

Alcester
Neighbourhood Development Plan
Regulation 15 Submission
Consultation Statement

February 2026



1.0 Introduction and Background

1.1 This Consultation Statement has been prepared to accompany the Regulation 15 Submission Draft of the updated Alcester Neighbourhood Development Plan. This Consultation Statement should be read alongside the Basic Conditions Statement.

1.2 This Consultation Statement has been prepared in accordance with The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (SI No. 637) Part 5 Paragraph 15 (2) which defines a “consultation statement” as *a document which:*

- (a) contains details of the persons and bodies who were consulted about the proposed neighbourhood development plan;*
- (b) explains how they were consulted;*
- (c) summarises the main issues and concerns raised by the persons consulted;*
and
- (d) describes how these issues and concerns have been considered and, where relevant, addressed in the proposed neighbourhood development plan.*

1.3 The Alcester Neighbourhood Development Plan was prepared in response to the Localism Act 2011, which gives parish councils and other relevant bodies, new powers to prepare statutory Neighbourhood Plans to help guide development in their local areas. These powers give local people the opportunity to shape new development, as planning applications are determined in accordance with national planning policy and the local development plan, and neighbourhood plans form part of this Framework.

1.4 In September 2013 Alcester Town Council made the decision to prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan for the Parish. The area was formally designated by Stratford-on-Avon District Council on 13 January 2014 and is shown in Figure 1 below.

1.5 The Neighbourhood Development Plan for Alcester was passed in a referendum in May 2021 and the “made” version was adopted by Stratford-on-Avon District Council in July 2021.

1.6 In September 2023, Alcester Town Council took the decision to review the Neighbourhood Development Plan to ensure that the review was completed within five years of the date when the Plan was “made”.

