

Alford Neighbourhood Plan

2018 – 2031
A vision for our
Lincolnshire Market Town



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1. Introduction

1.1. What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

- 1.1.1. The preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan is led by the local residents of the area that the Plan represents. It must be supported by the community on whose behalf it is being prepared. A Neighbourhood Plan cannot be adopted ('made') unless it has been approved by a majority of those voting in a local referendum.
- 1.1.2. Neighbourhood Plans are land-use and planning documents, therefore there are limitations on the matters a Neighbourhood Plan can influence. The policies must clearly relate only to land-use and planning, so they cannot, for example, include other matters and concerns like litter, anti- social behaviour, and the detailed management of open spaces, schools and community buildings.
- 1.1.3. Once a Neighbourhood Plan has been made by the Local Authority, it becomes part of what is known as the "Development Plan" for the area it covers – sitting alongside the Local Plan for the wider district. When the local planning authority receives an application for planning permission within the neighbourhood area, it must make its decision in accordance with the development plan – including the Neighbourhood Plan - unless material considerations indicate otherwise (this is set out in section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
- 1.1.4. Because it carries so much weight when planning applications are being considered and decided, a Neighbourhood Plan has to be consistent with national planning policies and guidance (these are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework¹, or "NPPF", and Planning Practice Guidance²), and with the local plan for the district. At the time of the preparation of this Neighbourhood Plan, East Lindsey District Council was in the process of preparing its Local Plan, to replace the East Lindsey Local Plan 1995. The East Lindsey Local Plan will be composed of two documents, the Core Strategy and the Settlement Proposals Document, which have been published as Submission Modifications Drafts in March 2017³. Although they are not yet finalised or adopted, the vision, objectives, policies and requirements of the Core Strategy Submission Modifications Draft and of the Settlement Proposals Submission Modification Drafts have been taken into account when preparing the Alford Neighbourhood Plan.

¹ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

³ <https://www.e-lindsey.gov.uk/article/5116/Emerging-Local-Plan>

1.1.5. As well as being in general conformity with national planning policies and guidance, and the strategic policies of the Local Plan for the area, every Neighbourhood Plan must also satisfy certain other conditions before it can be approved and then taken into account when planning applications are being considered. It must be shown that the Plan:

- has been prepared in accordance with The Localism Act 2011 and The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012⁴;
- contributes to the achievement of sustainable development:
- does not breach and is compatible with European Union obligations and the European convention of Human Rights.

1.2. Why prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for Alford?

1.2.1. This Neighbourhood plan was researched, steered and written by members of a sub-committee of Alford Town Council, which was first appointed in February 2012. The Town Council decided that it was important for Alford to develop its own Neighbourhood Plan, so as to guide future development in the town in accordance with key principles.

1.2.2. The importance of retaining the town's Character and Identity and its Community Culture whilst developing the town into the future are two recurring issues initially identified in the "Alford Town Appraisal (2008)⁵" and further reiterated through subsequent consultation with the town's residents as part of the Neighbourhood Plan process (notably 38 respondents out of a total of 43 supported the issue in the July 2015 consultation).

1.2.3. Much emphasis is placed on the retention of Alford's character and identity as a small, rural, market town with its treasured history and valued buildings from various eras. The town has a large Conservation Area where different architectural styles and historic assets from different ages combine together in an attractive way, contributing to give the town its distinctive character. At the same time, the Town Centre maintains several retail units that make it a modern market town, an element that Alford's residents cherish and would like to see protected and improved in the future. The Neighbourhood Plan will help to preserve the historic assets and

⁴ http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/637/pdfs/ukxi_20120637_en.pdf

⁵ https://www.e-lindsey.gov.uk/media/4674/CD28-Alford-Town-Appraisal/pdf/CD28_Alford_Conservation_Area_Appraisal.pdf

character of the town, promote the Market Place and Town Centre as a thriving retail hub and the whole town as an important economic and employment centre.

- 1.2.4. Notwithstanding the distinct and diverse character of Alford, several residents are concerned with some of the more recent developments that have taken place in the town. Recent developments have expanded the main body of the settlement to the West and to the South away from the Town Centre, are of a design and layout that is not in keeping with the character of the town and do not provide a “soft border” with open countryside. At the same time, several residents lamented a shortage of green spaces and public footpaths and links within the town’s main body. Residents recognise that improving the provision of green areas, landscaping solutions and the opportunity for more sustainable means of transportation will have a positive impact on their quality of life, on the character of the settlement and on the wider environment. The Neighbourhood Plan will help address these issues, ensuring that future development incorporates appropriate design characteristics and contributes to the provision of green spaces and public linkages.
- 1.2.5. In term of Community Culture, Alford’s residents have expressed a fear about a dilution of community culture as a result of inappropriate development of the town. The specific issues raised by residents encompass loss of the:
- vibrant, strong and active willingness to address any ‘cause’ requiring support;
 - huge range of community organisations run by a relatively small population;
 - balanced demography of the community, which provides sufficient resources for providing support where and whenever it is needed.
- 1.2.6. People feel pride at being part of “a community”. With community, size matters. A good community is where people are not living in each other’s pocket, whilst when there is a need, people and neighbours are at hand. It is also a feeling which promotes involvement in the town’s affairs and where volunteers are able to contribute fully for the good of all.
- 1.2.7. When people move into a community they join into a narrative of its history and life. Alford has, over the years, demonstrated a strong, independent and pioneering community spirit. Volunteers have, for many years, run many art festivals and various other events and were successful in obtaining ERDF grants, several Lottery awards and other funding. The impressive refurbishment of the Manor House, with £1.9 million raised, the use of other grants to upgrade shop fronts and street furniture as well as providing grant aid to upkeep thatched properties in the town, the achievement of coming second in a national competition organised by a well-known international computer firm to promote a “connected community”, and securing a sum of £50,000 in 2014 to renew the sports hall floor of Alford Sports Hall Association, are all more recent examples of the town’s Community Culture. Alford was also the

first town to take over service delivery and property management from the District council and now runs the Friday market, the cemetery, the public toilets and lately the Corn Exchange and the Library.

- 1.2.8. The sustainability of such a community needs organic change and growth and no extreme or excessive change. It is an accepted belief that people are generally happier, healthier and more contented when they live in a community. The “community” is accepted as a major factor in modern life for the wellbeing of citizens and the simple fact that the government has deemed it necessary to create the Department for Communities and Local Government is sufficient evidence for this.
- 1.2.9. It was thus, within this context, that the task of developing a Neighbourhood Plan for Alford was undertaken. It is expected that the Plan will protect and promote this sense of community, regulating development in a way that will help realise the aspiration of local residents and promote a sustainable and thriving community. During the process of preparing this plan, the Steering Group noted these community aspirations and ambitions. Even though these projects are not directly related to land-use and planning, and thus they cannot be formally included in the Neighbourhood Plan, they have been collected and presented in a separate Appendix at the end of this document, to inform future developers and other stakeholders of the aspirations of Alford’s Community.
- 1.2.10. East Lindsey District Council’s Core Strategy has deemed that the town of Alford’s housing requirement for the period 2016 - 2031 is a minimum of 161 homes. As at the 1st March 2017 there were already 95 homes with planning permission, leaving a requirement of 66 homes for the relevant plan period. Since then, a further 110 planning permissions have been granted. On top of these permissions, to cater for the eventuality of additional growth or expiration of some of these planning permissions, this plan allocates 43 homes on sites set out in the proposals map 1 – site allocations: this allocation policy attempts to prioritise brownfield sites and to meet the supposed need for affordable homes where possible. With regard to the need for employment land in the town, there is a requirement for a minimum of 1 hectare of land, this is set out in the Council` Core Strategy. The Steering Group performed an Allocation Study in respect of the requirement of the NPPF and of the guidelines of the Planning Practice Guidance to identify, assess and allocate the sites required to deliver this requirement, and prepared all the necessary planning policies and maps required to manage and promote such development. The Neighbourhood Plan will thus ensure the necessary amount of deliverable residential sites are available to support Alford’s sustainable growth in the future, whilst at the same redressing some of the existing issues (e.g. redevelop redundant brownfield sites, regenerate the Market Place, rebalance the geographical imbalance of the town etc.).

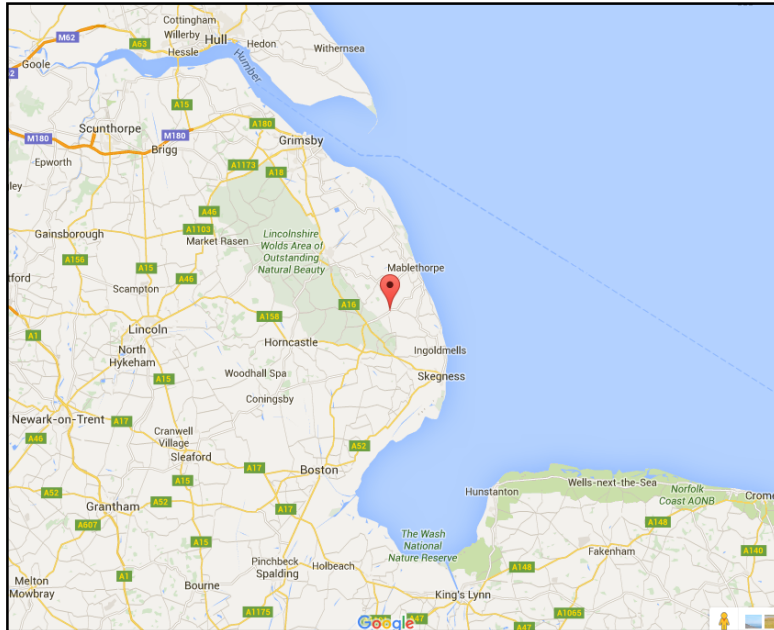
2. The Plan Process & Timeline

- 2.1.1. The Steering Group was appointed by Alford Town Council in February 2012 with the aim of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for the Town. The Neighbourhood Plan envisions development for Alford between 2017 and 2031, covering a 14 year period.
- 2.1.2. Consultations with the people of Alford on aspects of this Neighbourhood Plan took place in July 2012, April 2013, July 2015 & 2017 with the community, as well as with statutory consultees in 2016 & 2017. Reference has also been made to “The Alford Conservation Area Appraisal” and the “Alford Town Appraisal” , both of 2008.
- 2.1.3. Provision has been made within this plan for Alford Town Council to conduct an annual Progress Review and a substantive formal review of the Neighbourhood Plan every 5 years, in order to monitor implementation and reflect changing need and circumstances over time.
- 2.1.4. The Regulation 14 Consultation Version of the Alford Neighbourhood Development Plan was made available for consultation in accordance with Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Plan Regulations from 15th January to the 25th February 2018. The Consultation Statement provides a description of the amendments made to the document based on the comments received, that resulted in this current Submission Version.
- 2.1.5. Following the amendment to the Regulation 14 Consultation Version of the Plan and the preparation of the Statement of Consultation, the Steering Group has prepared a Statement of Compliance with the Basic Conditions, demonstrating how community members and statutory consultees’ comments have been addressed and how the Plan complies with all the following basic conditions:
- Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State (including the National Planning Policy Framework, NPPF);
 - The making of the neighbourhood development plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
 - The making of the neighbourhood development plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area);
 - The making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.

- 2.1.6. This Submission Version of the Plan, the Statement of Consultation, and the Statement of Compliance with the Basic Conditions will be submitted to East Lindsey District Council, which will publicise the proposal for a minimum 6 weeks and invite representations on the documents (Regulation 16 Consultation).
- 2.1.7. An Independent Examiner, selected by Alford Town Council, will be appointed, working with ELDC, to undertake an examination of the Plan and issue a report to the local planning authority and qualifying body. If the examination is successful East Lindsey District Council will arrange a referendum, and if the Plan is approved by the majority of local residents voting in the referendum, the District Council will make the Plan, which will become an integral part of the East Lindsey's planning system and a material consideration in decision making regarding planning applications.

3. Setting the Scene

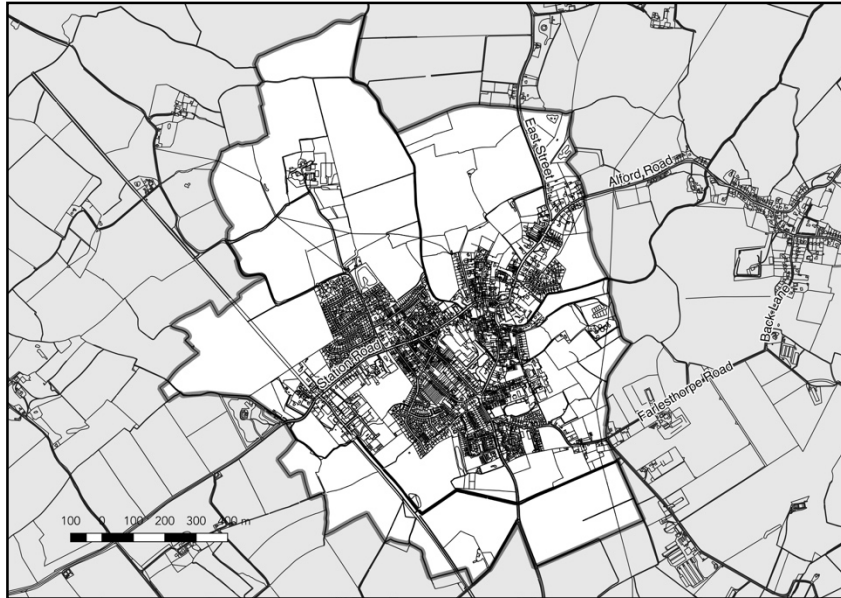
3.1. Location and Historic Significance



3.1.1. Alford is located approximately 7 miles from the North Sea coast and just east of the Lincolnshire Wolds in the district of East Lindsey. The Town sits in a flat landscape that slowly raises westward toward Miles Cross Hill in the direction of the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), which is in close proximity. Approaching Alford from the west gives the best view of the town and its surroundings, which are mostly rural in nature and currently used for agriculture purposes. The underlying geology of the Alford area is chalk with overlying glacial deposits, a small outcrop of sandstone runs close to, but not through, the town.

3.1.2. The Town is crossed by the Wold Gift Drain, which flows south through the centre of the town and then eastwards towards the coast. The Drain is the main cause of Flood Risk in the area, both north of the Town and within the Town Centre, where the drain is culverted beneath the road. Even though mostly connected with unusually high rainfall in 2007, some areas of the town are subject to surface flooding.

3.1.3. The built-up area covers a relevant part of the Town administrative boundaries, leaving a 'belt' of agriculture fields and rural areas that are crossed by a valuable network of bridleways and footpaths allowing access to the countryside.



Designated Area for the Alford Neighbourhood Plan



Flood Risk Areas in Alford

- 3.1.4. Ever since the 1283 Charter originally authorising it to hold markets, Alford has been able to maintain its character as a typical small Lincolnshire market town. By late Victorian times, it was well established as a centre to serve the needs of its own inhabitants and the surrounding agricultural area and the appearance of the majority of buildings in the centre of the town has been essentially preserved since this period.
- 3.1.5. Many of Alford's historic buildings, however, date from a very much earlier time; among them are its spacious medieval church, its various very attractive 17th century thatched buildings, including an old coaching inn and the imposingly large thatched Manor House, the sweep of Georgian buildings in





the main street and the five-sailed windmill, still working and reckoned to be one of the finest in the country.

3.1.6. With the advent of buses and motor cars following the First World War, larger towns became more accessible and expanded accordingly. Villages, even larger ones, suffered as a result, losing their shops and other facilities which held communities together. Alford was not large enough to compete with the larger towns in this way but it was large enough to maintain its independence, with schools, shops and



offices and other businesses continuing to serve its own immediate area. So, as it did not suddenly expand as larger towns did, it was able to preserve the special character it still has as a friendly little town, not too big for people to not know each other in the traditional way.

3.1.7. The successful preservation of the town owes much to the wisdom and foresight of the former planning authority, the Lindsey County Council. "The clearly recognisable limits of the town centre give it a character and identity of which even a stranger to the town is immediately aware", they said in designating the town as a statutory Conservation Area in 1970. They further stressed that, Alford being on the very edge of the Lincolnshire Wolds, "the preservation of its rural



setting is of importance in maintaining the character of the town".

3.1.8. In the years after the Second World War, substandard housing was replaced, with new housing being judiciously kept almost entirely within the confines of the town.



- 3.1.9. Alford's historian, R.C. Dudding, wrote very proudly in 1930 of the town's beautiful setting and the Conservation Area provisions stressed the importance of preserving the attractive approach roads leading in to the town. And, to date, the fine appearance of Alford's buildings in the extensive view down from Miles Cross Hill is still very substantially intact.



The approaches to Alford, from West, North, South and East respectively

3.2. Current socio-economic situation

- 3.2.1. According to 2011 Census, Town has 3,459 residents, making it relatively small for a Market Town. Notwithstanding its relative dimensions, this is an historic high for the Town, which has grown by almost 10% in terms of population and dwellings (147 new dwellings over the period 2001-2011) since 2001. To accommodate such growth, development in the last two decades has occurred to the south of the existing built area, away from the central point of the Town (the Market Place), and has been accommodated in developments that are out of keeping with the character of the Town.
- 3.2.2. This only exacerbated a previous problem, meaning the concentration of development westwards towards the former railway station, which created a physical imbalance and left several parts of the town isolated from the Town Centre and not in walking

distance from the Market Place and thus shopping and social opportunities. The 1995 East Lindsey Adopted Local Plan⁶ recognised this problem, and tried to address it through site allocations, with little success since most of the delivered development was concentrated in the South.

Age Groups	Total	Percentage
Age 0-15	626	18.10%
Age 16-29	569	16.45%
Age 30-44	579	16.74%
Age 45-59	623	18.01%
Age 60-74	628	18.16%
Age 75 -89	391	1.30%
Age 90+	43	1.24%

3.2.3. The Table provides a snapshot of the population structure of Alford, divided by age groups (Source ONS 2011 Census). A total of 1,518 households house Alford's population: the household composition structure is in line with the East Lindsey average.

3.2.4. In term of household accommodations, compared to East Lindsey as a whole, a lower concentration of the population lives in detached houses, while the figure for semidetached and terraced houses is higher: this is consistent with the nature of Alford as a Town, naturally denser than many of the small and medium villages in other parts of the District. 39% of households live in a detached whole house or bungalow, while 38% live in semidetached houses and 16% in terraced houses. Only 7% live in flats or maisonettes.

3.2.5. In total 60% of households own their own house, while the remaining 40% live in rented accommodation. It is relevant to notice how, out of all the households who rent a house, half of them live in socially rented accommodation, a share that is 64% higher than the

District's comparator. Compared to East Lindsey as a whole, the Town has a slightly higher percentage of unemployed residents, which would explain the higher rate of people living in social housing. This analysis is confirmed by the Indices of Deprivation, which put Alford among the most deprived Lower-layer Super Output Area in Lincolnshire, and by the rate of people claiming benefits, which exceeds national levels by more than 60% and exceeds district levels by 30%. This suggests that many people may be unemployed or on a low salary.

3.2.6. At the same time, the Town has a higher percentage of people who are economically active, possibly the result of a relatively healthy balance in terms of age groups. However, like many places in the Country the population in Alford is ageing, and more and more provision for this age group will need to be considered. Almost 20% of residents work in the wholesale and retail industry, 10% work

⁶ https://www.e-lindsey.gov.uk/media/4729/Part-2-Chapter-17-Alford-Area-Maps/pdf/Part_2_-_Chapter_17_-_Alford_Area_Maps.pdf

in manufacturing and 11.5% work in Education: all these values are higher than the District comparators, and are likely to be the result of the Town being a retail, industrial and service hub.

- 3.2.7. Education facilities are particularly good in the Town (Alford Primary School, John Spendluffe Technology College, and Queen Elizabeth's Grammar), and although Alford has a higher level of residents than the county and national average with either no qualifications or qualifications equal to 1 or more GCSE at grade D or below, the population in the Town has a similar profile of qualification levels to those held across the district.
- 3.2.8. Average car ownership across the East Midlands stood at 1.2 cars per household in 2011, which would translate into approximately 1822 private cars within Alford. This may be an underestimate as it is likely that car ownership in East Lindsey is higher than the East Midlands average due to the rural nature of its location and its relatively poor public transport links/services.
- 3.2.9. Whilst sports facilities are mostly adequate for the current size of the community, the "East Lindsey Green Infrastructure Study" (2013) states that Alford is seriously deficient in access to green infrastructure, for both biodiversity and accessibility green space, when compared to Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards.

3.3. Main Issues and Aspirations of Local Residents.

- 3.3.1. One of the main concerns of local residents is that inappropriate development may dilute the currently vibrant community culture and it may result in the reduction in the number of community organisations (currently high, considering the relatively small population) and in the disruption of the balanced demography of the community, which provides sufficient resources for providing support where and whenever it is needed.
- 3.3.2. Residents expressed the fear that development may harm the historic heritage and distinctiveness of the character in Alford, exacerbating the already problematic physical imbalance of the Town and creating more 'satellite' communities, such as the Tothby estate. Isolation of some parts of the Town is an issue for some residents due to its remoteness from the Town Centre and the key services located there, which are not within a reasonable walking distance, creating particular problems for mothers with pushchairs and elderly and less able people.
- 3.3.3. Across the large range of services which require development, those with the most important need for Alford are education, health services, the town centre, social inclusion, work opportunities and transport. Residents seek improvements to bus, pedestrian and cycle linkages / routes, and parking facilities for both private vehicles and visitors' coaches.

