



New Alresford Neighbourhood Plan

Health check of the Draft New Alresford Neighbourhood Plan

New Alresford Town Council

Draft

Prepared by LUC

June 2026

Version	Status	Prepared	Checked	Approved	Date
1	Draft	A Eardley	T Livingston	T Livingston	26.06.2026
2					
3					



Land Use Consultants Limited

Registered in England. Registered number 2549296. Registered office: 250 Waterloo Road, London SE1 8RD. Printed on 100% recycled paper

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1. This report reviews the information gathered to date and the draft policies (dated November 2024) relating to the emerging New Alresford Neighbourhood Plan (NANP). It provides a series of recommendations for consideration by the Town Council in progressing the plan to the Pre-Submission Version stage of the process.

1.2. New Alresford Town Council (NATC) is the qualifying body leading on the preparation of the NANP. Winchester City Council (WCC), as the local authority, designated the New Alresford Neighbourhood Area in September 2021 [See reference 1]. The neighbourhood Area shares its boundary with New Alresford Parish. The NANP is being prepared by the Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee (NPAC), which is made up of New Alresford Town Councillors and residents. NPAC is an Advisory Committee to the Town Council.

1.3. It is recommended that this report should inform a discussion with the Town Council, to agree the next steps to finalising the Pre-Submission Version NANP.

Chapter 2

Legislative requirements

2.1 The Localism Act 2011 Part 6 Chapter 3 introduced neighbourhood planning, including provision for neighbourhood development plans. A neighbourhood development plan should reflect the needs and priorities of the community concerned and should set out a positive vision for the future, setting planning policies to determine decisions on planning applications. If approved by a referendum and made by the local planning authority (as has happened here) such plans form part of the Development Plan for the neighbourhood concerned.

2.2 The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's (MHCLG) Neighbourhood Planning Routemap: A toolkit for neighbourhood planners **[See reference 2]** states:

A neighbourhood plan puts in place planning policy for a neighbourhood area to guide future development. A neighbourhood plan is about the use and development of land and may contain a vision, aims, planning policies, proposals for improving the area or providing new facilities, or allocation of key sites for specific kinds of development. It may deal with a wide range of social, economic and environmental issues (such as housing, employment, design, heritage and transport) or it may focus on one or two issues only.

These may be issues that are relevant to the whole neighbourhood or to just part of the neighbourhood. It is for those producing the plan to decide on its scope and content as a planning document.

If successful at referendum, a neighbourhood plan will become part of the statutory development plan for the area. This statutory status gives neighbourhood plans considerable weight in planning decisions.

A neighbourhood plan must meet certain specified 'basic conditions'. These ensure plans contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, have regard to national policy and guidance and are in general conformity with adopted strategic local planning policies.

Despite leaving the EU, the requirements to comply with EU-derived obligations continue to apply for the time being, as they have been assimilated into UK law. These may, however, be replaced by domestic UK requirements at some point in the future.

A neighbourhood plan cannot stop or promote less development than that identified in the local plan for the local area (such as new housing allocations). It can support additional growth levels, providing it meets the basic conditions. It can specify policies and guidance on how new development should be designed, orientated and located. Neighbourhood plans can be a powerful tool in shaping the development of a neighbourhood. The timeframe for the neighbourhood plan will be for communities to decide, for example whether it is a 5, 10, 15 or 20-year plan. In practice, many neighbourhood plans align their plan period with the local plan, this approach makes it easier for local planning authorities to set out housing requirements for a neighbourhood area.

A robust programme of community engagement and proportionate evidence base should help to make sure that a neighbourhood plan is based on a proper understanding of the area and of the views, aspirations, wants and needs of local people. Producing a clear project plan with key milestones could be very helpful in guiding the plan-making process.

Once a neighbourhood plan has been drafted, it will have to be submitted to the local planning authority and then be subject to an independent examination. This will make sure that the proper legal process has been

followed and that the plan meets the basic conditions described previously (also see later section on meeting the basic conditions).

Neighbourhood plans are subject to an independent examination and any necessary modifications are then made to ensure they meet legal requirements. They are then subjected to a public referendum. It is necessary that more than 50% of those voting in the referendum vote “yes” in order to bring the plan into force.

The basic conditions

2.3 When the Submission Version Plan and supporting documents are independently examined, the examiner will be checking the extent to which it meets the basic conditions.

2.4 Paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 **[See reference 3]** requires a neighbourhood plan to meet certain basic conditions before it can proceed to a referendum. On 25th of March 2026, Sections 98 and 99 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (LURA) **[See reference 4]** came into force. This is by virtue of The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Commencement No. 11 and Saving and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2026. In relation to neighbourhood plans, sections 98 and 99 amend the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 **[See reference 5]** and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 in respect of the legal compliance and the Basic Conditions requirements. The basic conditions are shown below, with a brief commentary provided below each:

1. Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood plan

2.5 The key elements of national policy relating to planning matters are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework December 2024 (NPPF) [\[See reference 6\]](#).

2.6 The NPPF sets out a range of land-use planning principles to underpin both plan making and decision-taking. Neighbourhood plans sit within this wider context both generally, and within the more specific presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 13 of the NPPF indicates that neighbourhoods should both develop plans that support the strategic needs set out in local plans and plan positively to support local development that is outside the strategic elements of the development plan.

2.7 In addition, other elements of national planning policy will be considered, including Planning Practice Guidance and recent ministerial statements.

2.8 The NPPF indicates that plans should provide a clear framework within which decisions on planning applications can be made and that they should give a clear indication of how a decision-maker should react to a development proposal (paragraph 16d). This is reinforced in Planning Practice Guidance (ID:41-041-20140306) which indicates that policies in neighbourhood plans should be drafted with sufficient clarity so that a decision-maker can apply them consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications. Planning Practice Guidance also advises that planning policies should be concise, precise, and supported by appropriate evidence.

2.9 It should be noted that the NPPF is due to be amended in summer 2026. This is likely to be in advance of the Submission Version NANP being finalised. It will be important for the Town Council to consider how it conforms to the new NPPF once published.

2. The making of the neighbourhood development plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development

2.10 Sustainable development has three principal dimensions – economic, social, and environmental. The making of a neighbourhood plan must contribute to this by providing a framework for meeting housing needs and addressing other economic, social, and environmental priorities.

3. The making of the neighbourhood development plan would not result in the development plan for the area of the authority proposing that less housing is provided by means of development taking place in that area than if the neighbourhood development plan were not to be made.

2.11 This basic condition came into force March 2026 and reinforces the principle that neighbourhood plans must support housing growth. It does not mean that the neighbourhood plan has to allocate sites for housing.

4. The making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, (retained) EU obligations.

5. Prescribed conditions are met in relation to the neighbourhood plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood plan. The prescribed condition is that the ‘making’ of the neighbourhood plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012) or a European offshore marine site (as defined in the Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats etc.) Regulations 2007) (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects).

2.12 Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA): The Neighbourhood Plan (General) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 [\[See reference 7\]](#) require a qualifying body either to submit an environmental report prepared in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations

2004 [\[See reference 8\]](#) or a statement of reasons why an environmental report is not required.

