ALCONBURY
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Basic Conditions Statement

Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan

2025 to 2036

Contents

1. Introduction....3
1.1 The Basic Conditions....3
1.2 The Qualifying Body....3
1.3 The Neighbourhood Plan Area....3
1.4 The Neighbourhood Plan Period....5
1.5 Excluded Development....5
1.6 Neighbourhood Plan Vision and Objectives....5
Chapter 2 National Planning Policy....7
Chapter 3 Huntingdonshire Local Plan....10
Chapter 4 European Obligations and Human Rights....13
4.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitat Regulations....13
4.2 Human Rights....13
Appendix 1: Parish Council Minute....15
Appendix 2: Neighbourhood Area Designation....16
Appendix 3: Final Screening Opinion....19

Map 1: the designated Alconbury neighbourhood plan area....4

1. Introduction

1.1 The Basic Conditions

1.1.1 This statement has been prepared on behalf of Alconbury Parish Council to support and accompany the Submission of the Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan (the Neighbourhood Plan) under Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Plan (General) Regulations 2012 (the 'regulations'), to the Local Planning Authority, Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC).

1.1.2 In accordance with paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and the Neighbourhood Plan Regulations 2012 (as amended), this plan must satisfy "basic conditions" before it can come into force. The plan must:

- Have appropriate regard to national planning policy
- Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development
- Be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan for the local area
- Not breach and otherwise be compatible with retained European Union (EU) obligations Regulations, including human rights requirements and not be likely to have a significant effect on a European site or European offshore marine site, or UK equivalent
- Not breach the requirement of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

1.1.3 In addition, the Neighbourhood Plan must meet the prescribed legal requirements.

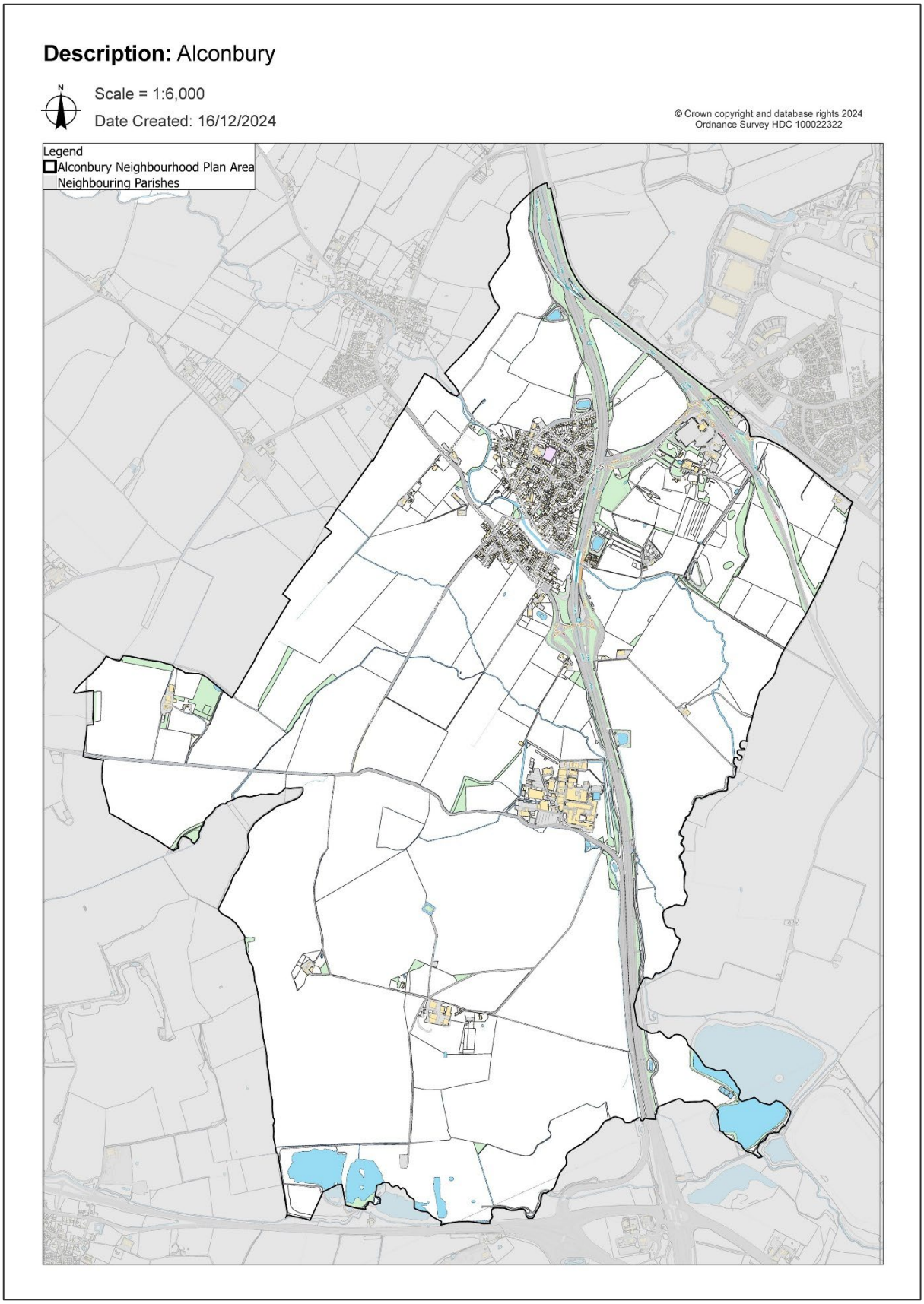
1.1.4 This Basic Conditions Statement addresses the above requirements by demonstrating that the Neighbourhood Plan has had regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024 as amended on 07 February 2025)); is in conformity with the strategic policies identified in the Adopted Huntingdonshire Local Plan 2036, will contribute to achieving sustainable development and does not breach, and is compatible with, EU obligations.

