

Alfold Neighbourhood Development Plan 2017-2032

**A report to Waverley Borough Council on the
Alfold Neighbourhood Development Plan**

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Executive Summary

- 1 I was appointed by Waverley Borough Council in July 2023 to carry out the independent examination of the Alfold Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- 2 The examination was undertaken by written representations. I visited the neighbourhood area on 3 August 2023.
- 3 The Plan includes a range of policies and seeks to bring forward positive and sustainable development in the neighbourhood area. There is a very clear focus on safeguarding its character and appearance. It also proposes a package of local green spaces.
- 4 The Plan has been underpinned by community support and engagement. All sections of the community have been actively engaged in its preparation.
- 5 Subject to a series of recommended modifications set out in this report, I have concluded that the Alfold Neighbourhood Development Plan meets all the necessary legal requirements and should proceed to referendum.
- 6 I recommend that the referendum area should coincide with the neighbourhood area.

Andrew Ashcroft
Independent Examiner
19 September 2023

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report sets out the findings of the independent examination of the Alfold Neighbourhood Development Plan 2017-2032 (the 'Plan').
- 1.2 The Plan has been submitted to Waverley Borough Council (WBC) by Alfold Parish Council (APC) in its capacity as the qualifying body responsible for preparing the neighbourhood plan.
- 1.3 Neighbourhood plans were introduced into the planning process by the Localism Act 2011. They aim to allow local communities to take responsibility for guiding development in their area. This approach was subsequently embedded in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012 and its updates in 2018, 2019, 2021 and 2023. The NPPF continues to be the principal element of national planning policy.
- 1.4 The role of an independent examiner is clearly defined in the legislation. I have been appointed to examine whether the submitted Plan meets the basic conditions and Convention Rights and other statutory requirements. It is not within my remit to examine or to propose an alternative plan, or a potentially more sustainable plan except where this arises as a result of my recommended modifications to ensure that the plan meets the basic conditions and the other relevant requirements.
- 1.5 A neighbourhood plan can be narrow or broad in scope. Any plan can include whatever range of policies it sees as appropriate to its designated neighbourhood area. The submitted Plan has been designed to be distinctive in general terms, and to be complementary to the development plan. It has a clear focus on maintaining the character and appearance of the neighbourhood area and designating a package of local green spaces.
- 1.6 Within the context set out above, this report assesses whether the Plan is legally compliant and meets the basic conditions that apply to neighbourhood plans. It also considers the content of the Plan and, where necessary, recommends changes to its policies and supporting text.
- 1.7 This report also provides a recommendation as to whether the Plan should proceed to referendum. If this is the case and that referendum results in a positive outcome the Plan would then be used to determine planning applications within the neighbourhood area and will sit as part of the wider development plan.

2 The Role of the Independent Examiner

- 2.1 The examiner's role is to ensure that any submitted neighbourhood plan meets the relevant legislative and procedural requirements.
- 2.2 I was appointed by WBC, with the consent of APC, to conduct the examination of the Plan and to prepare this report. I am independent of both WBC and APC. I do not have any interest in any land that may be affected by the Plan.
- 2.3 I possess the appropriate qualifications and experience to undertake this role. I am a Director of Andrew Ashcroft Planning Limited. I have 40 years' experience in various local authorities at either Head of Planning or Service Director level and more recently as an independent examiner. I am a chartered town planner and have significant experience of examining neighbourhood plans. I am a member of the Royal Town Planning Institute and the Neighbourhood Planning Independent Examiner Referral Service.

Examination Outcomes

- 2.4 In my role as the independent examiner of the Plan I am required to recommend one of the following outcomes of the examination:
- (a) that the Plan as submitted proceeds to a referendum; or
 - (b) that the Plan should proceed to referendum as modified (based on my recommendations); or
 - (c) that the Plan does not proceed to referendum on the basis that it does not meet the necessary legal requirements.
- 2.5 The outcome of the examination is set out in Sections 7 and 8 of this report.

