

Alresford Needs for Local Plan Part 2 - Infrastructure

A series of meetings were held January to April 2013 to establish the measures necessary to achieve the planning strategy for Alresford set out in the Winchester District local Plan Part 1, whilst protecting and enhancing the quality of life for Alresford residents, for village residents which rely on Alresford; and for the new residents arising from the houses to be built by 2031.

There is inevitably overlap with other Needs groups, and some matters may be covered elsewhere in the final report.

The predicted age profiles shown in Factors suggest there could be a near doubling of the population over 74. It may well be that recommendations from the housing and employment needs groups include measures that affect the age profile predictions, for example by providing jobs and houses that attract a younger profile of resident. This will affect the quantity of differing types of infrastructure required, but not the type of measures necessary to address existing and future deficiencies.

Infrastructure Needs - Summary

Education

Should an existing or new community building be developed it would be prudent to reconsider current and anticipated adequacy of pre-school places. High quality open space will be required.

There is no evidence to support an additional land requirement for Perins, for the present it must be assumed that any additional needs will be met on the current site.

Town Centre

Existing Pay & Display Car parks are held on leases which run until 2020 (Station Car Park) and 2035 (Perins Car Park). These car parks are felt to be essential if the retail centre is to survive and thrive, therefore existing sites should be secured or replacement sites identified. Depending on the type and location of new homes it may be necessary to identify & provide additional town centre parking.

The current Pay & Display sites, at Perins, the Station, and Arlebury Park should be the subject of a safeguarding policy. NATC should also investigate registering a Community Interest in the Perins & Station car parks.

Employment

Employment land is needed to conserve existing businesses and attract new small & medium enterprise (SMEs) that would add to the social fabric of the town. Where new sites are considered for commercial activity careful planning is necessary to prevent the current inconvenience arising from access for large vehicles, and employees parking on residential streets.

New or replacement employment sites will need to provide energy efficient adaptable buildings, with appropriate access to the road network, secure power supplies, and sufficient land area to meet business related and staff parking needs.

If the current ratio of working population able to work in the town is to be maintained, provision of land to accommodate about 210 new jobs will be necessary. If we wish to increase that ratio for reasons of sustainability, provision of land to accommodate 583 new jobs will be required to allow 50% of the population to work in the town.

High speed high resilient data communications are essential to support existing businesses, and attract new employers to the town. Such provision could also address the broadband needs of the town, and villages, on a subscription basis.

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Services

Land is required for burial space, this amounts to 2 Ha with planning, and parking, and a sufficiency of land to provide a commercial formal and green burial ground.

Higher speed Broadband is essential –for everyday life, and those working at home. Some areas of the town will still suffer poor (<2 MBS) after the delivery of superfast broadband.

Land for provision of dementia and nursing care is required if we are to provide better facilities for the elderly population.

Accommodation capable of being adapted for those needing extra care in their own homes will be necessary if we are to allow for the growth in the over 74 population – this is a housing issue which needs to take recommend if the town should provide fully for an older age group

Transport

In order to improve permeability for foot and cycle traffic all developments should be as permeable as possible for all residents, not just those that live there. In addition to those matters identified by HCC (reference to list) it is necessary to:-

- Consider measures to ease congestion on Sun Hill at the start and end of the school day, whilst imposing constraints to discourage the speeding that occurs when the cars are not there.
- Widen footways on the south side of West Street to accommodate increases in pedestrian and buggy traffic

There is a lack of circular foot and cycle tracks to the east and west of the town for recreational purposes.

The track and line used by the Watercress line has the capacity address many of the needs of Alresford – parking, foot & cycle paths, permeability to pedestrians and cyclists, access to the east & west of the town, and keeping open the option of a public rail service to the mainline rail network at Alton. It is important to ensure the land remains undeveloped should the Watercress Line no longer be in operation. NATC should investigate if we should register a community interest in this land.

Factors

The figures below are based on projections produced by Hampshire County Council based on the levels of growth for Winchester District proposed by the South East Plan. They apply these growth rates to the Alresford population and a multiplier is then used to illustrate population change arising from an increase of 500 dwellings from 2011 to 2031. Therefore, the results should be treated with some caution and as a general guide only.