2.13 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA): The requirement to undertake HRA of development plans was confirmed by the amendments to the Habitats Regulations published for England and Wales in 2007; the currently applicable version is the Habitats Regulations 2017, as amended [\[See reference 9\]](#). HRA refers to the assessment of the potential effects of a development plan on one or more sites afforded the highest level of protection in the UK: Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). These were classified under European Union (EU) legislation but, since 1 January 2021, are protected in the UK by the Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended).

2.14 Human Rights: Neighbourhood plans must have regard to the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights and comply with the Human Rights Act.

2.15 The provisions also add a Basic Condition related to the provision of an environmental outcomes report. However, because the framework for environmental outcomes reports has yet to be put in place, compliance with this Basic Condition cannot be assessed for neighbourhood plans at this time.

2.16 Note that there are two further basic conditions which are relevant only to the making of a Neighbourhood Development Order and are therefore not relevant to the NANP.

2.17 The amendments introduced by way of the LURA also require neighbourhood plans to meet the following legal compliance requirements:

- so far as the qualifying body considers appropriate, and having regard to the subject matter of the plan, the plan must be designed to secure that the development and use of land in the neighbourhood area contribute to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change; and
- so far as the qualifying body considers appropriate and having regard to the subject matter of the plan, the plan must be designed to take account

of any local nature recovery strategy under section 104 of the Environment Act 2021 that relates to all or part of the neighbourhood plan area.

Chapter 3

Approach to the health check

3.1 This health check reviews the draft policies as published following the November 2024 informal consultation [\[See reference 10\]](#).

3.2 At the date of this health check, the adopted Development Plan for the area, not including documents relating to excluded minerals and waste development, comprises the Winchester District Local Plan 2020 – 2040 [\[See reference 11\]](#), adopted on 24 March 2026.

3.3 The Plan area is also covered by the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan, adopted in October 2013 [\[See reference 12\]](#).

3.4 Planning policy for England is set out principally in the NPPF and is accompanied by the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) which offers guidance on how this policy should be implemented. All references in this health check report are to the latest iteration of the NPPF dated December 2024 and the accompanying PPG.

3.5 The work to date on the neighbourhood plan has been assessed at a high-level in terms of Process and Content. Further detailed comments are provided on each of the policies, with recommendations for next steps.

3.6 The following documents were also considered as part of this review:

- Draft of Policies following consultation 2024 (provided by email)
- Winchester District Local Plan 2020 to 2040
- New Alresford Conservation Area Enhancement Options [\[See reference 13\]](#)
- New Alresford Key Views Assessment [\[See reference 14\]](#)

- New Alresford Design Guidance and Codes [\[See reference 15\]](#)
- New Alresford Neighbourhood Plan potential site allocations: High-level transport review [\[See reference 16\]](#)
- New Alresford Site Options and Assessment Report [\[See reference 17\]](#)
- Strategic Environmental Assessment Interim Report [\[See reference 18\]](#)
- Strategic Environment Assessment for the New Alresford Neighbourhood Plan: Scoping Report [\[See reference 19\]](#)
- New Alresford Habitats Regulations Assessment [\[See reference 20\]](#)
- New Alresford Housing Needs Assessment [\[See reference 21\]](#)
- Consultant Report - Public to Draft Policies (Consultation 21st November – 17th December 2024) [\[See reference 22\]](#)
- Conservation Area Enhancements, AECOM, 2025 (provided by email)
- Selection of Preferred Housing Site Allocations (provided by email)
- Response to Transport Report in relation NA01 – Wates (provided by email)
- 2. Response to Interim SEA and Site Options report in relation to NA01 – Wates (provided by email)
- 3. Response to Interim SEA in relation to NA02 – Perins School (landowner) (provided by email)
- 4. Transport report commissioned by Alfred Homes in response to High Level Transport Report in relation to NA06 (provided by email)
- 5. Letter of Concerns about Interim SEA and Site Options in relation to NA06 – Alfred Homes (provided by email)
- 6. Response to Transport Report in relation to NA06 – Alfred Homes (provided by email)
- 7. Response to Transport Report in relation to NA07 – ProVision (planning consultant) on behalf of landowner (provided by email)

Limitations

3.7 In reviewing the draft neighbourhood plan policies and associated site allocations, LUC has not undertaken site visits or sought to reassess the suitability of individual sites. Comments are based solely on the evidence prepared to date by the qualifying body and/or local planning authority and are limited to an assessment of that material. Where potential issues or gaps have been identified, these are raised to highlight areas where further evidence, clarification or analysis may be required, rather than to provide an independent or definitive judgment on the appropriateness of any policy or site allocation.

Chapter 4

Findings of the Health Check

Process - High-level review

4.1 Table 4.1 provides a high-level assessment of the process to date. Where a source (column 3) is shown in brackets, this means that it has not yet been produced as the NANP has not yet reached this stage.

Table 4.1: Assessment of the Process

Ref.	Criteria	Source	Response/ comments
1.1	Have the necessary statutory requirements been met in terms of the designation of the neighbourhood area?	Designation letter from WCC	Yes – the Neighbourhood Area was designated in September 2021
1.2	If the area does not have a parish council, have the necessary statutory requirements been met in terms of the designation of the neighbourhood forum?	N/A	N/A
1.3	Has the plan been the subject of appropriate pre-submission consultation and publicity, as set out in the legislation, or is this underway?	(Consultation Statement)	This stage has not yet commenced.
1.4	Has there been a programme of community engagement	Residents Update, May 2026	This stage has not yet commenced. There has been a good level of engagement to date on the policies. Further engagement will be needed in relation to the site selection.

Chapter 4 Findings of the Health Check

Ref.	Criteria	Source	Response/ comments
	proportionate to the scale and complexity of the plan?	(Consultation Statement)	
1.5	Are arrangements in place for an independent examiner to be appointed?		This stage has not yet commenced. It will be for WCC to commission the Examiner, in consultation with the Town Council.
1.6	Are discussions taking place with the electoral services team on holding the referendum?		This stage has not yet commenced.
1.7	Is there a clear project plan for bringing the plan into force and does it take account of local authority committee cycles?		This stage has not yet commenced.
1.8	Has an SEA screening been carried out by the LPA?	SEA Scoping Report, April 2023 SEA Interim Report, July 2024	It is unclear whether an SEA Screening has been undertaken by the LPA. However, AECOM was commissioned by the Town Council to prepare an SEA Interim Report. This is because the NANP is allocating sites for development in an environmentally constrained part of Winchester (including, but not limited to, an SAC designation, SSSIs and associated Impact Risk Zones, listed buildings and a registered park and garden). Such development has potential to result in significant environmental effects. As such, the SEA process was commenced to meet the requirements as prescribed by the

Ref.	Criteria	Source	Response/ comments
			Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations) [See reference 23]. A Screening Determination Statement will need to be issued by WCC. Assuming an SEA is required, this will need to be completed before the NANP can commence the Pre-Submission Version consultation at Regulation 14.
1.9	Has an HRA screening been carried out by the LPA?	HRA Report, December 2025	A full HRA was undertaken and reported on in December 2025. The screening assessment was based on the policies as drafted in November 2024, following an informal consultation. The screening identified likely significant effects due to the Neighbourhood Plan in relation to: physical damage and loss of habitat, non-physical disturbance, direct pollution, and wastewater. However, with safeguards within the Winchester Local Plan policies and Neighbourhood Plan policies considered, the Appropriate Assessment concluded that there will be no adverse effects on the integrity of any Habitats Site, directly or via FLL, due to the New Alresford Neighbourhood Plan. Development proposals in some locations may require more evidence to demonstrate that they are avoiding harm to the River Itchen SAC than other locations. It is unclear if this report has been sent to Natural England for comment. This will need to be undertaken, and a Screening Determination Statement issued by WCC before the NANP can commence the Pre-Submission Version consultation at Regulation 14.