Other examination matters

- 2.6 In examining the Plan I am required to check whether:
- the policies relate to the development and use of land for a designated neighbourhood plan area; and
 - the Plan meets the requirements of Section 38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (the Plan must specify the period to which it has effect, must not include provision about development that is excluded development, and must not relate to more than one neighbourhood area); and
 - the Plan has been prepared for an area that has been designated under Section 61G of the Localism Act and has been developed and submitted for examination by a qualifying body.
- 2.7 I have addressed the matters identified in paragraph 2.6 of this report. I am satisfied that the submitted Plan complies with the three requirements.

3 Procedural Matters

3.1 I have considered the following documents during the examination:

- the submitted Plan;
- the Basic Conditions Statement;
- the Consultation Statement (and its appendices);
- the SEA/HRA Determination Statement;
- the Alfold Design Code;
- the Alfold Housing Needs Assessment;
- the representations made to the Plan;
- APC's responses to the clarification note;
- the adopted Local Plan Part 1 Strategic Policies and Sites (February 2018);
- the adopted Local Plan Part 2 Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (March 2023);
- the National Planning Policy Framework (September 2023);
- Planning Practice Guidance;
- the Planning Update Written Ministerial Statement (March 2015); and
- the First Homes Ministerial Statement (May 2021).

3.2 I visited the neighbourhood area on 3 August 2023. I looked at its overall character and appearance and at those areas affected by policies in the Plan in particular. The visit is covered in more detail in paragraphs 5.9 to 5.15 of this report.

3.3 It is a general rule that neighbourhood plan examinations should be held by written representations only. Having considered all the information before me, including the representations made to the submitted Plan, I was satisfied that the Plan could be examined without the need for a public hearing.

4 Consultation

Consultation Process

- 4.1 Policies in made neighbourhood plans become the basis for local planning and development control decisions. As such the regulations require neighbourhood plans to be supported and underpinned by public consultation.
- 4.2 In accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) (Amendment) Regulations 2012, APC has prepared a Consultation Statement. The Statement sets out the mechanisms used to engage all concerned in the plan-making process. It also provides specific details about the consultation process that took place on the pre-submission version of the Plan (October to December 2022). It captures the key issues in a proportionate way and is then underpinned by more detailed appendices. It is a very good example of a Consultation Statement.
- 4.3 Section 2 of the Statement sets out details of the comprehensive range of consultation events and activities that were carried out in relation to the initial stages of the Plan. Feedback from key events is included in Appendices 1-3. The Statement describes how the process continued through the Covid pandemic in 2020/2021.
- 4.4 The Statement also provides details of the way in which APC engaged with statutory bodies. I am satisfied that the process has been proportionate and robust.
- 4.5 Appendix 4 of the Statement respectively provide details about the comments received during the consultation process from statutory bodies and the wider community at the pre-submission version of the Plan. It identifies the principal changes that worked their way through into the submission version. This process helps to describe the evolution of the Plan.
- 4.6 I am satisfied that consultation has been an important element of the Plan's production. Advice on the neighbourhood planning process has been made available to the community in a positive and direct way by those responsible for the Plan's preparation.
- 4.7 From all the evidence provided to me as part of the examination, I am satisfied that APC sought to engage with residents, statutory bodies and the development industry as the Plan has been prepared.

Representations Received

- 4.8 Consultation on the submitted plan was undertaken by WBC and ended on 23 June 2023. This exercise generated comments from the following organisations:
- Natural England
 - Historic England
 - Thames Water
 - Southern Water

- Surrey County Council
- Merchant Seaman's War Memorial Society/Thakenham Homes
- Waverley Borough Council

4.9 Representations were also received from residents in the parish.

4.10 I have taken account of the various representations as part of the examination of the Plan. Where it is appropriate to do so, I make specific reference to the individual representations in Section 7 of this report.

