

Alderholt Neighbourhood Plan - Designation of Neighbourhood Plan Area

1. PURPOSE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Report Type:	Public Report for Decision
Purpose of Report:	To seek approval to designate a Neighbourhood Area for Alderholt Parish, to support future preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan.
Recommendations:	It is RECOMMENDED that: The Neighbourhood Area of the Parish of Alderholt is formally designated.
Portfolio holder:	Cllr Robin Cook, Portfolio Holder for Planning
Wards:	Alderholt;
Contact Officer:	Simon Trueick, Planning Policy Manager

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. Neighbourhood Planning was introduced to the planning system through the Localism Act 2011 (and a series of subsequent regulations). It strengthens and formalises previous attempts at “very local” planning, for example Parish Plans or Village Design Statements. Whilst sometimes successful, these very often lacked “teeth” in the planning process.
- 2.2. In simple terms, a neighbourhood plan is:
 - A document that sets out planning policies for the neighbourhood area – planning policies are used to decide whether to approve planning applications
 - Written by the local community, rather than the Local Planning Authority
 - A powerful tool to ensure the community gets the right types of development, in the right place
 - Forms part of the Statutory Development Plan for the area.
- 2.3 The Neighbourhood Plan process is quite complex, and involves public consultation and involvement, independent examination of the plan, and a local referendum.

3. A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FOR ALDERHOLT

- 3.1. In February 2019, Alderholt Parish Council indicated their intention to produce a Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish of Alderholt.
- 3.2. The first stage in the plan process is to formally designate the area to which the plan will apply, known as the Neighbourhood Area. In some cases, this process can involve a period of publication, however as it is the Parish Council

who are proposing their own Parish as the Neighbourhood Area, then no consultation arrangements are involved. The decision to designate the area rests with the District Council.

- 3.3. The formal details of the submitted request for designation are attached as Appendix A to this report.
- 3.4. This is the first such proposal in East Dorset. Neighbourhood Plans are very common elsewhere in Dorset, with over 30 in progress across the west and north of the County.
- 3.5. This is the first stage of a Neighbourhood Plan process in Alderholt, and officers will offer support in this wherever possible. At this stage however, the decision to undertake a Neighbourhood Plan should be welcomed and Council is encouraged to support the process by designating the Neighbourhood Area.

4. IMPLICATIONS

2018-2019 Strategic Priorities

- 4.1. The matter under consideration impacts upon the key priorities of the Council's One Year Strategy in the following areas:-
 - **Environment, Policy Planning & Housing**
 - Town & Parish Council liaison re environmental responsibilities
 - Oversight of transitional policy planning and planning consultation
 - Housing policy in transition
 - **Sustainable & Healthy Communities**
 - Seamless transition for community health & wellbeing

Legal

- 4.2. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Environmental

- 4.3. There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

Financial and Risk

- 4.4. The Neighbourhood Plan process does involve some costs to the local authority in who's area the plan is developed (for example costs of examination and referendum). Given the likely timescales involved however, these future costs would be a matter for the new Dorset Council to consider at the appropriate time.

Equalities

- 4.5. There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

Consultation and Engagement

- 4.6. As stated above, no consultation is required for the designation of the Alderholt Neighbourhood Area.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1. Neighbourhood Planning is an important new tool in helping communities take interest and influence in the future of their local area. Alderholt are taking the first step in this process and it is appropriate that this Council supports them in their endeavours by formally designating the Neighbourhood Area.

Appendices:

A – Neighbourhood Area designation request.

Background Papers:

None.