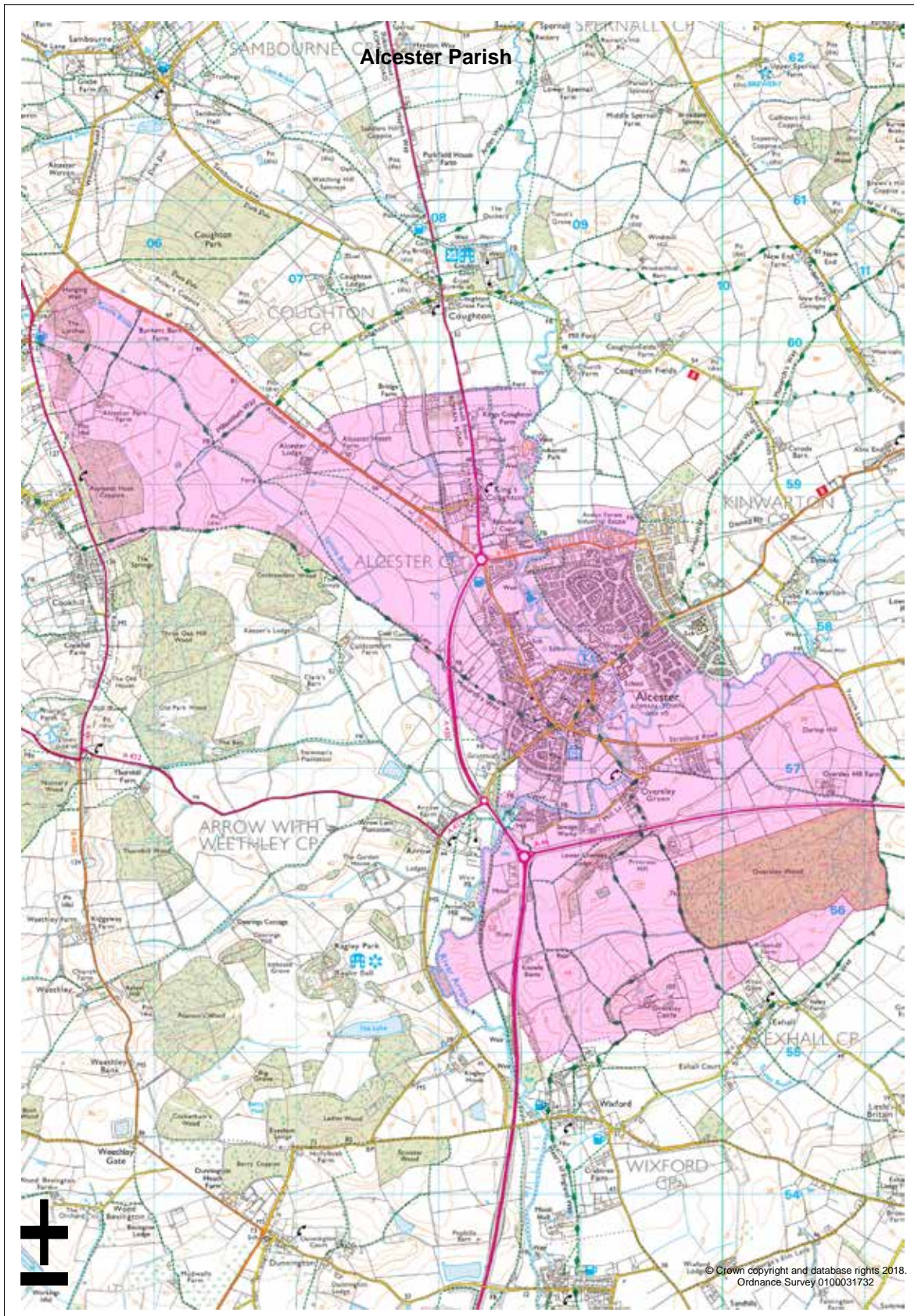


Figure 1

2.0 Consultation Aims and Techniques

- 2.1 The aims of the consultation process were:
- 2.1.1 To ensure that local residents, businesses and key local stakeholders were fully consulted on any proposed amendments to the Neighbourhood Development Plan.
 - 2.1.2 To engage with as broad a cross-section of the community as possible, using a variety of consultation and communication techniques.
 - 2.1.3 To ensure consultation results are made publicly available and used to inform subsequent stages of the Neighbourhood Planning process.
- 2.2 The Neighbourhood Plan Review Steering Group was made up of volunteers following an advert in the Town Council newsletter. In total 15 people were involved including 4 Town Councillors, 6 members of the public, 2 members of the Civic Society, 2 local business owners and the Town Clerk.
- 2.3 The Neighbourhood Plan Review Steering Group used the Town Council newsletter as the main means of communication. It is published quarterly and is hand delivered to the 3200 households in the town. This provided residents with a useful and regular update of progress.
- 2.4 The Town Council newsletter is also available via the Town Council website.
- 2.5 The Town Council manage Facebook and Twitter accounts which were used to update residents.
- 2.6 The Town Council set up a dedicated page on its website to cover the Neighbourhood Plan [Alcester Neighbourhood Development Plan Review | Alcester Town Council](#)
- 2.7 The Town Council advertised consultations on the Town Council notice boards.

3.0 Informal Consultation Stages and Summary of Results

- 3.1 March 2023 – Housing Needs survey distributed to every household with the Town Council newsletter which included this article.

HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY

Rural communities like ours have experienced a lack of **suitable and affordable housing** over many years. The Town Council would like to understand the extent to which this problem still exists within the Alcester Parish.

To gain greater awareness of the need for suitable affordable housing in our town, Alcester Town Council has joined forces with Warwickshire Rural Community Council, an independent charity supporting rural communities across Warwickshire.

To this end, you will find with this newsletter a questionnaire that we believe will help establish the type of housing needs mostly in demand. Your answers will help provide focus on the areas that could bring a beneficial change to the future of housing development in our community.

We should like to hear from residents that have a need for alternative housing and wish to live within the parish, so please, only complete the form if this applies to you.

Those needs can vary so, by way of example, if you are wanting to downsize maybe to a bungalow or smaller house or are currently living at home with parents and want your own home, we would like to hear from you.

I want to stress that there is no magic wand, and we cannot conjure up an immediate fix however your participation could influence how Alcester accommodates those needs going forward.

3.2 April 2023 – results of the updated Housing Needs Survey published. The Housing Needs Survey identified a need for 36 homes for households with a local connection.

3.3 September 2023 – report in Town Council newsletter

Housing Needs Survey Findings

An ongoing major project for Alcester's Planning Committee is identifying the types of homes local people need that are in high demand, but in short supply. To that end a Housing Needs Survey was undertaken earlier this year, aimed specifically at residents that had a need for alternative housing and wished to live within the parish of Alcester. It was important to gather this evidence to assist the Town Council in considering if there were possible future courses of action that may overcome those needs and if so, what they might be.

The report from the Housing Needs Survey highlighted that a majority of respondents indicated, in order of preference, their need for the following.

