



**Alcester**  
**Neighbourhood**  
**Development Plan 2021**  
*Summary of policies*

## HOUSING AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

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### Policy HBE 1- Residential Development within the Built-up Area Boundary

Proposals for new housing within the Built-up-Area Boundary, either by means of new build, or by converting, extending and/ or redeveloping existing vacant or partly occupied buildings, will be supported, where appropriate having regard to Policies EC1, EC4 and CLW1.

The Built-Up-Area Boundary as defined in the Core Strategy is shown on Map 2 (see ANDP page 16). For the avoidance of doubt, the sections which are within the parishes of Kinwarton and Arrow with Weethley and not included in the Neighbourhood Area are shaded blue.

Within the Built-up-Area boundary, community-led housing schemes and serviced plots for those wishing to build or commission their own housing will be supported.

All areas outside of the Built-up-Area Boundary are classed as countryside. New housing in the countryside will only be supported in accordance with the criteria in paragraph 79 of the NPPF and Policies AS.10 and CS.10 of the Core Strategy.

### Policy HBE 2- Local Needs Housing

Local needs housing development will be supported on small sites beyond, but adjacent to the Built-up-Area Boundary where the following is demonstrated:

- There is a proven and as yet unmet local need, having regard to the latest Housing Needs Survey; and
- Secure arrangements exist to ensure the housing will remain affordable and that priority in the allocation of the houses should be given to those with a local connection as defined in this policy.

For the purposes of local needs housing, a local connection is defined as meeting any of the following criteria:  
Built-Up Area Boundary

- Born in the parish or whose parents were ordinarily resident in the parish at the time of birth
- Currently lives in the parish and has done so for at least the past 12 months
- Used to live in the parish and did so for a continuous period of not less than 3 years
- Currently works in the parish and has done so for at least the past 12 months for an average of not less than 16 hours per week
- Currently has a close family member (ie mother, father, brother, sister, son, daughter) living in the parish and who has done so for a continuous period of not less than 3 years

Where viability for 100% local needs housing provision cannot be achieved, an element of market housing may be included within a rural exception scheme, to provide sufficient cross-subsidy to facilitate the delivery of affordable homes. In such cases, promoters will be required to provide additional supporting evidence in the form of an open book development appraisal for the proposal containing inputs assessed and verified by a chartered surveyor.

### Policy HBE 3- Housing Mix

#### Market Housing

Developments of ten dwellings or more should reflect the housing mix in the table below or those in the most up to date published housing needs assessment at district wide or parish level. Smaller developments should

also have regard to the need for one and two bedroom dwellings. Developers will be required to justify developments which depart from this approach having regard to viability and the character of the area. In order to meet the specific needs of the Neighbourhood Area, market housing will be provided with the following mix:

1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4+ bed	Total
At least 10%	At least 35%	No more than 40%	No more than 15%	100%

#### **Affordable Housing**

Affordable housing will be provided in accordance with Policy CS.18 of the Core Strategy.

In order to meet the specific needs of the Neighbourhood Area, affordable housing will be provided with the following mix:

1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4+ bed	Total
At least 20%	At least 40%	No more than 35%	No more than 5%	100%

The requirement for and provision of affordable housing within the Neighbourhood Area will continue to be monitored by the Town Council throughout the Plan period in order to ensure that the most up-to-date evidence is used to identify the current need. Such evidence will be used to inform the provision of affordable housing on qualifying sites.

#### **Policy HBE 4- Bungalows**

Proposals for the development of bungalows within the Built Up Area Boundary will be supported.

Developments of 10 or more units within the Built Up Area Boundary (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**

Where justified by the scale of development, proposals should demonstrate how they protect occupant health and the wider environment by making the best use of site orientation, building form, layout, landscaping and materials to maximise natural light and heat, whilst avoiding internal overheating by providing passive cooling and ventilation.

#### **Policy HBE 7 - Electric car charging points**

New development will be required to meet the following standards for the provision of electric vehicle charging points unless they are superseded by national standards:

All new dwellings, where parking is provided within the curtilage, shall be provided with at least one permanently wired electric car charging point per dwelling.

