that the site is "a unique site with environmental sensitivity and importance," that spreading soil across it "would destroy it," and that "the protection of this landscape is paramount." I found that response encouraging and consistent with the values I would ask the council to apply on Wednesday. The Windmill Hill fields share the same chalk landscape character and ecological sensitivity as the Orchid Field, and the case for protecting them is no less compelling. The council's stance at the May meeting also illustrates the broader concern about how developers treat their ecological obligations when it becomes financially inconvenient — a concern that weighs in favour of securing formal, durable protection for the Windmill Hill fields before any application is submitted, rather than relying on conditions attached after the fact.

5. Requests — Local Green Space Designation

The draft ANP3 contained a Local Green Space designation for Windmill Hill, and the current ANP2 already lists it as a protected open space. I would respectfully ask the council to confirm, as part of any minor modifications:

- (a) That the Local Green Space designation for Windmill Hill and its surrounding fields is retained and recorded clearly on the Policies Map;
- (b) That no housing allocation is carried forward for land at or immediately surrounding Windmill Hill, including land within or adjacent to Site AL-056; and
- (c) That residents who border Site AL-056 are notified of, and able to take part in, any future consultation before the modified plan is submitted to East Hampshire District Council.

I recognise this designation must be supported by evidence that the land is special to the community. I would gladly help the council assemble that evidence — photographs, records of use of the footpaths, and accounts of the area's value to residents — and I expect many other residents would do the same.

6. Other Things the Council Might Consider

In the spirit of being helpful rather than prescriptive, I would gently offer a few things for the council's consideration:

- Whether the modified plan might include stronger protection for the Windmill Hill landscape, its biodiversity, and the views across it.
- Whether, given the area's ecological sensitivity, any development in or adjacent to it might be expected to deliver biodiversity net gain above the statutory 10% minimum.
- Belford Parish in Northumberland and Little Bealings in Suffolk as recent reference points, where landscape protection was embedded successfully through a neighbourhood plan.

Above all, I would respectfully invite the council to consider commissioning an independent landscape assessment of the Windmill Hill area. The AECOM report itself notes its landscape judgements were made at a high level and that a professional assessment should be sought. Such a study would give the council a robust evidence base both to support the designation at examination and to defend against any speculative application at appeal — at modest cost set against the cost of losing an appeal without it.

I would be grateful if the chair could indicate whether the council would be willing to move a resolution on commissioning a landscape assessment this evening. This feels like the single most useful and immediate step the council could take.

7. Conclusion

Windmill Hill and its surrounding fields are a valued open landscape that matters to the whole community, and the council's own evidence confirms their sensitivity. I fully accept that Alton must take its share of growth, and I ask only that it be directed, as the evidence suggests, to more suitable sites — and that the council give these fields the formal, durable protection they merit.

I am grateful to the councillors for the work they are undertaking, and I would welcome the chance to speak to this representation at the meeting. I am happy to help in any way I can.

Signed: Jonathan Durante

Address: [redacted]

Contact: [redacted]

Date: 10 June 2026

**Councillor Steve Forster &
Integrated Transport Team
Economy, Transport and Environment Department
Hampshire County Council
The Castle
Winchester
Hampshire
SO23 8UJ**

7 June 2026

Dear Councillor Forster and Hampshire County Council Integrated Transport Team,

I am writing as the County Councillor for Alton Town, supported by Alton councillors representing wards across Alton and Holybourne, to ask Hampshire County Council to prioritise an **Area Transport Strategy for Alton and Holybourne**.

Alton is East Hampshire's largest town and a historic market town, serving not only its own residents but also many surrounding villages. Its railway station, access to the A31, schools, shops, healthcare services and community facilities make it an important local hub. That is precisely why any future development affecting Alton and Holybourne must be carefully planned and supported by the transport infrastructure needed to protect the town's character and quality of life.

The need for this work is urgent. Government changes to national planning policy and the standard method have almost doubled East Hampshire's housing need, from 575 homes a year to 1,124 homes a year. At the same time, 57% of the district lies within the South Downs National Park, meaning the remaining 43% of the district is under intense pressure to accommodate future growth.

For Alton, the implications are stark. East Hampshire District Council (EHDC)'s January 2026 indicative housing figures show a minimum indicative figure of 190 homes per year for Alton, or 3,413 homes over the 2025–2043 period. This is not a final housing requirement, but it clearly shows the scale of pressure now facing the town.

This is happening at a time when EHDC has confirmed that it will not proceed with its Emerging Local Plan, and the Alton Neighbourhood Plan is dated until 2028. Due to the district's low housing land supply and the tilted balance in the planning system, Alton and Holybourne are already seeing speculative development proposals for large sites. Without an up-to-date Local Plan and clear site allocations in place, this pressure will continue, with development coming forward in a piecemeal way rather than as part of a properly planned approach.

Residents do not want more housing added without proper consideration of road capacity, congestion, road safety, public transport, walking and cycling routes, and access to essential services.

The appendix to this letter sets out the key considerations and specific locations that we believe should be reviewed as part of an Area Transport Strategy for Alton and Holybourne. This not an exhaustive list, but it reflects issues already being raised by councillors, residents and local groups across the town and village.

Alton and Holybourne have already seen significant development in recent years, but this has not been matched by major improvements to local transport infrastructure. Apart from the widening of Butts Bridge around 2018, there has been little substantial investment to address the growing pressure on local roads. Congestion is now a serious issue at peak times, affecting journeys within the town, through Holybourne, and on routes into and out of the area.