5 The Neighbourhood Area and the Development Plan Context

The Neighbourhood Area

- 5.1 The neighbourhood area consists of the parish of Alfold. Its population in 2011 was 1059 persons living in 515 houses. It was designated as a neighbourhood area on 3 December 2019. It is situated between Milford (to the north and west) and Horsham (to the east) in the Surrey/Sussex Weald between the North and South Downs upland areas.
- 5.2 Alfold is a dispersed village. The Greensand Way runs north of the village along the Greensand Ridge and two key roads form the spine of the Parish; the A281 (Guildford to Horsham) and the B2133 (Alfold to Ashington). Its key feature is its relative isolation from nearby larger settlements.
- 5.3 There are two separate settlements in the neighbourhood area. The first is the historic village centre. The second is Alfold Crossways to the north of the village centre. The remainder of the parish is attractive countryside.

Development Plan Context

- 5.4 The Waverley Local Plan Part 1 (Strategic Policies and Sites) was adopted by WBC in February 2018. It includes a spatial strategy showing the level of development that will be delivered in the Borough to 2032 and how it will be distributed. It includes strategic policies on a range of issues, including transport, housing and employment and infrastructure. It also includes a series of strategic site allocations for developments.
- 5.5 Policy SP2: Spatial Strategy of the Plan seeks to avoid major development on land of the highest amenity and landscape value, such as the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and to safeguard the Green Belt; and to focus development at the four main settlements (Farnham, Godalming, Haslemere and Cranleigh). In terms of the neighbourhood area, it allows limited levels of development in/around other villages (including Alfold), whilst recognising that such villages not within Surrey Hills AONB or Green Belt offer more scope for growth. Policy AH1 continues this approach and identifies the need for new housing development across the Borough. It identifies the need for 125 new homes in Alfold (not including Dunsfold Aerodrome).
- 5.6 The following other policies in the Plan are particularly relevant to the submitted Plan:
- Policy ALH1 establishes housing requirements for main settlements and parishes across the Borough. This includes a requirement for 125 new homes in Alfold Parish (excluding Dunsfold Aerodrome) to be delivered over the period 2013-2032;
 - Policy ST1 supports the delivery of active and sustainable transport measures as part of new development;
 - Policy ICS1 seeks to deliver new infrastructure to support new development. It also resists the loss of key services and facilities;

- Policies AHN1 – AHN4 establish the requirements for affordable housing and mix of housing types and sizes to meet housing needs;
- Policies EE1 and EE2 seek to protect existing employment sites and support the provision of new employment related development. In areas such as Alfold, policy seeks to support and promote a strong rural economy;
- Policy TCS3 supports the provision of small-scale local facilities in neighbourhood and village centres to meet local needs as well as resisting the loss of existing facilities;
- Policy LRC1 seeks to retain existing open space, leisure, and recreation facilities, and require new provision in line with established standards;
- Policies RE1 – RE3 seek to protect the quality and character of the landscape and areas of countryside outside defined settlement boundaries;
- Policy TD1 promotes high quality design that responds to local character, linked to which Policy HA1 seeks to protect the significance of heritage assets in the Borough;
- Policies NE1 – NE3 seek to conserve and enhance biodiversity, watercourses, and designated areas of significance; and
- Policies CC1 – CC4 support sustainable design and construction and help respond to the climate emergency, including the approach to development, flood risk and renewable energy.

5.7 The Local Plan Part 2 (Site Allocations and Development Management Policies) was adopted in March 2023. It contains detailed policies for development management purposes and allocates additional sites for housing in parts of the Borough. It also reviews the boundaries of the town centres and local landscape designations, and allocates sites for Gypsy and traveller accommodation.

5.8 The submitted Plan has been prepared within its wider development plan context. In doing so it has relied on up-to-date information and research that has underpinned previous and existing planning policy documents in the Borough. This is good practice and reflects key elements in Planning Practice Guidance on this matter.

Unaccompanied Visit

5.9 I visited the neighbourhood area on 3 August 2023. I approached from Milford to the north and west. This allowed me to understand its setting in the wider landscape and its restricted access to the strategic highways network.