Residential development with unallocated parking and non residential development shall provide one permanent wired electric car charging point per 10 spaces of parking.

The requirements of this policy may be modified where they would be harmful to heritage assets.

#### **Policy HBE 8 - Development design**

All development proposals in the Neighbourhood Area must demonstrate a high standard of design that is sensitive to the character of its surroundings in accordance with the following principles:

- Be compatible with the distinctive character of the area, respecting the local settlement pattern, building styles and materials whilst taking a positive approach to innovative, contemporary designs that are sensitive to their setting;
- Be of a density and scale that is in keeping with the character of the surrounding development and landscape;
- Use materials that are consistent with the Alcester vernacular;

- Building heights will not exceed three storeys unless the proposal clearly demonstrates that this is appropriate in terms of the function and significance of the building and the building will make a positive contribution to the street scene.

Proposals for major development as defined in the NPPF are encouraged to apply the "Building for Life 12" criteria<sup>34</sup> and achieve as many green ratings as possible with no red ratings.

#### **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 within or adjacent to the Alcester Conservation Area and/or affecting a heritage asset or within the setting of 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.

Developments which ensure that heritage assets remain in an active and viable use appropriate to their location or bring heritage assets back into such a use in a manner appropriate to their heritage value, will be supported.

This policy will be applied to applications affecting both designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings. Maps 4 and 5 (see ANDP page 26 and 27) show the heritage assets in the Neighbourhood Area.

## **ECONOMY**

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#### **Policy EC 1 - Development within the Town Centre** (as defined on Map 4- see ANDP page 26)

Proposals that provide new retail, offices, hospitality, or tourism units or which look to enhance/extend existing units for the same uses will be supported.

Development that results in any loss of parking provision in the town will not be supported unless it is replaced by equivalent or enhanced provision in a suitable location.

Development proposals which require permission to change the use of existing retail, office, hospitality or tourism units to alternative business use will be supported where it can be demonstrated that proposals will enhance or support the vitality of the Town Centre.

Where permission is required, change of use of commercial premises to residential will be resisted at ground floor level unless it can be demonstrated that their continued use is no longer viable. Any application for change of use will need to be supported by evidence that the site has been marketed for a minimum of 12 months for a range of possible business uses at a price reflecting open market value for these uses. Full details of the marketing arrangements will be agreed with Stratford-on-Avon District Council.

Where permission is required, change of use of commercial premises above ground level to residential will be supported where separate access and adequate resident parking provision with 24 hour availability is provided and where development would not result in the loss of, or adversely affect the ground floor business use.

#### **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**

Proposals for small-scale business space suitable for start-ups will be supported.

Support will also be given to the development of flexible units that can be altered to meet the needs of new and small businesses.

Development proposals for new build or conversions providing live/work space will be supported where the amenity of neighbouring properties is fully addressed.

Proposals for new residential developments which include home office space will be supported.

**Policy EC 4 - Employment land changes of use and mixed use development**

Where planning permission is required for land currently in employment use (including offices, retail, hospitality, tourism and other commercial uses), proposals for changes of use to other employment uses will be supported.

Where permission is required, change of use from employment use to residential use will only be supported where it can be clearly demonstrated that the continued business use is no longer viable. Any applications will need to be supported by evidence that the site has been marketed for a minimum of 12 months for a range of possible business uses at a price reflecting open market value for these uses. Full details of the marketing arrangements will be agreed with Stratford-on-Avon District Council.

Proposals for changes of use from employment use to provide a mix of employment and residential use will only be supported if the residential element is necessary to make the scheme viable.

**Policy EC 5 - Support for commercial development**

Proposals for new commercial developments, particularly where they demonstrate direct benefits to the local area and support and promote use of the local workforce and products, will be supported within the Built Up Area Boundary provided that they provide adequate parking provision for staff and visitors.

Any proposals for retail development outside the Town Centre, whether on greenfield or brownfield sites, will be subject to an impact assessment in relation to the Town Centre and will only be supported where it can be shown that the impact to the Town Centre vitality and viability is not adversely affected.