1.2 The Qualifying Body

1.2.1 The Neighbourhood Plan is submitted by Alconbury Parish Council, who is the qualifying body, as defined by the Localism Act 2011. A Parish Council Minute confirming a resolution to submit the Neighbourhood Plan can be found in Appendix 1.

1.3 The Neighbourhood Plan Area

1.3.1 The Neighbourhood Plan Area is the Parish of Alconbury. A map of the designated area is shown in **Map 1.**



Map 1: the designated Alconbury neighbourhood plan area

1.3.2 An application for designation of the neighbourhood plan was received from Alconbury Parish Council by Huntingdonshire District Council on 9 February 2023. The area designation was made on 27 February 2023. The designation notice is attached at Appendix 2. The notice confirms that no part of the designated area is part of a pre-existing neighbourhood plan area.

1.3.3 The vision, objectives, planning policies and community action points apply to this area of land.

1.4 The Neighbourhood Plan Period

1.4.1 The Neighbourhood Plan Period is 2025 to 2036, a period of 11 years. This represents the year in which the Regulation 14 consultation was conducted up to the end of the Adopted Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036

1.5 Excluded Development

1.5.1 The Neighbourhood Plan cannot and does not cover matters of excluded development under Schedule 1 of the 1990 Act, relating to minerals development, which are County Matters.

1.6 Neighbourhood Plan Vision and Objectives

1.6.1 The Neighbourhood Plan Vision is:

> **"To steadfastly preserve and enhance the distinctive rural character and unique identity of Alconbury Parish. We are committed to ensuring that every development aligns seamlessly with the village's historical character, maintaining its size and amenities, while proactively advancing flood risk management to safeguard our community for future generations."**

1.6.2 The overarching purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to contribute to achieving sustainable development and enhancing the quality of life for existing and future residents. There is a clear thread linking the Vision, Objectives and Policies in the Neighbourhood Plan.