Process - High level recommendations

4.2 As summarised in Table 4.1, the NANP has not yet commenced the Pre-Submission Version consultation at Regulation 14. Prior to this being started, it will be important that WCC is approached to prepare a Screening Determination Statement for the SEA and HRA aspects of the process. Assuming a SEA is officially screened in for the plan, the SEA will need to be completed prior to the NANP proceeding to the first round of formal consultation at Regulation 14.

4.3 The HRA screening assessment published in December 2025 identified some likely significant effects, but the appropriate assessment stage concluded that there will not be adverse effects on integrity of any Habitats Sites due to policy safeguards contained in the Winchester Local Plan and the draft policies in the NANP. This needs to be acknowledged formally by WCC in their Screening Determination Statement.

Policies - High-level review

4.4 Table 4.2 provides a high-level assessment of the policies to date. Detailed commentary on each policy is provided below the table.

Table 4.2: Assessment of the Policies

Ref.	Criteria	Source	Response/ comments
2.1	Are policies appropriately justified with a clear rationale?	Draft of Policies following consultation 2024 Evidence documents	The majority of policies are suitably justified. For clarity, it would be helpful to include a statement above each policy setting out its purpose. A clear justification, drawing on evidence that underpins the policy should also be provided. Where evidence directly supports a policy, for instance local green spaces, key views and non-designated heritage assets, this should be included within an Appendix. The site allocations will need additional review and this is discussed later in this chapter.
2.2	Is it clear which parts of the draft plan form the 'neighbourhood plan proposal' (i.e. the neighbourhood development plan) under the Localism Act, subject to the independent examination, and which parts do not form part of the 'plan proposal', and would not be tested by the independent examination?	Draft of Policies following consultation 2024	The Plan document structure, beyond the policies, has not yet been drafted. Topics for inclusion are suggested later in this chapter.

Chapter 4 Findings of the Health Check

Ref.	Criteria	Source	Response/ comments
2.3	Are there any obvious conflicts with the NPPF?	Draft of Policies following consultation 2024	There are some examples of duplication of NPPF policies. There are also examples where the plan policies are worded in an overly restrictive manner, which would not be in compliance with sustainable development. Note that a new NPPF is due to be published in summer 2026 and policies will need to be reconsidered against this.
2.4	Is there a clear explanation of the ways the plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development?	Draft of Policies following consultation 2024 (Basic Conditions Statement)	The vision and objectives contribute to explaining the key issues facing New Alresford. Policies NA8 (Housing Strategy), particularly if combined with Policy NA15 would contribute to illustrating the spatial and growth strategy for the plan area. The residential site allocations, once selected, can also contribute to sustainability, for instance where they are located close to public transport nodes, local facilities and amenities. The SEA will provide a detailed review of the policies in relation to their environmental impacts (as well as some social and economic impacts covered by the SEA topics) and therefore will help to explain how the policies and plan contribute to achieving sustainable development. Ultimately the Basic Conditions Statement, which will be prepared to sit alongside the Submission Version Plan, should set out how the policies, individually and collectively contribute to sustainable development. As drafted, the suite of policies would achieve this. Of note is the Local Green Space policy where spaces must be capable of enduring beyond the plan period and not restrict ability for future growth.
2.5	Are there any issues around compatibility with	(Basic Conditions Statement)	No issues have been identified. Whilst not a requirement, some neighbourhood plan groups prepare an Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA). An example is Horsmonden in Tunbridge Wells Borough [See reference 24]. Where this is not provided, the SEA

Chapter 4 Findings of the Health Check

Ref.	Criteria	Source	Response/ comments
	human rights or EU obligations?		objectives could be updated (perhaps an expansion to the community and wellbeing objective) to include equalities. In the absence of the EqIA, the SEA should suffice as it will help to identify potential adverse effects on human health/people's ability access green space and services and facilities (and hence equality).
2.6	Does the plan avoid dealing with excluded development including nationally significant infrastructure, waste and minerals?	Draft of Policies following consultation 2024	Yes. A statement to this effect would be helpfully included in the Basic Conditions Statement as well as in a 'strategic context' section of the Plan itself.
2.7	Is there consensus between the local planning authority and the qualifying body over whether the plan meets the basic conditions and, if not, what are the areas of disagreement?		Once an updated draft plan is developed, it would be helpful to discuss this with WCC. Areas of concern can then be addressed prior to commencing the formal consultation at Regulation 14
2.8	Are there any obvious errors in the plan?	Draft of Policies following consultation 2024	There are no obvious errors with the scope of the policies. Individual comments on policy drafting and evidence is provided below this table. The work on the sites is extensive and very detailed but would benefit from an objective review to update the site assessments, to check accuracy, consider the viability of sites, identify preferred sites and assess reasonable alternatives. This is discussed further in the sections below the table.

Chapter 4 Findings of the Health Check

Ref.	Criteria	Source	Response/ comments
			The SEA and HRA Screening Determination Statement need to be finalised by WCC. These will be needed for the Regulation 14 consultation.

Policies – detailed comments and recommendations

4.5 This section should be read in conjunction with the Draft of Policies following consultation 2024. As a general point, references to the emerging Local Plan in that document will need to be updated as the Local Plan was adopted in March 2026. It is possible that the new NPPF will be published before the NANP Pre-Submission Version plan is finalised. This will need to be reflected in the document. In addition, some policies can be best illustrated using a map. All maps should be prepared to an OS base, in line with planning guidance. A ‘policies map’ should also be provided in the document, illustrating all of the designations and policies as they apply to the parish.

4.6 Vision and Objectives: A draft vision and objectives for the NANP were consulted on in November 2024 [\[See reference 25\]](#). These are considered appropriate for the Parish in the context of national policies and the strategic policies of the current adopted Local Plan for Winchester District. A comment in the consultation relates to how the vision and objectives will be monitored. This is considered later in this section under ‘Content and Layout of the Plan’.

Policy NA1: Architecture and Urban Design

4.7 The policy sets out design expectations for the Neighbourhood Area to ensure that it is landscape/context-led. It is underpinned by the New Alresford Design Guidance and Codes although this is currently described as a draft ‘emerging’ document, so will need to be finalised. Currently, Section 4 of the Design Guidance document sets out Design Codes for each of the sites being considered for allocation. The NAPC might wish to review the inclusion of this in its entirety once site/sites for allocation have been selected, and remove those parts relating to non-allocated sites.

4.8 The Conservation Area Enhancements document prepared by AECOM in March 2025 could also be cited in this policy in relation to any site allocations within the Conservation Area.

