



Vote YES

for the
**Alcester Neighbourhood
Development Plan**

Summary Document
Referendum Version



Referendum

Following Independent Examination in January 2020, and a delay of 12 months due to the pandemic, Alcester's Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) is now proceeding to referendum. This will be held on Thursday 6 May 2021 at the usual polling stations. You will receive a polling card from Stratford on Avon District Council (SDC) in the usual way.

The NDP deals with key aspects of life in Alcester: Housing and Built Environment; Economy; Transport and Infrastructure; Community, Leisure and Well-being; and the Natural Environment. There are existing planning policies at national and district council level and the NDP does not contradict or alter these but adds local policies pertinent to Alcester.

This document provides a summary of the Referendum version of the Alcester NDP. It sets out a summary of each policy. We hope that you will take the time to read it. If you would like more detail, please have a look at the full NDP which is available on the Town Council website (www.alcester-tc.gov.uk), SDC website (www.stratford.gov.uk) and from the Library (Click & Collect).

Wendy Mills, Chair, Alcester Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Background to the Alcester Neighbourhood Development Plan

Neighbourhood Development Plans are led by the local community for the local community. The Alcester Neighbourhood Development Plan is a way for our community to influence the planning system within the town area over the next 11 years.

Neighbourhood Development plans are powerful! They can shape the way we approach planning and development and deal with a wide range of social, economic and environmental issues. They allow local people to provide input into the types of development that the community want.

The plan has passed through various rounds of consultation, independent examination and has now finally reached referendum stage to determine whether or not it should be used. The 'made' (adopted) document will form part of the statutory planning framework used to determine planning applications in Alcester's Neighbourhood Development Plan area, truly devolving power to the community level!

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Vision

“In 2031 Alcester will be an attractive, thriving rural town with a valued historic character, located in a beautiful natural environment, offering a wide range of high quality housing, good opportunities for business and local employment, a learning environment for all ages and excellent community and recreational facilities.”

Housing and Built Environment

Policy HBE 1 – Residential Development within the Built-Up Area Boundary

Proposals for new housing within the Built-up-Area Boundary (BUAB) will be supported where appropriate having regard to policies EC1, EC4 and CLW1. Community led self-build schemes will be supported. New housing in the countryside outside the Built-up-Area will only be supported if it meets criteria in national policies and the Stratford on Avon District Council (SDC) Core Strategy.

Policy HBE 2 – Local Needs Housing

Where there is a proven and as yet unmet local need (e.g. local people needing affordable housing), and there are no suitable sites in the BUAB, development will be supported on small sites adjacent to the Boundary. Arrangements to ensure continuing affordability must also exist. If developers can prove that 100% local needs housing is not viable, then an element of market housing may be included to facilitate the delivery of affordable homes.

Policy HBE 3 – Housing mix

This policy seeks to ensure that developments of ten dwellings or more contain a mix of housing to meet Alcester’s needs, as shown in the latest Housing Needs Survey. The policy says 45% of homes should have one or two bedrooms, no more than 40% 3 bedroom, and no more than 15% 4+ bedrooms. In relation to affordable housing the mix is at least 20% 1 bedroom and 40% 2 bedroom, no more than 35% 3 bedroom and 5% 4+ bedroom homes. The requirement for affordable housing will continue to be monitored.

Policy HBE 4 – Bungalows

Proposals for bungalows within the BUAB will be supported. Developments of ten or more units within the BUAB (except specialist accommodation), should include at least 10% bungalows.

Policy HBE 5– Specialist accommodation

Proposals for new specialist accommodation will be supported.



Policy HBE 6 – Healthy living

This policy seeks to ensure that all developments protect occupants' health and the wider environment. This includes maximising natural light and heat and providing ventilation.

Policy HBE 7 – Electric car charging points

New developments will be required to meet the following standards unless they are superseded by national standards: Where parking is provided within the curtilage- one permanently wired electric car charging point (ECCP) per dwelling. Other development with unallocated parking- one ECCP per 10 spaces of parking. Requirements of the policy may be modified where they would be harmful to heritage assets.

Policy HBE 8 – Development design

With this policy we are seeking to ensure that all development in Alcester is of high quality and well designed. This policy also requires developers to show how their development contributes to the character of the town in accordance with the principles of compatibility with the distinctive character, density and scale, materials and building heights.

Policy HBE 9 – Public Realm

Wherever possible new residential and town centre developments should respond to opportunities to provide a high quality of public realm that will enhance the sense of place in Alcester.

Policy HBE 10 – Heritage Assets

Development which is within or adjacent to Alcester's Conservation Area or affecting a heritage asset will only be supported where the public benefits of the proposal clearly outweigh any harm to the Conservation Area, a heritage asset or its setting.

Economy

Policy EC 1 – Development within the Town Centre

This policy seeks to enhance and support the vitality of the Town Centre, supporting proposals for new shops, offices, hospitality and tourism or extensions to them. Parking spaces must not be lost by development. Change of use at ground floor level to residential will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that the existing use is no longer viable.

Policy EC 2 – Supporting employment on brownfield sites

Proposals for employment uses on brownfield sites within the Neighbourhood Area will be supported subject to ensuring the amenity of neighbouring uses is protected.