1.6.3 There are nine Objectives divided over the six Neighbourhood Plan themes. The policies linked to each objective are shown in the table below

Theme 1: Village and Settlement Character
Objective 1: Alconbury to remain a village with an identity that is clearly distinct from nearby settlements **Linked policy:** • Policy AL 1: A spatial strategy for Alconbury
Objective 2: To safeguard Alconbury's rural quality by preserving and enhancing the landscape characteristics that are considered to be distinctive and make it special **Linked policy:** • Policy AL 2: Protecting and enhancing Alconbury's landscape and settlement character

Objective 3: Conserve and enhance Alconbury's valued heritage assets and its historic environment

Linked policy:

- Policy AL 3: Conserving and enhancing Alconbury's non-designated heritage assets

Objective 4: Maintain and enhance open, green spaces of particular significance to the community, identified in the Neighbourhood Plan

Linked policy:

- Policy AL 4: Local and 'other' Green Spaces

Theme 2: Built Environment

Objective 5: New development will be of a high quality design and contribute positively to village character

Linked policy:

- Policy AL 5: Delivering high quality design that is sensitive to Alconbury's distinctive character

Theme 3: Flooding

Objective 6: New development will not exacerbate existing flood risk in the parish and all opportunities must be taken to reduce levels of risk

Linked policy:

- Policy AL 6: Addressing flood risk appropriately when development is proposed via a planning application

Theme 4: Moving around the village and parish safely and through active travel modes

Objective 7: Our village streets will retain their rural character where it is enjoyable and safe to walk around, and opportunities will be taken to improve and expand:

- walkable routes between residential areas and village services
- the network of safe and attractive off-road routes that link Alconbury village with neighbouring settlements.

Linked policies:

- Policy AL 7 'Maintaining well connected neighbourhoods and addressing barriers to moving around the village more safely using active travel choices'
- Policy Al 8 'Protecting and improving Alconbury's network of rural routes'

Theme 5: Infrastructure

Objective 8: Ensure infrastructure is always capable of providing good provision for the village for both hard infrastructure such as roads and soft infrastructure such as services and facilities

Linked policy:

- Policy AL 9: Protecting and improving Alconbury's community facilities
- Policy AL 10 'Alconbury community infrastructure priorities'

Theme 6: Natural Environment

Objective 9: Biodiversity in the parish will be protected and enhanced. Its contribution to supporting key sites of ecological value in neighbouring parishes will be recognised and reinforced

Linked policy:

- Policy AL 11 'Protecting and enhancing the natural environment'

Chapter 2 National Planning Policy

2.1.1 The Neighbourhood Plan is required to have appropriate regard to national planning policy. This national policy is provided by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in December 2024. The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared having regard to the framework as demonstrated in the table below. The table refers to sections of the NPPF most relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan policies and comments on how the policies contribute to achieving sustainable development.

Neighbourhood Plan Policies	Conformity with the NPPF	Sustainable Outcome
Policy AL 1: A spatial strategy for Alconbury	The purpose of this policy is to guide sustainable development, ensuring proportionate locally appropriate growth whilst preserving the nucleated built form of the village, as distinctive from its close neighbours. It has regard to achieving sustainable development, (ch.2) whilst delivering sufficient supply of homes in the village, on land well related to the village, or on suitable rural exception sites (ch.5), making the most effective use of land (ch.11)	Ensures that development is located close to existing services and facilities in a sustainable pattern of development.
Policy AL 2: Protecting and enhancing Alconbury's landscape and settlement character	The purpose of these policies is to protect the distinctive character of the countryside, landscape character, and locally important views and open green space through the centre of the village. It has regard to conserving and enhancing the natural environment (ch.15).	Contributes to enhancing the landscape setting of the parish and maintaining local distinctiveness.
Policy AL 3: Conserving and enhancing Alconbury's non-designated heritage assets	The purpose of this policy is to focus on conserving the unique locally important heritage features and architecture of the parish. It has regard to conserving and enhancing the historic environment (ch.16) and particularly para 16.	Recognises the architectural and cultural value of local heritage and reinforces local identity.