4.9 In Part 2 of the policy, it should be made clear that the Design Guidance and Codes, once finalised, forms an integral part of the plan, to emphasise its status in planning decisions. It should form an Appendix to the Plan. The New Alresford Design Statement 2008 could also be added to the Appendix to uplift its status as part of the NANP. There may be a need to review this to ensure its content is still valid.

4.10 There is a need to define terminology, such as 'active elevations' in the Glossary.

4.11 The NAPC would be well-placed to include 'as appropriate to their scale, nature and location' to the start of Part 3 of the policy, to allow for flexibility in the application of the policy.

4.12 Within the supporting text, it would be useful to make reference to the relevant sections of the Landscape Character Assessment (2022) [\[See reference 26\]](#), which will assist in understanding what 'landscape-led' means in the context of New Alresford.

Policy NA2: Community Facilities

4.13 The policy has three parts. The first supports the provision of new community facilities, subject to criteria. The second seeks to retain existing community facilities from change of use and the third provides information about community facilities within mixed-use development.

4.14 Part 1 of the policy could be further enhanced by including the detail of the sorts of facilities that would be particularly supported. This is currently set out in the justification text. There could be an option to show the existing community facilities you wish to safeguard on a map. That map could also be helpful in underpinning Policy NA13 (Movement and Access) in relation to demonstrating the 20-minute neighbourhood concept and distance of potential housing sites from existing facilities.

Policy NA3: Delivery, Monitoring and Review

4.15 Having reviewed Policy NA3, it is considered that much of its content would be more appropriately presented as supporting text rather than as a standalone planning policy. Neighbourhood plan policies should primarily provide a clear basis for determining planning applications and should contain locally specific planning requirements that add value to the wider development plan. Several elements of NA3, including arrangements for monitoring, review, infrastructure prioritisation and the allocation of neighbourhood CIL receipts, do not directly influence planning decisions and therefore sit more naturally within the supporting chapters of the plan.

4.16 The policy also largely describes existing mechanisms through which infrastructure is secured, including planning obligations, planning conditions and the Community Infrastructure Levy. These mechanisms are already established through national legislation and local planning policy and are available to the local planning authority irrespective of whether they are repeated in the neighbourhood plan. Reproducing these processes as policy risks creating duplication without providing additional planning weight or locally distinctive guidance.

4.17 Moving this material into a separate chapter focusing on Delivery, Monitoring and Review would improve the clarity and effectiveness of the plan by separating development management policies from implementation and governance matters. This approach would allow the plan to explain how infrastructure priorities will be identified, how neighbourhood CIL funding will be directed, and how the plan will be monitored and reviewed over time, while ensuring that the policy section remains focused on matters that can be directly applied in the assessment of planning applications.

4.18 If there is a desire to retain a policy reference to infrastructure delivery, this could be achieved through a short and focused policy requiring development to make proportionate provision for, or contributions towards, infrastructure

necessary to support the development and mitigate its impacts. The more detailed procedural and administrative matters could then be set out in the supporting text, where they can be updated and interpreted more flexibly without affecting the policy framework of the neighbourhood plan.

4.19 Policy NA4: Employment

4.20 This policy addresses matters that are clearly within the scope of neighbourhood planning: safeguarding employment land; supporting business growth; encouraging modern forms of employment; protecting employment areas from erosion; and promoting sustainable travel.

4.21 However, several criteria feel more like aspirations than planning tests. For example, how would 'promote smart economic growth' be defined? The wording needs to be clear to a planning officer/ planning committee who would be applying the policies and making planning decisions. The reference to superfast broadband could be improved to ensure that it does not become out-dated. An alternative could be 'development proposals should incorporate high-quality digital infrastructure wherever feasible'.

4.22 Part 2 b could be reworded to 'Development proposals should provide appropriate facilities for walking, cycling and public transport users proportionate to their scale and nature' to allow for greater flexibility. Specific examples of such facilities could then be included in the supporting text. The use of the words 'consider avoiding' in clause e is fairly weak and could be replaced with 'Development proposals should not result in unacceptable impacts on neighbouring occupiers, highway safety or the efficient operation of the local road network'. Whilst 'wheeling' is an accepted term, it would be helpful to include a definition of this in the Glossary.

4.23 In Part 4, is there a particular reason why co-working provision would not be supported in safeguarded Employment Areas? It may be preferable to refer to supporting coworking spaces, workshops, maker spaces and home-working facilities where compatible with surrounding uses.

4.24 Overall, the policy could be improved by removing ambiguous and/or subjective wording. Restating it within three themes could also improve legibility, for instance: employment land protection, employment growth and flexible workspace. The two later policies relating to the economy (NA16 and NA17) could usefully be positioned next to this policy in the document.

Policy NA5: Green and Blue Infrastructure

4.25 This is a strong policy which deals with matters that planning applications can genuinely influence: protection of green and blue infrastructure; ecological connectivity; sustainable transport integration; and integrating sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and nature-based solutions.

4.26 Wording improvements could be made to enable the flexible application of the policy. For example, replacing ‘any loss, or fragmentation...’ with ‘development should avoid the loss or fragmentation of Green and Blue Infrastructure and should not result in significant harm to the integrity or function of the network.’ Equally, avoiding the phrase ‘maximises opportunities’, which can be difficult to quantify and replacing with ‘where appropriate, integrates the Green and Blue Infrastructure network with existing and proposed sustainable transport routes’ is recommended.

4.27 The map supporting the policy would ideally be bigger and clearer to read. It would be very helpful if the policy also referred to the Hampshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), which was published in November 2025 [\[See reference 27\]](#). Read across to the LNRS is now required for neighbourhood plans as set out in Chapter 2 of this Health Check. Specifically, reference could be made to Areas of Importance for (and Potential Importance for) Biodiversity, which could also be referenced in the policy itself as spaces where off-site biodiversity net gain could be supported as a priority within the parish.

Policy NA6: Historic Environment

4.28 The importance of heritage within the neighbourhood area is clear. However, Part 1 of the policy largely duplicates national and local plan policy.

Unless it can be tailored more specifically to New Alresford, an Examiner may recommend it to be removed. Part 2 is more relevant in terms of setting out design principles, however, this is largely covered already in Policy NA1. Part 3 refers to an emerging Local Plan policy, now adopted. As with Parts 1 and 2, there is no need to repeat existing policy. The policy may be best removed unless Part 2 can add additional local value that is not already covered in Policy NA1.

Policy NA7: Local Heritage Assets

4.29 The policy seeks to identify ten assets as Non-Designated Heritage Assets (NDHA). It is recommended that the term 'locally listed assets' is amended, including the policy title, to 'Non-designated heritage assets' for clarity. This aligns with wording in the NPPF.

4.30 Part 2 of the policy should be moved into the supporting text as it is not required for the policy itself. As WCC does not have an official 'Local List', the following text could be added to the end of Part A: 'The above list is not exhaustive, and other buildings, structures and sites may be identified as non-designated heritage assets, for example during the determination of a planning application.'

4.31 Part 3 is currently diverging from national policy and could be better replaced with "Proposals affecting non-designated heritage assets will be determined based on national planning policy."