- 3.3.4. The lack of green infrastructure and, in general, green features in the Town is an issue for several residents, that would like to see additional public parks and better landscaping in both the public and private environment.
- 3.3.5. Finally, promotion of Alford's retail, tourist, and industrial economy is considered a necessity to ensure the Town remains a vibrant and viable community. Revitalisation of the Town Centre, and in particular of the Market Place, is another key issue, together with the promotion of Alford as a tourist destination offering unique attractions (the Manor House, the Windmill, the Corn Exchange, the Craft Markets, the Pottery, etc.). The idea of creating opportunities for innovative industries and employers, to be based in Alford, is highlighted whereas shopping issues were fairly muted during consultation, although a desire to maintain / improve the town centre, which provides the vast majority of such outlets, was consistently mentioned.

4. Vision & Objectives

4.1. A Vision Statement for Alford

- 4.1.1. Alford should remain a visual 'treat' as it nestles within green fields and hedgerows when viewed from Miles Cross Hill. The windmill and church tower will remain dominant when the town is viewed from all directions. The 'soft edges' of the town, as it blends into the surrounding fields, will remain a feature of development.
- 4.1.2. The town centre and market place will remain important centres for shopping, social interaction and celebrations.
- 4.1.3. The small market town feel with housing development connected to and supporting the main retail centre will be maintained.
- 4.1.4. The town's heritage and distinctiveness will be sustained by the high quality and appropriate design of any new development.
- 4.1.5. Alford's unique sense of place to live and work in, from its strong and active community and its identity as a centre for craft, will be sustained.
- 4.1.6. Alford's economy will develop, to provide a thriving, safe, healthy and sustainable community, with an appropriate balance between all employment sectors, including tourism. Utility and community service providers should ensure that the services they provide are at least adequate and continually improving.

4.2. Core Objectives

- 4.2.1. These have been derived from consultation feedback, taken together with reference to planning legislation, the Local Authority's Core Strategy, Alford's historic and organic growth and other reports and research as listed in the evidence log for this document and cited in reference sources.
 - The core objectives are grouped round the following headings:
 - Locational Strategy
 - Housing
 - The Local Economy

- Transport
- Heritage and the Environment
- Health & Wellbeing
- Services & Infrastructure

CORE OBJECTIVES	
A. LOCATIONAL STRATEGY	E. HERITAGE and the ENVIRONMENT
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To promote synergy between the various uses and activities that contribute to Alford's life as a town. 2. To minimise the environmental impacts of travel. 3. To maintain Alford's distinctive character. 4. To make efficient use of previously developed land and buildings. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) To reinforce the character and quality of Alford's environment b) To minimise the environmental impact of development c) To protect and enhance access to green infrastructure and biodiversity d) To promote energy efficiency and local self sufficiency
B. HOUSING	F. HEALTH & WELLBEING
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To meet local housing need in terms of quantity, quality and mix. 2. To make efficient use of previously developed land and buildings. 3. To minimise the environmental impacts of travel. 4. To maintain Alford's distinctive character. 5. To support quality design that respects its immediate surroundings. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Support and strengthen the culture of community within the town. b) Support opportunities for improved physical and leisure activity of Alford's residents. c) Protect and enhance buildings that are currently community assets.
C. THE LOCAL ECONOMY	G. SERVICES and INFRASTRUCTURE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the provision of retail outlets necessary and beneficial for the community. • Support the creation of employment opportunities. • Promote clear connections between local consumption & production. • Support the viability and vitality of the Market Place and its 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Support a level of statutory and community services appropriate to the development and population needs of the town. b) Support provision of an appropriate level of utility services relevant to the town's needs.

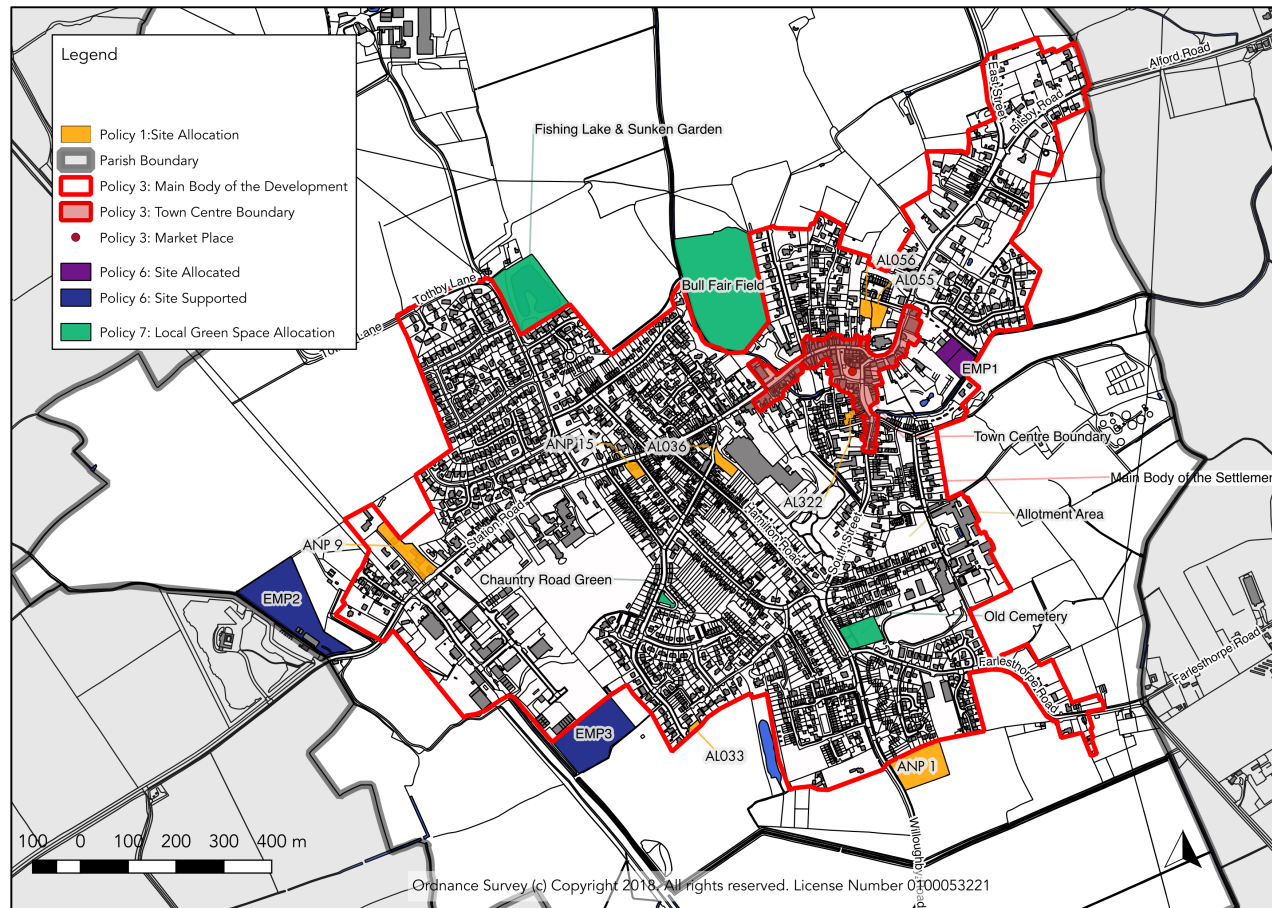
immediate area, as a business & tourism hub.

D. TRANSPORT

1. Connect new housing into Alford's town centre and the wider area with sustainable/low impact transport connections.
2. Expand and improve existing pedestrian and cycle connections within Alford.
3. Ensure car parking within the town supports the viability of the town centre and other vital facilities.

5. Policies

As with the above objectives, and arising directly out of them, the plan policies have been derived from consultation feedback, taken together with reference to planning legislation, the Local Authority's Core Strategy, Alford's historic and organic growth and other reports and research as listed in the evidence log for this document and cited in reference sources.



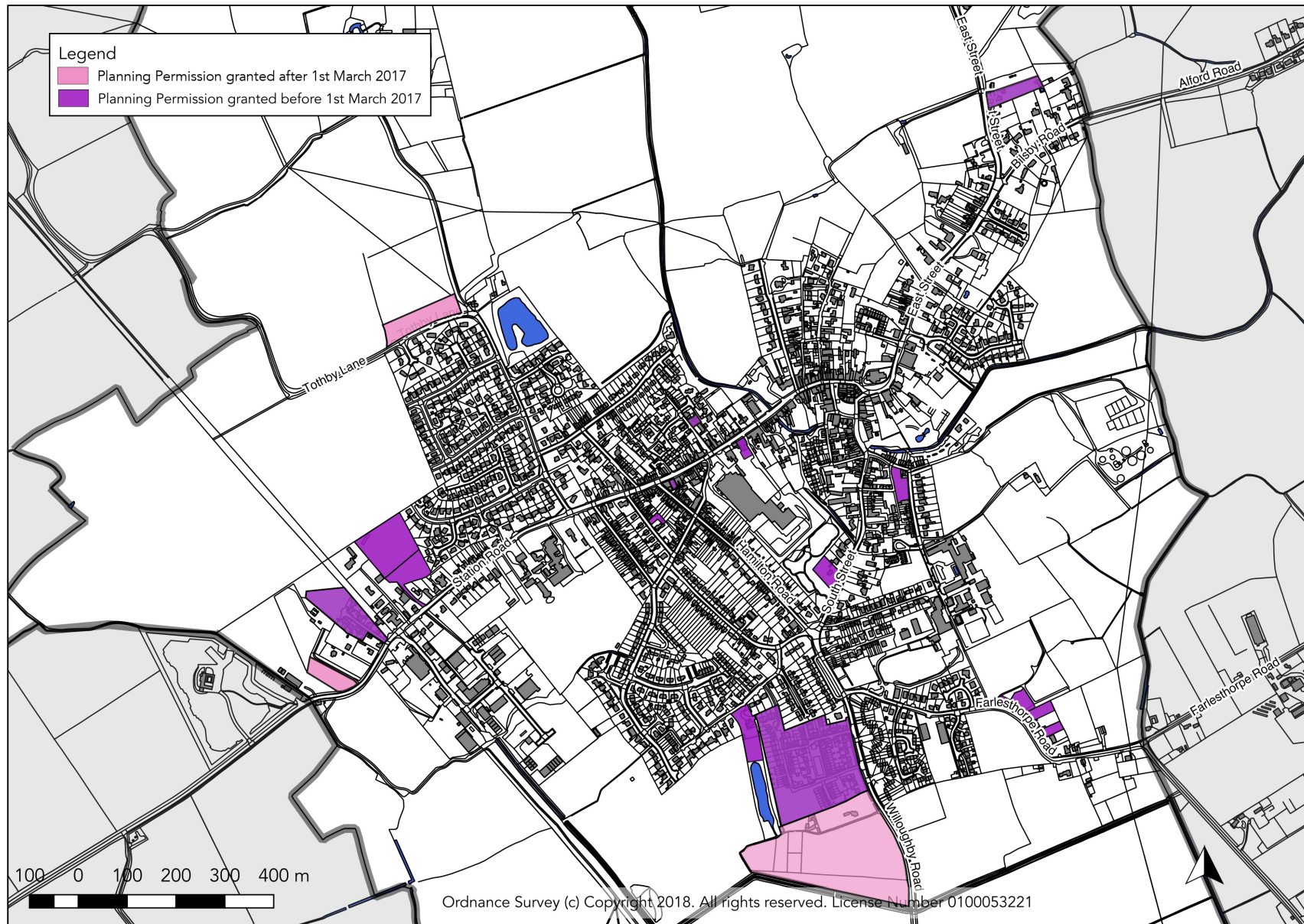
Development Management Policies Map

5.1. POLICY 1: SITE ALLOCATION

OBJECTIVES

- To meet local housing need in terms of quantity, quality and mix.
- To make efficient use of previously developed land and buildings.
- To minimise the environmental impacts of travel.
- To maintain Alford's distinctive character.
- To support quality design that respects its immediate surroundings

5.1.1. Alford is defined as a town in the East Lindsey Core Strategy-Submissions Modifications Draft's "Strategic Policy 1 (SP1) – A Sustainable Pattern of Places", and East Lindsey District Council's Core Strategy establishes that the town of Alford should provide sufficient land to build a minimum of 161 dwellings within the plan period (2016-2031). According to the calculations of East Lindsey District Council (ELDC) as at 1st March 2017, existing commitments amounted to 95 homes with planning permission, leaving a requirement of 66 homes to be found for the relevant plan period. From the 1st March 2017 until the finalisation of the Allocation Policy, planning applications for a further 110 dwellings were granted permission, adding to the existing commitment identified by ELDC (see Map below). This effectively means that the minimum requirement of 161 dwellings to be developed in Alford within the Local Plan period has already been reached and exceeded by 44 units.



Map of Existing Commitments

- 5.1.2. The East Lindsey Settlement Proposals Submission Modifications Draft⁷ puts the responsibility of allocating sites to deliver the target and prepare the necessary planning policies on the Neighbourhood Plan. Considering that, as explained above, the target has already been reached, at this point of time the Alford Neighbourhood Plan has no specific minimum requirement. To promote sustainable development in the town, support redevelopment of brownfield sites and deliver necessary affordable homes, the Alford Neighbourhood Plan allocates residential sites for a total of 43 dwellings, selected according to the methodologies described below and consultation with local residents.
- 5.1.3. As the Neighbourhood Plan has been produced to be in conformity with these strategic policies of the Local Plan, consideration has also been given to the Coastal Lincolnshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2012⁸ and the update of this document published in January 2014⁹.
- 5.1.4. The Steering Group, following the direction of the NPPF and of the Planning Practice Guidance on “Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment”, developed a methodology to identify, assess and eventually allocate sites according to carefully considered criteria derived from the policy statements, and for the future benefit of the town.
- 5.1.5. An availability study to compile a list of all available sites within the town was performed. Sites included all those identified by East Lindsey District Council as possibilities for future housing development in the “Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)”¹⁰, together with others identified by the Alford Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group through a local call for sites process.
- 5.1.6. Two different suitability tests have been performed on the sites. Firstly, sites have been tested following the methodology set in the East Lindsey Settlement Proposals Sustainability Appraisal: each site has been tested against the 13 Sustainability Objectives considered in the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report, and its impact has been scored as negative, positive or neutral. This resulted in a sustainability score for each location and subsequently a ranking of the most appropriate sites.

⁷ https://www.e-lindsey.gov.uk/media/5027/CD109-East-Lindsey-Settlement-Proposals-Submission-Modifications-Draft-Part-One-Alford-to-Legbourne/pdf/CD109_East_Lindsey_Settlement_Proposals_Submission_Modifications_Draft_-_Part_One_Alford_to_Legbourn.pdf

⁸ <http://www.e-lindsey.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=1635&p=0>

⁹ <http://www.e-lindsey.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=6917&p=0>

¹⁰ https://www.e-lindsey.gov.uk/media/4743/CD17-SHLAA-Report-2016/pdf/CD17_SHLAA_Report_2016.pdf

- 5.1.7. To add accuracy and greater sophistication to this test, a second test directly structured around the Neighbourhood Plan’s Vision and Objectives has been developed by the Steering Group. A total of seven weighted criteria have been selected and each site has been assessed against them, as explained in detail in the Housing Site Assessment Methodology document. This further test confirmed the list and ranking of the Sustainability Appraisal Assessment of sites, with three relevant exceptions.
- 5.1.8. Potential sites have been submitted to Lincolnshire Highways, requesting their comments in term of access, transport impact, and impact on the Conservation Area before consulting the community. The comments of the Officers have been taken into consideration for the selection of sites and the identification of development considerations and requirements, and have been incorporated in the “Summary of Development Considerations and Requirements” of each site (see Table of Allocated Sites in the Policy).
- 5.1.9. For each site, a Site Pro-forma was prepared: each site Pro-forma details general information of the site (address, area, reference code, location map), a proposed density based on information given to the Steering Group by the Local Authority and presented in the Alford Character Assessment, the scoring of the site according to the two suitability test methodologies, deliverability considerations, and a series of recommendations in term of development of the site. Site Pro-formas of allocated sites form part of the evidence base of Policy 1, and are collected in the Site Pro-forma Document.
- 5.1.10. On the 7th July 2017, the Steering Group organised a drop-in event, presenting the methodology employed for scoring the sites, the result of the scoring exercise and the complete list and map of proposed and discounted sites. Distinction between proposed and discounted sites was based on the scoring system. Through a questionnaire, attendees were asked to express their support or opposition for each proposed site, and to provide comments. Moreover, attendees were able to make comments on the discounted sites and on the overall methodology and scoring result. The event was well attended, with almost 100 people participating, and a total of 52 questionnaires returned. The questionnaire allowed the Steering Group to shortlist the most supported sites, to be allocated for residential development as part of Policy 1. The event also allowed the Steering Group to collect comments and suggestions for each of these sites, which have been included in the development considerations and requirements column of Table 5.1.1. The list of allocated sites has been amended following Regulation 14 Consultation in response to Statutory and non-statutory consultees’ comments.
- 5.1.11. In terms of density, the following methodology has been:
- Indicatively 25 dwellings per hectare for sites within the main body of the development.
 - Indicatively 20 dwelling per hectare for sites at the edge of the development (except in case of site wholly allocated for affordable use, i.e. ANP1).

- 5.1.12. Site ANP1 is currently owned by a Housing Association, and the landowner is committed to develop the totality or the majority of the site for affordable homes. Considering the need for affordable and social accommodation in Alford and across the District, a higher density is recommended for this site to maximise the opportunity of providing affordable and social homes.
- 5.1.13. These figures for density in different parts of the town have been identified by the Steering Group through a density assessment based on information given to the Steering Group by the Local Authority, and are in line with the current density of the town centre and contribute to maintaining the rural market town character of Alford, gradually reducing density at the edge of the development and creating a “soft boundary” between the rural and urban area. Such an approach has been ignored in the past in several developments to the south and west of the main body, with detrimental impact on the town character. The density is close to the assumptions of the document ‘Review and Update of the East Lindsey Economic Viability Assessment’¹¹, which analyses viability of schemes in the District.
- 5.1.14. Landowners of each site allocated within the plan were contacted to confirm the intention to develop the site within the first five years of the neighbourhood plan or 6 to 10 years after the start of this neighbourhood plan. After considering the conclusions of the Review and Update of the East Lindsey Economic Viability Assessment and noting that the majority of sites do not present major constraints, all allocated sites are considered viable and achievable.
- 5.1.15. The table in Policy 1 lists the allocated sites and gives an indication of the number of dwellings each site should deliver, including affordable housing numbers. For each site, a list of development principles specific to each site has been prepared. They include design and layout recommendations, possible contributions in term of public right of way and green space, particular provisions to protect and enhance historic buildings and the Conservation Area, etc.
- 5.1.16. Development considerations have been identified to ensure allocated sites are developed in a way that promotes the Neighbourhood Plan’s Vision and Objectives and that is consistent with other policies in the Plan. The housing figures and development considerations give an indication on the way the site should be developed, and should be considered in planning applications (e.g. providing justification and evidence in case of non-commitment) as well as in the development management process. Such recommendations are re-stated in the Site-Proforma Document. Planning applications for allocated sites will also be

¹¹ <http://www.e-lindsey.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=4684&p=0>

required to comply with all other policies of this Plan and with the indications of the Alford Character Assessment and the Alford Conservation Area Appraisal.