5.10 I looked initially at Alfold Crossways. As the Plan describes, I saw the scale and significance of the recent development of new homes.

5.11 I then walked down Loxwood Road to the village centre. In doing so I looked at the four proposed local green spaces.

5.12 In the village I saw the role and popularity of the village shop/post office.

- 5.13 I took the time to look at St Nicholas Church and the attractive vernacular buildings in its immediate locality.
- 5.14 I then walked along Rosemary Lane up to Velhurst Farm so that I could appreciate the countryside to the west of the village. I saw the scale and significance of the wooded areas in this part of the parish.
- 5.15 I left the neighbourhood area along the B2133 to Loxwood and then to the A272. This provided me with another indication of the way in which it connected with the strategic road network and with other settlements in the surrounding area.

6 The Neighbourhood Plan and the Basic Conditions

6.1 This section of the report deals with the submitted neighbourhood plan as a whole and the extent to which it meets the basic conditions. The submitted Basic Conditions Statement has helped considerably in the preparation of this section of the report. It is a well-presented and informative document. It is also proportionate to the Plan itself.

6.2 As part of this process, I must consider whether the submitted Plan meets the Basic Conditions as set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. To comply with the basic conditions, the Plan must:

- have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
- contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
- be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan in the area;
- be compatible with European Union (EU) obligations and European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR); and
- not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

6.3 I assess the Plan against the basic conditions under the following headings.

National Planning Policies and Guidance

6.4 For the purposes of this examination the key elements of national policy relating to planning matters are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) issued in September 2023.

6.5 The NPPF sets out a range of core land-use planning issues to underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. The following are particularly relevant to the Alfold Neighbourhood Plan:

- a plan led system – in this case the relationship between the neighbourhood plan and the adopted Waverley Local Plan Parts 1 and 2;
- delivering a sufficient supply of homes;
- building a strong, competitive economy;
- recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving local communities;
- taking account of the different roles and characters of different areas;
- highlighting the importance of high-quality design and good standards of amenity for all future occupants of land and buildings; and
- conserving heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.

6.6 Neighbourhood plans sit within this wider context both generally, and within the more specific presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 13 of the NPPF indicates that neighbourhoods should both develop plans that support the strategic

needs set out in local plans and plan positively to support local development that is outside the strategic elements of the development plan.

- 6.7 In addition to the NPPF, I have also taken account of other elements of national planning policy including Planning Practice Guidance and relevant ministerial statements.
- 6.8 Having considered all the evidence and representations available as part of the examination, I am satisfied that the submitted Plan has had regard to national planning policies and guidance in general terms subject to the recommended modifications included in this report. It sets out a positive vision for the future of the neighbourhood area with a focus on improving the role and function of retail and service facilities and designating local green spaces. The Basic Conditions Statement maps the policies in the Plan against the appropriate sections of the NPPF.
- 6.9 At a more practical level, the NPPF indicates that plans should provide a clear framework within which decisions on planning applications can be made and that they should give a clear indication of how a decision-maker should react to a development proposal (paragraph 16d). This matter is reinforced in Planning Practice Guidance. Paragraph ID:41-041-20140306 indicates that policies in neighbourhood plans should be drafted with sufficient clarity so that a decision-maker can apply them consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications. Policies should also be concise, precise, and supported by appropriate evidence.
- 6.10 As submitted the Plan does not fully accord with this range of practical issues. Many of my recommended modifications in Section 7 relate to matters of clarity and precision. They are designed to ensure that the Plan has regard to national policy.

Contributing to sustainable development

- 6.11 There are clear overlaps between national policy and the way in which the submitted Plan contributes towards sustainable development. Sustainable development has three principal dimensions – economic, social, and environmental. The submitted Plan has set out to achieve sustainable development in the neighbourhood area. In the economic dimension, the Plan includes policies for residential development (Policy H1) and for retail facilities (Policy BT1). In the social dimension, it includes policies on health and well-being facilities (Policies HW1) and on educational facilities (Policy ED1). In the environmental dimension, the Plan positively seeks to protect its natural, built, and historic environment. It has specific policies on local green spaces (Policy GS1) and footpaths/rights of way (Policy TT2). APC has undertaken its own assessment of this matter in the submitted Basic Conditions Statement.

General conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan

- 6.12 I have already commented in detail on the development plan context in Waverley Borough in paragraphs 5.4 to 5.8 of this report.
- 6.13 I consider that the submitted Plan delivers a local dimension to this strategic context. The Basic Conditions Statement helpfully relates the Plan's policies to policies in the

development plan. Subject to the recommended modification in this report, I am satisfied that the submitted Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 6.14 The Neighbourhood Planning (General) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 require a qualifying body either to submit an environmental report prepared in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 or a statement of reasons explaining why an environmental report is not required.
- 6.15 In order to comply with this requirement WBC undertook a screening exercise (October 2020) on the need or otherwise for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to be prepared for the Plan. The report is thorough and well-constructed. As a result of this process, it concluded that the Plan is not likely to have any significant effects on the environment and accordingly would not require SEA.

Habitat Regulations Assessment

- 6.16 The screening statement also included a separate section on the need for a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the Plan. It concludes that the Plan is not likely to have significant environmental effects on a European nature conservation site or undermine their conservation objectives (either alone or in combination) and taking account of the precautionary principle. On this basis it concludes that Appropriate Assessment is not required.
- 6.17 The HRA report is both thorough and comprehensive. It advises that whilst the Alfold Neighbourhood Plan is within 10km of The Mens SAC and the Ebernoe Common SAC, it is considered unlikely that the Plan will give rise to any significant effects on these protected landscapes as it does not allocate any development sites. In terms of the Plan's impact on the Thames Basin Heaths SPA, Thursley, Hankley and Frensham Commons SPA and the Wealden Heaths Phases I and II SPA, it is considered unlikely that the proposals will have any significant effects on the protected sites as the Plan does not allocate sites. In the round, the HRA provides assurance to all concerned that the submitted Plan takes appropriate account of important ecological and biodiversity matters.
- 6.18 Having reviewed the information provided to me as part of the examination, I am satisfied that a proportionate process has been undertaken in accordance with the various regulations. In the absence of any evidence to the contrary, I am entirely satisfied that the submitted Plan is compatible with this aspect of the basic conditions.

Human Rights

- 6.19 In a similar fashion I am satisfied that the submitted Plan has had regard to the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and that it complies with the Human Rights Act. There is no evidence that has been submitted to me to suggest otherwise. In addition, there has been full and adequate opportunity for all interested parties to take part in the

preparation of the Plan and to make their comments known. Based on all the evidence available to me, I conclude that the submitted Plan does not breach, nor is in any way incompatible with the ECHR.

Summary

- 6.20 On the basis of my assessment of the Plan in this section of my report, I am satisfied that it meets the basic conditions subject to the incorporation of the recommended modifications contained in this report.

7 The Neighbourhood Plan policies

- 7.1 This section of the report comments on the policies in the Plan. It makes a series of recommended modifications to ensure that they have the necessary precision to meet the basic conditions.
- 7.2 The modifications focus on the policies themselves given that the basic conditions relate primarily to this aspect of neighbourhood plans. In some cases, I have also recommended modifications to the associated supporting text.
- 7.3 I am satisfied that the content and the form of the Plan is fit for purpose. It is distinctive and proportionate to the neighbourhood area. The wider community and APC have spent time and energy in identifying the issues and objectives that they wish to be included in their Plan. This sits at the heart of the localism agenda.
- 7.4 The Plan has been designed to reflect Planning Practice Guidance (ID:41-004-20190509) which indicates that neighbourhood plans must address the development and use of land. It also includes a series of Community Infrastructure projects.
- 7.5 I have addressed the policies in the order that they appear in the submitted plan. Where necessary I have identified the inter-relationships between the policies. I address the projects after the policies.
- 7.6 For clarity this section of the report comments on all the policies in the Plan.
- 7.7 Where modifications are recommended to policies they are highlighted in bold print. Any associated or free-standing modifications to the text of the Plan are set out in italic print.