Neighbourhood Plan Policies	Conformity with the NPPF	Sustainable Outcome
Policy AL 4: Local and 'other' Green Spaces	The purpose of this policy is to protect green space that the community has identified as particularly important to them. It has regard to promoting healthy and safe communities, (ch.8) using paras 106-108 to designate Local Green Spaces.	Identifies local green spaces that are particularly special to residents.
Policy AL 5: Delivering high quality design that is sensitive to Alconbury's distinctive character	The purpose of this policies is to engage potential developers in the Design Guidance specifically prepared for Alconbury. The Design Guidance and Codes document ensures new development positively contributes to the built and natural environment. It has regard to achieving well-designed places (ch.12).	Ensures that development results in a positive enhancement to the local area.
Policy AL 6: Addressing flood risk appropriately when development is proposed via a planning application	With large swathes of the village at risk from fluvial or surface water flooding, the purpose of this policy ensures that flood risk is not exacerbated by development including householder applications. It has regard to the challenge of climate change and flooding (ch.14) in particular paras 162 and 170.	Provides the opportunity to reduce flood risk through small developments and increase resilience to future flooding events.

Neighbourhood Plan Policies	Conformity with the NPPF	Sustainable Outcome
Policy AL 7 'Maintaining well connected neighbourhoods and addressing barriers to moving around the village more safely using active travel choices'	The purpose of this policy is to improve the ease of moving around through active travel methods, where opportunities arise, noting 4 areas where movement is restricted. It has regard to promoting sustainable transport in (ch.9) paras 109-111, and healthy communities (ch.8).	Has dual outcomes of reducing the need for cars and ameliorating climate change, and offering safe options for active travel.
Policy Al 8 'Protecting and improving Alconbury's network of rural routes'	The purpose of this policy is to protect access to the countryside to the countryside to promote health and wellbeing. It has regard promoting healthy and safe communities (ch.8) and particularly to para 105.	Actively encourages the use of public footpaths and their importance for providing access to the countryside.
Policy AL 9: Protecting and improving Alconbury's community facilities	The purpose of this policy is to support local services. It has regard to achieving sustainable development (ch.2) para 8.b) and promoting healthy and safe communities (ch.8) para 98.	Seeks support for retention and improvement of local services and facilities.
Policy AL 10 'Alconbury community infrastructure priorities'	It has regard to planning and flood risk (ch.14), promoting sustainable transport (ch.9), promoting healthy and safe communities (ch.8), and plan-making (ch.3) para 29, and conserving and enhancing the natural environment (ch.5) para 199.	A catch-all for the necessary infrastructure to support sustainable development.
Policy AL 11 'Protecting and enhancing the natural environment'	It has regard to conserving and enhancing the natural environment (ch.15) and particularly para 198. The purpose of these policies is to protect important ecological features and to promote nature recovery through connecting green corridors, and habitat improvements through new development and active projects within the parish. It has regard to conserving and enhancing the natural environment (ch.15).	Ensures that natural features and habitats are protected and enhanced.

Chapter 3 Huntingdonshire Local Plan

3.1.1 The current Huntingdonshire Local Plan was adopted on 15 May 2019 and is dated to 2036. The Development Plan for Huntingdonshire comprises the Huntingdonshire Local Plan, made Neighbourhood Plans and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Plan. The development Plan is supported by Supplementary Planning Documents including:

Huntingdonshire Design Guide 2017

Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD 2017

Wind Energy Development in Huntingdonshire SPD 2014

Developer Contributions SPD 2011

Developer Contributions: updated costs 2019/20

Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment SPD 2007.

3.1.2 A neighbourhood plan should be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan for the local area. The strategic policies in the adopted Local Plan are defined on page 4 as:

1. All policies in 4 'The Development Strategy' of this Local Plan (LP1 – LP10)

2. All policies that allocate land for development in Section D: 'Allocations' as they are required to achieve the strategy as set out in 4 'The Development Strategy' (not applicable to this Neighbourhood Plan)

3. The policies on 'Design Context' and 'Affordable Housing Provision' (LP11 and LP24)

3.1.3 On 24 January 2023 Huntingdonshire District Council's Cabinet agreed to the preparation of a full update to the adopted Local Plan which will set out a plan for how the district will grow over future decades.