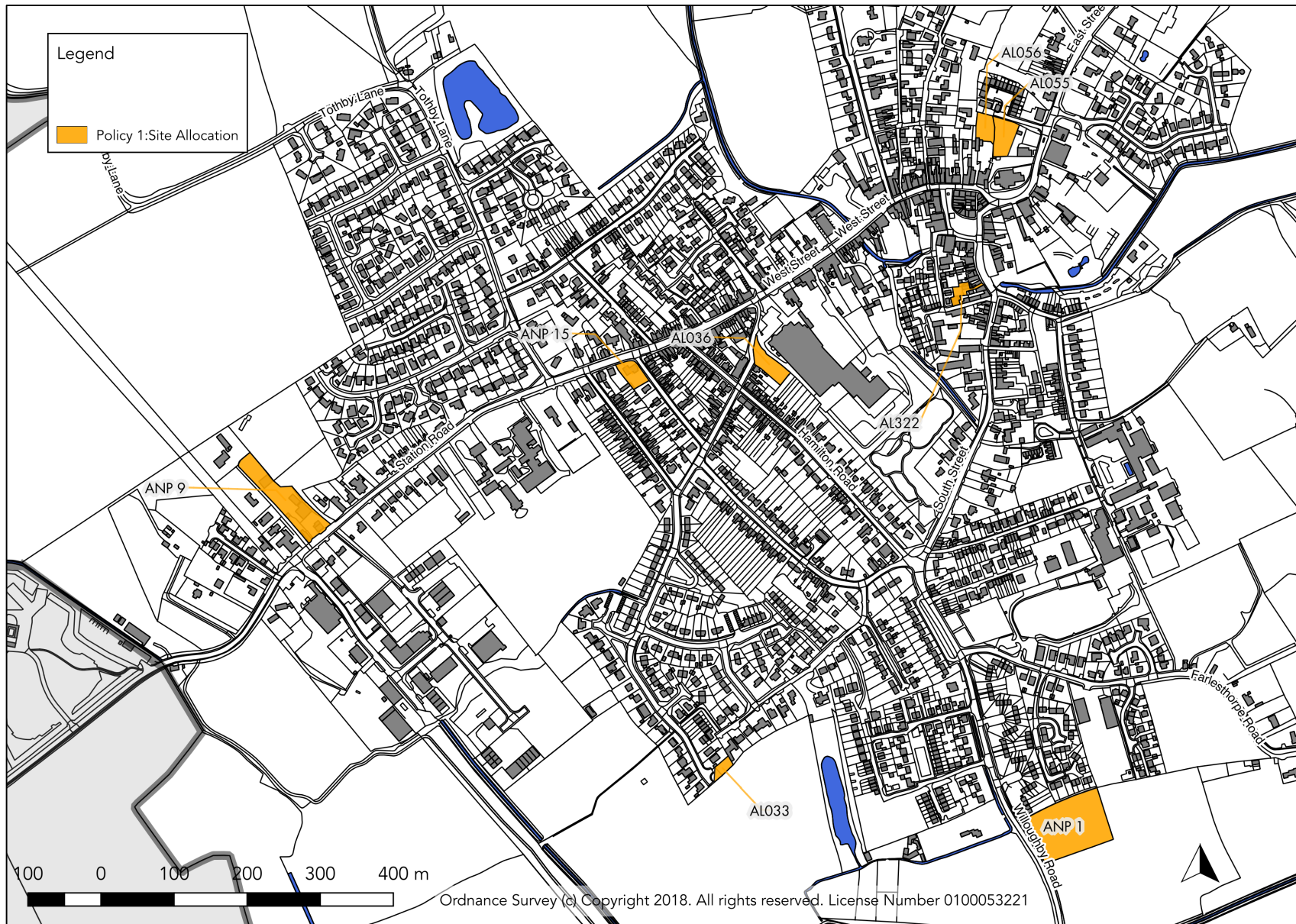
POLICY 1 SITE ALLOCATION

- 1) This plan allocates 43 dwellings on sites set out in the Policy Map 1 – site allocations. This will deliver between 2017 – 2031 approximately 3 houses a year. Proposal for residential development of the sites listed in the Table below and identified on Policy Map 1 will be supported provided that:
 - a) the proposal enables the number of dwellings (including, where applicable, the number of affordable dwellings) allocated to the particular site to be achieved, as detailed in the Table below; and,
 - b) the proposal addresses development requirements set out for each site, as detailed in the Site Pro-forma Document and summarised in the Table below, addresses the principles of Policy 10, the Alford Character Assessment, the Alford Conservation Area Appraisal (where applicable), and in general delivers all adequate infrastructure to serve the development (including safe and convenient walking and cycling routes, road access, sewerage and drainage, and education, health & social provision).
- 2) Site ANP1 is allocated for affordable houses. Proposals for residential development of this site will be supported provided that the totality or majority of the development delivers affordable housing.

Code	Name and Location	Summary of Development Considerations and Requirements	Number of Dwellings (including affordable houses)	Number of Affordable houses
AL033	Plot next to 139 Chantry Rd	Development should complement and be consistent with the character of this part of the Town.	1	0

ANP 15	Old Boys' School House, West Street	Development should protect and enhance the historic quality of the Landmark Building on the site. Appropriate measures to manage surface flooding (SUDS) should be delivered as part of the development.	2	0
AL036	Adjacent 9 Chantry Rd	The owner of the adjacent commercial site has indicated that he might consider aiding any access to this site. In the eventuality that the nearby industrial site (owned by Safelincs) is developed for residential purposes before this site is, development proposals should complement and be consistent with the design style of the nearby development.	3	0
ANP9	Hunts Depot	There is an existing groundwater extraction site (Alford Water supply works) in Anglian Water's ownership located adjacent to the above site. Development should ensure that it does not prejudice the continued operation of this site. Proposals should also not include soakaways on this site given the potential risk of pollution to the existing water source.	11	0
ANP1	Waterloo Homes, Willoughby Road	This site is allocated for affordable houses, and the totality or majority of the residential development on the site should be for affordable and social housing. Considering the demand for affordable housing locally, the density of development on the site could be higher than the expected density for this part of the Town. The existing hedge would need to be trimmed back to ensure that the required visibility could be met.	20	20

AL056	Rear of George public house	This site is in close proximity to Saint's Wilfrid Church and within Conservation Area. Development will thus need to disclose high quality design features to enhance the Conservation Area, as well as high quality landscaping solutions to screen the development and avoid spoiling the view of the church. Access via St Wifrid's Close is essential for it to be adequate and footway links will need to be provided as part of the development.	2	0
AL322	Off South Market Place & Carr Lane	Development should complement and be consistent with the character of this part of the Town.	1	0
AL055	Behind and to side off Church Hall	This site is in close proximity to Saint's Wilfrid Church and within the Conservation Area. Development will thus need to disclose high quality design features to enhance the Conservation Area, as well as high quality landscaping solutions to screen the development and avoid spoiling the view of the church. Footway links will need to be provided as part of the development.	3	0



Policy Map 1. Site Allocations

5.2. POLICY 2: LOCAL CONNECTION CRITERIA

OBJECTIVES

- To meet local housing need in terms of quantity, quality and mix.
- Support a level of statutory and community services appropriate to the development and population needs of the town

- 5.2.1. Alford is considered one of the most deprived LSOA in Lincolnshire and in East Lindsey, particularly if ranked by Income and Employment Domains (based on the Index of Deprivation 2015 Explorer¹²). This is reflected in a high percentage of residents claiming benefit, either because they are unemployed or on low wages, and explains the relevant proportion of Alford residents living in socially rented accommodation.
- 5.2.2. This Plan supports the development of affordable houses through both site allocation and a windfall policy: it aims to address local issues connected with housing affordability and to ensure local residents' housing needs are fulfilled. To ensure local needs are addressed, Policy 2 of this Neighbourhood Plan requires all development delivering affordable houses to allocate units according to a local connection criteria as part of the S106 Agreement in securing planning permission.
- 5.2.3. The priority criteria of policy 2 complies with the priority criteria presented in annex 1 of ELDC's Core Strategy Submissions Modifications Draft February 2016 – 2031, identifying the Town of Alford as the main area and the following adjacent Parishes: Bilsby and Farlesthorne, Beesby with Saleby, Aby with Greenfield, Rigsby with Aliby, and Well.
- 5.2.4. The highest priority is given to people who meet the requirements of Criteria 1.i., followed by people who meet the requirements of criteria 1.ii., 1.iii., and 1.iv. If all the properties cannot be allocated from i – iv (in order) in Criteria 1, nominations will be sought in accordance with Criteria 2 i-iv (in order) and so on.

¹² <http://dclgapps.communities.gov.uk/imd/idmap.html>

POLICY 2: LOCAL CONNECTION CRITERIA

All new affordable houses delivered in the Town will be allocated based on the following cascade local connection criteria

1) Place of Development (5 years or more):

- i) was born in the Town of Alford and lived there for 5 years or more; or
- ii) has permanently resided for 5 years or more in the Town of Alford; or
- iii) used to permanently live in the Town of Alford for 5 years or more but has been forced to move away because of the lack of affordable housing; or
- iv) has been permanently employed in the Town of Alford for 5 years or more.

2) Adjacent parishes of Bilsby and Farlethorpe, Beesby with Saleby, Aby with Greenfield, Rigsby with Aliby, and Well (5 years or more):

- i) was born in one of the above mentioned Parishes and lived there for 5 years or more; or
- ii) has permanently resided for 5 years or more in one of the above mentioned Parishes; or
- iii) used to permanently live in one of the above mentioned Parishes for 5 years or more but has been forced to move away because of the lack of affordable housing; or
- iv) has been permanently employed in one of the above mentioned Parishes for 5 years or more.

3) Place of Development (less than 5 years):

- i) was born in the Town of Alford and lived there for less than 5 years; or
- ii) has permanently resided for less than 5 years in the Town of Alford; or
- iii) used to permanently live in the Town of Alford for less than 5 years but has been forced to move away because of the lack of affordable housing; or

- iv) has been permanently employed in the Town of Alford for less than 5 years.
- v) need to reside in the Town of Alford to give or receive family care and support.

4) Adjacent Parishes of Bilbsby and Farlesthorpe, Beesby with Saleby, Aby with Greenfield, Rigsby with Aliby, and Well (less than 5 years):

- i) was born in one of the above mentioned Parishes and lived there for less than 5 years; or
- ii) has permanently resided for less than 5 years in one of the above mentioned Parishes; or
- iii) used to permanently live in one of the above mentioned Parishes for less than 5 years but has been forced to move away because of the lack of affordable housing; or
- iv) has been permanently employed in one of the above mentioned Parishes for less than 5 years.

5) District of East Lindsey (5 years or more):

- i) was born elsewhere in the District and lived there for 5 years or more; or
- ii) has permanently resided for 5 years or more elsewhere in the District; or
- iii) used to permanently live in the District for 5 years or more but has been forced to move away because of the lack of affordable housing; or
- iv) has been permanently employed in the District for 5 years or more years;

6) District of East Lindsey (less than 5 years):

- i) was born elsewhere in the District and lived there for less than 5 years; or
- ii) has permanently resided for less than 5 years elsewhere in the District; or
- iii) used to permanently live elsewhere in the District for less than 5 years but has been forced to move away because of the lack of affordable housing; or
- iv) has been permanently employed elsewhere in the District for less than 5 years.

7) Housing Register

- i) Anyone on the housing register

5.3. POLICY 3: RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

OBJECTIVES

- To meet local housing need in terms of quantity, quality and mix.
- To make efficient use of previously developed land and buildings.
- To minimise the environmental impacts of travel.
- To maintain Alford's distinctive character.
- To make efficient use of previously developed land and buildings.
- Support the viability and vitality of the Market Place and its immediate area, as a business & tourism hub.

- 5.3.1. Windfall sites are defined in the NPPF as “sites which have not been specifically identified as available in the Plan process. They normally comprise previously-developed sites that have unexpectedly become available”.
- 5.3.2. According to the ELDC Core Strategy, windfall development represents an important share of the District's total housing growth, up to 50%. At the same time, one of the aims of the Core Strategy is to be less reliant on this form of development and ensure that windfall sites come forward in suitable locations, thus contributing to the sustainable development of the wider settlement. This Neighbourhood Plan recognises the role of windfall development in ensuring the growth of Alford and makes provisions for the promotion of such sites in line with the Vision and Objectives.
- 5.3.3. The Policy aims to define what is **spatially appropriate**, according to Section 5 of the “Strategic Policy 3 (SP3) – Housing Growth and the Location of Inland Growth”. Policy Map 2 shows in red the boundaries of the main development body, which follows the curtilage of existing building in the town: the map is aimed to help in assessing sites which are wholly within or adjoining the main body.
- 5.3.4. Alford's character is deeply connected with its historic and socio-economic status as a market town, developed around the main Market Place. However, already by the mid 1990's, new developments had stretched the boundary of the town westward, creating a physical imbalance in the town around its centre and promoting sites that are out of character and not within walking distance from the Town Centre. The East Lindsey Adopted Local Plan 1995 acknowledged this problem and tried to redress it, but instead this problem has been further exacerbated by development southward, in equal distance from the Market Place.

- 5.3.5. According to the consultation exercise carried out in July 2015, almost 70% of the respondents are in favour of integrating new housing into Alford, but at the same time want to avoid the creation of ‘satellite’ communities remote from the town centre (62% of respondents), and reinforce the character and quality of Alford (90% of respondents).
- 5.3.6. To avoid further erosion of the character of the Town and its sense of community, to encourage the re-generation of certain locations in or close to the town centre and to redress the physical imbalance of the town, windfall sites will be considered spatially appropriate where they are within convenient walking distance, defined as 800 metres (approximately 10 minutes’ walk), from the Market Place (the central hub for most services and facilities in the town). The term walking distance is used directly in the NPPF (Paragraph 38), emphasising how “key facilities such as primary schools and local shops should be located within walking distance of most properties”. Although walking distance is not univocally defined, the Department of Transport define walking neighbourhoods as neighbourhoods that “are typically characterized as having a range of facilities within 10 minutes’ walking distance (around 800 metres)” (Building Sustainable Transport into New Developments: A Menu of Options for Growth Points and Eco-towns, 2008¹³, and Manual For Streets, 2007).
- 5.3.7. On top of ensuring development comes forward in suitable locations and contributes to maintaining the character of the settlement, Section 1 of Policy 3 promotes alternative and more sustainable means of transportation such as walking and cycling, as supported by over 80 % of respondents of the July 2015 Consultation. This Section is also in accordance with the NPPF’s Core Planning Principles (NPPF Paragraph 17), which states that planning should “manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling (...)”. The Section is also in line with the elements of the Justification Text of Strategic Policies SP22 and SP10 of the ELDC Core Strategy. Proximity to the Market Place will also contribute to protect and strengthen the socio-economic viability and vitality of Town Centre, a community objective (80% of respondents want the Plan to support the Market Place as a retail centre) and a goal of both the NPPF and Strategic Policy SP14 of the Core Strategy.
- 5.3.8. Windfall proposal will also have to demonstrate compliance with Policy 10: Heritage and Design, and that adequate infrastructure to serve the development is in place or easily accessible. Particularly problematic is the condition and efficacy of the town’s sewers. This is highlighted by local knowledge (as exemplified by 23 residents’ comments, collected through a Consultation exercise carried out in July 2013) and East Lindsey District Council’s draft Water Cycle Study (November 2014). Following consultation with Anglian Water, their following comments were noted:

¹³ <https://laqm.defra.gov.uk/documents/sustainabletransnew.pdf>

- “under no circumstances should surface water from new development be allowed to discharge into the foul system.” and
- “any proposal (for development) that would place a significant burden on the sewage system will be curtailed unless it includes sufficient funding to enable adequate upgrades (to the infrastructure), ... in order to avoid pollution of the water environment and accord with paragraph 156 of the National Planning Policy Framework.”

5.3.9. The Environment Agency, in response to consultation on this plan’s Scoping Report, mirrored the concerns of Anglian Water Services concluding:

- “that adequate infrastructure must be in place prior to development taking place in order to avoid pollution of the water environment and accord with paragraph 156 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).”

5.3.10. On top of the requirements set out in Section 1 of the Policy, windfall sites that present a number of additional features will be supported and encouraged, if they help fulfil the Vision and Objective of the Plan. Alford’s main body presents several brownfield sites, some of which are redundant buildings of community and historic value. To redevelop previously developed sites and, where possible and worthy, retrofit existing buildings will avoid further expansion into the open countryside and improve the appearance and character of Alford. During the Consultation Event carried out in 2015, residents supported the idea of prioritising brownfield development over greenfield. Support for the development of brownfield sites is thus emphasised in this Policy, in compliance with the NPPF’s Core Planning Principles as well as the Strategic Policy SP10 of the ELDC Core Strategy.

5.3.11. The need to rebalance the physical imbalance of the main body of the development has already been made clear and partially addressed through Section 1 of this Policy. In order to tackle this issue more directly, windfall developments will be encouraged in or adjoining the eastern part of the settlement; such development will help the town grow around and in close proximity to the Town Centre, making the Market Place again the centre of the settlement. Policy Diagram 3 gives an indication of what is considered as the eastern part of the settlement, the diagram is not meant as a zoning tool that sets hard boundaries around acceptable areas, but rather as a tool to help the Local Authority and developers to assess in which cases an application helps redress the physical imbalance of Alford.

5.3.12. Several residents in Alford lament a lack of pedestrian and cycling routes across the town, that would make walking and cycling quicker and safer. Developments that promote the improvement of existing routes, or facilitate the creation of new ones (especially those proposed as part of Policy 9) will be particularly supported.

5.3.13. Even though most windfall sites tend to be small scale, in the life of the plan it may be the case that larger developments come forward outside the allocated sites. Provided that the requirements in Section 1 of this Policy have been met, large scale

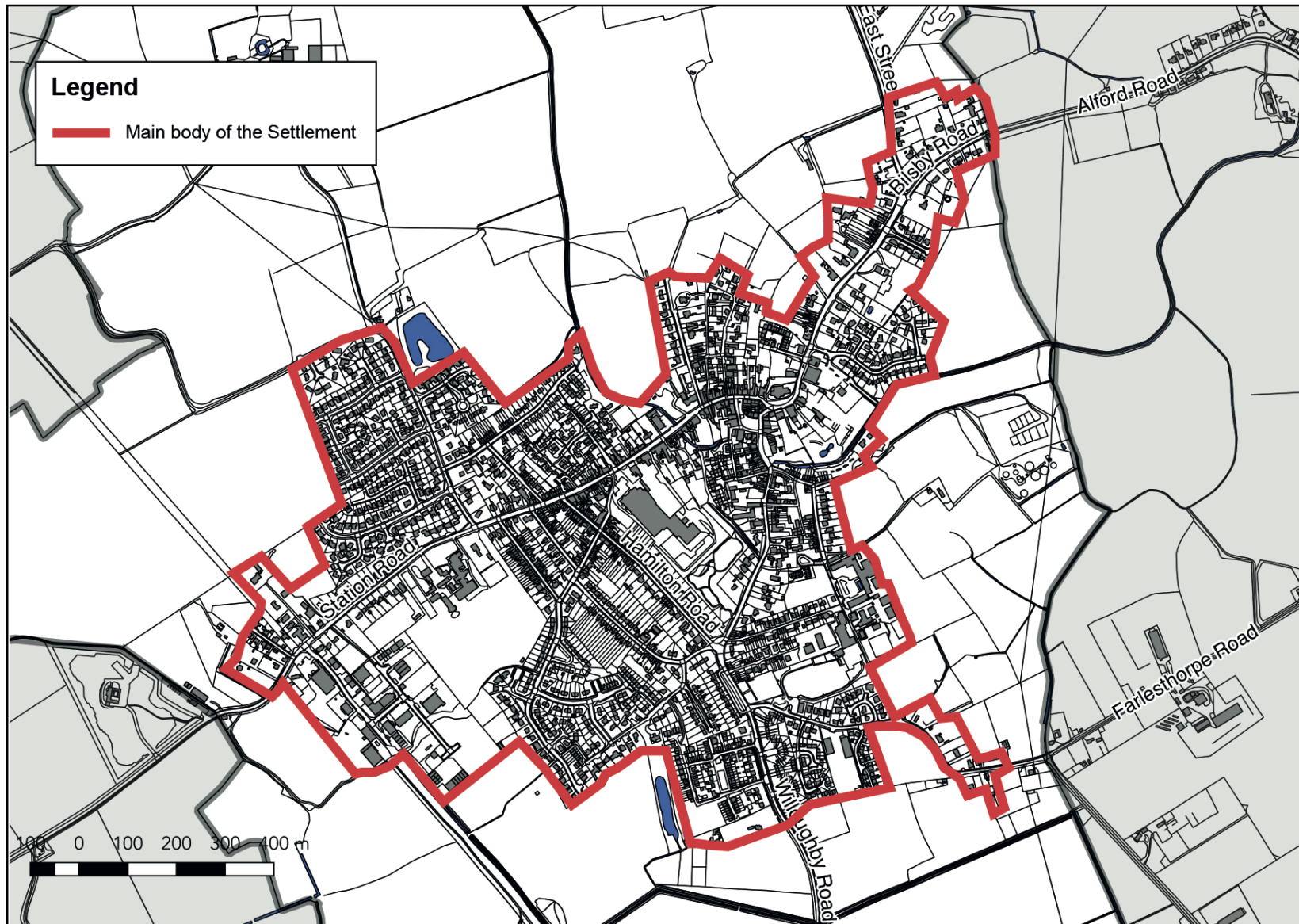
development [as defined by the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) i.e. 10 or more dwellings, or a site area of 0.5 ha when the no. of dwellings is not known, or building or buildings have a floor space of 1,000 square metres or more, will be asked to prepare a Development Brief and consult the community on it. It is believed that local residents have insightful information on sites within the town and on the potential impact of development, and an early discussion with Alford Town Council and the community would be beneficial for the developers and helpful for the District Council, producing schemes that have community support. The importance of pre-application consultation is also endorsed in paragraph 188 of the National Planning Policy Framework, and it is best practice for Local Planning Authorities to assist developers at the pre-application stage where this is requested. A variety of consultation exercises to involve the local community, such as web-based questionnaire, public events, charrettes, etc., can be implemented to demonstrate community involvement. Alford Town Council should be addressed directly, either through written communication or scheduling a meeting. Appendix B provides a list of materials that are advised to be included in a Development Brief, while Appendix C provides guidance on the elements to include in a Community Consultation Statement.