- In first place, a 'starter/first home'
- In second place, a more accessible home
- In third place, looking to downsize

Two-bedroom dwellings were the most popular choice followed by three-bedroom dwellings, with more than half of all respondents preferring to rent.

3.4 March 2024 – Town Council newsletter item

Alcester Neighbourhood Development Plan (ANDP) Review Steering Group - Update

Membership of the steering group involving local residents and town councillors plus the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk held their inaugural meeting on 16 January 2024, recording members in attendance and included the election of the Chair and Deputy Chair.

The Steering Group agreed to review the existing Neighbourhood Development Plan and policies, initially focusing on sections of the ANDP that address Natural Environment and Community, Leisure, and Wellbeing in concert with the impact of the emerging South Warwickshire Local Plan alongside any relevant national policies.

Meetings are scheduled for Tuesdays 20 February and 26 March 2024 at Globe House Priory Road Alcester B49 5DZ at 10.30am.

Members of the public are welcome to attend and observe the meeting.

Please email administration@alcester-tc.gov.uk or call 01789 766084 if you wish to attend.

3.5 June 2024 – Town Council newsletter item

The Neighbourhood Development Plan Review progress update

The Alcester Neighbourhood Development Plan Review Steering Group, consisting of residents, businesses and town councillors, has met regularly over the last 6 months. This stage of the review involves looking at the existing policies in Alcester's Neighbourhood Development Plan and seeing if they need changes or additions in the light of new local concerns or higher-level planning policies. To date the Group has looked at policies in the sections called Natural Environment, Community Leisure and Well-being, Transport and Infrastructure and the Economy. Policies relating to Housing and the Built Environment will be subject to focus next. This is clearly a big topic area and Group

members will have in mind the Housing Needs Survey conducted last year which highlighted the need for local affordable housing.

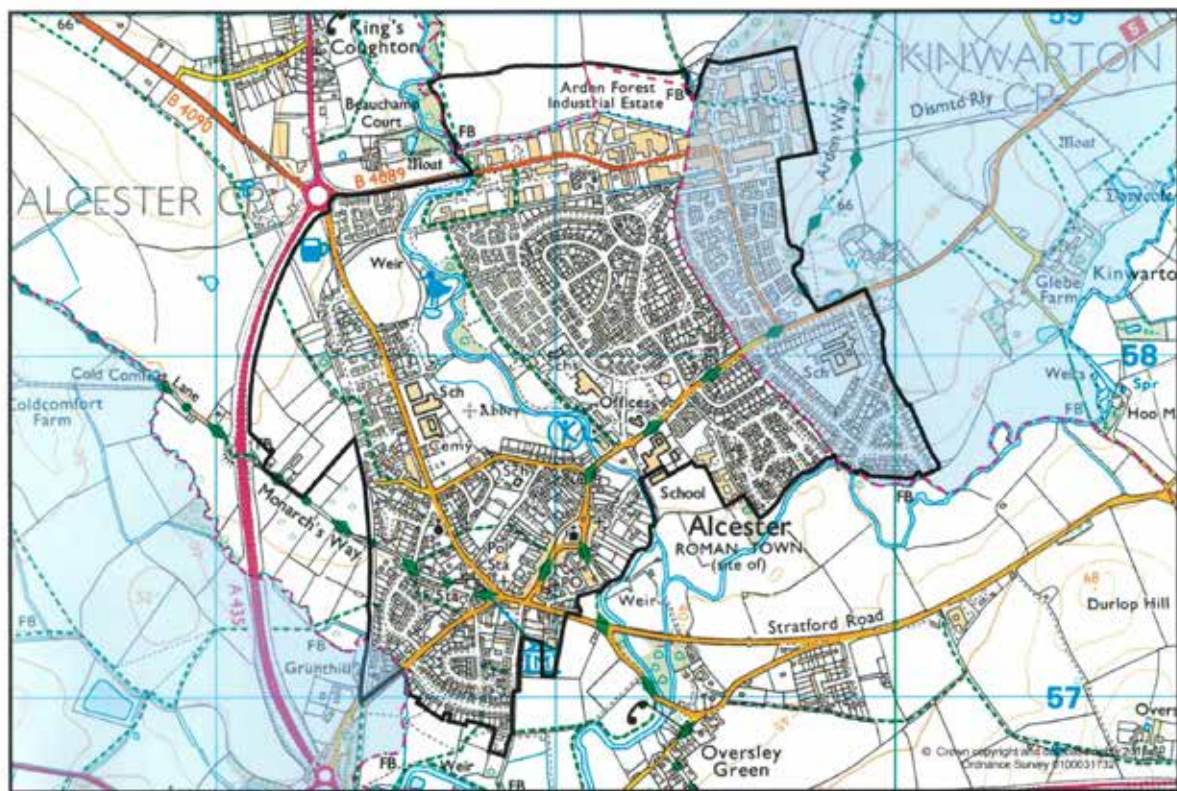
There is a lengthy official process before we can finalise a revised Neighbourhood Plan. If you have ideas for better planning for Alcester's future then we would be very pleased to hear from you. All residents will later be consulted on all the proposed policy changes but earlier comments could indicate the need for more research or detailed discussion.