3.1.4 The Preferred Options Draft Local Plan to 2046 was consulted on in autumn 2025, closing on 17 December and a Proposed Submission Local Plan may be consulted on later this year (2026). Included in that consultation were two adjoining housing sites on the edge of Alconbury (outside the village envelope) totalling up to 90 homes. If the draft allocation 'Alconbury 2: East Globe Lane were to be pursued, it would be expected to comply with Policy AL2 in the Neighbourhood Plan.

3.1.5 Alconbury is currently designated as a Small Settlement in the adopted Local Plan (one of only two designations) and is proposed to be designated as a 'Local Service Village' in the draft Local Plan (one of four designations) in the new Settlement Hierarchy.

3.1.6 Draft Policy LP2 and Appendix 1 in the Preferred Options Draft Local Plan describe and contain indicative housing requirement figures for Neighbourhood Plan Area. The third section of draft Policy LP2 says that for designated neighbourhood plan area the minimum housing requirement will

be determined on the basis of the local plan allocations, existing commitments and estimated windfall at the time of designation of a Neighbourhood Area. When Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan Area was designated, such a policy did not exist. The Indicative Neighbourhood Plan housing requirement figure for Alconbury is Appendix 1 consists of 2 completions and the 90 homes subject to the proposed allocations in the Preferred Options Draft Local Plan. This confirms that Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan is not required to included housing allocations in order to meet the requirements of the NPPF.

3.1.7 Neighbourhood plan policies should align with and support the delivery of strategic policies in the adopted local plan whilst also providing a finer grain of detail specific to their area. Until the Local Plan review is concluded, Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan should align with the 2019-2036 adopted Local Plan.

3.1.8 The table below shows the relationship between the strategic polices in the adopted Local Plan (LP), identified in paragraph 1.8.2 above, and the relevant policies in the Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan.

Huntingdonshire Local Plan Core Policies	Alconbury NP Policies	Comments
LP 1 Amount of Development	_	The Spatial Strategy supports development. It does not contain any site allocations and is not required to in the Local Plan.
LP 2 Strategy for Development	AL 1	Policy AL 1 sets out the development principles for growth. This growth should be in the built up area or well related to the built up area, or acceptable in a countryside location.
LP 3 Green Infrastructure	AL 4 AL 8 AL 11	LP 3 expects proposals to protect and enhance green infrastructure and connectivity of green spaces for nature and enhancing rights of way. Policy AL 4 identifies and protects locally important green spaces, Policy AL 8 protects access to the countryside on rights of way, and Policy AL 11 protects important ecological features and promotes nature recovery through connecting green corridors and habitat improvements.
LP 4 Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery	AL 10	LP 4 concerns payment of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Planning Obligations. Policy AL 10 encourages infrastructure provision to support sustainable development and specifies the priorities for Alconbury.

Huntingdonshire Local Plan Core Policies	Alconbury NP Policies	Comments
LP 5 Flood Risk	AL 6	Policy AL 6 complements LP 5 providing the opportunity to reduce flood risk, specific to Alconbury and encourages small developments to contribute.
LP 6 Waste Water Management	AL 6	LP 6 is concerned with the sewer network and water treatment capacity. Propper management of river and surface water flooding set out in AL 6 can reduce the strain on the capacity of the sewer network in flood conditions.
LP 7 Spatial Planning Areas	_	LP 7 concerns Spatial Planning Areas in the Local Plan and is not relevant to Alconbury
LP 8 Key Service Centres	_	LP 8 concerns Key Service Centres and is not relevant to Alconbury
LP 9 Small Settlements	AL 1 AL 2 AL 3 Al 4 AL 5 AL 7 AL 9 AL 10	Alconbury is identified as a small settlement in this policy. Most of Alconbury's Neighbourhood Plan Policies are designed to support sustainable development through service provision, access to services by sustainable modes of transport and enhance the character of the settlement and its immediate locality.
LP 10 The Countryside	AL 1 AL 2 AL 5 AL 11	LP 10 provides criteria for appropriate development in the countryside. Alconbury is traditionally an agricultural village, so this function is supported as well as protecting landscape character and not polluting the countryside with light.
LP 11 Design Context	AL 5	LP 11 sets out the mechanisms for achieving high standards of design for all development. The Neighbourhood Plan (Policy AL 5) has a specific Design Guide written for Alconbury with design principles and a design checklist. A high standard of design is sought in the rural area and in the built up area of the village.
LP 24 Affordable Housing Provision	AL 1	LP 24 supports affordable housing provision. Policy AL 1 supports affordable housing on a rural exception site as being appropriate outside the built up area of Alconbury Village.