- 5.3.14. Where appropriate and achievable, ELDC should seek Section 106 Legal Agreement with developers to provide the necessary services to support an increased population, with particular regarding a Healthcare and Education Contribution.

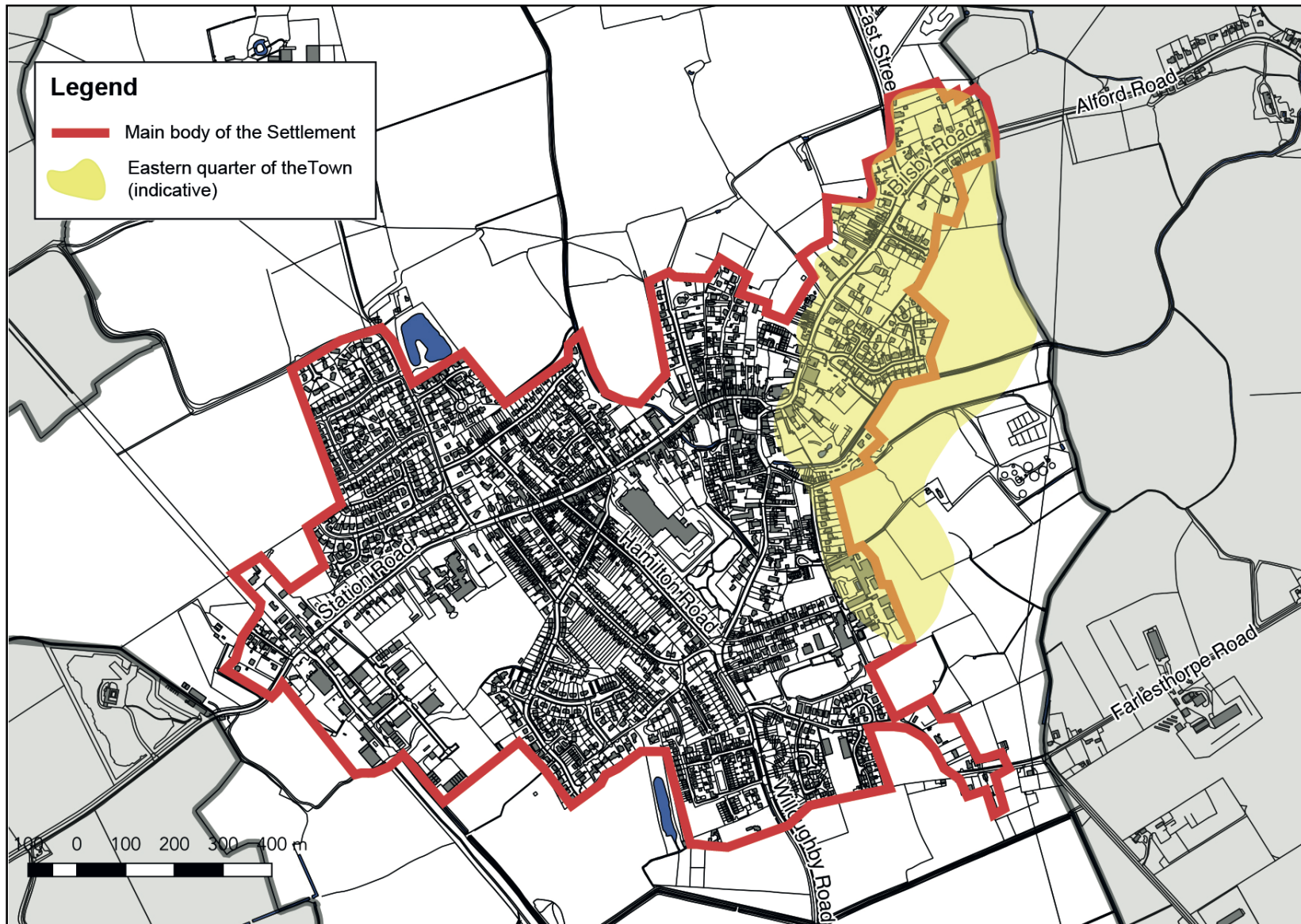
POLICY 3: RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

- 1) Residential development of sites other than those identified in Policy 1 will be supported, provided that the following criteria are satisfied:
 - a) the site is wholly within or adjoining the main body of the town, as defined on Policy Map 3; and
 - b) the density, layout, overall form and design proposed accord with Policy 10, the Alford Character Assessment and Conservation Area Appraisal; and
 - c) the site is within reasonable walking distance of the Town Centre³; and
 - d) there is adequate infrastructure to serve the development (including safe and convenient walking and cycling routes, road access, sewerage and drainage, and education, health and social provision).
 - e) The layout maximises opportunities to integrate development with the town as a whole through creating new connections and improving existing ones and allows for easy, direct movement to and from the town centre.
- 2) Developments that meet the requirements of Section 1, above, and comply with one or more of the following criteria will be encouraged:
 - a) The site is “brownfield”, according to the definition of the National Planning Policy Framework.
 - b) The site helps to redress the geographical imbalance of the main body of the settlement, in that it is within or adjoining the eastern quarter of the town. Policy Diagram 3 provide an indicative location of the quarter.
- 3) Proposals for development comprising 10 or more dwellings, or relating to sites of 0.5 hectares or larger when the number of dwellings is not known, or buildings with a floor space of 1,000 square metres or more, must be accompanied by:
 - a) a Development Brief, including the materials presented in Appendix B of this Neighbourhood Plan; and,
 - b) a Statement of Community Consultation following the guidelines presented in Appendix C of this Neighbourhood Plan.

³ Reasonable walking distance is defined as a maximum of approximately 800 metres (or 10 minutes) walk from the Market Place



Policy Map 3. Main Body of the Settlement



Policy Diagram 3. Main Body of the Settlement and Eastern Quarter of the Town (indicative).

5.4. POLICY 4: FLOOD RISK

OBJECTIVES

- To make efficient use of previously developed land and buildings
- To minimise the environmental impact of development
- To minimise the environmental impacts of travel
- Support the creation of employment opportunities

- 5.4.1. Flooding is a relevant issue in the Town, with 25% of residents lamenting garden flooding during major storms (The Alford Town Appraisal, 2008). The main threat of flooding to Alford originates from the Wold Grift Drain that flows south through the centre of the town and then eastwards towards the coast, as described in the East Lindsey Strategic Flood Assessment¹⁴. Surface water flooding is a major issue in some parts of the Town: 51% of the residents which had their garden flooded in 2007 indicated streets and impermeable surface run-off as the main cause. Policy Map 4 presents the areas of the town where the risk of surface water flooding is more likely, based on the Environment Agencies data.
- 5.4.2. Mitigation solutions upstream of the Wold Grift Drain, such as the identification of flood detention basins, high water canals, 'green rivers' etc., are welcomed and recommended to reduce the impact of flooding on the Town Centre and promote its development.
- 5.4.3. Flood Risk Zone 2 covers a relevant part of the Town Centre, thus one of the denser areas of the town, threatening not only existing dwellings but also undermining residential development of abandoned and derelict sites in the area, much needed to regenerate this portion of the town and promote the viability of the Town Centre. Three discounted sites identified in the call for sites (ANP6, ANP8, and ANP11) are perfect examples of this situation, as well as other former employment sites which are currently disused and

¹⁴ https://www.e-lindsey.gov.uk/media/4770/CD54-East-Lindsey-Strategic-Flood-Risk-Assessment-2017/pdf/CD54_East_Lindsey_Strategic_Flood_Risk_Assessment_2017.pdf

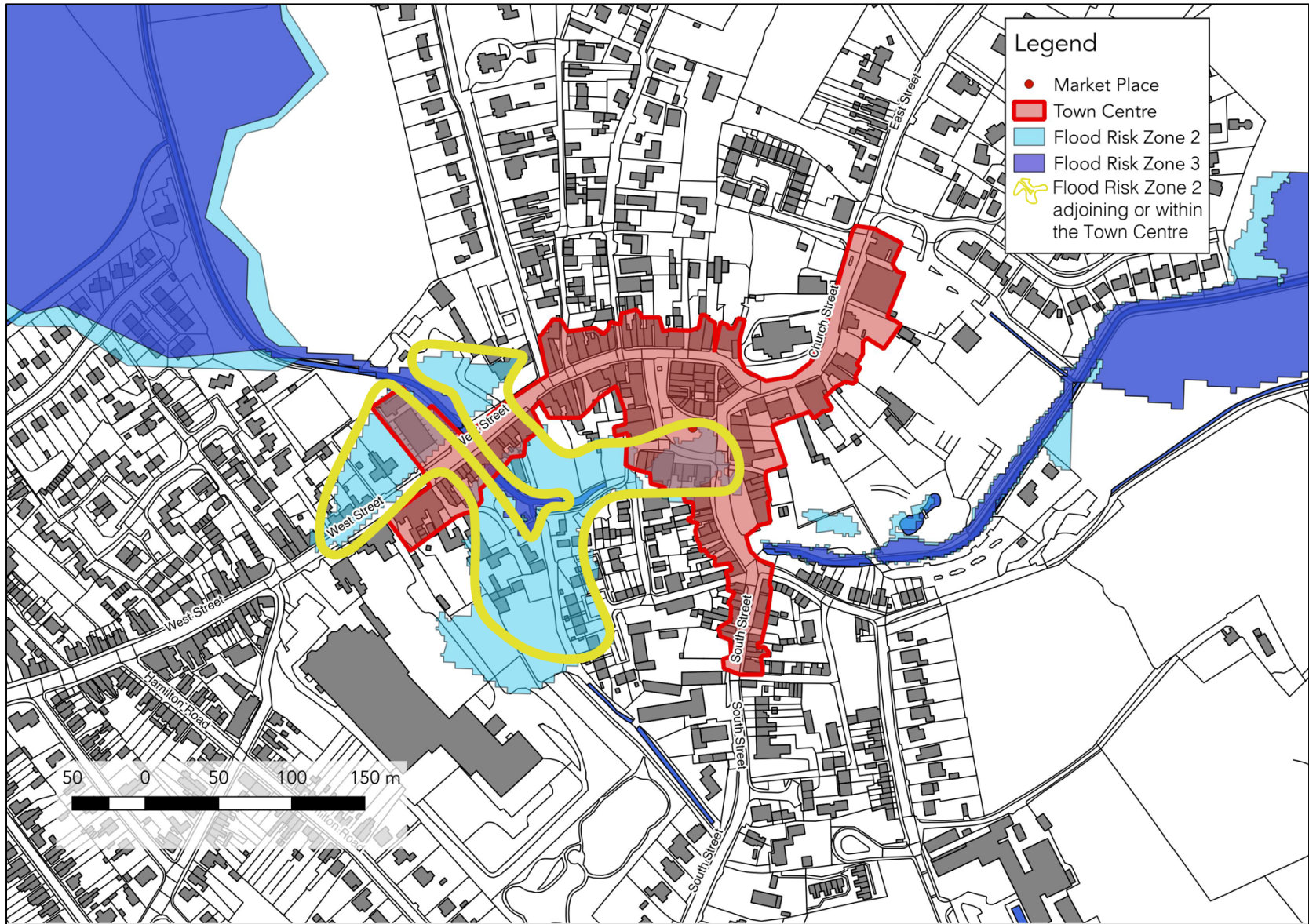
in need of regeneration. Paragraph 12 of the Justification Text of Policy SP16 of the ELDC Core Strategy recognises the importance “that these areas do not become blighted and cause amenity issues in settlements”.

- 5.4.4. Section 1 of Policy 3 implements the requirements of Policy SP16, and clarifies the area in Alford where it is particularly important to implement the policy to promote regeneration of Alford Town Centre. Development of brownfield sites in Flood Risk Zone 2 will be supported when it contributes to the revitalisation of the Town Centre, and where it demonstrates that the necessary Sustainable Urban Drainage solutions have been implemented and that the site is not viable for commercial, business and leisure use. To demonstrate unviability, the site must have been advertised for sale at an acceptable price for at least 12 months.
- 5.4.5. Policy Diagram 4 shows Flood Risk Zone 2 adjoining or within the Town Centre, where Section 1 of the Policy should apply. The diagram is not meant as a zoning tool that sets hard boundaries around acceptable areas, but rather as a tool to help the Local Authority and developers to assess in which cases Section 1 of the Policy applies to the application.
- 5.4.6. New development in Flood Risk zones 2 and 3, detached from the Town Centre, will need to demonstrate that it meets the requirement of the sequential test.
- 5.4.7. Any new development will need to demonstrate how it will not increase and exacerbate the risk of flooding from surface water (see Policy Map 4), ground water, foul water etc. Where new development is clearly at risk of flooding from these sources, or risks to disrupt the safe run-off of water, it will need to implement Sustainable Urban Drainage solutions and other design features such as green roofs and permeable surface treatments. Existing water features should be retained and incorporated into new drainage systems to maintain the aquatic biodiversity value of sites and to provide a local source of flora and fauna. These provisions implement the requirement of Policy SP16 and share the policy rationale in term of prevention of flood risk due to surface water and other sources.

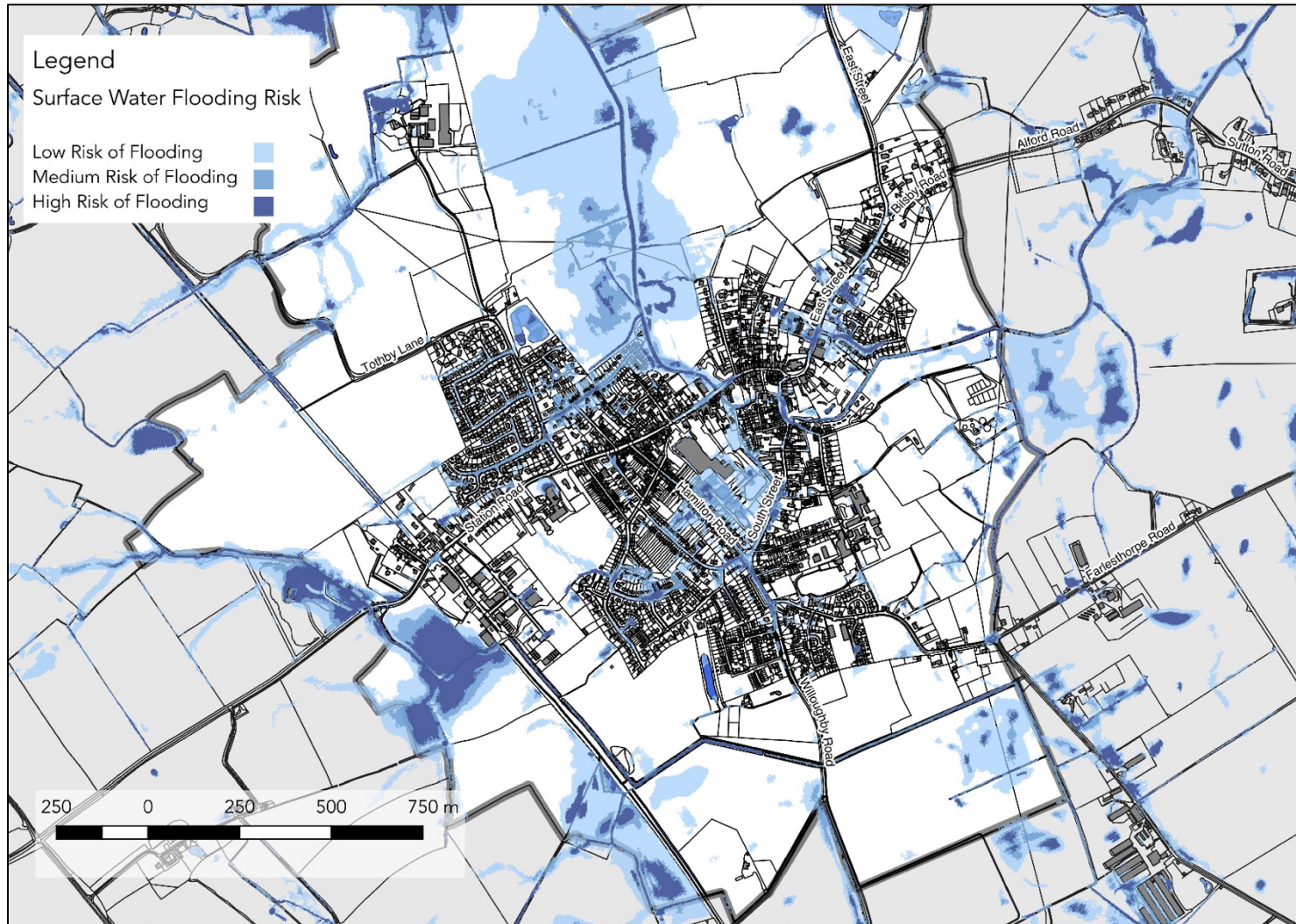
POLICY 4: FLOOD RISK

- 1) Development in Flood Risk Zone 2 and within or at the edge of the Town Centre boundary will be supported provided:
 - a) The site is “brownfield”, according to the definition of the National Planning Policy Framework; and,
 - b) It incorporates adequate flood mitigation measures in its design; and,
 - c) if residential development is proposed, the site has been actively marketed for a business, leisure or commercial use for a minimum of 12 months, without success.

Policy Diagram 4 provides an indicative location for such areas.
- 2) Development in other areas known to be at risk from flooding (Zones 2 and 3, as identified in the relevant Environment Agency Flood Risk Maps) will only be supported if:
 - a) the requirements of the relevant sequential and exception tests have been met; and,
 - b) a flood risk assessment carried out in accordance with the expectations of the NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance has demonstrated that:
 - i) the development proposed will not lead to increased surface-water run-off beyond the site; and,
 - ii) the development will be designed to minimise predicted water discharge using the best-available design solutions; and,
 - iii) any loss of an open water course will not exacerbate existing land drainage and sewerage problems; and,
 - iv) flood attenuation features, where required, will positively enhance biodiversity and the public realm.
- 3) Development will need to demonstrate it will not have a detrimental impact on surface water flow routes or ordinary watercourses, and will not increase the risk of flooding from surface water or other sources. The implementation of Sustainable Urban Drainage System and other appropriate design features would be the preferred method of surface water disposal and will be required as part of the development where feasible. Surface water discharge to public sewerage network should be considered as a last resort, after having demonstrated that alternatives methods of surface water disposal are not feasible.



Policy Diagram 4: Flood Risk Zone 2 Adjoining the Town Centre.



Policy Map 4 Surface Water Flood Risk Map

5.5. POLICY 5: TOWN CENTRE VITALITY AND VIABILITY

OBJECTIVES

- Support the provision of retail outlets necessary and beneficial for the community.
- Support the creation of employment opportunities.
- Promote clear connections between local consumption & production.
- Support the viability and vitality of the Market Place and its immediate area, as a business & tourism hub
- Support a level of statutory and community services appropriate to the development and population needs of the town.
- Support provision of an appropriate level of utility services relevant to the town's needs.

- 5.5.1. Sustaining a vibrant and active Town Centre is central to maintaining the character of Alford as a modern Market Town. Creation of employment opportunities, promotion of retail outlets and regeneration of the Market Place were mentioned as key objectives by almost 90% of the 2015 Consultation respondents, and previous consultations highlighted the need to address the negative impact of shop vacancy. Although it is such an important aspect of the character of the town, Alford Town Centre experiences the same difficulties many inland towns in East Lindsey are facing, losing not only expenditure to larger centres like Lincoln, Boston and Grimsby, but also regional centres such as Louth and Skegness. The town is characterised by fewer shops and a fluctuating vacancy level. Revitalising it is one of the main objectives of this Neighbourhood Plan, in line with paragraph 23 of the NPPF.
- 5.5.2. The Town Centre of Alford has its natural centre in the Market Place and on from there it expands following the four medieval streets (West Street, High Street, Church Street, and South Street). The Town Centre boundary follows the curtilage of buildings that have their frontage directly on one of these streets. Several of these buildings host shops, retail uses and other commercial activities on the ground floor.
- 5.5.3. Whilst it is hoped that more retail outlets will again populate this area, there is clearly a need to be more inventive if the town centre, and in particular the Market Place, is to once again become the hub of Alford life. It is believed that greater flexibility of uses needs to be encouraged, with a different mix of both retail and service businesses (e.g. cafes) in this location. This is also justified by the results of the 2015 consultation, which not only emphasise the need for retail but also for the provision of a wider array of community services. The development of the Library into Alford's Focal Point is a welcome innovation that will need support.