2031 Age Profile of Alresford will be

Year	Age 0-4	Age 5-15	Age 16-44	Age 45-64	Age 65-74	Age 75+	TOTAL POP.	TOTAL DWELLINGS
2011	276	631	1657	1594	591	661	5410	2476
2031	315	820	1912	1814	807	1207	6874	2976
% Increase	13.99	29.93	15.41	13.79	36.47	82.63	27.07	

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% of Pop. By age range	Year	Age 0-4	Age 5-15	Age 16-44	Age 45-64	Age 65-74	Age 75+
	2011	5	12	31	29	11	12
2031	5	12	28	26	12	18	

School Pupils

Year	TOTAL DWELLINGS	Additional Primary Age Children from 2011	Additional Secondary Age Children from 2011
2011	2476		
2031	2976	150	105

Working Population

2011 Population	Alresford	Percentage	Source
Population	5431	100%	2011 Census (Parish)
People aged 16-74	3804	70%	2011 Census (Parish)
Economically active	2738	72%	2011 Census (Parish)
% working in Alresford	1049	38.3%	2007 land study

2031 Population			
Population	6874		
People aged 16-74	4533		
People aged 16-74 Economically active	3264	72%	
% working in Alresford	1250	38.3%	

In order to maintain the same proportion of the economically active working in Alresford (38.3%), it would be necessary to provide an additional 201 jobs in the town. If it was wished to increase that proportion to for example 50%, it would be necessary to provide an additional 583 jobs. NB these figures are only for the Alresford population, and ignores those from the surrounding villages.

Education

Currently, 8% of local families choose private education

There is a difficulty in estimating the number of places required for the under 5s, as some parents choose to use providers nearer or on their way to work.

Day Care

There is one nursery, based on Perins site. There are 7 childminders through the town according to the HCC Childcare search.

Pre-schools

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Although there will be more children, to some extent market forces will drive provision. HCC do have a duty to ensure adequacy. According to the HCC childcare search there are no pre-schools in the town; Perins is only listed as Day care and 345 is not listed at all. If the search radius is widened to 5 miles, there are 5, but that pre supposes access to a car.

There is only one pre-school providing all day care, at Perins. 345 only provides morning sessions.

Were a community building to be developed it would be prudent to reconsider the need for additional provision with high quality outdoor play space. East Stratton Village Hall is a model of multiple community uses, including Pre-school.

Infants & Juniors

There is a predicted shortfall in places by 2017. HCC have an investment program to extend the available spaces.

Although there have been some difficulties with local families being unable to have children attend the local school, even when siblings are there already, the schools as a whole have capacity. The buildings are in good condition and the sites have space for extension as and when necessary.

It is the duty of HCC to ensure provision, and bear the cost when that provision cannot be met locally, but the social costs of inadequate spaces are manifold.

As most parents are now working, at least part time, a large number of children are driven to school. This makes Sun Hill a traffic hot spot for an hour each day during term time. Although local emergency services are aware of this any drivers from further afield would not know to avoid this road, and a delay could result. If the land east of Sun Hill were developed measures would be necessary to resolve this problem. Unfortunately, when not constrained by parked cars this road suffers from speeding, as do Sun Lane, Tichborne Down, and Nursery Road as parents leave the congested areas...

Secondary Education

Perins has grown from a school of 750 in 2000, to a school of 1,050 in the current academic year. For the past three years it has been oversubscribed at the point of entry in year 7. On this basis, the governors have reviewed the PAN (Planned Admission Number) and will raise it from 208 currently to 215 in 2014. A further increase will then be looked at in order to allow us to meet

- the increased number in the current catchment from a rising birth rate and an increase in local building
- the increasing pressure to support parents in their choice of school for their child irrespective of catchment areas
- Significant changes in Winchester educational provision which is also likely to impact on Perins.

By 2020 Perins could be a school of 1,250 students. It is likely that the school will want to take back the public parking area, which provides 78 spaces at weekends, at the earliest opportunity if it is to stay on the current site to accommodate the increase.

