

APPENDIX A

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

A1. Introduction:

The initial consultation period started in October 2004 and lasted until January 2005. A document, based on the information gathered for the Draft Local Action Plan was prepared for circulation to the Chairmen of all the active organisations and charities in Alresford. It was subsequently revised and used as a base for Design Statement Workshops.

The next consultation process involved workshops and a questionnaire being sent to all households together with an invitation to attend these workshops. The Chairmen of the Chamber of Commerce and of all the groups who undertake local community work and local charity organisers were personally invited to the workshops, many of whom attended. The resulting document was put on public display for six weeks at the Community Centre and the Swan Hotel where it was viewed by over 500 visitors and people from the town. The document was then discussed and revised and at public meetings held at Arlebury Park with a further discussion at a public meeting in November 2005.

A1.2. Timetable:

Initial Consultation:	October – January 2004
1 st Workshop:	12 th March 2005
2 nd Workshop:	23 rd April 2005
Public Display of outcomes at Swan and Community Centre:	June/July 2005
Public Meetings at Arlebury Park:	August/September 2005
Public Meeting in the John Pearson Hall:	21 st November 2005
Public Meeting in the St Johns Church hall with the church group	26 th January 2007
Formal consultation period	February-April 2007
Final consultation at St Johns Church	July 2007
Final presentation of documents to the public at the Community Centre	July 2007



Over 250 households responded and a summary of their comments is in Section A2 below. These were combined with the workshop outcomes (discussed in A2 below) and the July/August and November public consultation sessions and comprise the full 'Character Descriptions.' These are held in CD format at NATC together with the questionnaire response forms.

A2. Outcomes of Workshops - Summary

A2.1. Features of The Conservation and Non-Conservation Areas Most Valued

All the groups highlighted the preservation of the vibrant street scene in East, West and Broad Street areas, as they are highly important for the sustainability of the town both as a place to live and its historic role as a venue for tourists and business people alike. The main threat they saw to this was the increase of traffic in the area, particularly lorries and the speed they travel (together with the lack of safe road island areas for pedestrians), and the lack of accessible parking within easy walking distance of the Conservation Area.

The character area of the town they felt was an eyesore was the industrial area in the Dean. They felt this because it was a part of the Millennium Walk and one of the first sub-areas of the town they visited if taking the east to west route. They also felt, as long as the older properties were protected, a renovation or re-development process could be used to improve the general level of architecture in this area.

The feature raised about the area outside the Conservation Area was the green spacious feel this had and the glimpses of beautiful views residents, walkers and people driving through the town also have when traversing the town. The second most important feature of these areas was the way they demonstrated the twentieth century history of the town as it extended towards Tichborne Down and the way each character area shows the design that each decade had to offer.

Great value was placed on this area as a garden suburb with superb views, its well planned footpaths with their views across the townscape, tree lined roads and Avenues, and the extensive green areas for communal enjoyment and the way it interweaves with modern design, including the award winning St Gregory's Church.

A2.2. Main Issues of Concern

A. The general tenure of those present was against any changes to the character of any area that detracted from those mentioned in A.2.1 above, as well as the possible damage to the fabric of the town by the increased traffic volumes, the speed lorries travel in the areas popular with tourists and that crossing these roads is now difficult and hazardous.

B. There was a strongly held view that traffic volumes were increasing and that this posed a danger not only to pedestrians, where it was felt there should be more specific crossing points in the town, but also to the fabric of the town.

C. Residents clearly valued their peace and tranquillity. The need for out of the town centre parking was mentioned by most people, together with the problem of lorries and cars mounting pavements and reversing into narrow passageways on a daily basis, and the consequent damage to pavements and danger to pedestrians,

Notable was the feeling the original planning permission for the Watercress Company safeguards on the numbers of lorries going through the town were being ignored, with its resultant increase in carbon emissions in the town and possible damage to historical properties and buildings.

D. Concerns were also raised over the ability of the infrastructure of the town to cope with an increase in the town's population and of further increases in traffic. Particular mention was also made of the type of water supply system for the town and the town's closeness to water meadows.

At that time the town's schools were sometimes unable to take all the children presented to them, and the doctors, primary medical provision, and dentists in the area were under pressure. The Community Centre and other recreational venues also tended to be booked for six months in advance at the weekend and on certain days.

A.3 The Outcomes of the Questionnaire

Introduction:

As mentioned in A1 above, a questionnaire was sent to all households in New Alresford. Over 250 households responded. There was some confusion as residents thought they had already fully participated in this process when visiting the display at the Community Centre for the Town Plan and this affected participation negatively.

The findings of the questionnaire are contained in Appendix B.

Summary

Views

People's most popular places and areas to walk are shown on Map 3.1 in Section 3. Notable views outside the town are from the Golf course and to the Golf course from Jacklyns Lane and the views northwards from Grange Road and the Avenue. People in the Benenden Green – Sunhill area commented on the far-reaching views from this and the surrounding areas, and some people also talked about the New Farm Road view over the water meadows.

Infrastructure

The town fully utilises the infrastructure it has. Recreational Halls and the Community Centre are fully booked, the schools sometimes have difficulty absorbing newcomers, there is inadequate public transport and the doctors' surgery is always busy. People were concerned about traffic from the south in Jacklyns Lane and New Farm Road, and east to west in Grange Road in particular. The school run was also a concern. Lorry traffic to Old Alresford and the watercress companies was felt to have increased enormously and pedestrians have difficulty crossing Broad Street as a result of the increased traffic. The town's car parks are full between Thursday and Saturday, and a shortage of parking for residents in the conservation area was also mentioned.

Recreation

The largest number of people said they enjoyed walking and this has resulted in a large number of views of the surrounding countryside being highlighted on Map 3.1 in Section 3.

Final consultation

The final six week consultation took place from February to April 2007. Notification was put in the press and the TDS was made available on the Alresford web-site. Returns were received from The Alresford Society, Hampshire County Council, Natural England, the Environment Agency and one member of the public Ken Yeldham. The many comments received related to improving the accuracy of the descriptive parts of the document and have been incorporated in this issue.