- 5.5.4. Considering this element and the rather compact dimensions of the Town Centre, it is believed that there are neither the conditions nor the need to perform a differentiation between Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages, and instead to differentiate ground floor uses and upper floor uses within the Town Centre.
- 5.5.5. As a result, to promote flexibility and ensure a mix of uses is achieved, a range of uses as listed in Section 3 will be permitted in ground floor locations within the Town Centre. To preserve the existing ground floor shopping and premises, in case of proposed change of use for shops or premises in one of the class uses listed in Section 3, the applicant will need to demonstrate that the shop or premise cannot be viably continued in its current use or in any of the other listed uses. The applicant will thus be required to show that there is no demand for the unit through re-let or resale. Regarding above the ground premises, to revitalise the Town Centre as a place in which to work, shop and live, a wider range of uses is permitted, including office use B1 and residential use C3.
- 5.5.6. In compliance with paragraph 24 of the NPPF and Section 4 of SP14 of the Core Strategy, proposals for “town centre uses” (Listed in Section 3) outside of the Town Centre will have to pass a sequential test, demonstrating that:
- no suitable location within the town centre is available.
 - in case no suitable location within the town centre is available, no edge of the centre location is available, defined as 300 meters from the Market Place.
- 5.5.7. The NPPF defines edge of the centre “for retail purposes, a location that is well connected and up to 300 metres of the primary shopping area”. As explained in paragraph 5.4.5., a differentiation between Primary and Secondary Shopping Centre is considered very complicated in the town context; moreover, considering the dimensions of the town, 300 meters from the Town Centre Boundary would include a disproportionate area of the town, exacerbating the isolation of the Market Place and the physical imbalance of the town. To address this issue, for the sake of this plan the edge of the centre is defined 300 meters from the Market Place; taking the Market Place as the centre of the town ensures that the sequential test will redress the above mentioned problems, rather than worsening them. This definition is in line with the NPPF definition of edge of the centre, which requires taking into account local circumstances.
- 5.5.8. Considering the limited space available in and at the edge of the Town Centre, those sites that can demonstrate the need of large open spaces for displaying and selling goods, such as garden centres, will be excepted from the sequential test.
- 5.5.9. To promote local production and consumption, application for commercial premises will be permitted outside the Town Centre where they sell goods and items that have been produced on the premise or on adjoining land, such as farm shops.

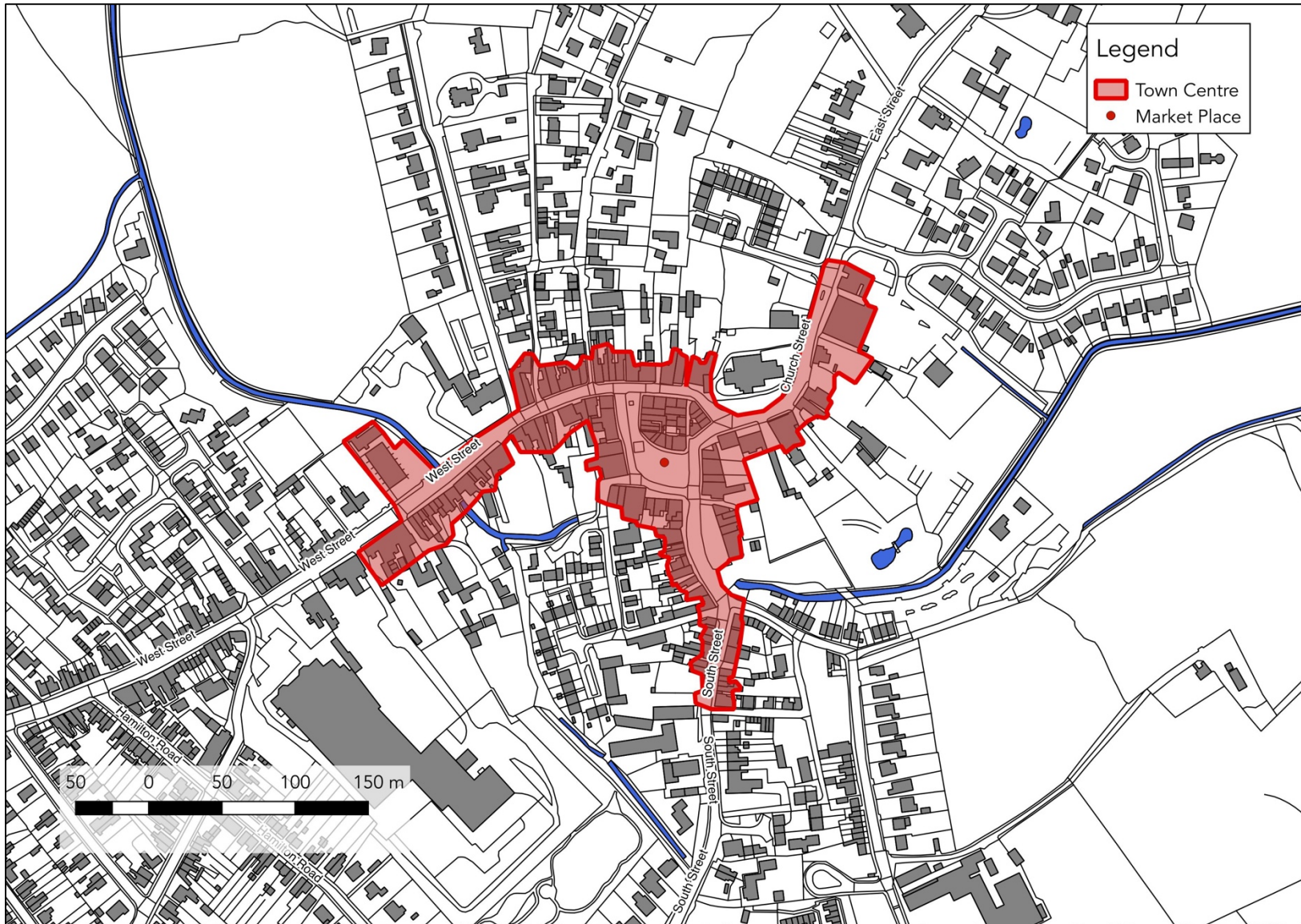
5.5.10. Finally, it is recognised that, even though a result of poorly planned development, some neighbourhoods in the town have grown quite some distance from the Town Centre, and that to a certain extent the immediate needs of people residing there should be satisfied within the neighbourhood. For this reason, applications for small scale shops outside the Town Centre will not be required to perform a sequential test, where applicants clearly show how the development will address the need of the residents in the immediate vicinity that cannot be satisfactorily addressed by shops in the Town Centre.

POLICY 5: TOWN CENTRE VITALITY AND VIABILITY

- 1) The Town Centre is delineated on Policy Map 5 and comprises the eastern part of West Street, Market Place, High Street, Church Street, and South Market Place.
- 2) Development proposals that will support and / or enhance the vitality and viability of the Town Centre as Alford's main shopping location and meeting place will be encouraged and supported. In all cases, the proposal must demonstrate how the proposed use will not result in an unacceptable impact on the amenities that nearby residents and occupiers of neighbouring premises may reasonably expect to enjoy, for example as a result of noise, odour and other disturbances.
- 3) The following uses of ground floor premises within the Town Centre will be supported:
 - a) shops (Use Class A1);
 - b) professional and financial services (Use Class A2);
 - c) restaurants and cafés (Use Class A3);
 - d) drinking establishments (Use Class A4);
 - e) hot food takeaways (Use Class A5);
 - f) non-residential institutions (Use Class D1);
 - g) assembly and leisure (Use Class D2).

In ground-floor premises in the Town Centre currently used for any of the purposes listed in Section 3, change of use into a class use other than those listed above will only be supported where it is shown that the premise cannot be viably used for any of the listed uses and that the proposed use will not compromise the vitality and viability of the Town Centre.
- 4) The following uses, which can contribute to the vitality and viability of the Town Centre will be supported where they use space above the ground floor of buildings within the Town Centre and where they use buildings that are located in places adjacent to the Town Centre:
 - a) shops (Use Class A1);
 - b) professional and financial services (Use Class A2);
 - c) restaurants and cafés (Use Class A3);

- d) drinking establishments (Use Class A4);
 - e) offices (within Use Class B1);
 - f) Hotels (Use Class C1);
 - g) Dwelling houses (Use Class C3)
 - h) non-residential institutions (Use Class D1);
 - i) assembly and leisure (Use Class D2).
- 5) In places other than the Town Centre, proposals for uses listed in Section 3 above will only be supported if:
- a) there is no suitable site or premises available within the Town Centre and the location proposed is on the edge of the Town Centre (considered as 300 m from the Market Place); or
 - b) It is demonstrated that there are no suitable sites available within or at the edge of to the Town Centre; or
 - c) the proposed development is:
 - i) of a type and scale appropriate for meeting local (rather than wider) needs within the particular part of the town where it is to be located; or
 - ii) for the sale of items or services produced on or adjacent to the same premises; or
 - iii) for the sale of items which require large open areas for storage and display (e.g. a garden centre);
- and, in all cases, the vitality and viability of the Town Centre will not be weakened as a result of the proposed development, either by itself or cumulatively.



Policy Map 5. Town Centre and Market Place.

5.6. POLICY 6: EMPLOYMENT

OBJECTIVES

- Support the creation of employment opportunities.

- 5.6.1. Residents lamented the shortage of employment opportunities in both the 2013 and 2015 public consultations, and strongly supported the Neighbourhood Plan's aim to promote Alford as a vibrant economic hub. Alford Town Council plans to achieve this not only through a Town Centre retail and tourism economy, but also through the provision of employment opportunities. The Town Council, where possible, will need to be pro-active in encouraging business into the town, with perhaps an emphasis on specialist, niche businesses, which are more likely to be successful.
- 5.6.2. According to Strategic Policy SP13, the East Lindsey Settlement Proposals-Submission Modifications Draft and in line with the recommendations of ELDC's "East Lindsey Employment Land Review" (2016)¹⁵, through the Neighbourhood Plan Alford is asked to allocate 1 hectare of land for industrial/commercial development. Unfortunately, availability for employment sites in the town is extremely limited, through a combination of shortage of suitable sites and landlords' intention not to develop land for employment uses.
- 5.6.3. Land at site EMP1, behind the Squash Club and Miller's Way, is allocated for employment use. Notwithstanding proximity to residential development and the risk to increase traffic in the eastern part of the town, the site is considered suitable for class uses B1 Business and B8 Storage and Distribution, and offers 0.5 hectares of much needed employment area. To minimise the risks connected with this development, proposals will need to demonstrate that operations will not cause unacceptable impact on the existing traffic, considering the status of the access roads, as well as off-site pollution of air and water, intrusive levels of noise or odour outside the site, or ground pollution. Considering the location, the site is thus adequate for a range of uses including offices,

¹⁵ https://www.e-lindsey.gov.uk/media/5801/CD41-Employment-Land-Review-2016/pdf/CD41_Employment_Land_Review_2016.pdf

research and development sites, storage and distribution centres that do not require the use of multi-axle lorries of other unacceptably large typologies of vehicles.

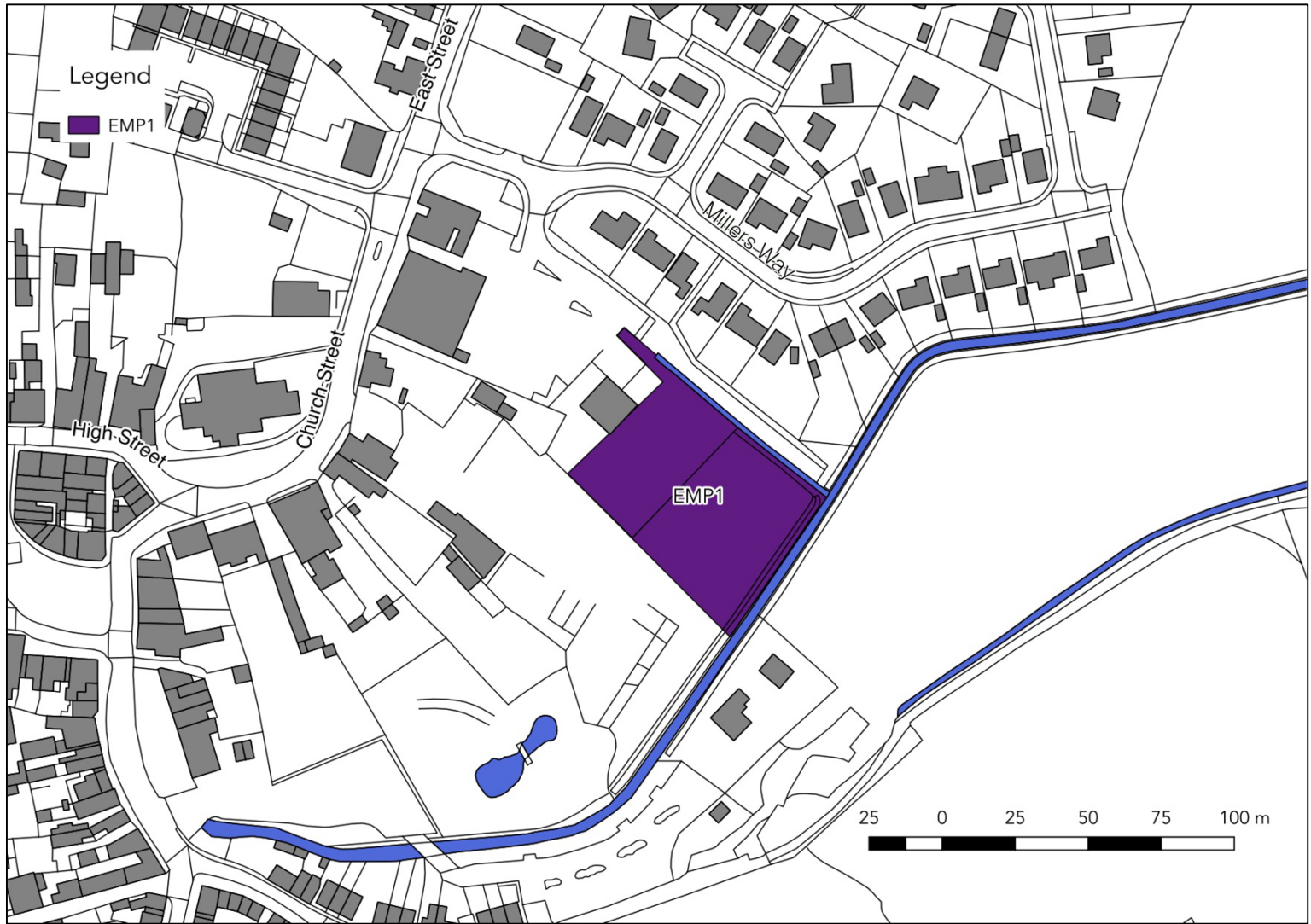
- 5.6.4. Even though not allocated as part of this Neighbourhood Plan, sites EMP2 and EMP3 have been identified as appropriate locations for the expansion of industrial/commercial land for the town. The sites are not currently available for employment allocation, however they would offer opportunities for new light industry, and fit with the need to keep industry and thus heavy goods and other associated vehicles to the west of the town, away from the town centre and nearest the A16. Even though applications for these sites will be considered in their own merit, this Neighbourhood Plan would support applications for employment-creating uses in these two locations.
- 5.6.5. Site EMP2, known locally as the Rabbit Farm, covers 1.80 hectares of land at the western edge of the town, in a good location for employment use. Considering the presence of residential development to the east of it (even though not directly adjacent), the class uses suggested for this site are restricted to B1 and B8, to reduce disturbance to residents. Lincolnshire County Highways Department have indicated that only minor adjustments to roadside signage and the height of a hedge would be required to ensure safe access here.
- 5.6.6. EMP3 would represent an extension of the existing industrial estate in Beechings Way. The land has been identified in the East Lindsey Employment Sites Review 2016, and it was previously allocated in the Adopted Local Plan 1995. As a potential employment site, its development for B1, B2 or B8 uses would be welcomed.
- 5.6.7. To protect the employment opportunities currently existing in Alford and thus the economic viability of the town, change of use for sites which are currently in employment use (class uses B1, B2 and B8) will not be supported, unless the change of use is permitted development, the site has been allocated as result of a different Policy in this Neighbourhood Plan, or it is demonstrated that the site cannot viably maintain or be resold in its current use. To demonstrate unavailability, developers will be asked to demonstrate that they have actively advertised the site on the market for employment use, at an acceptable price (in line with market price), for an acceptable period of time (12 months).

POLICY 6: EMPLOYMENT

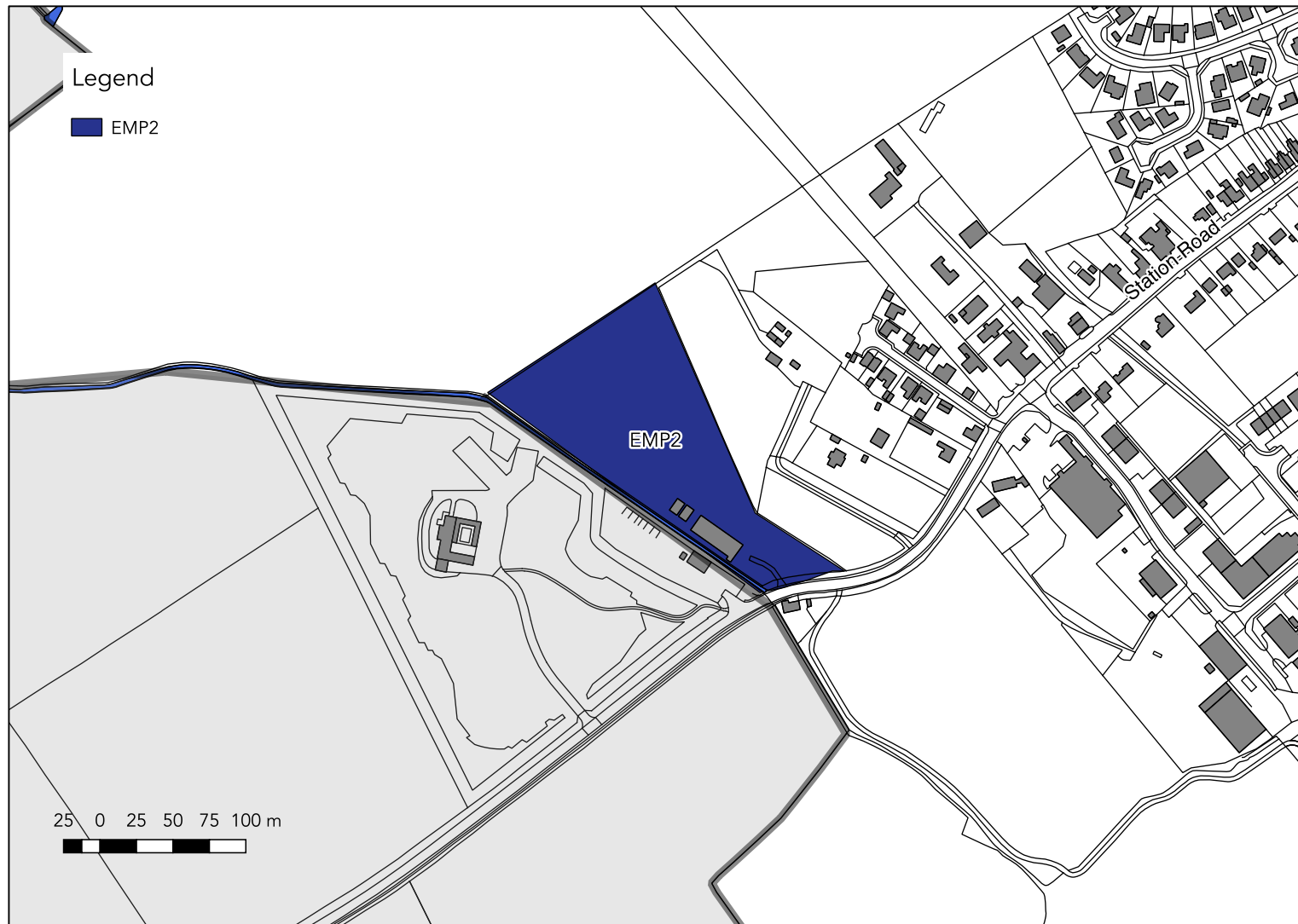
- 1) Land at site EMP1 (Land behind the Squash Club and Miller's Way), as shown on Policy Map 6.1, is allocated for employment-creating development within the following Use Classes:
 - a) B1 - Business, and
 - b) B8 - Storage or DistributionProposals for development within those Use Classes will be supported provided that such uses will be carried out in ways that:
 - i) Do not detract from the amenities which occupiers / users of neighbouring premises and land may reasonably expect to enjoy; and
 - ii) are consistent with the capacity of the roads serving the location; and
 - iii) do not cause off-site pollution of air and water, intrusive levels of noise or odour outside the site, or ground pollution.
- 2) Land at site EMP2, as shown in Policy Map 6.2, is identified as a site where the development for employment-creating uses within Use Class B1 and B8 will be supported.
- 3) Land at site EMP 3, as shown in Policy Map 6.3, is identified as a site where the development for employment-creating uses within Use Class B1, B2, and B8 will be supported on existing employment sites (subject to the provisions of Section 4 of this Policy).
- 4) The development or expansion of existing businesses and employment areas – including home working -, and particularly proposals that include increasing the density of these sites, will be supported, provided that such developments will not:
 - a) detract from the amenities which occupiers / users of neighbouring premises and land may reasonably expect to enjoy; or
 - b) harm the character of the area within which they are to be situated; or
 - c) cause unacceptable impact on traffic and accessibility in the surrounding area.
- 5) Proposals for the change of use or redevelopment of existing employment sites for purposes outside the Use Class(es) within which their current authorised use falls (or a Use Class to which a change is 'permitted development'), will not be supported unless:
 - a) the proposed development is consistent with the site's allocation within this Plan for an alternative use; or
 - b) in any other case, it is demonstrated that the site is no longer appropriate or viable for such use, and the alternative use proposed is consistent with the objectives and policies of this Plan.