If you would like further information on the review please contact either Andrew Matheson, Chair of the Steering Group via andrew_matheson@btinternet.com or Cllr Wendy Mills, Vice Chair of the Steering Group via wmills.atc@gmail.com

3.6 September 2024 – Town Council newsletter item as an informal “Call for Sites”

Housing for Local People

As part of the review of the Alcester Neighbourhood Plan, the Town Council Working Group is looking for small parcels of land which could be used to provide houses/flats to meet local needs. The land would need to be within or immediately adjacent to Alcester's built-up area - which is shown edged in a black line on the map below.



Alcester Built-Up Area Boundary

In order to keep rents or purchase costs for the housing affordable, it would not be possible to pay full market value for the land but it is only by restricting the housing for local people that a planning permission for new housing within the Green Belt might be obtained. So, a landowner keen to help local people stay local wouldn't really be losing out.

If you have around 1 acre of land (0.4 ha), appropriately located in relation to Alcester's built-up area, or you know someone that does, please contact the Town Clerk for an initial discussion: clerk@alcester-tc.gov.uk Future generations of Alcestrians will be grateful that you made that contact.

4 Regulation 14 Consultation

- 4.1 The public consultation on the Alcester Draft Neighbourhood Plan was carried out in accordance with The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (SI No. 637) Part 5 Pre-submission consultation and publicity, Regulation 14. This states that:

Before submitting a plan proposal (or a modification proposal) to the local planning authority, a qualifying body must

- publicise, in a manner that is likely to bring it to the attention of people who live, work or carry on business in the neighbourhood area*
 - 1. details of the proposals for a neighbourhood development plan;*
 - 2. details of where and when the proposals for a neighbourhood development plan may be inspected;*
 - 3. details of how to make representations; and*
 - 4. the date by which those representations must be received, being not less than 6 weeks from the date on which the draft proposal is first publicised;*
- consult any consultation body referred to in paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 whose interests the qualifying body considers may be affected by the proposals for a neighbourhood development plan; and*
- send a copy of the proposals for a neighbourhood development plan to the local planning authority.*

- 4.2 At the Alcester Town Council Full Council meeting on 7th October 2025, the Town Council, as the Qualifying Body, approved the proposed amendments to the Neighbourhood Development Plan. It was agreed that the amendments were minor and would not materially affect the Neighbourhood Development Plan. The Council resolved to conduct a pre-submission consultation on the proposed amendments in accordance with Regulation 14.

- 4.3 The draft updated Alcester Neighbourhood Development Plan was published for 6 weeks formal public consultation from 15th December 2025 – 30th January 2026. The draft Plan was available for viewing and downloading from the Town Council website www.alcester-tc.gov.uk.

- 4.4 Hard copies of the draft updated Plan were available for viewing at the Town Council Offices which are open from 9 am to 1 pm every weekday. Hard copies were also available to view at Alcester Library.

- 4.5 A link to the draft updated NDP was forwarded by email to 145 Statutory Consultees in accordance with the list provided by Stratford on Avon District

Council.

- 4.6 A link to the draft updated NDP was forwarded to the owners of the new Local Green Spaces, where contact details were available.
- 4.7 A special pullout was included in the Town Council newsletter which was published in the first week of December 2025. This was a summary of the proposed changes plus a form for return to the Town Council. The text is below:

Alcester Neighbourhood Development Plan Review

Pre-Submission Consultation: 15 December 2025 - 30 January 2026

Introduction

The Alcester Neighbourhood Development Plan was adopted in July 2021. It is subject to a review every 5 years. The Plan contains planning policies which are important to the local community and which the planning authority take into account when deciding on planning applications.