Chapter 4 European Obligations and Human Rights

4.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitat Regulations

4.1.1 European Union Directive 2001/42/EC requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to be undertaken for plans or programmes that would have a significant environmental effect. UK legislation is set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the Regulations). The local planning authority, in the case Huntingdonshire District Council, should determine whether or not a plan is likely to have a significant effect and consult the consultation bodies (Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency). The Neighbourhood Planning Regulations requires either that a SEA or a determination that an SEA is not required because the plan is not likely to have significant effects, is submitted with a Neighbourhood Plan proposal. or a determination obtained

4.1.2 Huntingdonshire District Council made a determination in May 2025, concluding that "the Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan will not have significant effects on the environment. Therefore, an assessment is not required.

4.1.3 In relation to the Habitats Regulations Assessment the determination concluded that "as the Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of any internationally designated sites either on its own or in combination with any other plans. Therefore, an assessment is not required."

4.1.4 The full screening determination is attached to the end of this Basic Conditions Statement, in Appendix 3.

4.2 Human Rights

4.2.1 The Human Rights Act 1998 encapsulates the Convention and its articles into UK Law. The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared having regard to the fundamental rights and freedom guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights.

4.2.2 During the process of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan, and at the statutory Regulation 14 consultation, particular regard was paid to publicising events both digitally (on the village Facebook page) and in hard copy through regular updates in the parish magazine (Parish Pump).

4.2.3 Community questionnaires were delivered to all residents at the start of the preparation process, and survey forms were also made available at each subsequent consultation. Several face to face consultations took place at local village events. A public meeting was held where a presentation was given. A letter was delivered to all residents to inform them of the Regulation 14 consultation setting out how they could respond. The Parish council website was also regularly updated with information. Full details are provided

in the Alconbury Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Statement.

4.2.4 The Neighbourhood has had regard to the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights and complies with the Human Rights Act 1998.

4.2.5 An assessment has been carried out on the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan to ensure that the implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan would not lead to increased inequalities or discrimination in the Neighbourhood Plan Area, in each of the protected characteristics categories as identified in the Equality Act 2010. Please see the result in the table below.

Protected Characteristic	Impact	Commentary
Age	+ Positive	Policy AL 4 identifies a specific green space as an informal space for children to play away from traffic. LGS 4 is also identified as popular with children for recreation uses. Policy AL 1 supports affordable housing provision outside the built up area which could provide one bed homes for off spring of village residents wishing to stay in the village.
Disability	+ Positive	Appendix 4: Design Check list reminds developers that access points and street layouts should have regard for all users including those with disabilities.
Gender Reassignment	0 Neutral	No specific impact identified
Marriage and civil partnership	0 Neutral	No specific impact identified
Pregnancy and maternity	0 Neutral	No specific impact identified
Race	0 Neutral	No specific impact identified
Religion or belief	0 Neutral	No specific impact identified
Sex	0 Neutral	No specific impact identified
Sexual Orientation	0 Neutral	No specific impact identified