EMP1	Land behind the Squash Club and Miller's Way	0.47 Hectares
EMP2	Rabbit Farm	1.80 Hectares
EMP3	Land on the back of the industrial estate in Beechings Ways	1.38 Hectares

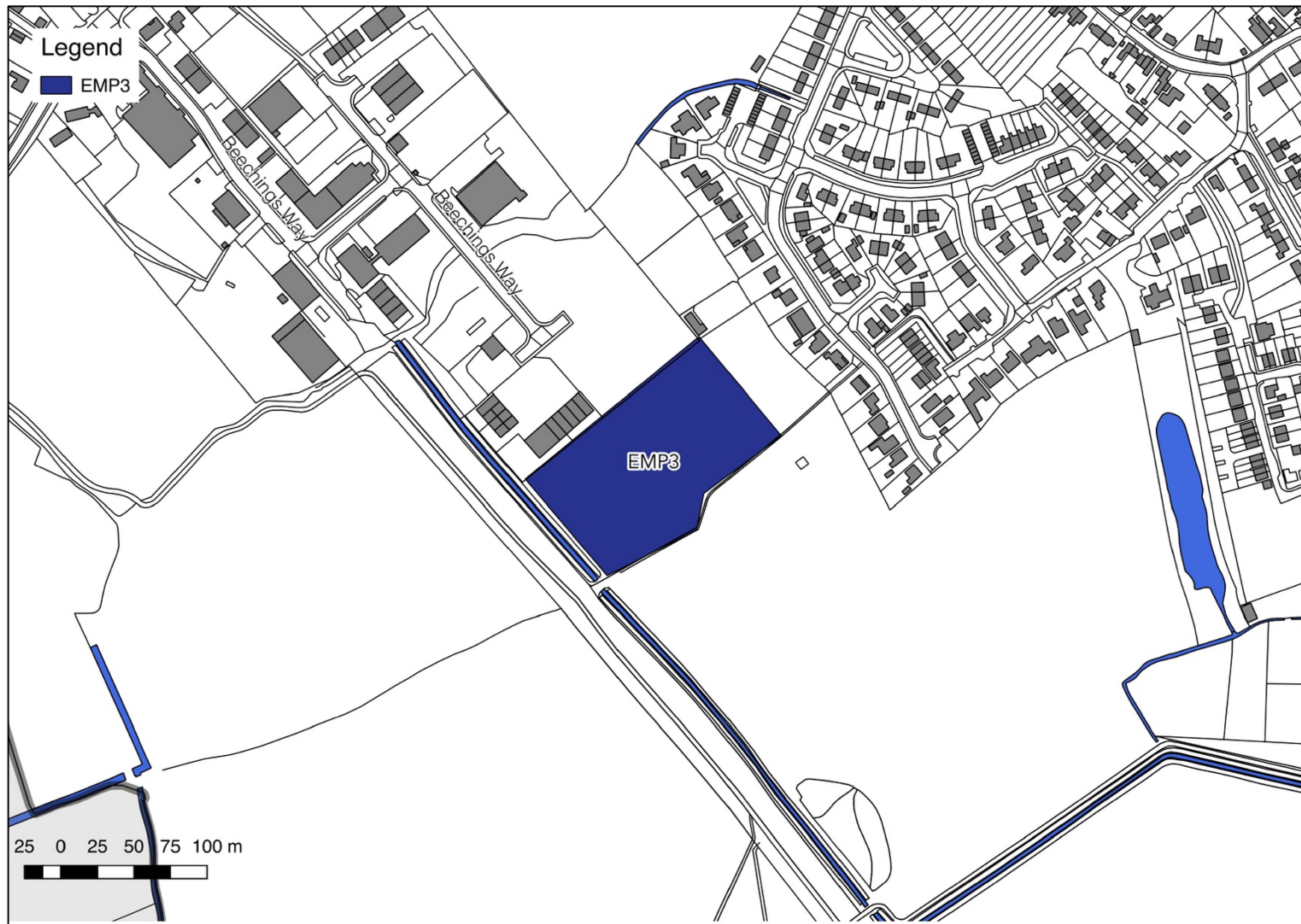
Table 5.6 Employment Site



Policy Map 6.1 EMP1 Land behind the Squash Club and Miller's Way



Policy Map 6.2 EMP2 Rabbit Farm



Policy Map 6.3 EMP3 Land on the back of the industrial estate in Beechings Ways

5.7. POLICY 7: LOCAL GREEN SPACE

OBJECTIVES

- Support opportunities for improved physical and leisure activity of Alford's residents.
- To reinforce the character and quality of Alford's environment
- To minimise the environmental impact of development
- To protect and enhance access to green infrastructure and biodiversity

- 5.7.1. According to the result of the Consultation carried out in July 2015, over 90% of the residents support the aim to protect and enhance green infrastructure, and 86% would like to see improvement in the existing public open spaces and the provision of additional ones. Notwithstanding the landscape value of the countryside surrounding the town, within the town green spaces are quite rare and not particularly extensive in nature, as highlighted by the ELDC's Green Infrastructure Audit. The only exception is represented by the Memorial Park, a highly valued recreational facility that provides much needed green amenity and walking connectivity across the town.
- 5.7.2. Currently, the town presents few other green areas that are locally important for their biodiversity, landscaping, and historic value, and that can also represent opportunities to improve the provision of green spaces for recreational and contemplative uses, connectivity, biodiversity protection, and even flood risk reduction.
- 5.7.3. The NPPF (paragraph 76 to 78) enables local communities, through Neighbourhood Plans, to identify for special protection, green areas of particular importance to them. By designating land as LGS local communities are able to rule out development other than in very special circumstances. The NPPF notes that LGS designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space and the designation should only be used where:
- the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
 - the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and

- the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.
- 5.7.4. Having regard to these criteria, it is considered that there are a number of green spaces both within and around the built up area of the town that meet this test and merit special designation and protection. These LGS's are defined on Policy Map 7. For each site, a specific assessment has been prepared, showing a map of the site, pictures of the green area, detail on ownership and dimension, and how the site meets the criteria of the NPPF and why it is special for the local community.
- 5.7.5. Within such areas the Plan seeks to protect their special qualities and new development is generally prohibited, in accordance with paragraph 78 and section 9 of the NPPF.

POLICY 7: LOCAL GREEN SPACE

- 1) The following sites, identified on the Policy Map 7 and in the Local Green Space Assessment in Appendix A of this Neighbourhood Plan, are designated as Local Green Spaces according to the definition in NPPF paragraph 76:
 - i. Bull Fair Field
 - ii. Fishing Lake & Sunken Garden
 - iii. Chaunty Close Highway Verge
 - iv. Old Cemetery
- 2) Applications for development that would adversely affect the function of a Local Green Spaces will not be permitted other than in very special circumstances as specified in the NPPF.



Policy Map 7. Local Green Spaces.

5.8. POLICY 8: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURES AND CONNECTIVITY

OBJECTIVES

- Support opportunities for improved physical and leisure activity of Alford’s residents.
- To reinforce the character and quality of Alford’s environment
- To minimise the environmental impact of development
- To protect and enhance access to green infrastructure and biodiversity

- 5.8.1. The positive impact green spaces and landscape have on physical and mental health and community wellbeing is incontrovertible, as demonstrated by several studies (e.g. DEFRA Evidence Statement in March 2017) and recognised in several publications and policies (e.g. Town & Country Planning Association: ‘Planning for a Healthy Environment’, The Policy Exchange: ‘Policies to Improve the UK’s Urban Green Spaces’ 2014, etc.).
- 5.8.2. The NPPF supports the creation of new, and improvement of existing, green infrastructures in order to deliver a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities, such as recreation, mental and physical wellbeing, connectivity, protection of biodiversity, flood risk alleviation, etc. Policy 8 adopts the definition of Green Infrastructure provided in the NPPF and is in line with the Framework approach of “planning positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure” (Paragraph 114). The Policy is also in line with Strategic Policy 25 of the ELDC Core Strategy, as well as SP 23 in regards to enhancing accessibility of the countryside.
- 5.8.3. This relationship is fully recognised by the Steering Group, which aims to use the plan to protect valuable natural resources (such as air, water, and, soil), create new green spaces for the benefit of people, improve the existing green infrastructure to promote physical activity and sustainable means of transportation. Expanding the existing pedestrian and walking connections within Alford and supporting opportunities for physical and leisure activities are objectives supported by the vast majority of respondents to the 2015 Consultation.
- 5.8.4. The town is surrounded by a network of footpaths and bridleways that almost circle it completely, which represent a valuable resource in term of physical activity and connection, offering the possibility of peaceful country walks for Alford’s residents and

visitors: according to the Alford Town Appraisal 2008, 64% of residents regularly use walking footpaths. The main problem in terms of green linkages rests in the shortage of routes leading from the Town Centre to this network (the only notable exception is at the end of Park Lane), as well as the lack of walking and cycling routes within the Town Centre. The “East Lindsey Green Infrastructure Study” (2013) states that Alford is seriously deficient in access to green infrastructure, for both biodiversity and accessibility green space, when compared to Natural England’s Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards.

- 5.8.5. As mentioned in the Justification Text of Policy 7, the town not only presents a limited number of green spaces, but also a limited number of green features in the public environment, such as verges, tree-lined streets, hedgerows etc. A Green Corridor Assessment, performed as part of this Neighbourhood Plan, concluded that no Primary Corridor (meaning a corridor of continuous adjacent green features) could be identified within the Town, and the few ‘Secondary Corridors’ (a corridor which has intermittent gaps across hard infrastructure) identified run on the edge of the main development body. The few Local Green spaces identified in Policy 7 are thus isolated green areas.
- 5.8.6. Policy 8 aims to ensure development not only does not exacerbate this situation, but helps to redress it by promoting existing and introducing new green spaces, green features and green infrastructure linkages.
- 5.8.7. Development proposals will need to demonstrate how they protect and maintain existing green spaces, green features (e.g. mature trees and hedgerows) and green infrastructure linkages. Where development is likely to have a negative impact on any of the above, it will be requested to present alternative solutions that avoid the loss or the damage to the green spaces or green infrastructure, or that replace the feature with a solution of equal value and purpose on-site. However, where the damage is unavoidable, developers will need to demonstrate that the general benefit of the development (in terms of, for instance, socio-economic benefits) justifies the impact on the green infrastructure, and to demonstrate what mitigation solutions they will implement on the site. In case mitigation solutions are not available or considered not sufficient, developers will be asked to present compensatory provision off-site, for instance contributing to the improvement or creation of other green infrastructure or green spaces.
- 5.8.8. Where landscaping and planting of trees, hedgerow and other planting is required, native species should be preferred over alien ones, to create natural habitats for native flora and fauna. Particular attention should be given to pollinators: this means selecting flowers and other species of plants that best provide food for pollinators, and design gardens and green features in a way that can provide nesting for bees and other pollinators, whilst respecting health and safety considerations. It is suggested that an expert’s advice should be sought to maximise the contribution of landscape for pollinators, and to follow the recommendations contained in the National Pollinator Strategy.

- 5.8.9. Where the scale and type of development allow for it, development proposals will be required to either contribute to the improvement of existing green infrastructure or the creation of new ones. Policy 8 incorporates the conclusions and recommendations of the Character Assessment, as well as presenting the proposed New Green Infrastructure Linkages in Policy Map 8. Further details of such intervention, as well as positive examples within the town are available in the Recommendations and Conclusion Section of the Alford Character Assessment.
- 5.8.10. In addition to the New Green Infrastructure Linkages proposed in Policy Map 8 and in the Character Assessment, it is recognised that Alford would benefit from an additional green space as public amenity.
- 5.8.11. Contributions will be secured through the addition of conditions to a planning application or, where the legal requirements are met, by a section 106 planning obligation. Even though the Steering Group recognises that not every development proposal, especially small ones, can feasibly deliver the contributions sought in the Policy, it still encourages developers and the Local Authority to explore opportunities to improve the provision of green infrastructure and consider the long-term benefits they provide in term of health quality and wellbeing.

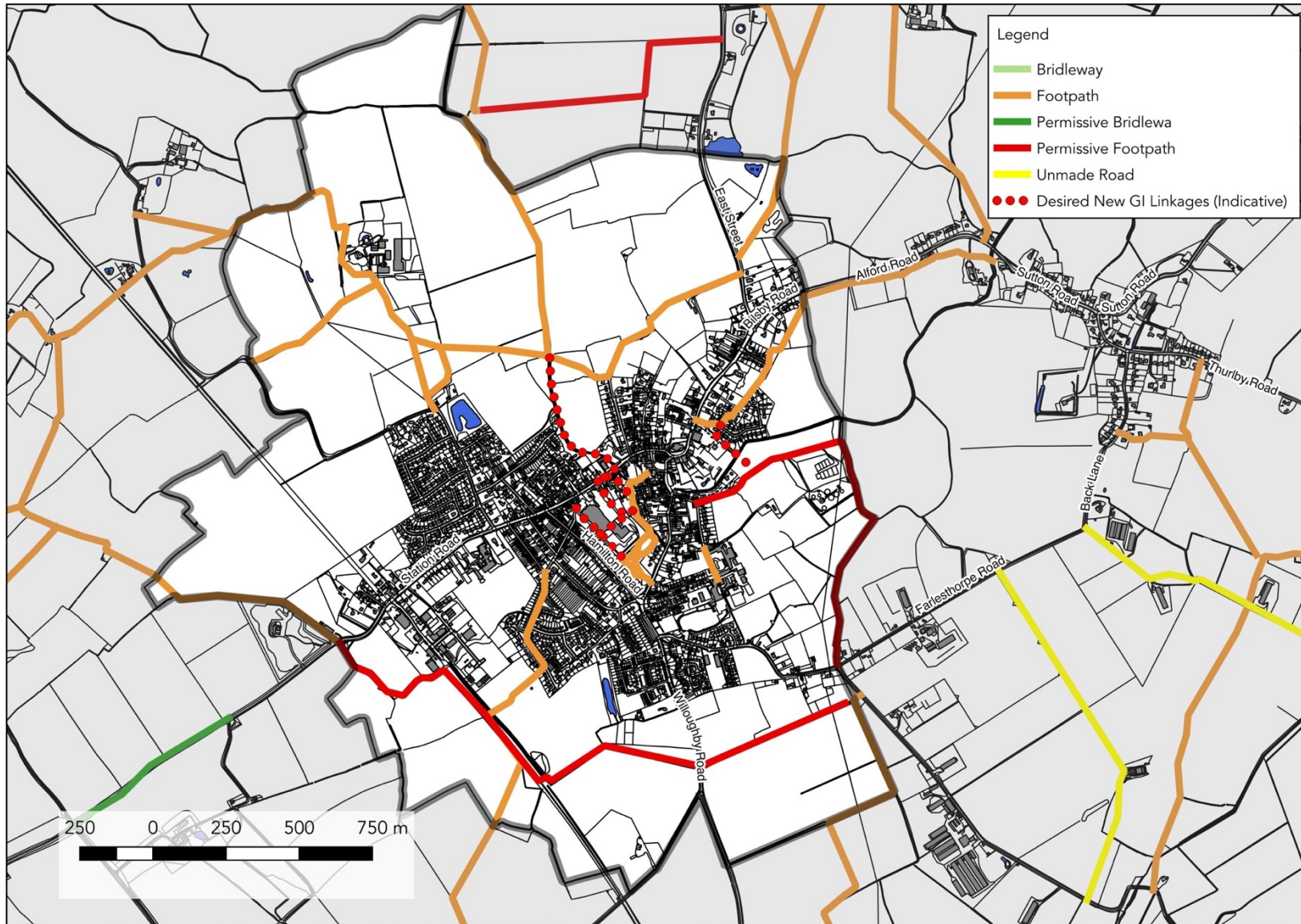
POLICY 8: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONNECTIVITY

- 1) Developments will be supported provided that, where appropriate, they:
 - a) contribute to the protection, management and enhancement of existing green spaces, mature trees and hedgerows, and green infrastructure networks, as presented on Policy Map 9, in accordance with Community Aspirations and the recommendations and conclusions of the Alford Character Assessment. In particular, the following will be sought:
 - i) Contributions to improve existing public rights of way in the form of landscaping, resurfacing, widening of boundaries between development curtilage and footpaths, and introduction of signs.
 - ii) contributions to retrofit existing public rights of way to allow cycling.
 - iii) contributions to improve the appearance of existing streets, footways and public spaces through landscaping solutions (introduction of grassed or flower verges, planting of tree lines, etc.) and additional street furniture.
 - b) Contribute to the planting of new native trees and hedgerows and to the provision of new public green spaces and green infrastructure linkages, where practicable. In particular:
 - i) Regarding new road and accesses, development should present tree-lined streets, verges (possibly with pollinator-friendly flowers) and hedgerows.
 - ii) Regarding new public rights of way, contributions to the realisation of the Desired New Green Infrastructure Linkages, as presented in Policy Map 8, will be sought.
 - iii) Regarding new green spaces, a combination of large public spaces and small pockets will be sought, according to the dimensions and characteristics of the development

The requirements of the National Pollination Policy should be taken into account when planning and implementing these contributions.

- 2) Developments that will detract from the purpose or function of existing green spaces and green infrastructure will not be supported, unless it is demonstrated that:
- a) the detrimental impact on the green spaces, mature trees and hedgerows, or green infrastructure network is unavoidable and significantly outweighed by the benefits of the development; and,
 - b) adequate and appropriate mitigation provision will be made within the development site. As a last resource, compensatory provision will be made in another agreed location.

The requirements of the National Pollination Strategy should be taken into account when assessing detrimental impact and the effectiveness of alternative solutions.



Policy Map 8 Green Infrastructure.

5.9. POLICY 9: SPORT AND LEISURE FACILITIES

OBJECTIVES

- Support opportunities for improved physical and leisure activity of Alford's residents.
- To reinforce the character and quality of Alford's environment

- 5.9.1. In the consultation held in July 2015, residents lamented a shortage of leisure facilities and sporting centres that could be used during the day, and 83% of respondents supported opportunities for improved physical and leisure activities. This is a long-standing issue, raised in a previous consultation. In the public event organised in 2013, six residents expressed the need for more leisure facilities and provided some suggestions, such as a swimming pool, an indoor bowling green, and more open space leisure facilities in the Memorial Park. Similarly, the result of the questionnaire distributed as part of the preparation of the 2008 Alford Town Appraisal shows that 50% of the respondents would like to see more opportunities for leisure activities.
- 5.9.2. Alford Town Council should investigate opportunities to improve access to existing sporting and leisure facilities, such as public use of the swimming pool at John Spendluffe Technology College, and/or community use of the new sports hall and swimming pool, which Queen Elizabeth's Grammar Academy is planning (see Community Aspiration).
- 5.9.3. This Neighbourhood Plan supports development that promotes the creation of additional sporting and leisure facilities, both outdoor and indoor, such as sport pitches, playgrounds, bowl greens, swimming pools, gym, community centres etc. Such development will need to comply with all other policies in this Plan.
- 5.9.4. Regarding development that results in loss or causes unacceptable impact on existing sporting and leisure facilities, this Plan supports the approach of Strategic Policy SP26, meaning that development will not be supported unless it is demonstrated that the site is no longer used as a sporting or leisure site, or where facilities are replaced by an improved facility.

POLICY 9: SPORT AND LEISURE FACILITIES

- 1) Development proposals that will deliver, or contribute to the provision of, additional sporting and leisure facilities, both indoor or outdoor, will be supported, provided that the proposal complies with all other policies of this Plan.
- 2) Development that results in the loss or causes unacceptable impact on existing sporting and leisure facilities will not be supported, unless:
 - a) The facility has been demonstrated to be redundant for a sports and leisure use through a robust and up to date assessment of need and has been marketed for at least 12 months at a price that reflects its condition and market value; or,
 - b) The facilities are to be replaced by improved facilities that help meet the sporting/recreational needs of the Town.

5.10. POLICY 10: HERITAGE AND DESIGN

OBJECTIVE

- To reinforce the character and quality of Alford's environment
- To maintain Alford's distinctive character.
- To support quality design that respects its immediate surroundings
- Protect and enhance buildings that are currently community assets.