Environmental improvements to existing employment land will be supported within the Built Up Area Boundary. Proposals that include business conferencing and meeting facilities will be supported within the Built Up Area Boundary. 6.2.10 6.2.12 6.2.11 6.2.13 6.2.14 32 Proposals that include the provision of low-cost business space within the Built Up Area Boundary to meet the needs of micro or small enterprises and to support firms wishing to start-up or expand will be supported.

**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 and cycle links
- Demonstrate high quality design
- Can provide on-site parking in accordance with the standards of Warwickshire County Council

**Policy EC 7- Further and adult education and training**

Developments which include tertiary education, adult education, apprenticeship training and general learning and training facilities will be supported.

Such facilities will be supported where they are of high quality design, accessible via footpath / cycle links and include adequate parking for staff and students.

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

Development proposals that will increase or improve the amount and range of visitor attractions and accommodation in the town will be supported.

Proposals will need to demonstrate how they contribute towards other objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan by providing adequate parking provision, cycle storage, linkages to public transport, new and improved footpath and cycle routes and ensuring all facilities are fully accessible for all.

Development proposals that contribute to the creation of new Town Centre facilities for providing visitor and tourist information will be supported.

Proposals that enhance the visitor enjoyment of or engagement with Alcester’s natural environment and historical sites including Alcester Abbey and Beauchamp Court will be supported.

## TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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TI 1	New development and connectivity	36
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### Policy TI 1 – New development and connectivity

Residential developments of ten or more units should provide direct connections to the existing network of public footpaths, cycleways, bridleways and rights of way with clear signposting (with distance and time markers) and ensure full accessibility for all users except where it can be clearly demonstrated to be physically impossible.

Such developments should improve and not impede accessibility to existing routes and should seek to encourage a modal shift (or transition) to reduce car journeys by integrating into existing footpaths, cycleways and bus routes, which may require developers liaising with local public transport providers.

Such developments should also provide bike storage.

### Policy TI 2 – Telecommunication

New and enhanced telecommunications development will be supported subject to the following factors:

- The operational requirements of the telecommunication networks and the technical limitations of the technology, including any technical constraints on the location of telecommunications apparatus.
- The need to comply with the most up-to-date guidelines on safety in place at the time of the application.
- The need to avoid interference with existing electrical equipment and transmission services.
- The potential for sharing existing masts, buildings and other structures. Sufficient evidence and justification for any new site should accompany any application.
- The impact of the development on its surroundings with particular regard to the siting and appearance of the proposed apparatus and associated structures and the surrounding area. If on a building, apparatus and associated structures should be sited and designed in order to seek to minimise impact upon the external appearance of the building.
- The safe removal of all redundant masts and apparatus

### Policy TI 3 – High Speed Broadband

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

## COMMUNITY, LEISURE AND WELL-BEING

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### 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 that they are compatible with existing neighbouring uses. New sites for such facilities will be supported 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 demonstrated that the facility is no longer required and has no prospect of being brought back into use.

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

Proposals to improve access to and recreational usage of open green spaces, especially the river corridors, will be supported.

Consideration should be given to wheelchair users as well as pedestrians. Level, safe pathways, and appropriate signage/ waymarking should be provided where possible.

In relation to Abbey Fields and Priory Meadow any changes must be compatible with protection of the underground and surface features of the heritage asset. Any development must not harm or threaten the open nature of the area as this is an Area of Restraint identified under Policy CS.13 of the Core Strategy.

**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**

Any development proposal that would result in the partial or entire loss of an existing allotment site will not be supported unless it can be clearly demonstrated that there would be a positive improvement to existing provision or a net increase in allotment provision elsewhere in the Neighbourhood Area.