There are also clear opportunities to improve walking, cycling and public transport, especially for shorter journeys to schools, the railway station, the town centre, medical facilities, community facilities and local shops. However, many residents also need to travel beyond the town for work, education, healthcare and larger shops. Any transport strategy must therefore look both at local journeys within Alton and Holybourne and the traffic flows in and out of the town, reflecting Alton's role as a key centre for surrounding communities.

Given the scale of housing pressure, the uncertainty in the local planning system, and the existing congestion and road safety concerns, we believe an **Area Transport Strategy for Alton and Holybourne** is now urgently needed.

We are therefore asking Hampshire County Council to prioritise this work and to begin the strategy this year if possible. We would welcome confirmation of whether this can be taken forward.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Emily Young

Hampshire County Councillor for Alton Town and EHDC Alton Westbrooke

Cllr Barbara Tansey

EHDC Alton Eastbrooke

Cllr Ginny Boxall

EHDC Alton Whitedown

Cllr Graham Hill

EHDC Alton Holybourne

Cllr Lizzie Marshall

EHDC Alton Amery

Cllr Suzie Burns

EHDC Alton Ashdell

Cllr Warren Moore

EHDC Alton Wooteys

Appendix: Considerations for an Area Transport Strategy for Alton and Holybourne

We would ask that the Area Transport Strategy considers the following themes and locations.

1. Cumulative impact of development

The strategy should look at the **cumulative highways impact of speculative development**, rather than assessing each planning application in isolation.

Given the scale of housing pressure now facing Alton and Holybourne, it is essential that transport planning looks at the overall effect of development on the town, village and surrounding road network.

2. Existing developer-funded highways schemes

Please review existing **Section 278 projects** for Alton and Holybourne, particularly where developers have committed funds to Hampshire County Council for permanent alterations or improvements to the public highway, such as new junctions, roundabouts or pedestrian crossings, but the work has not yet started.

This would help establish what improvements are already expected, whether they remain appropriate, and whether they are sufficient given the scale of current and future development pressure.

3. Strategic routes into, out of and around Alton

The strategy should look at the main traffic routes serving Alton and Holybourne, including congestion, safety, junction capacity, traffic flow and the cumulative impact of development. Particular attention should be given to:

- **A31 / A339 / Basingstoke Road corridor**, including congestion, safety and access to and from the town.
- **B3349 and its connection with Pertuis Avenue**, where congestion can feed into wider pressure along Whitedown Lane.

- **New Odiham Road, Old Odiham Road and Anstey Road**, particularly in relation to development pressure to the north and north-east of Alton.
- **Holybourne and London Road**, including existing congestion, pedestrian safety, development pressure and traffic flows through the village.
- **Gilbert White Way**, including speeding, traffic flow, junction capacity and its role as a key route through newer areas of Alton.

4. Local congestion, safety and residential amenity

The strategy should also consider local roads and junctions where residents are already experiencing congestion, safety concerns, rat-running, HGV movements or pressure from nearby development.

This should include:

- **Chawton Park Road**, including the cumulative impact of existing and proposed development, including a proposed site of approximately 1,000 houses on Chawton Park Farm, school traffic, pedestrian safety and pressure on nearby junctions.
- **Whitedown Lane and Butts Bridge**, including whether previous improvements remain adequate in light of further housing growth and rush-hour congestion along Butts Road and Whitedown Lane.
- **Borovere Lane and The Ridgeway**, which are increasingly used as routes through to Kingsley Road and Mill Lane.
- **Windmill Lane**, which is narrow but carries a high volume of traffic, including unsuitable large HGVs.
- **Mill Lane, Wilsom Road and the surrounding road network**, including the cumulative impact of proposed commercial sites, HGV movements, residential amenity and safe access.
- The **Wilsom Road / Mill Lane / Ashdell Road crossroads**, which is a particular concern feeding into the wider industrial area.

5. Town centre congestion, air quality and movement

The strategy should consider how traffic moves through the town centre and the impact this has on congestion, air quality, pedestrian safety and access to local businesses and services.

This should include:

- **Normandy Street**

- **High Street**
- **Draymans Way**
- **Paper Mill Lane**
- **Lower Turk Street and the Draymans Way roundabout**, where crossing is difficult for pedestrians and cyclists.
- The road past **Kings Pond**, where the pinch point creates safety concerns for cyclists.

6. Walking, cycling and wheeling routes

The strategy should identify practical opportunities to improve walking, cycling and wheeling routes, especially for shorter local journeys to schools, the railway station, the town centre, medical facilities, community facilities and local shops.

Particular attention should be given to safe routes to schools and to improving routes across the town, so that residents are not forced into cars for short journeys.

The strategy should also consider the routes already identified as important in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, including:

- **Holybourne and London Road through the town centre and High Street — LCWIP 200**
- **Basingstoke Road from the turn-off to Beech to the High Street — LCWIP 210**

Local cycling groups have also identified that relatively small changes, such as safer crossings and better links between existing routes, could make a significant difference. There is a clear need for joined-up cycling infrastructure that creates a proper network across Alton rather than isolated sections of provision.

7. Public transport and station access

The strategy should consider public transport connectivity across Alton and Holybourne, including:

- Bus access to new and existing residential areas.
- Integration between bus services and Alton railway station.
- Access to the railway station by walking, cycling, wheeling and bus.
- The impact of station-related travel on nearby residential streets.

8. Parking pressures

The strategy should consider commuter and station-related parking in residential streets, particularly in the **Eastbrooke area** and streets around **Alton railway station**.

All-day parking can affect residents, pedestrian safety, visibility and traffic flow, and should be considered as part of the wider transport picture.