- 5.10.1. Alford's distinctiveness incorporates several aspects, including its unique historic heritage, its character as a small Market Town, a rural setting, fine examples of modern building and streetscapes, and valuable views into, from and within the town. These qualities are treasured by local residents and contribute to creating a sense of place and boosting community spirit: ensuring new developments preserve and enhance these qualities is thus one of the main objectives of this plan.
- 5.10.2. Policy 10 complies with the requirements of both Section 7 and Section 12 of the NPPF; at the same time, the Policy is meant to implement locally the requirement of the Strategic Policy SP10 and SP11 of the ELDC Core Strategy. To do that, the policy relies heavily on two distinct documents: the Alford Character Assessment and the Alford Conservation Area Appraisal.
- 5.10.3. The Alford Conservation Area was first designated by the former Lindsey County Council in June 1970. In November 1989 a review of the conservation area boundary resulted in some minor boundary modifications. The current Alford Conservation Area (see map below) covers the historic town centre and areas of quality housing mainly from the 19th Century whilst leaving the more recent 20th Century developments outside its boundary.
- 5.10.4. "The Alford Conservation Area Appraisal¹⁶" published in July 2008 by East Lindsey District Council and QuBE is a comprehensive overview of the heritage of the town, and has important recommendations regarding the protection of this environment and the

¹⁶ <http://www.e-lindsey.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=1380&p=0>

safeguards needed to be put in place in the event of future development. In particular, Section 7 of the Appraisal identifies the main characteristics of this historic environment, Section 9 details the negative aspects where intervention is welcomed, and Section 11 provides a series of recommendations to preserve and enhance the Character of the Conservation Area. Particularly important is the map contained in the document (reproduced in this Plan as Policy Map 11): the Map does not only show the extent of the Conservation Area and the main Listed Buildings (such as the Saint Wilfrid Church and the Windmill), but it also identifies a list of Buildings of Townscape Value, valuable views and positive surfacing. Equally relevant are the negative buildings and surfacing in the Conservation Area, that future development could address and improve.

- 5.10.5. The Alford Character Assessment is a piece of work prepared by the Steering Group to address the character of all the other areas of town and to complement the information of the Appraisal regarding the Conservation Area. The Assessment has been prepared through a combination of desk based research and visual surveying: the result of this survey demonstrated how the route structure of the town is intrinsically linked with the character of different parts of the settlement. As the town developed away from its core (i.e. Market Place) and in between its main roads (e.g. Station Road and West Road, East Street, South Street), new estates have been built with a dedicated network of roads to provide access and connection. These roads tend to disclose a consistent set of features in term of layout, land use, streetscape, density, building design, etc., and can thus be used as the primary elements to identify character areas within the town. The Character Assessment identified ten character areas based on this approach, each with its own characteristics and features. Each area has thus been carefully analysed, identifying not only the elements that characterise the buildings (e.g. material, type, height, etc.), but giving particular attention to density, boundary treatment, landscaping and streetscaping, green spaces, valuable views etc. In some case, community aspirations for the improvement of the area have been identified as well. The last section of the Assessment contains general conclusions for each of these elements (providing positive and negative examples, as well as recommendations). Such conclusions have been incorporated in the Policy text.
- 5.10.6. Within the Conservation Area, development will need to demonstrate how the type, layout, massing, height, fenestration, and external building / surfacing materials, boundary treatment and landscaping is in keeping with the historic environment. The development will need to demonstrate it has taken into account all the elements of Section 7 of the Alford Conservation Area Appraisal and the character area-specific and general recommendations and conclusions of the Alford Character Assessment. In case the development is in proximity to a Listed Building or a Building of Townscape Importance, it will need to demonstrate how it does not negatively impact and is compatible with the character of the nearby building, in accordance with Section 2 of Strategic Policy SP11. Redevelopment of a Listed Building or a Building of Townscape Importance that is underused and at risk will be welcomed, when the above mentioned requirements are demonstrated and the development does not harm but promote the historic qualities of the asset (meaning, when necessary, to remove modern intrusive additions). For the sake of this policy, any building listed in

Appendix B1 of the Alford Conservation Area Appraisal and marked as a Building of Townscape Importance in the Alford Conservation Area Appraisal is considered locally important, and should be considered non-designated heritage assets according to the definition of SP11. To assess how development will not harm the Conservation Area or Listed Building and a Building of Townscape Importance, a qualified expert's contribution should be sought.

- 5.10.7. Protecting the Town Centre and in particular the Market Place as a pleasant and historic retail and shopping hub is particularly important for the residents. Policy 10 contributes to this by protecting traditional shopfronts and signage and resisting their removal - even in the case of changing the use of the premise - unless it can be demonstrated that they are beyond repair or that the nature of the development cannot feasibly incorporate the existing shopfront. In such instance, careful consideration should be given to the recommendations of the Alford Conservation Area Appraisal, Section 9.4.
- 5.10.8. Outside the Conservation Area, development will need to demonstrate how the type, layout, massing, height, fenestration, and external building / surfacing materials, boundary treatment and landscaping is in keeping with the specific character area it sits in, as described in detail in the Alford Character Assessment. The use of local materials will be supported. The density, massing, type and landscaping of new development deserves special mention. Within the main body of the development, buildings tend to be denser and higher, with little or no separation between frontage and public street: such development is considered appropriate for the more central areas of the town, as it is a mark of higher population and activity density. Where the main body of the development meets the countryside, however, the transition between built environment and countryside should be gradual, creating a "soft border" around the town and helping retain the character of Alford as a town surrounded by a rural setting. At the edge of the main development boundary and adjacent to it and in particular in gateway sites into the development, proposals for development will need to demonstrate how low density, building massing, and landscape and layout solutions (such as large back gardens, spacious gardens between and to the front of dwellings, green boundary treatments etc.) contribute to promote the ideas of gradual transition into the countryside.
- 5.10.9. All views described in each character area's description in the Alford Character Assessment and identified in the Alford Conservation Area Appraisal Map (see Policy Map 10) should be preserved, meaning that development proposals which are likely to impact on them will need to provide layout alternatives to avoid detrimental impact and, where this is not feasible, landscaping and screening solutions that mitigate the impact. Visual representation, 3D rendering and photographic evidence will be welcomed to demonstrate the above.
- 5.10.10. To address the problem of on-street parking, development will need to demonstrate sufficient provision of on-site parking, and when car shelters are proposed, they will need to demonstrate how they can comfortably accommodate a family car. In the case

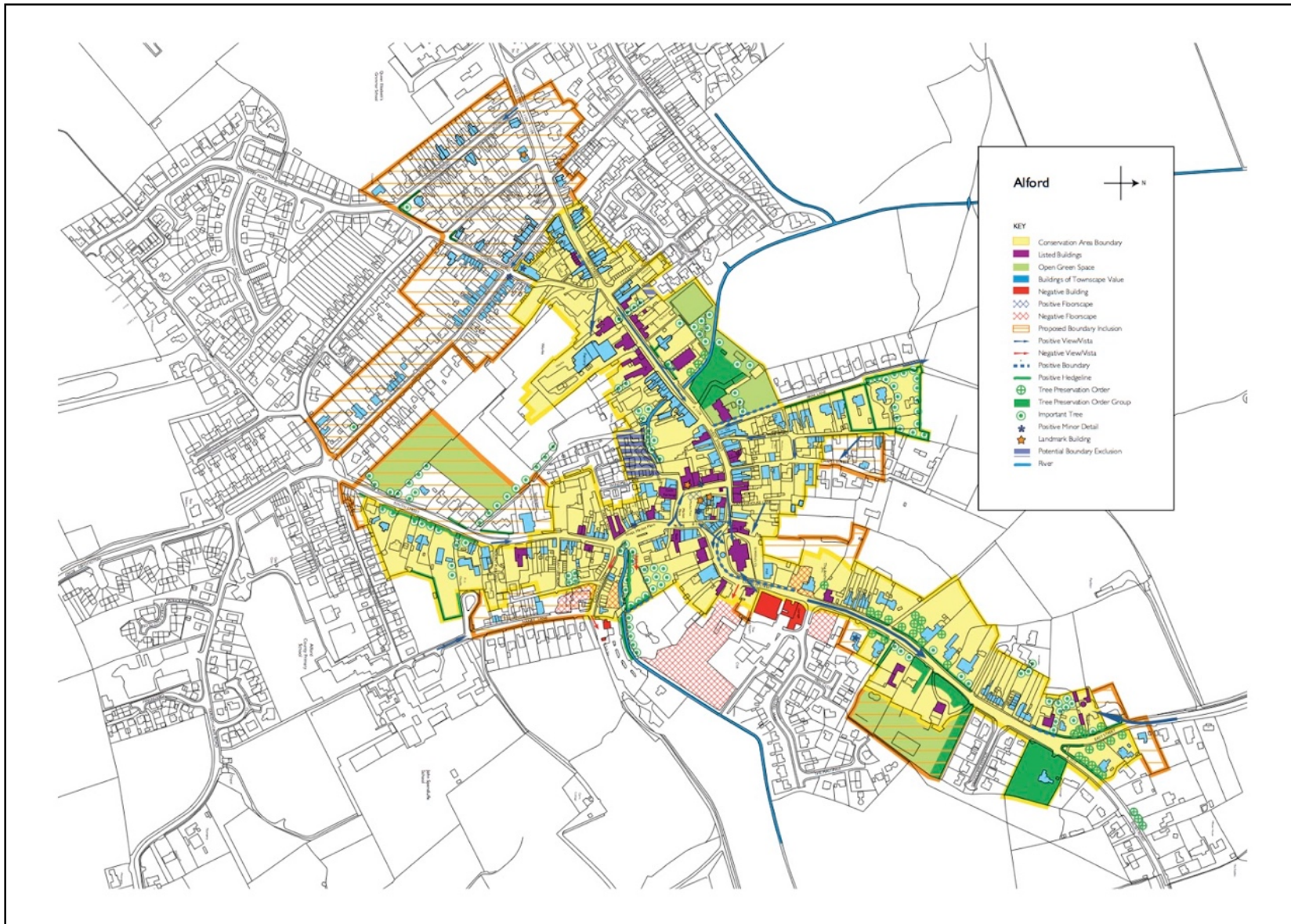
that a Design and Access statement is requested, the document should be used to demonstrate compliance with this and with all other aspects.

POLICY 10: HERITAGE AND DESIGN

- 1) All developments should be consistent with the following design principles:
 - a) Density, layout scale and housing typology of the development should reflect the location within the Town, differentiating between:
 - i) Development within the main body of the settlement, should be of higher density (approximately 25 dwellings per hectare, potentially in the form of semi-detached houses or terrace houses), and a general maximum height of two-stories.
 - ii) Development adjacent to the main body of the settlement should be of lower density (approximately 20 dwellings per hectare), a massing and a maximum height of two-stories that minimise the impact of the building and house typology (detached or semi-detached) and layout that prioritises open spaces in-between dwellings.
 - b) Material, fenestration, and external building / surfacing materials should harmonise with, or complement, the existing character of the locality, as described in the Alford Character Assessment and, where relevant, the Alford Conservation Area Appraisal. In particular:
 - i) Use of local material should be a priority, in particular red or yellow Farlesthorne bricks or similar, stone (mostly for detailing and finishing), clay pantiles or Welsh slates tiles. Cement renders and concrete interlocking tiles or imitation slates should be avoided.
 - ii) Development should reflect the predominant style of the surrounding houses and not sit out of context with existing dwellings. The character areas descriptions provide information for each specific street or area.
 - c) Landscaping and planting associated with developments should be consistent with the Alford Character Assessment, Section 7 of the Alford Conservation Area Appraisal (where relevant) and the National Pollination Strategy and should reflect location within the Town, differentiating between:
 - i) Development within the main body of the settlement, where gardens separating the front of the dwelling to the street are welcomed but not required.
 - ii) Development adjacent to main body of the settlement, which should present large frontage garden with appropriate landscaping solution (trees and hedgerows), separating the main building from the street, and large back gardens with soft boundary between them and the surrounding countryside, to promote the idea of a gradual transition between the developed footprint and the countryside
 - d) The setting of Listed Buildings, the character or appearance of the Conservation Area and the setting and character of any Building and

Landmark of Townscape Value (as identified in Policy Map 10 and in the Appendix of the Alford Character Assessment) should not be harmed; development in close proximity to heritage assets will thus need to present layout, design and architectural solutions that respect and complement the historic site.

- e) refurbishment of existing heritage assets (both listed and locally important) in poor condition or underused will be promoted as long as it maintains and enhances the historic and architectural characteristic of the development and possibly remediates inappropriate intervention and extension performed in recent times.
 - f) where historic paving materials, associated ironwork and street furniture survive, they should be retained and protected from harm;
 - g) views identified as being of importance in the Alford Character Assessment and in Section 7 of the Conservation Area Appraisal (see Policy Map 10) should be preserved and, where possible, enhanced. In order to protect such views, development should demonstrate the provision of adequate screening and landscaping solutions where necessary.
- 2) Traditional existing shop fronts and signs should be retained unless they are demonstrably beyond repair or are incapable of being successfully incorporated into the development. When opportunities arise inappropriate shop fronts (and signage) should be replaced so as to respect the character of the building, adjacent buildings (if part of a group or terrace) and the area as a whole.
 - 3) Where Design and Access Statements are required, they should show how the principles outlined above have been taken in to account.
 - 4) New development should include adequate access and off street parking. If a garage or any other form of car shelter is included it should be able to accommodate an average-sized family car, leaving enough room for the driver to comfortably get in and out of the vehicle.



Policy Map 10 Conservation Area (Source: QuBE Report)

5.11. POLICY 11: RENEWABLE ENERGY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

OBJECTIVE

- Promoting increased energy efficiency and the development and use of solar energy by residents and utility companies serving the town.

- 5.11.1. Over 90% of consultation respondents supported the need to encourage energy efficient and sustainable development as a main objective: this demonstrates how deeply the residents of Alford understand the need to protect the existing energy and ecological resources and reduce the effect of climate change. It is believed that energy efficiency and small scale renewable energy solutions can significantly contribute to this goal.
- 5.11.2. New development will be supported when it implements state-of-the-art energy efficiency solutions (in term of heating and cooling, use of natural light, use and disposal of building materials and waste, etc.), renewable and/or low carbon technology and where it is designed according to the standard of sustainable building certification (e.g. BREEAM)
- 5.11.3. Regarding incorporation of renewable energy sources in the development, such as photovoltaic panels, development will be supported where it complies with the requirement of Policy 8 and does not have a detrimental impact on the character of the settlement, on the Conservation Area, and on Listed Buildings and Buildings of Landscape Value. In general, such energy efficiency solutions should be so located and of an appropriate size, that they are do not have a significantly adverse effect on the street scene. Particular attention should be given to important views as described in Policy 10: the installation will need to demonstrate how it is not intrusive in the view, either due to its strategic location or size. Any other solutions that minimise the impact of renewable energy solutions (e.g. photovoltaic panels shaped and designed to resemble slate and tiles) would be welcome.

POLICY 11 RENEWABLE ENERGY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

- 1) Development of buildings designed to achieve high levels of energy and resource efficiency, and to incorporate or promote the use of energy from renewable and low-carbon sources will be supported, provided there will be no detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, Listed Buildings and their settings, other Buildings of Townscape Value, or distinctive views.

6. Reviewing the Neighbourhood Plan

- 6.1.1. This Plan operates until 2031, in parallel with the East Lindsey Core Strategy.
- 6.1.2. There could, obviously, be a need to review the Plan over that period, for example if there are changes to national housing targets. The Town Council will consider at its annual meeting every year whether the Neighbourhood Plan remains appropriate or requires review.
- 6.1.3. In exceptional cases, the Town Council may agree at any other time to review the Neighbourhood Plan. If they agree at any time that the Neighbourhood Plan does need review, the Parish Council will decide the manner in which the review will be undertaken and allocate resources for doing so.
- 6.1.4. Following review, the Town Council will agree any proposed changes to the Neighbourhood Plan. Any review or proposed changes to the Neighbourhood Plan will be in accordance with legal requirements in force at that time.

7. Community Action

In addition to those policies pertaining to material planning matters, the Alford Neighbourhood Plan wishes to establish some community based policies that reflect the aspirations of the people of Alford, many of which have been mentioned in comments received at Public Consultations. It is to be hoped that these policies will contribute to the general improvement of life in the town during the Plan period.

7.1. The Local Economy

- 7.1.1. Alford Town Council, in collaboration with relevant public bodies and stakeholders, should seek measures to support existing retail outlets within the town in order to maintain current shopping opportunities.
- 7.1.2. Alford Town Council, in collaboration with relevant public bodies and stakeholders, should encourage tourism through the promotion of Arts, Craft & Cultural events in the town with the Market Square, the Manor House, the Corn Exchange, The Focal Point (Library), local faith buildings, local community halls and the Windmill as a central focus.
- 7.1.3. Where possible Alford Town Council, in collaboration with relevant public bodies and stakeholders, should take measures to support existing employment opportunities and to promote new ones.
- 7.1.4. Where possible Alford Town Council, in collaboration with relevant public bodies and stakeholders, should continue to seek additional locations for industrial development, small business units and office space.
- 7.1.5. Where possible Alford Town Council, in collaboration with relevant public bodies and stakeholders, should seek measures to revitalise the Market Square and its immediate area (i.e. the town centre), in order to create a more viable, central hub for the town. This may entail re-fashioning this area in order to foster greater and more varied use by the community and visitors, for example through the broadening of the pavements in south Market Place. Section 106 agreements on developments that will see increased use of the town centre could be used to fund such work if viability allows. Alford Town Council, where possible, should seek measures to maintain and increase the viability and vitality of Alford's markets (Tuesday and Friday).
- 7.1.6. Where possible Alford Town Council, in collaboration with relevant public bodies and stakeholders, should seek measures to encourage agricultural & business producers to sell their goods locally.

7.2. Transport

- 7.2.1. Alford Town Council will seek to maintain, and if possible increase, the number of public car parking spaces within easy walking distance (250 metres) of the town centre.
- 7.2.2. Alford Town Council will ensure that public car park charges are either free or minimal, in order to support the viability of town centre businesses.
- 7.2.3. Alford Town Council, in collaboration with relevant public bodies and stakeholders, will attempt to ensure that bus connections offer adequate regular services, that are both flexible and reliable, and that cover routes into town and the wider area.
- 7.2.4. Alford Town Council will be proactive in providing sufficient cycle parking facilities in the town to encourage the use of cycles for journeys into the centre.
- 7.2.5. Alford Town Council will liaise with relevant public bodies and stakeholders to ensure the satisfactory maintenance of the highway network and paved footways within the parish of Alford.
- 7.2.6. Alford Town Council, Lincolnshire County Council & ELDC should be proactive in seeking relevant and appropriate measures to ensure the safety of all road users and adequate traffic flow through and around the town.

7.3. Heritage & The Environment

- 7.3.1. Alford Town Council, in collaboration with relevant public bodies and stakeholders, should, where possible, be proactive in seeking measures to protect and maintain the Conservation Area and all buildings of historical importance, including those that are listed, and those that are community assets.
- 7.3.2. Alford Town Council, in collaboration with relevant public bodies and stakeholders, should, where possible, be proactive in seeking measures to maintain, improve and increase public open space in the town, including looking for additional park land for the town.
- 7.3.3. Alford Town Council, in collaboration with relevant public bodies and stakeholders, should, where possible, be proactive in seeking measures to protect and improve Alford's access to green infrastructure.
- 7.3.4. Alford Town Council, in collaboration with relevant public bodies and stakeholders, where possible, be proactive in seeking measures to promote energy efficiency & the use of solar power within the town.

- 7.3.5. Alford Town Council, in collaboration with relevant public bodies and stakeholders, should seek measures to offset the effects of climate change including flooding.
- 7.3.6. Alford Town Council, in collaboration with relevant public bodies and stakeholders, should, where possible, be proactive in seeking measures to maintain and increase biodiversity in the area and help to implement the National Pollination Strategy.

7.4. Health & Well Being

- 7.4.1. Alford Town Council, in collaboration with relevant public bodies and stakeholders, should seek measures to improve disability access within the town.
- 7.4.2. Alford Town Council, in collaboration with relevant public bodies and stakeholders, should seek measures to improve the opportunities for physical, recreational and leisure activities for Alford's residents.
- 7.4.3. Alford Town Council will seek collaboration with relevant public bodies and private agencies, such as the Environmental Agency, the Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service and private landowners, to promote the creation of an additional public park within the town.

7.5. Services & Infrastructure

- 7.5.1. Alford Town Council & health & social service providers should be pro-active in seeking measures to bring existing Health & Social Services up to an acceptable level for the town's current population, and seek improvements that maintain a satisfactory level of statutory services e.g. Health & Education, for the needs of the town's increased population, following residential development.
- 7.5.2. Alford Town Council & utility service providers should be pro-active in seeking measures to ensure a satisfactory level of utility services that is appropriate for the needs of the town's current population, and its increased population, following residential development.
- 7.5.3. Alford Town Council, in collaboration with relevant public bodies and stakeholders, should be pro-active in seeking measures to ensure a satisfactory level of community services that is appropriate for the needs of the town's current population, and its increased population, following residential development.
- 7.5.4. Alford Town Council, in collaboration with relevant public bodies and stakeholders, should be pro-active in seeking measures to bring the existing sewer system up to an acceptable level for the town's current number of dwellings and other buildings, and seek measures to ensure the system is adequate for any proposed residential development.