Policy EC 3 – Supporting business start-up

This policy supports applications for small-scale business space for start-ups. Flexible units that can be adapted to meet the needs of new and small businesses will be supported. In new homes, home office space is also supported.

Policy EC 4 – Employment land changes of use and mixed use development

This policy supports retaining land currently in employment use. Change to residential use will be resisted unless it can be shown that continued business use is no longer viable.

Policy EC 5 – Support for commercial development

Proposals that demonstrate direct benefit to the local area and which support and promote the use of the local workforce and products will be supported within the BUAB subject to adequate parking provision. Proposals for retail development outside the Town Centre will only be supported if the impact to the Town Centre vitality and viability is not adversely affected. Proposals which include conferencing and meeting facilities as well as low cost business space will be supported for small enterprises and start-ups within the BUAB.

Policy EC 6 – Education and childcare provision

Developments which propose the provision and expansion of educational and childcare facilities will be supported where they meet an identified need, are accessible to the area they serve by adequate footpath or cycle links, demonstrate high quality design and can provide on-site parking in accordance with the standards of Warwickshire County Council.

Policy EC 7 – Further and adult education and training

Development proposals for tertiary education, adult education, apprenticeship training and general learning facilities will be supported where they are of high quality design, have adequate parking provision and good links to public transport and footpaths and cycleways.

Policy EC 8 – Support for new or improved tourist attractions and accommodation

This policy supports development proposals which increase and improve tourist attractions and accommodation in the town. Proposals which enhance visitor enjoyment of Alcester's natural environment and historical sites will also be supported.

Transport and Infrastructure

Policy TI 1 – New development and connectivity

Residential developments of ten or more units should provide direct connections to existing footpaths, cycleways and bridleways with clear signposting and ensure full accessibility for all users where possible. In helping to reduce car journeys developers may also have to liaise with local transport providers. Such developments should also provide bike storage.



Policy TI 2 – Telecommunication

New and enhanced telecommunications developments will be supported provided there is compliance with operational requirements and safety guidelines, interference with existing equipment is avoided, opportunities for potential mast sharing have been explored, impact on surroundings and buildings is minimised and redundant equipment is safely removed.

Policy TI 3 – High Speed Broadband

All new commercial and residential development within the BUAB will be expected to include the necessary infrastructure to allow future connectivity at the highest speeds available.

Community, Leisure and Well-being

Policy CLW 1 – Community and leisure facilities development

Development proposals which enhance and improve existing community and leisure facilities (indoor and outdoor) will be supported where shown to be economically sustainable and serve a demonstrable need. Proposals for new leisure and community facilities will be supported provided they are compatible with neighbouring uses and also where they are accessible via good footpath/cycle links. The loss or partial loss of existing community facilities will not be supported unless it can be shown that there is no prospect of them being brought back into use.

Policy CLW 2 – Enhancing access to and utilisation of open green spaces

Alcester contains many green spaces and any development which improves access to them and their recreational usage will be supported, provided it is consistent with retaining biodiversity. Consideration should be given to wheelchair users as well as pedestrians. Level, safe pathways and appropriate signage should be provided where possible.

Policy CLW 3 – Health provision

Any development proposal, meeting a proven local need, which would create or enhance facilities for supporting or improving people's mental or physical health will be supported.

Policy CLW 4 – Allotments and growing spaces

Alcester has several well used allotment sites. This policy seeks to protect those and support proposals for new allotments and growing spaces providing there is no adverse impact on the neighbourhood and there are satisfactory arrangements for water supply.



Natural Environment

Policy NE 1 – Trees, hedges and landscape features

This policy expects developers to protect mature trees and hedges and where appropriate incorporate new native trees and hedges planting of a suitable size and species as part of a mitigation scheme.

Policy NE 2 – Biodiversity

In Alcester's natural landscape there is a diversity of species. This policy requires developers to retain existing ecological networks and encourages them to contribute to new habitats.

Policy NE 3 – Local Green Spaces

Alcester has many green spaces. This policy puts forward a list proposing that they formally become "Local Green Spaces" and thereby affording them greater protection from future development.

Listed are:

LGS 1 Westbury Park

LGS 2 Arrow Valley Corridor

LGS 3 Jubilee Fields

LGS 4 St Mary's Park, Kinwarton

LGS 5 Bleachfield Street Play Area

LGS 6 Collins Way Play Area

LGS 7 Moorfields Park

LGS 8 Centenary Field (Gas House Lane Rec)

LGS 9 Alcester Town Cemetery

LGS 10 Whitehall Farm Green Space

LGS 11 Land at Eclipse Road

Policy NE 4 – Protecting Valued Landscapes and Important Views

There are beautiful views in Alcester both within the town and across the countryside.

Where development would have a significant adverse effect on these views, it will only be permitted where the benefits outweigh the harm.

Policy NE 5 – Mitigating and preventing increased flood risk

Many properties in Alcester have suffered from flooding in the past. This policy states that future development must not increase the risk and appropriate flood assessments must be made. The use of sustainable drainage systems and permeable surfaces will be expected where appropriate and the re-use and recycling of water will be encouraged. Proposals which do not satisfactorily demonstrate secure arrangements for the prevention of flooding will not be supported.

REMEMBER TO VOTE ON 6 MAY 2021