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Perins is now an Academy. As a convertor Academy from a Trust school the Academy Trust is the owner of the land; they have control of their own admissions policy; and should they wish to redevelop on the existing site, or move to another site Perins is responsible for funding.

At present there is no established need for additional or replacement land.

6th Form Colleges

Alresford needs are well met by Alton College and Peter Symonds.

The lack of public transport is a nuisance and there is continued irritation that parents pay the same for a bus pass as those elsewhere, but have the use of far less busses, and have to provide a taxi service for any evening activities.

Health & Welfare

Dentists

Neither dentist responded to request for information on capacity, and both are advertising for new patients.

Surgery

Currently meets the needs of 9000 patients. There is capacity to expand on the current site which is ideally placed regarding accessibility. A current planning application will extend facilities to accommodate the needs of up to 10,000 patients.

Care services

Commercial provision meets the care at home needs of the current population in their own homes.

The delivery of extra care to residents in their own home is much more cost effective; capable of closer management; and has better health outcomes when the homes are co-located. (Kneale, D., *Establishing the Extra in Extra Care: perspectives from three Extra-Care housing providers*. (International Longevity Centre-UK, 2011.))

HCC will provide a map of those needing care, and provision, based upon 2011 census data. The Housing Needs group will consider needs for the increase in the elderly population.

Nursing, Dementia, and Residential Care.

There is no local provision for nursing or dementia care. For those whose home cannot be adapted for care at home, there is only one establishment locally providing residential care, in Old Alresford.

Hospitals

Alresford is well placed for access to Basingstoke and Winchester hospitals in emergencies. However, access to attend outpatients is dependent on the voluntary care group for those without friends or family nearby, and unable to cope with the changes necessary for public transport.

Transport

Roads – in the Town.

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The use of the Soke by large vehicles continues to be perceived as a problem, and would be exacerbated by any significant commercial activity north of the town. Various measures have been tried and are in hand to reduce the danger to other traffic and pedestrians.

There are traffic hotspots in the town, notably around the schools, at the start and end of the school day. The expected increase in numbers has the potential to exacerbate these problems.

Commercial areas within the town are accessed via residential areas. Large delivery vehicles cause road stoppages on The Dean, from the necessity to unload in the road; there has been damage to property on the Soke, and New Farm Road from commercial traffic.

500 houses will generate significant additional traffic movements a day, especially at peak times, and are a considerable factor in any development. There are several potential problem points, and the traffic plan for all developments will receive community scrutiny.

20 mph limits on residential roads were considered by the Group, but it was felt that the likelihood of resources to enforce that would be poor. Traffic calming measures are more likely to succeed, but these should be in the form of restrictions to the carriageway, not humps – which cause more damage and noise. This may well accommodate our trees, which are being removed, but not replaced. The soft surfacing on Rosebery Road has improved pedestrian safety, but not path width.

HCC have identified the following needs:

- Improvements to the junction of Spring Gardens and New Farm Road
- Improvements to the junction of the B2177/Jacklyns Lane/Spring Gardens
- Junction signalisation and pedestrian phasing - Jacklyns Lane/Pound Hill/West St.
- Station Road Improvements and access to Station Car Park

Roads – External

Alresford is well placed on the national road network, via the A31. But access to the north is a difficult for commercial vehicles due the restrictions at the Soke.

There is no specific need for additional access to the bypass unless it is driven by site specific developments.

Footpaths and Cycle Paths

There is good permeability throughout the town except where the railway forms an effective barrier. The access roads from south east of the town that do exist are busy, and not perceived to be safe for novice bicycle riders.

The track and land used by the Watercress Line should be safeguarded against alternative development that would jeopardise foot and cycle use of the land. It has the potential to address some of the permeability needs of the town, and the ability to link to open countryside to the east & west.

Although we have many cul-de-sacs, valued for the lack of through road traffic, these tend to lack permeability - notably Appledown, Orchard, and John Arlott & Thornton. This is undesirable in design terms and future development should maintain permeability.

Knowledge of the extensive network of town footpaths is poor, despite them now being on the NATC website map.