Appendix 1: Parish Council Minute

0226.155 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

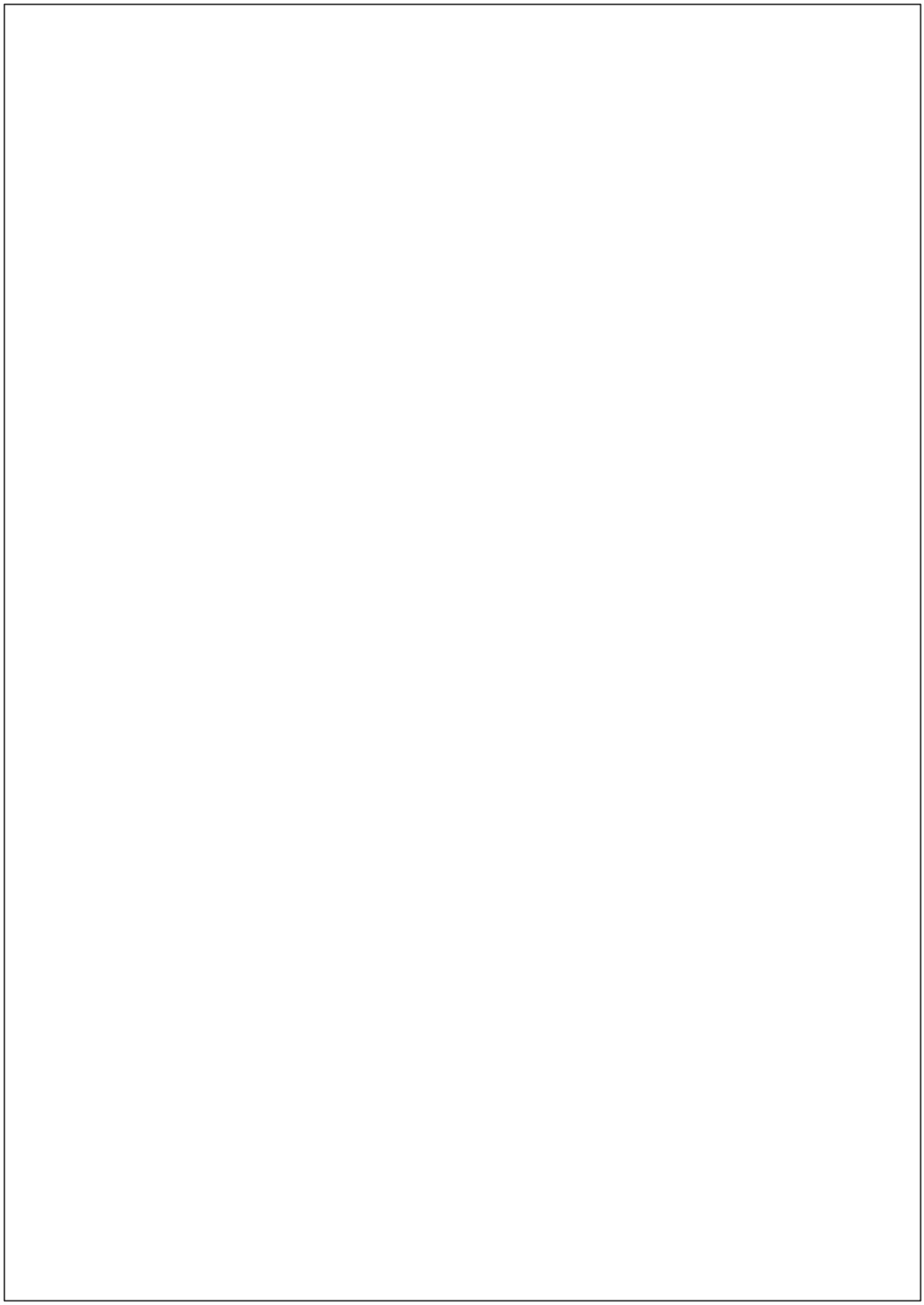
Councillors confirmed that they were satisfied with the work carried out on the Neighbourhood Plan to date and agreed to proceed to the next stage, Regulation 16 and that the proposed draft Neighbourhood Plan should be submitted by the Clerk to Huntingdonshire District Council by the end of this week.

