

Section 1 Introduction

1.1 What is a Town Design Statement?

The purpose of a Town Design Statement (TDS) is to influence the planning process so that changes and developments in the town contribute to the sustainability of the town and its environment; to reflect local characteristics and thereby contribute to its current status as a popular tourist venue, whilst also preserving the qualities of the community values in its surroundings.

Produced by the community, a TDS once having the official status of 'Supplementary Planning Document' gives detailed practical guidance on the broad outline within the local development framework. In Alresford's case, the research undertaken for the New Alresford Town Plan and Action Plan was followed by a two-year research and consultative process for this document. The documents relating to this research is held at New Alresford Town Council (NATC).

It aims to assist developers and planners when assessing planning proposals to ensure their plans are sustainable, are based on an understanding of the common threads linking past and present, the continuing maintenance of land and buildings, and contribute positively to its future.



Broad Street

Why a TDS for Alresford?



The Weir

Alresford is a small market town, voted the most attractive in the south of England (and second in the whole of England) in the 2005 Country Life Market Towns competition. It is famed throughout the country for its colourful Georgian architecture, open airy streets and quaint passageways and is set on the edge of the Alresford marshlands in the beautiful Upper Itchen Valley countryside nine miles east of Winchester.

The area has a long history of settlement going back to the Iron Age due to its sheltered position and clear shallow source of water. It is bordered by the Upper Itchen Valley, for which it part sources natural irrigation, and is recognized in the Winchester District Landscape Character Assessment as an area of natural beauty. The town's economic and social history is so important to its current character; this is covered separately in Section 2.

By setting sustainable guidelines for development within the town and its surroundings this design statement will help safeguard the New Alresford conservation area, as well as the settlement and industrial areas that have built up around it since Victorian times by setting sustainable guidelines for development within the town and its surroundings.

What area does it cover?

This design statement covers the New Alresford ward of Winchester and District constituency as shown in Maps 1.1 and 1.2.

The River Alre and its tributaries runs from the Old Alresford Pond along much of the northern town boundary sweeps south towards Tichborne and to the west where it feeds the River Itchen. To the west beyond the water meadows is the Upper Itchen Valley. To the south-east and east of Tichborne Down are wooded and farmed down lands and a golf course all crossed by footpaths. These are integral and essential parts of the local environment.

The town's surroundings help shape its character and ambience, and give a magnificent landscape for the community and visitors to enjoy.

Consultative Process

The consultative process for this document was from October 2004 until April 2007. Details of this and the statement of public involvement are described in Appendix A.

1.2 Summary of Aims and Objectives

The aim of the New Alresford Town Design Statement is to be a positive and continuing influence helping to shape the future sustainable development of the town.

Its objectives are to help ensure the town develops in a way that retains its essential characteristics and historical features by providing:

- Supplementary planning guidance to Winchester City Council within the context of the South East Plan, and the Winchester District Local Plan Review.
- A framework against which developers and individuals can assess the visual impact of their proposals, and how these will affect the town's sustainability and infrastructure.
- A document that complements the New Alresford Town Plan and Action Plan.

- Ensuring that new developments conserve the character of the town and of each character area and at the same time meet the community's needs for sustainable development that:
 - Helps meet the town's need for affordable homes. (i.e. integrating affordable homes within developments in accordance with the Local Plan policies).
 - Meets the towns housing and business needs in an integrated, environmentally friendly way.
 - Assist with planning a safe environment for the community, especially with regard to air quality, road transport and walkways.

Subjects people highlighted as important, not relevant to this document, will be taken forward in the Town Plan Health Check.

This is the community's perception of New Alresford, as it is in 2006 and its ideas on how it can be shaped in the years ahead in a way that will protect it for future generations, together with summary Character Descriptions and Guidance based on those perceptions, to encourage quality in design of new properties.

We would like to thank all those who have participated in the research for this document, in particular, those people who have participated in the workshops and the subsequent consultation process; Planning Aid South, Alresford Town Councilors, the Town Plan Steering Group, The Alresford Society, and all those who have worked with them.

We would also like to thank the Swan and The Community Centre for providing venues without charge during the six-week public display in 2005.



Definitions

This document refers to:

- The Conservation Area, the central core of the old town from the river Alre in the north and the railway boundary from Sun Lane to Jacklyns Lane in the south, and along the Avenue to Drove Lane.
- The Settlement Area is encompassed within the H3 boundary in the Winchester District Local Review. This is divided into five character areas:
 1. The Conservation Area.
 2. Jacklyns Lane area. (Lined by some properties surviving from the original Edwardian development and (further South) some mid-war and later houses.)
 3. West of Jacklyns Lane. (a leafy suburb full of Edwardian housing, some of which has been 'modernized' at various dates, with a wide variety of more modern housing as a result of infilling from the 1920s up to the present; includes a sub area of properties built as social housing from the 1940s onwards).
 4. East of Jacklyns Lane. (A variety of post 1950's developments/areas, bordered by some late nineteenth century properties).
 5. Areas used by industry.
- The Surrounding Environment is the area outside the H3 boundary, i.e. the River Alre and the Alresford Marsh (shaded blue) and agricultural and wooded land (shaded green) that surrounds New Alresford. (See Map 1.2)

Textual Format

The following format is adopted in the document:

- Planning guidance points, directly related and subordinate to the District Local Plan are highlighted. These sections form part of the Local Development Framework as Supplementary Planning Documents.

Map 1.1 New Alresford in the Winchester District