Pedestrian access has been improved at Sun Hill and Jacklyns Lane rail crossing, but cycle access at these points is still unattractive for those with children.

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There is a lack of circular footpaths to the east and west of the town. See the maps at <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/row/row-maps.htm>. Half circular routes around the town would improve recreational opportunities and access to the SDNP for existing and new residents.

HCC have identified the following needs:

- Grange Road traffic calming and footway widening- issue of mature trees
- Cycle links from Town centre to NCN 23
- FP 15 pedestrian enhancements
- Pedestrian crossing point on West Street near junction with Jacklyns Lane
- Pedestrian improvements on West Street / The Dean crossroads.
- West Street Improvements (North Side) – i.e. the pavement build out to narrow the road for pedestrians.
- West Street Improvements (South Side) (in the vicinity of Co-op)

The following items should be added:-

- Capacity of the south side of West Street between the Co-op and the Old Post Office. It is difficult to pass in peak shopping times with a buggy and the predicted rise in the numbers of over 75's indicates an increasing no. of electric trolleys.
- Circular paths to the East & West of the town.

Public Transport

There are no current proposals for an improvement in public transport and the prospects of future improvements are thought to be poor.

Depending on location, new housing may provide the customers to support an expansion of the existing services, especially the round the town service (AB1).

It is possible that a railway service to connect to the mainline network at Alton could become a commercial proposition the future. In order to ensure that remains a possibility, it is essential that the track remains available. The Town Council should investigate the costs & benefits of registering a Community Interest in the land used by the Watercress Line.

Parking

Town Centre

There is significant free on street parking, and substantial pay & display parking but there is conflicting evidence as to adequacy:-

- Shopkeepers complain of inadequate parking.
- Two surveys of available empty spaces show some spare capacity.
- Shopping survey quotes lack of parking as the reason for not shopping in Alresford.

The lease on the Pay & Display at the Station expires in 2020, on Perins site in 2035. The Pay & Display car park at Arlebury Park is owned by the Town Council.

As LP1 seeks to maintain the viability of the everyday shops that residents rely on it is necessary to manage the stock to ensure churn of free on street parking AND signpost pay & display parking for visitors. Turnover of on street parking is a management issue, and therefore not strategic.

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Given a growth in population in the town of about 1350 people by 2031 and the uncertainty regarding future Pay & Display sites, it is important to secure space for current and further car parks, the amount of additional space required if any, depends on the site that housing.

There are many residents in the town centre that have no parking. The annual car park permit is now usable in all pay & display car parks, but security continues to be a concern. It is possible that the installation of CCTV would reassure residents on this matter.

Away from Town centre

Residents slightly away from the town centre are impacted by employees that park inconsiderately on residential roads; the Abbotstone Road triangle is now an all day parking space. Although the parking permits will shortly be usable in all car parks that may not resolve this problem, and costs may still be unattractive.

Double yellow lines may be necessary on some roads, to ensure access to drives and for emergency vehicles.

Any land designated for commercial use must provide sufficient onsite parking for staff, as well as space for the commercial use of the business. Developing jobs away from the town centre may help avoid putting additional pressure on town centre parking.

Resident parking zones have been discussed repeatedly. In order to work, these may need to cover the entire town, which is considered an unacceptable expense on residents, especially when we are so poorly served by public transport.

Community Facilities

Broadband

Although speed in the town centre is acceptable in some of the outlying areas of the town it is poor.

HCC have recently signed an agreement to provide Superfast (24-80 MBS, depending on distance from box) to 90% of Hampshire residents. However for Appledown, there may be no improvement, for Meryon they will have Superfast in 2014, and for Spring Gardens, some will, and some won't.

This significantly impacts home working, small businesses, pupils' ability to do homework, social isolation, and the access to internet shopping.

See Data Communications, page 11.

Shopping

Alresford has a good range of local shops which meet the weekly shopping needs of residents of the town & villages. The Co-op has stated that it has capacity for a 30% increase in trade without any need for extra floor space. Independent retailers provide a wide range of goods and have the capacity to serve the increased population to 2031. A shopping survey around the town & villages gave service levels and quality as the main reasons for shopping in the town.