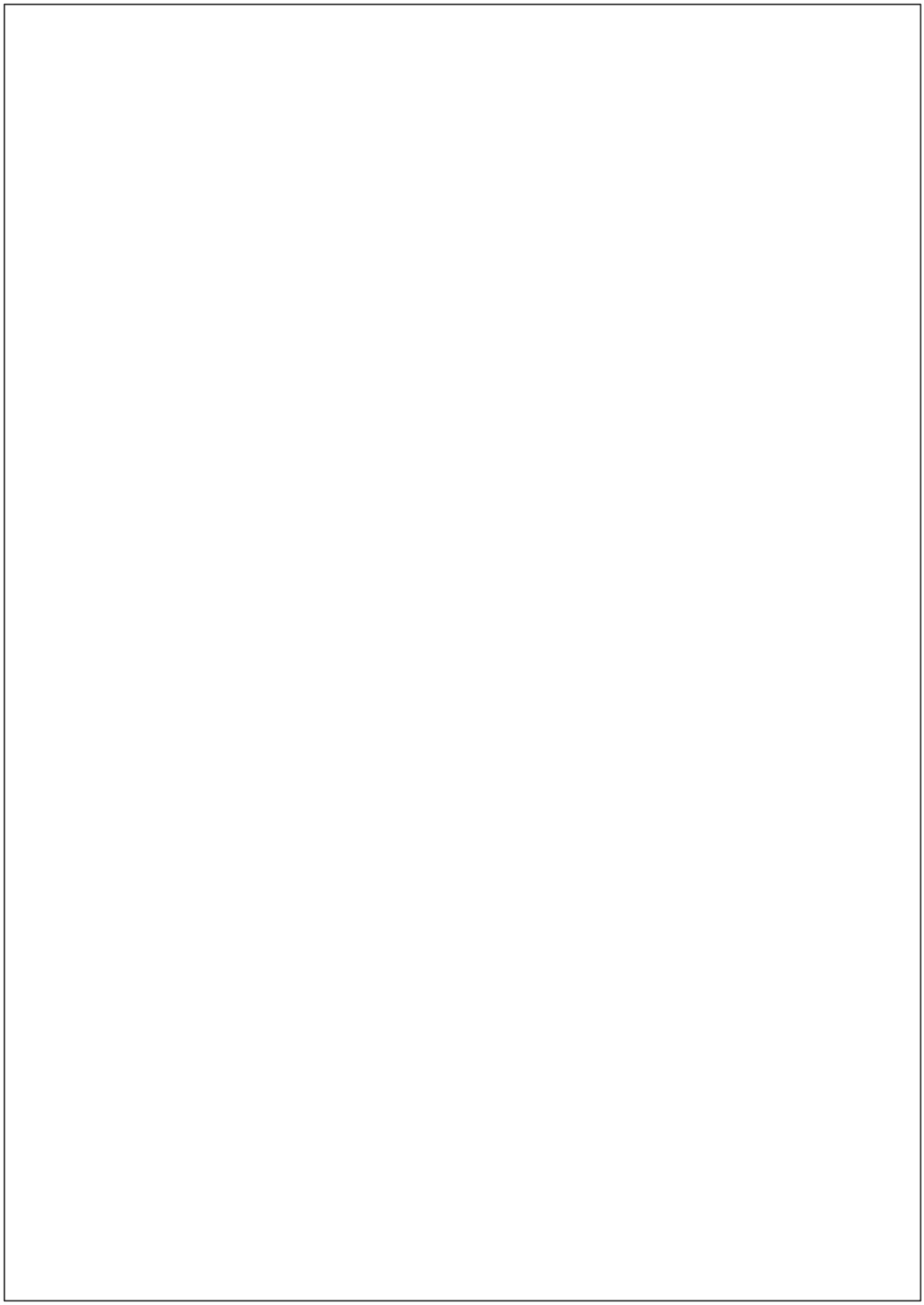
Regulation 16 is the stage at which the local planning authority publicises the submitted Plan for a statutory six-week consultation period, inviting representations from residents, statutory consultees and other stakeholders before it proceeds to independent examination.

Although the Plan will be submitted shortly, progression to Regulation 16 will not take place until after 11 May, following the local elections. It is anticipated that a referendum will be held towards the end of the year. The Parish Council will be responsible for publicising the referendum to ensure residents are aware of, and able to vote on, the matter.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk submits the draft Neighbourhood Plan to Huntingdonshire District Council for Regulation 16 consultation.

Appendix 2: Neighbourhood Area Designation





Appendix 3: Final Screening Opinion

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