7.6. Allotments

- 7.6.1. Over 80% of the respondents to the 2015 consultation support allocation of land for allotments, a need previously identified in the 2013 consultation event. There are currently no allotments within the Parish of Alford and Alford Town Council keeps a waiting list of those who would be interested in having one, in case it would become available. The creation of an allotment area is thus strongly supported by local residents, and it is considered an excellent way to promote healthy lifestyles and community spirit while at the same time create a further green area in the Town.
- 7.6.2. The Council approached the landowner of a site opposite John Spendluffe Technology College, and explored the potential of the site as suitable land for allotments. The site has been assessed for residential development, and although scored relatively well on all other criteria, it was discounted since it lacks proper access: the tract of Hanby Lane in front of the site is in the ownership of the County Council (even though it is a Public Right of Way). However, investigation on the site discovered risk of contamination of the soil, effectively meaning that it would not be suitable for an allotment unless it was extensively decontaminated.
- 7.6.3. The Town Council will work proactively with local landowners and relevant public bodies and stakeholders to identify and acquire suitable land for allotments.

7.7. The Woldgrift Drain

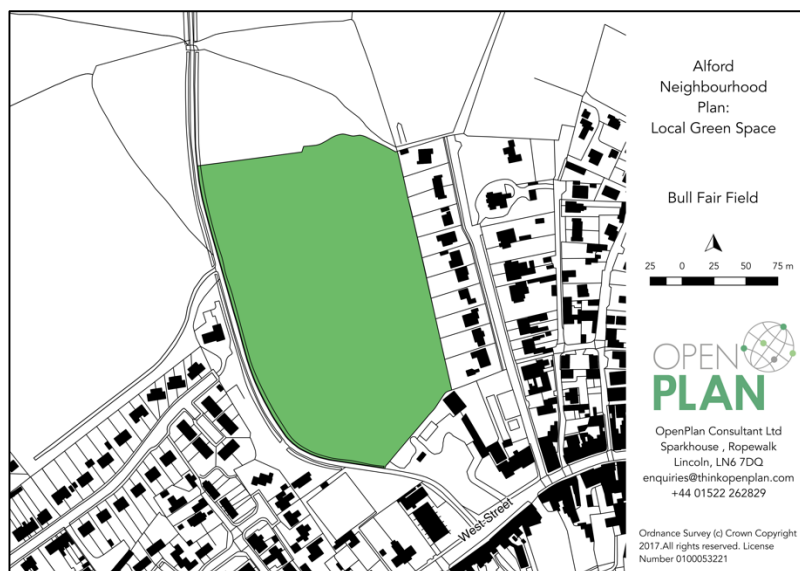
- 7.7.1. The Council will seek collaboration with ELDC and the Environmental Agency to implement any feasible and appropriate intervention to improve or restore the Woldgrift Drain habitat and to ensure it supports the numbers of plants and animals that would be expected in a chalk stream. In particular, measures to improve in-channel diversity would help provide improved habitat for fish, invertebrates and other ecology, and create diversity of flow within the channel.
- 7.7.2. Improvements to the habitat within the channel or bankside should also deliver improvement to the visual amenity of the Drain.
- 7.7.3. Improvements to the habitat upstream or through Alford should also be aimed at reducing flood risk through the town.

1. Appendix A. Local Green Spaces (LGS) – Designation Forms

1.1. Bull Fair Field

Site Name and Address	The Bull Fair Field, off Park Lane, Alford.	Organisation Proposing Site for Designation	Alford Town Council
Site Ownership	St Andrew's Healthcare, Cliftonville House, Cliftonville Road, Northampton, NN1 5DG	Owner Support to Designation	The landowner has been consulted. Responses to their comments are included in the Consultation Statement.
Planning Status	No and none pending from local knowledge.	Land Allocation	No. Identified as important Local Green Space for designation.

Site Location Plan





An early morning scene in the judging ring at Alford Bull Sale, 1958.
W. Richardson.



Best Group of Three Bull Calves at the Alford Sale in 1948. Won By Mr. H. R. Robinson.
Farmers Press Agency.



ALFORD 1958
A group of Cropwell polled animals, the first of the breed to be sold at a public auction.



<i>Area of Proposed Site</i>	The field is approximately 9 acres.	<i>Is the Site an “Extensive Tract of Land”</i>	This is a typical area of ancient grassland reduced in size by the Park Lane road frontage development, on the west side, carried out by the former Alford Urban District Council in the late 1950's. Even though the site is quite large in term of hectares, in the context of the town centre it does not ‘feel’ like an extensive tract of land, and it rather has the size appropriate to a typical town centre park.		
<i>Is the Site “Local in Character”</i>	<p>This field is the site of the once famous Alford Bull Fair where the county breed of Lincoln Red Cattle was shown and sold annually each November from 1901 until moving to the Alford Cattle Market Site in the 1950's, where it continued until 1972 when the Show and Sale were moved to the County Showground. Apart from the fair, the field has always been a pasture in agricultural use.</p> <p>For many years, it has also been used by the Alford Craft Market for the location of a music marquee for the annual Craft Market and Entertainment weekend held each August Bank Holiday, with the market being held in the adjoining Alford Manor House grounds.</p> <p>There are significant views of the open countryside represented by the Bull Fair Field from West Street in the location of the road bridge over the Wold Grift Drain. The Wold Grift Drain forms the western boundary to the field. This forms an important wild life corridor linking in to the town centre and is a popular spot for seeing Kingfishers flying over the drain as well as the occasional Little Egret.</p> <p>There is a wonderful opportunity here to create a linking field path from the centre of the town, through the Manor House Grounds in to the Bull Fair Field and along the drain bank edge to connect with the existing field path network, and ideally a foot bridge over the drain to connect to the Tothby Meadows area, which would open up opportunities of public access for exercise and safer access to the town centre. This would be arranged to ensure no interference with existing stock grazing in the field.</p>				
<i>Is the Site “in Close Proximity to the Community it serves”?</i>	<p>The site is bounded by housing on Park Lane on the east side, the Wold Grift Drain on the west, with the large housing areas of Tothby Lane beyond, and the northern boundary is field hedges to open countryside.</p> <p>The vision to extend footpath links in the field could provide valuable access opportunities for a significant portion of Alford’s residents from the housing developments off Tothby Lane.</p>				
<i>Is the Site “Special to a Local Community”?</i>	The site has historically been by the local community for market purposes, and currently it is considered an important complement to the Manor House and a good connection between the countryside and the town centre.				
<i>The Sites Holds a Particular local significance because of its:</i>					
<i>Beauty</i>	<i>Historic Significance</i>	<i>Recreational Value</i>	<i>Tranquillity</i>	<i>Richness of Wildlife</i>	<i>Any Other Reason</i>

<p>The openness of the site allows enjoyable views toward the back of Manor House from the end of Christopher Road, as well as an open view on the countryside north of the town looking from West Street.</p> <p>The Wold Grift Drain running through the site represents an enjoyable water course surrounded by native flora and fauna. The path running north of the site is popular also because of the beautiful view over this site that gradually turns into the town centre.</p>	<p>The site represents a part of the history of the village, having been the site for the famous Alford Bull Fair, and important event for a market town such as Alford. It has also historically served as location of a music marquee for the annual Craft Market and Entertainment weekend.</p>	<p>Currently the site is used for bird watching and to enjoy view of nature wet ecosystem (around the drain) and open countryside. The path running on the northern boundary of the site is particularly popular.</p>	<p>The site is appreciated for its tranquillity, being screened from any main road or hub, to the point that it is a valued point for bird watching</p>	<p>The site is a valuable site in term of biodiversity and ecological conservation, mostly because of the presence of the Wold Grift Drain. The site presents mature trees and other native plants typical of wet area around watercourses; it is also a nesting area for birds such as Kingfishers and Little Egret.</p>	<p>The site is widely included in Flood Zone 1 and 2, that follows the Wold Grift Drain as it flows toward south. The site is thus an important retention basin that, through is wide permeable area, could collect a consistent volume of water before it hits the town centre. Any development of the site would affect this natural Sustainable Urban Drainage solution</p>
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1.2. Tothby Lane Fishing Lake & Sunken Garden

Site Name and Address	The Tothby Lake, Tothby Lane, Alford	Organisation Proposing Site for Designation	Alford Town Council
Site Ownership	The Alford and District Angling Club, c/o C.B. Sutton, (Vice Chairman) 90, Chantry Road, Alford, LN13 9HW	Owner Support to Designation	The owner has been consulted.
Planning Status	No and none pending, from local knowledge.	Land Allocation	<i>Is the site allocated for development in the Local or Neighbourhood Plan?</i> No. Identified as important Local Green Space for designation.

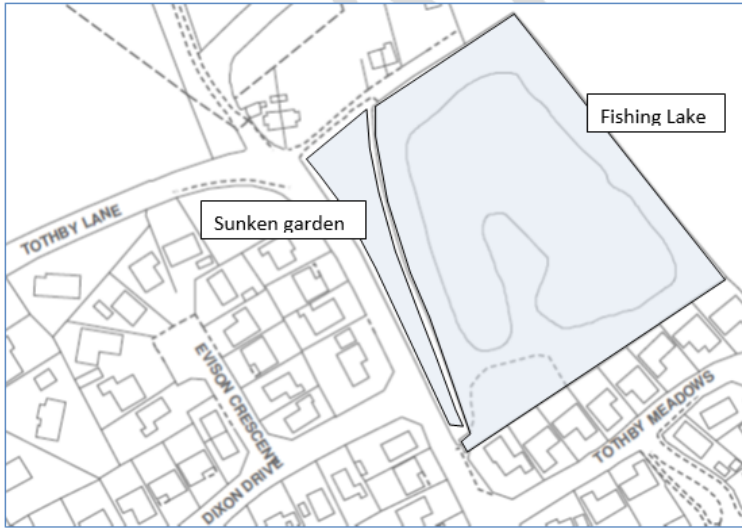
Location Plan



And below,

Site Photos





<i>Area of Proposed Site</i>	1.40 hectare	<i>Is the Site an “Extensive Tract of Land”?</i>	The fishing lake was excavated in 1970. Along with its surrounds, it sits in an area which was a small grass paddock typical of edge of town small fields. The site does not feel extensive, because it is mostly covered by water surface, and it fits very well in to this corner of the Tothby Lane area.		
<i>Is the Site “Local in Character”</i>	This facility has been in existence since 1970, and serves the local community well. It is readily accessible to members. It is well screened by mature hedges and trees and plays a significant part in the bio-diversity of the locality.				
<i>Is the Site “in Close Proximity to the Community it serves”?</i>	This is an edge of town facility sited in an ideal location.				
<i>Is the Site “Special to a Local Community”?</i>	This is an admirable facility giving opportunities for recreation to a district wide community.				
<i>The Sites Holds a Particular local significance because of its:</i>					
<i>Beauty</i>	<i>Historic Significance</i>	<i>Recreational Value</i>	<i>Tranquillity</i>	<i>Richness of Wildlife</i>	<i>Any Other Reason</i>
The site is a beautiful water surface surrounded by mature trees and hedgerows. It is also valuable in beautifying the surrounding neighbourhood, presenting a enjoyable green wedge on the side of Tothby Lane. It complements the view over the countryside	The facility is not particularly historic in character, but it has represented a important recreation facility for almost the last 50 years	The site is currently used for fishing and readily accessible to members	The site is separated from the main street by a large verge covered in mature trees, and transmits a sense of calm typical of fishing locations. It is thus also an excellent location to enjoy tranquillity in a green and blue open space.	The lake is populated by several species of aquatic fauna, and even though the species of fish are obviously not wild, the site sustains a certain level of wildlife ecosystem. There are several mature trees and hedgerows on the site.	The site marks the border between the developed footprint and the open countryside, and performs an important role in naturally containing town sprawl and thus negative impact on the surrounding countryside.

north of Tothby Lane and promotes the impression of organic transition between developed footprint and countryside					
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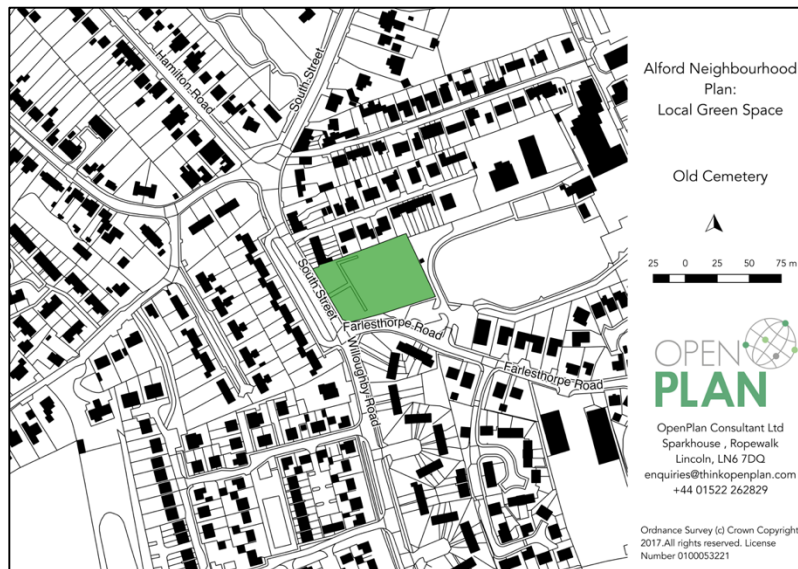
1.3. South Street Old Cemetery

<i>Site Name and Address</i>	The Old Cemetery, South Street, Alford	<i>Organisation Proposing Site for Designation</i>	Alford Town Council
<i>Site Ownership</i>	Alford Town Council	<i>Owner Support to Designation</i>	ATC, the owner, is aware and supportive, since this is its document.
<i>Planning Status</i>	No and none pending, from local knowledge.	<i>Land Allocation</i>	No. Identified as important Local Green Space for designation.
Location Map	Site Photos		



And below,





<i>Area of Proposed Site</i>	Approx 0.39 hectares	<i>Is the Site an “Extensive Tract of Land”?</i>	Relatively small area fitting well into neighbouring 'plot' sizes. Not extensive if compared with adjoining Primary School Grounds
<i>Is the Site “Local in Character”</i>	The site has been the local cemetery in the past, until the more modern one on Farlesthorne Road has been built. It has always been a part of the community it served. It is fronted by South Street and Farlesthorne Road and is readily accessible to the surrounding residential area with an access path leading off South Street.		
<i>Is the Site “in Close Proximity to the Community it serves”?</i>	It is at the centre of the South Street/ Willoughby Road residential area and is readily accessible and adjacent to a walking route to the Alford Primary School.		
<i>Is the Site “Special to a Local Community”?</i>	As stated earlier this was the Town burial ground in the past and as such is very important (once consecrated? is it still?). Unfortunately, the grave stones have been removed so it has lost its typical appearance. The area is laid down to grass with access		

	paths laid and a seating area: this forms a tranquil area for quiet contemplation. It also represents one of the few open green areas infill to the town developed footprint.				
<i>Beauty</i>	<i>Historic Significance</i>	<i>Recreational Value</i>	<i>Tranquillity</i>	<i>Richness of Wildlife</i>	<i>Any Other Reason</i>
The site represents a beautiful green open area in the middle of the developed footprint, a rare example for Alford. The spacious verges on the front of the site, bordering the street transmit the feel of openness, and it is limited inward by a line of mature trees.	The site has historically being the Town cemetery, and covers an important historic role in this sense	The site has a public access through it leading to a bench. It is a valuable location for social interaction in a green environment.	The site is particularly valued for its tranquillity and quiet contemplation, especially in the most inward part of the site which is more separated from the street and screened by mature trees.	The site has a few mature trees, but due to its location in the town centre there is little opportunity for wildlife fauna to develop in the site	The site represents one of the few green open space effectively within the developed footprint, while the majority sit at its edge.

1.4. Chantry Close Amenity Verge

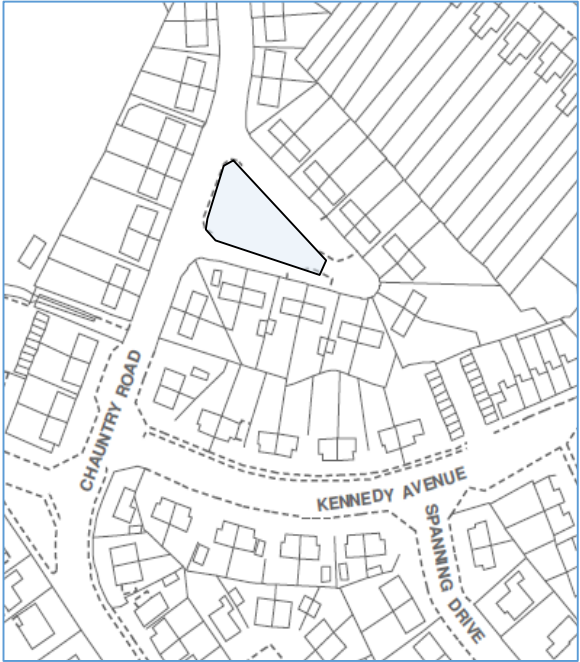
Site Name and Address	Central Amenity Area, Chantry Close, Alford	Organisation Proposing Site for Designation	Alford Town Council
Site Ownership	Lincolnshire County Council, County Offices, Highway, Lincoln.	Owner Support to Designation	The owner has been consulted and supports the designation.
Planning Status	None currently nor pending from local knowledge	Land Allocation	No. Identified as important Local Green Space for designation.

Location Plan



And below,



	<p style="text-align: center;">Green space verge in Chantry</p>		
<p><i>Area of Proposed Site</i></p>	<p>0.08 hectares</p>	<p><i>Is the Site an “Extensive Tract of Land”</i></p>	<p>This is small in scale and entirely in keeping with normal housing estate development</p>
<p><i>Is the Site “Local in Character”</i></p>	<p>This is entirely local in character, relating to the residential development that surrounds it on all sides. There is direct access to the entire perimeter of the area.</p>		
<p><i>Is the Site “in Close Proximity to the Community it serves”?</i></p>	<p>The site is in the middle of a residential area - it is directly accessible to its surroundings.</p>		
<p><i>Is the Site “Special to a Local Community”?</i></p>	<p>The site is a pleasant green break from the repetitiveness of the streetscape of the surrounding residential road. It is valued by the local residents as it improves the appearance of the surrounding dwellings . This area is an important green area in the centre of this estate that needs protecting from any further encroachment. Some of its original area has been eroded by use for car parking.</p>		

<i>The Sites Holds a Particular local significance because of its:</i>					
<i>Beauty</i>	<i>Historic Significance</i>	<i>Recreational Value</i>	<i>Tranquillity</i>	<i>Richness of Wildlife</i>	<i>Any Other Reason</i>
The site beautifies Chaunty Close providing much needed green area and openness, comfortably sitting in the middle of the estate and complemented by the hedgerows of the surrounding dwellings. The two mature trees at the edge nicely frame the end the site looking from Chantry Road.	The site has little historic significance.	The site has little recreational value.	The site transmits a sense of tranquillity, promoting the feeling that the whole area is a quiet residential neighbourhood rather than simply a street environment dominated by cars. For this reason, car parking on the site should be restricted.	The site has little wildlife value.	The is one of the few positive examples of green pocket or verges on Alford's street, that although relatively small have a big impact in changing the perception of street and surrounding area. It should be protected and its model potentially replicated in other areas of the town.

2. Appendix B: Development Brief

Development Briefs can helpfully include:

- A site map showing the site's location and its context within its immediate neighbourhood including any areas of special landscape value, flood zones, the location of any heritage assets, landmark buildings or views
- An illustrative layout showing how the proposed development could be accommodated on the site
- Scale, footprint, bulk and height of buildings
- Mix of dwelling types and tenure
- Design style and guidelines
- Improvements to infrastructure and facilities to be provided
- Access, parking, cycle and pedestrian ways and any required traffic congestion and parking assessments
- Landscaping and publicly accessible open spaces
- The location of trees and any that may be affected by the development
- Other environmental considerations to be incorporated in a proposal
- Specific resource efficiencies to be incorporated in a proposal
- Indicative timing and phasing of the proposed development
- Where applicable the community benefits to be provided
- An analysis of how the development proposals comply with the whole policy framework including the Neighbourhood Plan.

3. Appendix C: Community Consultation Statement

This Neighbourhood Plan aims to encourage developers to engage with the local community at an early stage before planning applications are submitted, in liaison with the Town Council. Where this occurs the submission of a Statement of Community Involvement including the following information will be helpful:

- An explanation of how a broad cross-section of local people, both in the immediate area likely to be affected by the development proposals and in the wider neighbourhood, were consulted on the development proposals in a timely fashion
- The means used to involve and engage with local people in consultation, using a range of ways in which input and comments could be provided. For example, a variety of publicity and the opportunity to provide web-based comments as well as attending events in person
- A numerate record of the views expressed by local people and the Town Council
- An explanation of how the proposals being submitted following this Consultation have addressed the views of and any issues or concerns raised by local people and the Town Council.