The decision to undertake a review of the Plan was publicised in September 2023. In January 2024 a Steering Committee was formed comprising residents, business and community organisation representatives, and Town Councillors. That Committee has reviewed the exiting Plan and proposed changes. Some of these changes update the Plan to align with updates to higher level plans and references to other documents. There are also some changes to existing policies. The version of the Alcester Neighbourhood Development Plan showing all the highlighted changes, and a clean version can be found on the relevant Town Council website page using the QR code here: –



A reference copy of the Plan is also available in Alcester Library.

Have your say!

We now wish to consult residents on the policy changes which are summarised below. We seek your feedback. Please complete the form below and return it to Alcester Town Council, Globe House, Priory Road, Alcester, B49 5DZ or alternatively, use the QR code above to access the consultation documents. The deadline is **30 January 2026**.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO POLICIES

HOUSING AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Policy HBE 1 – Residential development within the Built Up Area Boundary – AMENDED

A Housing Survey indicated that affordable housing is in short supply so it is proposed to add to this policy a statement that the use of small sites to address this shortfall would be encouraged.

Policy HBE 5 - Specialist accommodation – DELETED

It is proposed to delete this policy. Since the existing Plan was made some specialist accommodation has been built. Deleting the policy does not mean that applications for new specialist accommodation will not be supported but each application would be considered on its merits and against compliance with other plan policies.

Policy HBE 6 - Healthy living – DELETED

It is proposed to delete this policy which aims to ensure all developments protect occupants' health. These requirements are now covered by other planning provisions and building regulations.

Policy HBE7 - Electric car charging points – DELETED

This policy requires all new houses to have charging points. It is proposed to delete this policy which has been superseded by higher level policies which require charging points.

Policy HBE 9 - Public realm – AMENDED

This policy seeks to make public areas more attractive. A new proposed requirement is that all development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how design has been influenced by the need to plan positively to minimise crime. Developers should achieve Secured By Design silver level certification.

Another proposed change to this policy adds that public realm includes street furniture such as litter and dog bins, benches and noticeboards. Recent experience of new build developments has shown the need for this change.

ECONOMY

Policy EC 1 - Development with the Town Centre – AMENDED

This policy supports development which enhances and supports the vitality of the Town Centre. An addition to the policy is proposed to state a preference for reusing existing commercial premises. This is to retain a compact, sustainable and attractive Town Centre.

It is often difficult to find a parking space in the Town Centre so it is also proposed to support additional parking provision and improved signage.

Policy EC 3 - Supporting business start-up – PART DELETED

It is proposed to delete the part of the policy which refers to supporting residential developments which include specific home office space. This is no longer required;

working from home is now more common-place and residents use suitable space if they have no home office.

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

This policy supports changes in employment use to provide a mix of employment and residential. The proposal is to add that such support will be provided only if the residential part is secondary. This is to ensure that employment stays the major use of the site.

Policy EC 5 – Support for commercial development -AMENDED

This policy supports commercial development that demonstrates direct benefits to the area and promote the use of local workforce and products. The policy states that adequate parking should be provided. To reduce car journeys it is proposed to add to this policy that retail development outside the Town Centre should be accessible by footpaths, cycle ways and public transport.

Policy EC 6 – Education and childcare provision – AMENDED

This policy supports development proposals for new or extensions to education and childcare facilities. To reduce car journeys and parking issues it is proposed to add to this policy that such developments should be accessible by appropriate public transport.

Policy EC 7 – Further and adult education and training – AMENDED

This policy supports the development of further and adult education facilities and requires them to be accessible by footpath and cycle ways. To reduce car journeys and parking issues it is proposed to add that new facilities should be accessible by public transport.

TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Policy TI 1 – New development and connectivity – AMENDED

This policy requires residential developments of ten or more units to provide connectivity to existing public networks. It is proposed to extend the policy to commercial development.

Policy TI2 – Telecommunication – AMENDED

This policy supports new and enhanced telecommunications development subject to certain factors. It is proposed is to add that there is a preference for underground cabling, which is less obtrusive and does not require poles, rather than overhead cabling.

Policy TI3 – High speed broadband – DELETE

This policy requires all new development to include high speed broadband. It is proposed that this is deleted because Alcester now has superfast broadband.

COMMUNITY, LEISURE AND WELL-BEING

Policy CLW 1 – Community and leisure facilities development – AMENDED

This policy supports development proposals which improve existing community or leisure facilities. A list of the existing facilities in the neighbourhood area has been added for clarification. It includes sporting facilities, play areas, and community buildings.

Policy CLW2 – Enhancing access to and utilisation of open green spaces – AMENDED

It is proposed to add that access consideration should be given to cyclists – currently it only mentions wheelchair user and pedestrians.