4.32 Each proposed NDHA will need to be carefully justified against the identified criteria [\[See reference 28\]](#) along with a description and photograph. This could be included as an Appendix. As with all maps in the document, the supporting figure here should be prepared to an OS base and clearly show the locations of the assets. It would be helpful to show other heritage assets on the map, for instance, the Conservation Area and designated heritage assets (listed buildings).

Policy NA8: Housing Strategy

4.33 This policy could most usefully be included at the start of the Plan as a spatial strategy policy and be combined with the Policy NA15 (New Alresford Settlement Boundary). The policy could helpfully set out where development is considered appropriate and where it should be focussed. It could establish the allocation of site/s to deliver ‘approximately’ or ‘at least’ 100 dwellings and signpost to the Site Allocation policies that would ultimately need to be included in the Plan. A clause then extending the Settlement Boundary, to incorporate those new allocations, would complete the policy.

4.34 The justification could set out the key principles that should be followed when considering where development is appropriate. It could also provide the reasoning as to why a figure of 100 dwellings has been identified, i.e. that this is number required by WCC for the parish.

4.35 The policy would then need to be followed by the Site Allocation policy or policies, which are discussed later in this chapter.

Policy NA9: Housing Size, Type and Mix

4.36 This policy sets out the housing mix required for the parish. It is underpinned by a Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) that was prepared for New Alresford. It is a reasonable and workable neighbourhood plan policy, but it still needs some tightening to make it more defensible at examination and clearer in application. For example, phrases such as ‘balanced mix’ and ‘easy access’ are open to interpretation and could be better defined. The term ‘innovative housing’ is also ambiguous and should be clarified to avoid misinterpretation of the policy.

4.37 Note that Policy NA4 (Employment) suggests that coworking/live-work units are not supported in safeguarded employment areas. Policy MA9 supports live-work units in general housing contexts. Whilst this is acceptable in principle, the plan needs to be clear that ‘live-work’ is a residential typology, not an employment land use.

4.38 The justification could more clearly bring out the key findings of the HNA and should make the point that whilst the focus is on meeting local (parish) housing needs, there is an expectation that new residential development would also contribute to the wider, strategic housing need for the district.

Policy NA10: Key Views Policy

4.39 The Plan identifies 24 key views. A detailed assessment of the views has been prepared to justify and underpin the policy. This sets out the planning and landscape context, the methodology for selecting the views, the criteria against which views have been assessed, and descriptions, maps and photographs for each. There is read across between the work undertaken on the New Alresford Design Guidance and Codes, as well as the New Alresford Conservation Area Technical Assessment, both of which highlight important views.

4.40 All of the views are accessible from public locations, in line with planning guidance. It would be helpful to make clear that the view arcs are indicative.

4.41 It should be noted that it is a basic principle of the neighbourhood planning system that a policy can only apply to land that falls within the neighbourhood area. The map associated with Policy NA10 shows a number of areas where the view arcs are either wholly situated outside the parish, or extend across the parish boundary. This is the case for Views: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 12, 23 and 24. An Examiner may request that these views either be amended to better reflect that they relate to areas within the Parish, or for them to be removed from the plan. An example of an Examiner requiring such an amendment is for the East Dean and Friston Neighbourhood Plan [\[See reference 29\]](#).

4.42 A response to the WCC and the Public to Draft Policies (Consultation 21st November – 17th December 2024) identifies additional public views across Barn Field. These will need to be assessed in accordance with the methodology and added to the Views Assessment Report, map and policy if considered to meet the criteria. Accordingly, Part 1 of the policy, and also the supporting justification text, would also need to be amended to make clear that views are ‘within the neighbourhood area’.

4.43 In terms of the impact on views of allocated sites, the supporting text could also state (excerpt from the East Dean and Friston Neighbourhood Plan [\[See reference 30\]](#) as an example):

Where identified views stretch into neighbouring parishes, it is the intention of the Town Council to discuss those views with the relevant parishes, especially in relation to any future development.

Development should be designed in a way that safeguards, where possible, the key view or views concerned. The policy attempts to provide the flexibility required for a range of development proposals which will come forward within the Plan period. In circumstances where the proposed development would be likely to have a significant impact on an identified significant view – which is highly likely for the views coinciding with any allocated site – the planning application concerned should be accompanied by a landscape and visual impact assessment proportionate to the scale of the development proposed.

Appropriate mitigation measures should be incorporated within the design of the proposal and captured in the assessment. It is accepted that in some areas, views will be compromised, but developers should seek to incorporate glimpses of views within proposals. This will assist in embedding a landscape approach to development and perpetuate a sense of place, connecting with South Downs National Park.

Policy NA11: Landscape

4.44 This policy is clearly place-based and landscape-led, with significant potential to shape positive development outcomes. However, parts of the wording could be tightened up and introduce an element of subjectivity that could reduce clarity and consistency in both examination and decision-making.

4.45 The wording ‘and enhance’ is a high bar to reach and could be caveated for flexibility with the words ‘where possible’. Part 1 could also make reference to the Design Guidance developed to underpin Policy NA1.

Policy NA12: Local Green Spaces

4.46 The policy seeks to designate 37 Local Green Spaces.

4.47 The evidence underpinning this policy has been separately reviewed in the Review of proposed Local Green Spaces prepared by LUC alongside the Health Check Report.

4.48 It would be helpful to include the Local Green Space Report, which contains the justifications for each space, as an Appendix to the NANP and refer to this in the policy itself. The text at the end of the policy may be considered by an Examiner to go beyond national policy in terms of how the development of a Local Green Space should be considered. Notably the wording ‘*Planning applications for development on designated Local Green Spaces will not be supported unless they perform a supplementary and supporting function to the green space*’ (emphasis added) is not a requirement of national policy.

4.49 An alternative statement is suggested as follows: “Development proposals within the designated Local Green Spaces will be consistent with national policy for Green Belt”.

4.50 It is understood that all owners of the Local Green Spaces have been identified and contacted, which is in line with Planning Practice Guidance. All owners should be contacted again at the Pre-Submission Version consultation stage at Regulation 14.

Policy NA13: Movement and Access

4.51 This is a strong and ambitious policy on movement and accessibility, underpinned by a clear place-based approach and a direction of travel.

4.52 Its principal weakness lies not in its objectives, but in its structure and focus. The policy seeks to address a wide range of issues within a single policy and, at times, extends into aspirational ambitions or operational matters rather than setting out clear planning requirements. Any aspirations would be better included in the supporting text or as ‘non-policy’ projects to pursue in a separate chapter of the document. The maps supporting the policy could be improved to provide an indication of the 20-minute neighbourhood concept as applied to New Alresford. This could also show key community facilities. The Watercress Way (see Policy NA14) could also be marked on the maps here as a potential active travel route. This will help to demonstrate connectivity to the existing movement network.

4.53 With some rationalisation and a clearer distinction between overarching policy priorities and decision-making criteria, the policy would provide a robust and examination-ready framework.

Policy NA14: The Safeguarded Watercress Way

4.54 This policy seeks to enable the use of the dismantled railway line as an active travel route. It is well written, albeit some of the wording lacks flexibility. This could be addressed by redrafting it slightly, for example:

1. The dismantled railway line from New Alresford station towards Kingsworthy, as identified on the Policies Map, is safeguarded for its existing and potential future use as an active travel route. Development proposals that facilitate the delivery, enhancement, or use of the route as an active travel corridor will be supported. Development proposals that would prejudice or compromise the integrity, continuity, or future delivery of the route will not be supported.