Proposals for the provision of new allotments in locations which are accessible to the community they will serve and where ground conditions are suitable for cultivation will be supported. Proposals for new allotments should clearly demonstrate the following criteria:

- There are no adverse impacts on the landscape or character of the area;
- There are satisfactory arrangements for water supply; and
- There would be no adverse impacts on neighbouring uses

**NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

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**Policy NE 1 – Trees, hedges and landscape features**

All new development will be expected to protect mature healthy trees and hedges where appropriate, in accordance with BS 5837: 2012 or the latest British Standard. Where this is not appropriate, new trees and hedges should be planted to replace those lost as part of a mitigation scheme. Where possible and appropriate, new development should incorporate new native tree and hedge planting of a suitable size and species. The new hedge or shrub planting should be implemented in accordance with the recommendations in BS 4428:1989 and any new tree planting should be carried out in accordance with BS 8545:2014 or the latest British Standard.

Major developments, as defined by the NPPF, and other proposals which would have a significant impact on the landscape will need to demonstrate that they have been shaped by a landscaping strategy which takes into account the essential characteristics of the site.

**Policy NE 2 – Biodiversity**

Development will not be supported unless it minimises impacts on biodiversity and provides net gains in biodiversity wherever possible. Where developments would result in significant harm to biodiversity it will be necessary to demonstrate how this harm will be mitigated by the creation of new habitats and ecological assets.

Existing ecological networks should be retained and enhanced. New ecological habitats and networks are particularly encouraged and measures to improve landscape quality, scenic beauty and tranquillity and to reduce light pollution are encouraged.

### **Policy NE 3 – Local Green Spaces**

This Plan identifies the following sites to be designated as Local Green Space:

LGS 1 Westbury Park	LGS 8 Gas House Lane Recreation Ground (Centenary Field)
LGS 2 Arrow Valley corridor	LGS 9 Alcester Town Cemetery
LGS 3 Jubilee Fields	LGS 10 Whitehall Farm Green Space
LGS 4 St Mary's Park, Kinwarton	LGS 11 Land at Eclipse Road
LGS 5 Bleachfield Street Play Area	The Local Green Spaces are identified on Map 7 (see ANDP page 46).
LGS 6 Collins Way Play Area	
LGS 7 Moorfields Park	

Full details are included in Appendix 2 (see ANDP page 56).

Development that would harm the openness or special character of a Local Green Space or its significance and value to the local community will not be supported unless there are very special circumstances which outweigh the harm to the Local Green Space.

### **Policy NE 4 – Protecting Valued Landscapes and Important Views**

Development proposals must demonstrate how they are appropriate to, and integrate with, the character of the landscape setting whilst conserving, and where appropriate, enhancing the character of the landscape including important landscape features.

Development proposals should demonstrate that they maintain the essential character of the important landscapes as seen from the viewpoints on Map 8 (see ANDP page 48) and the important views within, into or out of the Conservation Area indicated on Map 9 (see ANDP page 49). Where development would have a significant adverse effect on these views it will only be permitted where the benefits of the proposal clearly outweigh the harm.

### **Policy NE 5 – Mitigating and preventing increased flood risk**

Development should not increase pluvial or fluvial flood risk. Planning applications for development within the Plan area must be accompanied by site-specific flood risk assessment in line with the requirements of national and district policy but may also be required on a site-by-site basis based on locally available evidence.

All developments should seek to control and discharge all surface water runoff generated onsite during the 1 in 100 year plus climate change rainfall event. For greenfield development sites the surface water runoff generated as a result of the developments should not exceed the greenfield runoff rate. For brownfield development sites, developers are expected to achieve a substantial reduction in the existing runoff rate and, where possible, reduce the runoff to the equivalent greenfield rate.

All proposals, in areas requiring a flood risk assessment under national policy, must demonstrate that flood risk will not be increased elsewhere and that the proposed development is appropriately flood resistant and resilient.

Information accompanying applications should demonstrate how any mitigation measures will satisfactorily be integrated into the design and layout of the development.

All developments will be expected to include sustainable drainage systems and permeable surfaces. Where site conditions are proven to be unsuitable an alternative drainage solution will need to be agreed with the local planning authority and water authority.

The re-use and recycling of water within developments will be encouraged.

Proposals which do not satisfactorily demonstrate secure arrangements for the prevention of flooding will not be supported.