Since the existing plan was made access to Oversley Wood has been limited by the Forestry Commission, so it is added as a space that access to would be supported.

Policy CLW 3 - Health provision – AMENDED

This policy supports any development that creates or enhances facilities for mental or physical health provision. It is proposed to add that any such development must be in an accessible location.

Policy CLW 4 – Allotments and growing spaces – AMENDED

Part of this policy states that any development that would result in the loss of an existing allotment space would not be supported. It is proposed to delete this because under Policy NE3, below, existing allotments have been added as Local Green Spaces which will give them greater protection. The second part of the policy supporting new allotments will be retained.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Policy NE 2 – Biodiversity – AMENDED

This policy supports developments that minimise impact on biodiversity and provide net gains, but the policy does not set a minimum. It is proposed to add that development, unless exempt, will not be supported unless it provides at least 10% net gain and above that level will be encouraged where possible.

Policy NE 3 – Local Green Spaces – AMENDED

It is proposed that the following additional sites, which are well used by residents, are made Local Green Spaces.

This gives them greater protection from future development:

LGS 12 Land adjoining Old Stratford Rd	LGS 16 Bleachfield St allotments South
LGS 13 Alcester Park Green Space	LGS 17 School Road allotments
LGS 14 The Bowling Green	LGS 18 Allimore Lane allotments
LGS 15 Bleachfield St allotments North	LGS 19 Alcester Park allotments

ALCESTER NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW - CONSULTATION FORM

Please complete this to let us know what you think about the proposed policy changes.

If you agree with all the changes please tick here:

If you wish to feedback on each policy separately, please tick the appropriate Agree or Disagree

HOUSING AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

		Agree	Disagree
HBE 1	Residential development in the Built-Up Area Boundary		
HBE 5	Specialist accommodation		
HBE 6	Healthy living		
HBE 7	Electric car charging points		
HBE 9	Public Realm		

ECONOMY

		Agree	Disagree
EC 1	Development of the Town Centre		
EC 3	Supporting business Start-up		
EC 4	Employment land change of use		
EC 5	Support for commercial development		
EC 6	Education and childcare provision		
EC 7	Further and adult education & training		

TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

		Agree	Disagree
TI 1	New development and connectivity		
TI 2	Telecommunication		
TI 3	High speed broadband		

COMMUNITY LEISURE AND WELL-BEING

		Agree	Disagree
CLW 1	Community and leisure facilities development		
CLW 2	Enhancing access to public open green space		
CLW 3	Health provision		
CLW 4	Allotments and growing spaces		

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

		Agree	Disagree
NE 2	Biodiversity		
NE 3	Local Green Spaces		

Please explain here why you disagree with any proposed changes. Please continue on another sheet if necessary

Please return this form to Alcester Town Council, Globe House, Priory Road, Alcester, B49 5DZ by 30 January 2026 or email: administration@alcester-tc.gov.uk

- 4.8 A press release was issued which resulted in an article in the Stratford Herald newspaper.



- 4.9 A public notice was put on the Town Council noticeboards
- 4.10 Respondents were invited to complete the questionnaire and to submit completed forms / other comments by email or by post to the Town Clerk or left in the collection box in the library.
- 4.11 Stratford on Avon District Council was advised of the publication.
- 4.12 Ten representations were received from statutory bodies and interested groups,

one from a District Councillor and 16 completed questionnaires were received from residents.

- 4.13 The spreadsheet on the Town Council website sets out all the detailed responses submitted to the Draft Neighbourhood Plan, together with information about how these responses have been considered by the Steering Group and have informed the amendments to the Submission Neighbourhood Plan. A link to the spreadsheet is here [Reg-14-consultation-responses-final.pdf](#)

5.0 Strategic Environmental Assessment/Habitat Regulations Assessment

- 5.1 Neighbourhood Plans are covered by the Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations and the Habitat Regulations Assessment process. Stratford-on-Avon District Council prepared an SEA Screening Report to determine whether the Alcester Neighbourhood Development Plan should be subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and/or a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) in accordance with Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive and with Regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended).
- 5.2 The Screening Report concluded that neither SEA nor HRA was required. It was subsequently sent to the relevant statutory bodies: Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency to clarify whether they agreed with Stratford-on-Avon District Council's findings as to whether the plan requires a full SEA and/or HRA assessment. These bodies agreed with the conclusions of the Screening Report.