2. Development proposals on sites adjoining or in close proximity to the Watercress Way should, where appropriate and proportionate to the scale and nature of the development, provide safe, inclusive and convenient access to the route. This may include new or improved connections for walking, wheeling and cycling, and measures that enhance permeability and accessibility to the network.

Policy NA15: New Alresford Settlement Boundary

4.55 See comments against Policy NA8. Part 2 currently requires all clauses to be met for development to be considered appropriate within the settlement boundary. This is a fairly inflexible approach and may cause unintended consequences for smaller development proposals, which may, for example, find it challenging to ‘support and deliver sustainable transport infrastructure maximising active travel opportunities’. Amending wording to ‘contributing to’ or ‘supporting opportunities for’ would assist in this regard.

4.56 There is a need to ensure that Part B aligns with the adopted Local Plan policy and national policy on this matter.

4.57 The map associated with this policy will need to be updated to include any site allocations in the NANP and the open space at the Sun Lane development.

Policy NA16: Sustainable Tourism/ Visitor Economy

4.58 This policy could be moved to beneath the Employment policy.

4.59 The policy as drafted is seeking to achieve four distinct outcomes: support tourism development, control impacts on town centre/community facilities, manage loss of tourism uses; and manage environmental and infrastructure impacts. As a result, it could benefit from some simplification or sub-headings within the policy.

4.60 An Examiner may seek a definition of ‘sustainable tourism’. The South Downs signposts to the report Regenerative Tourism in UK National Parks [See reference 31], which includes a definition. Note that this policy would support tourism development outside the settlement boundary, which is not explicitly mentioned in Policy NA15.

Policy NA17: The Town Centre

4.61 This policy could be moved to beneath the Employment policy.

4.62 The policy seeks to enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre, which is defined on the associated map. Part 2 could usefully encourage mixed-uses in the town centre, which would align with national policy. For Part 4, it would be helpful to add to the supporting text any particular public realm improvements that would be supported. Part 7 could explicitly reference the re-use of historic buildings.

Site allocations

4.63 In parallel with the policies described earlier in this section, the NANP is also seeking to allocate a site/sites to meet identified housing need.

4.64 Policy NA3 (Neighbourhood Plan Designated Area) of the Winchester District Local Plan states that additional land will be allocated for development in the New Alresford Neighbourhood Plan for about 100 dwellings, including any amendments to the settlement boundary. Should the NANP not allocate these homes, this allowance will be considered as a part of an early review of the Local Plan.

Summary of the process

4.65 The NPAC has been actively exploring sites to meet this requirement. A Call for Sites was held in 2023, which elicited nine responses. One of these

sites was dismissed as it had already received planning permission for a single dwelling. The eight remaining sites had all been previously assessed by WCC as they had also been submitted via the district Call for Sites. New Alresford Town Council commissioned AECOM to reassess the eight sites. A summary of the assessments can be found in the NOTE: Selection of Preferred Housing Site Allocations.

4.66 AECOM's assessment found that due to the potential landscape impact, two of the sites are only potentially suitable for partial allocation (rather than allocation of the whole site). These sites are NA06 (Land adjacent Arlebury Park) and NA07 (Land off Drove Lane).

4.67 The report also concluded that none of the sites were assessed as 'Green – appropriate for allocation' and that all eight sites were assessed as 'Amber – may be appropriate for development if the identified issues can be resolved or constraints mitigated, or that a site is only suitable for partial allocation'.

4.68 At this stage, landowners/site promoters were invited to discuss their proposals with the Town Council in July 2024. The landowner of Site NA05 informed the Town Council that the site was no longer available, leaving seven sites remaining. Site NA10 had also been granted planning permission during this time and was therefore removed from the list. The remaining sites are:

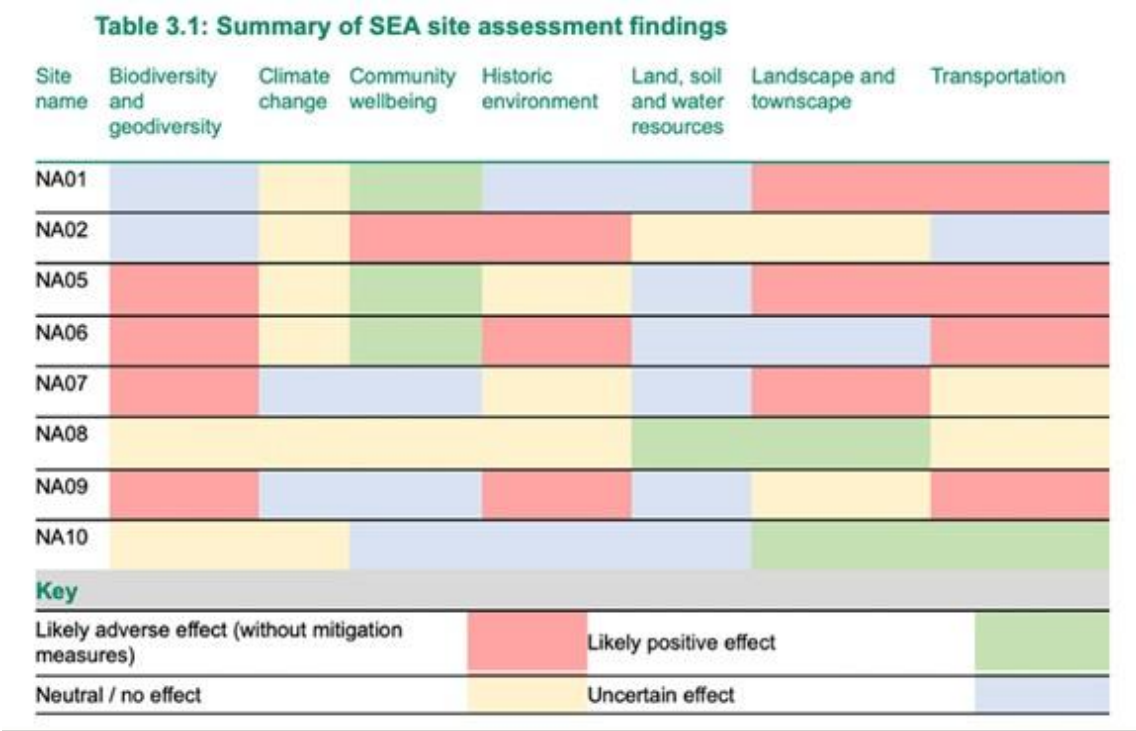
- NA01 - Thody's, New Farm Road (up to 75 dwellings)
- NA02 - Land at Perins School, Pound Hill (up to 13 dwellings)
- NA06 - Land adjacent Arlebury Park (up to 51 dwellings)
- NA07 - Land off Drove Lane (9 dwellings and 5,000sq ft commercial floorspace)
- NA08 - Land on the east side of Bridge Road (up to 8 dwellings)
- NA09 - The Spinney Caravan Site, Arlebury Park (up to 20 dwellings)

4.69 The Town Council sought views from statutory consultees on the remaining six potential sites. Feedback was received from WCC's specialist

teams (Ecology and Biodiversity, Historic Environment, Landscape), South Downs National Park Authority (Landscape) and the Environment Agency. The NOTE: Selection of Preferred Housing Site Allocations contains a summary of the comments received.