For those that are unable to shop locally the larger supermarkets provide a delivery service for those that can shop online.

There has been criticism in the past regarding the costs of shopping in Alresford. A comparison of the costs of a shopping basket was taken using a price comparison website and the prices in the Co-op gave the following results:-

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Price comparison website	Asda	Sainsbury's	Ocado	Tesco	Waitrose
	44.73	48.18	53.48	50.94	56.68
Alresford co-op	49.69				

Waste Amenity Point

The household waste amenity point in Prospect Road is well used, there is sometimes a queue at weekends but as local businesses are closed at this time there is little inconvenience. Due to the size of the site, when the bins are changed over there is a blocking of Prospect Road which does inconvenience local businesses. We accept the following statement from HCC:-

"The planned housing increase is unlikely to trigger the need for HWRC expansion in Alresford, moreover the Town does not figure in a service gap area. Accordingly a new HWRC does not figure as a priority for the County Council.

However, if an opportunity arose and it could be funded by developer contributions the Council might be interested in supporting a new site especially if it was on employment land and the HWRC service could be broadened to handle 'trade' waste."

A survey of local businesses will include questions regarding a need to dispose of trade waste locally.

Community Hall

There are many halls for hire; the maximum capacity is 650, Perins Sports Hall. There is no evidence of need for a larger facility, subject to the outcome of research.

WCC are commissioning an assessment of built sports provision against the standards set in LP1.

Burial Ground

The parish churchyard at St John's has capacity for approximately other 10 years burials. About 10 interments take place each year, although this may reduce if interment costs were increased. There is plenty of capacity for cremated remains.

If land for burial space is not made available the burials will take place at Magdalen Hill (Winchester). The cost there for interment is currently £1626 for those from outside the city. This ground is run by WCC, but maintenance costs are borne by the Town Forum, hence ex-residents enjoy a 50% discounted rate.

Although NATC may be willing to purchase land for burials, they may be unwilling to manage the site.

St John's are restricted in how much they can charge by Church of England fee levels, the current charge being £286. This charge does not cover the costs of maintaining this land, despite the very high volunteer input, and a grant of £1200 from NATC.

It is possible that WCC would manage a burial ground on a similar basis to the Magdalen Hill area, discussion are in progress.

Two undertakers have been approached, and both are willing to manage such a ground. However, NATC would have no control how that ground is run; and it would be open to all, not just town residents.

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It was agreed that the evidence shows that there will be a future need for additional burial space and that it is not possible to manage the cost of interment so as to extend the capacity of the existing land. Therefore, provision should be made for a new burial ground, with associated landscaping, access and parking.

Steels have advised that in order to be commercially viable, provide parking and infrastructure, and provision for formal as well as a natural burial ground, a site of about 2 Ha would be required.

Costs would be broadly similar to those at Magdalen Hill; although town residents may enjoy a 50% discount were the Town Council to fund purchase and/or maintenance costs.

Allotments

Referred to Open Spaces Needs Assessment.

Waste Water

Southern Water have made major investments and are working on several current problems. In some areas of the town storm water causes over load in the foul water system. Southern Water have recently commissioned some investigatory work on this problem.

Jobs

In order to make the town attractive to small and medium employers (SMEs) the following investments will be necessary:

- High speed, high capacity and high resilience data communications, see below.
- Modern, energy efficient and flexible buildings with adequate open space for work related use or parking.
- Good access to the roads network without impinging on residential roads.
- A secure power supply to business accommodation, with 3 phase dependent on category of use.
- Reliable high speed broadband to support the increasing number of people self employed and/or working from home.

Data Communications

High volume, high resilience, and high capacity data communications are essential for many modern businesses. The lack of this will be a major barrier to attracting new economic activity, and supporting our existing businesses.

To install such a service could also meet the needs of broadband for residents and small businesses in the town and surround villages on a resale basis. For brevity, this facility has a working title of 'Big Pipe'.

First Option have prepared a paper on this, see attached papers.

M3 LEP funding is a potential source of finance, as it is a repayable loan fund designed to support investment in infrastructure to support economic activity.