4.70 In October 2024, AECOM was commissioned to prepare draft Design Codes for each of the six sites. An interim SEA was also prepared by AECOM and each site was assessed against the SEA objectives. The site options have been ranked in terms of their sustainability performance against the relevant SEA theme as set out in Figure 4.1 below:

Figure 4.1: Sites assessed against SEA objectives



4.71 A public engagement event was held with the community in November 2024 to gain feedback on the six sites. Opportunities, constraints and important aspects to protect were identified for each site.

4.72 The NANP consultants (Troy Planning and Design) took the information gathered from the feedback and technical studies and suggested that the Town Council review the sites against the emerging draft objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan to help determine which site(s) would best reflect the ambitions for the town. This work has not been completed.

4.73 The consultants also advised that 'despite the considerable technical evidence prepared, there are several outstanding and unresolved issues/constraints for housing in New Alresford both strategically across the Parish as well as site specific issues. Until these matters have been addressed or resolved it is not possible to draw firm conclusions about any potential preferred housing allocations for the Neighbourhood Plan'. Strategic constraints include:

- **Nutrient neutrality:** the Solent water catchment is of international importance for wildlife. There are high levels of nitrogen and phosphorus entering the water catchment, as a result of run off from agricultural sites or from wastewater from housing development. These nutrients are causing eutrophication in the Solent, resulting in dense mats of green alae which negatively affect marine ecology. New development in the district is therefore expected to be 'nutrient neutral' to prevent any exacerbation of this issue.

It should be noted that the introduction of Environmental Delivery Plans and the Nature Restoration Fund later in 2026/2027 will assist in enabling developments in areas where nutrient neutrality is an issue.

- **Site access and safety:** the potential accesses to each of the sites has not been reviewed or assessed by the Highways Authority: Hampshire County Council (HCC). HCC has confirmed feedback on this will not be possible until the Regulation 14 stage.

In November 2025, the Town Council commissioned Hampshire Planning and Transport (HPT) to review the six sites from a transport perspective. The report concluded that all sites have a proposed access for motor vehicle access, and it is expected that these could also provide suitable access for walking and cycling. Two of the sites have an additional access

point which is for walking and cycling access only. An assessment of other potential access points has not been provided. The report also provides DfT Connectivity scores for each site, which provides an indication of connectivity both by car and other modes of transport.

It is not unusual for the Highways Authority to not provide feedback at this stage and often groups would encourage site promoters to ascertain this information, potentially through a pre-application discussion with HCC. It should not prevent the site selection process from going ahead.

- **Healthcare:** The Town Council states that the nearest GP has confirmed they will not take on new patients from Sun Lane. Therefore, it is unlikely that they would be in a position to take on patients from development stemming from the Neighbourhood Plan.

This matter would be resolved through developer obligations and should not hold up the selection of sites. The need for approximately 100 new dwellings has been tested via the now adopted Local Plan.

- Site specific constraints have not yet been collated.

4.74 Concerns about the accuracy of the site assessments and interim SEA have also been raised by a number of the site promoters. However, it is noted that this is common for site promoters to disagree with the findings of the SEA and does not usually mean the SEA is inaccurate, especially when it has been carried out by consultants with extensive SEA experience.

Next steps for the Sites

4.75 The following steps, based on the guidance prepared by Locality [\[See reference 32\]](#), are recommended to finalise the site selection process:

- 1. Review and update the Site Assessments for each of the six sites.**

4.76 The work undertaken by AECOM was prepared fairly early on in the process and some aspects of the assessments do not reflect the current situation for some of the sites. There has been additional information gathered, including from WCC, the community, a Transport Consultant, and site promoters themselves, which needs to be consolidated into the overall assessments.

4.77 The site assessment process is designed to demonstrate that a site is available, suitable and economically viable and that there is a good prospect the site will be delivered. The completed site assessment should include the information to justify conclusions on each of these factors as follows.

4.78 In terms of availability, there needs to be evidence that a landowner or developer is willing to sell or develop the site at a known point in the future, and within the plan period. Site allocations in the plan should include an indication of the expected timescale for delivery, for example years 0-5, or 6-10 of the plan period.

4.79 In terms of suitability, the assessment will review potential constraints for each site and consider the extent to which these can be mitigated. Mitigation measures would need to be drawn out in the associated NANP Site Allocation Policy.

4.80 In terms of achievability, there are two aspects to consider whether a site is economically viable. The first refers to the overall level of development proposed in the plan and to ensure that the necessary infrastructure will be in place to support development, e.g. highways and public transport improvements, utilities such as water and sewerage and social infrastructure such as health and education. As the adopted Local Plan sets out a need for at least 100 new home in the parish, it is assumed that this aspect has been met. Contributions to infrastructure from the sites would stem from planning obligations.

4.81 The second aspect refers to the ability of the developer to deliver the scheme and, in particular, whether the financial returns on the site will be

sufficient for the developer to go ahead with the development. Each of the site promoters should be asked to provide evidence that they can deliver a scheme that would comply with current local plan policy on e.g. affordable housing, open space and parking requirements, as well as Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and any other planning obligations. They should also be asked to provide evidence of the viability of any additional benefits that have been promised (such as public open space, community buildings, education or healthcare buildings), including anything the neighbourhood plan group have requested.

4.82 At this point, the sites will have an up-to-date assessment as to whether they are available, suitable and achievable. From here, the preferred sites for allocation should be selected based on which of the shortlisted sites best meet both the development need, e.g. the housing requirement, and the objectives and draft policies of the neighbourhood plan and the SEA objectives. A discussion with WCC Planning Officers would be helpful at this point to set out the findings and gain any feedback.

2. Consultation on preferred sites

4.83 Once the preferred sites have been identified, these should be presented to the community for comments before the Pre-Submission Version Plan is finalised. This would also be an opportunity to share the rest of the draft Plan showing the full suite of policies. It is essential that clear and robust supporting evidence to justify the choice of sites is provided and effective recording of the consultation efforts and responses received. Note that some stakeholders will leave their objections to the formal Regulation 14 or Regulation 16 stage. If it is the former, the Town Council will be able to respond to these. If it is at the latter, these comments will go straight to the external Examiner, so it is better to engage with the community before this stage.

4.84 Following the steps above should result in one or more sites being identified as the most appropriate option to allocate in the neighbourhood plan to meet the identified development need, e.g. for housing or community use. This will form the basis of the site allocation policies that should be presented in the draft plan.

3. Finalise the SEA

4.85 The SEA can be updated at this point, to assess the policies against the SEA objectives and site options (including reasonable alternatives) and set out why the preferred sites were ultimately selected with justifications.

4. Drafting the site policies

4.86 Site allocation policies can include:

- A map showing the site boundary
- The number of houses to be developed and any other proposed land use (including community uses)
- The development area of the site, including areas to be protected from development
- Site phasing
- Landscaping requirements
- Access arrangements
- Design aspects – including materials, building heights, density, layouts, parking
- Provision of open space
- Active travel connectivity

4.87 The design principles set out in the Design Coding work undertaken by AECOM can help to inform this but should not be considered as final schemes. Rather they are indicative. Discussion with the site promoters when developing the policy will assist in ensuring that the proposal is viable and deliverable.

4.88 Note that sites can also be allocated as ‘reserve’ or contingency sites, which would only come forward if allocated sites prove to be undeliverable due to unforeseen constraints.

4.89 At the end of this process, the group will have identified sites for delivery. As stated in the Locality guidance:

Carrying out a site assessment will provide the evidence that the sites selected for allocation are the most appropriate – that they are in the most sustainable location, they are in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Planning Authority's Local Plan and that there is a good prospect that they will be developed.

Sites can then be proposed for allocation in the neighbourhood plan, which will establish the principle for a particular form of development in that location. At the end of the process you will have a site or sites that you can demonstrate to an examiner has been thoroughly and impartially assessed for suitability.

This process will also allow you to 'tell the story' of how the sites that are chosen for allocation were selected, and why others were not. This will help to demonstrate to the community and to landowners and developers who may be promoting other sites, the basis on which the decisions were reached.

Layout of the Plan

4.90 The draft policies reviewed in this chapter were not presented within a full Plan document. When preparing the final structure of the NANP, it would be helpful to include the following:

4.91 Foreword: Whilst not essential, a foreword allows an opportunity to summarise the document and explicitly thank those involved in its development.

4.92 About the Plan: It is helpful to set out what the document is and the strategic planning context within which it has been written.

4.93 Introducing the Area: A pen portrait of the town and wider parish can help to set the scene. This can be illustrated with photographs. Any information relating to demographics can also be identified here.

4.94 Vision and Objectives: The vision and objectives should be set out towards the start of the document. Often neighbourhood plans identify opportunities and challenges facing the area, which lead into these.

4.95 The policies: As a general point, the policies could be clustered by topic area, for example:

- Spatial Strategy and Housing: Policies NA8 (combined with NA15), NA9, and the Site Allocation policies
- Design and Heritage: Policies NA1, NA6 and NA7
- Environment and Green Space: Policies NA5, NA10, NA11, NA12
- Getting Around: Policies NA13 and NA14
- Community facilities: Policy NA2
- Local Economy: Policies NA4, NA16 and NA17

4.96 For each policy, it would be helpful to include a heading, a short section on what the policy is seeking to achieve, the policy itself and a justification for the policy. Some groups also include a 'conformity reference' setting out how the policy conforms to local plan and national policy. Some policies are also best illustrated with maps or other diagrams. Large pieces of evidence, such as justifications for the NDHAs, Local Green Spaces and Key Views, could be included in an Appendix. It is important to note that policies need to be drafted clearly, positively and with flexibility in mind, bearing in mind that they may be used for a whole range of applications, from the very small to the very large. The use of the word 'supported' in place of 'permitted' is also recommended.

4.97 The Parts and clauses within the policies themselves need to be numbered clearly. Some Parts are number 1, 2 etc, while some number only the clauses. A uniform approach is needed.

4.98 Non-policy projects: Often neighbourhood planning groups include a short chapter in their plan setting out projects or aspirations that have been suggested during the community engagement phase and which should be pursued but which sit outside planning and land-use. These could be collated and linked back to the vision and objectives, with an indication of what the project involves and who the key partners might be.

4.99 Implementation of the plan: It would be helpful to include a section setting out how the Plan will be used and what may trigger a future review. For instance, significant changes to national policy, a new local plan, a change in local circumstances could require a (light-touch review of the NANP). This section could also set out infrastructure priorities against which any developer contributions or other funding should be spent. Including this detail in the NANP can give it extra credence as the Plan will have been subject to a referendum. Furthermore, some plans include indicators as to how the relative effectiveness of the policies will be implemented and measured. An example is Badby Parish Council in Daventry District [\[See reference 33\]](#).

4.100 Appendices: Where information specifically justifies a policy, for example, the NDHAs, Local Green Spaces, and Key Views, information should be provided within an Appendix. This could be contained within the document, or separately if too large. The New Alresford Design Guidance and Codes are integral to the NANP, and this should be stated explicitly.

4.101 Evidence list: A list of all documents referenced in the NANP should be compiled, ideally with URLs included if accessible online.

4.102 Glossary: It would be helpful to include a glossary of key terms in the document. This can draw from definitions provided in the NPPF, the Planning Practice Guidance and the Winchester District Local Plan.

4.103 Paragraph, Figure and Table numbering: To ease the readability of the document, it would be helpful to divide the plan into chapters and include paragraph numbering. All maps, figures and tables should be numbered.

4.104 Accessibility: The Plan document will need to conform to accessibility requirements. WCC should be able to provide additional information on the requirements. The Government guidance Writing Planning Policies: A toolkit for neighbourhood planners [See reference 34] also provides helpful advice on the use and tone of language.

4.105 Maps: All maps should be prepared to an OS base and display the OS copyright number. To note, the Town Council can sign up to the OS Public Sector Geospatial Agreement for free and access detailed base mapping through the OS Datahub. A policy map (or maps) will be required in the document illustrating the policies and other land-use matters as they apply to the Neighbourhood Area. If digitised, these can be supplied to WCC to include on their online interactive map. In general, maps should be made larger to enable interpretation. Each should have a key, compass point and scale.

Chapter 5

Next steps

5.1 Overall, the draft Plan is in a fairly advanced state. The majority of the evidence required to underpin the policies is in place. There is some additional consolidation work to carry out in relation to the sites in particular, which will enable a robust justification to be assembled as to the preferred option to take forward. Given the complexity of the sites and the challenges associated with site selection that are often inevitable at the very local level, it would be recommended to employ a consultant to support at least this aspect of the work. The following steps are recommended to finalise the Pre-Submission Version NANP:

- 1.** SEA and HRA Screening Determination Report: Check with WCC that these have been prepared as they will need to be presented at the Regulation 14 consultation.
- 2.** Finalise the policies: Based on the review provided in this report, the policies, justifications and supporting evidence can be finalised. The plan can be assembled using the recommended layout advice provided in Chapter 4. This will include the preparation of suitable maps and presenting evidence in an accessible way.
- 3.** Consolidate the substantial site evidence, assess against the SEA framework, select the preferred sites, and draft the site allocation policies. The sites should be finalised alongside the SEA, following the steps set out in Chapter 4.
- 4.** Undertake an informal consultation on the draft plan: This would provide an opportunity for the community and WCC to share feedback informally before the Plan is finalised into its Pre-Submission Version.

- 5.** Make preparations for the Regulation 14 consultation: This will involve setting out a consultation programme with both the local community and those interested in the Plan. Statutory consultees will need to be written to as will the owners of the Local Green Spaces and NDHAs.
- 6.** Finalising the Submission Version Plan: Feedback from the Regulation 14 consultation will be collated by the Town Council and comments will be reviewed in order to finalise the Submission Version NANP. Alongside this Submission Version Plan, a Consultation Statement and Basic Conditions Statement will need to be prepared. Once all the documentation is complete, it will need to be formally submitted to WCC who will lead the remaining steps in the process, albeit with involvement from the Town Council.

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