The initial section of the Plan (Sections 1-4)

- 7.8 The initial parts of the Plan set the scene for the range of policies. They do so in a proportionate way. The Plan is presented in an effective fashion. It makes good use of well-selected maps. A very clear distinction is made between the policies and the supporting text. It also highlights the links between the Plan's objectives and its resultant policies.
- 7.9 Section 2 addresses the background to neighbourhood planning. It comments about how the Plan has been prepared and how it will be used. It defines the Plan period (in paragraph 2.1). Various maps of the neighbourhood area are included in the package of submission documents. However, no such map is included in the Plan itself. I recommend accordingly so that the Plan meets the prescribed matters as described in paragraph 2.6 of this report.

At the end of paragraph 2.1 add: 'The neighbourhood area is shown on Figure [insert number]'

Insert a map of the neighbourhood area in the Plan itself

- 7.10 Section 2 also comments about the way in which the community was engaged on the work on the Plan. It overlaps with the submitted Consultation Statement. This part of

the Plan also comments about the Vision and the Objectives. They are commendably distinctive to the neighbourhood area. The Vision is as follows:

'Alfold's Vision is to remain an attractive and desirable place to live, meeting the needs of all ages in a community seeking to provide a good quality of life for all residents in a rural village environment. The Neighbourhood Plan aims to sustain and shape a thriving, healthy and safe community, supported by appropriate infrastructure, including transport links, and offering a range of housing and employment opportunities, maintaining heritage assets, green areas, and access to the countryside.'

- 7.11 Section 3 provides a range of information about the neighbourhood area. Key elements of this analysis have underpinned the production of the Plan.
- 7.12 Section 4 comments about the planning policy context within which the Plan has been prepared. It addresses both national and WBC policies.
- 7.13 The remainder of this section of the report addresses each policy in turn in the context set out in paragraphs 7.5 to 7.7 of this report.

The Alfold Design Code

- 7.14 Several policies in the Plan are underpinned by the submitted Design Code. Through the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Neighbourhood Planning Programme led by Locality, AECOM was commissioned to provide design support to APC. The main objective of the resulting Code is to develop design guidelines that future development in Alfold can follow to retain and protect its special character. The design coding section of the document is organised around four bespoke Alfold design principles; In keeping with strong rural character; People focused; Harmonious diversity; and Sustainability and eco design.
- 7.15 In the round the Design Code is an excellent document. It provides a very bespoke local response to Section 12 of the NPPF.

ANP H1 Residential Development

- 7.16 This policy establishes a series of criteria for the development of new homes in the parish. The approach is underpinned by APC's assessment of the level of new housing which has been recently developed in the parish.
- 7.17 The policy takes a positive approach to this matter. It acknowledges the need for development within the two settlement boundaries as defined in Part 1 of the Local Plan. I am also satisfied that the criteria in the policy are locally-distinctive.
- 7.18 I recommend detailed modifications to the wording used in the policy and the deletion of the unnecessary Part 1.2 of the policy. Otherwise, the policy meets the basic conditions. It will contribute to the delivery of each of the three dimensions of sustainable development.

In the initial part of the policy replace 'applications' with 'proposals' and 'will need to' with 'should'

Delete part 1.2 of the policy.

ANP H2 Housing Type and Mix

- 7.19 This policy complements the approach taken in Policy H1. It comments about the type of houses which should be included in development proposals. The first and second parts comment about the mix of house sizes. The third part seeks to retain one- and two-bedroom homes. The fourth part comments about the design of new homes and the Design Code. The final part of the policy offers support to specialist accommodation for older people.
- 7.20 The approach taken is distinctive to the parish and reflects the range of housing and social issues which are addressed in the supporting text. However, in several cases the policy is unclear in terms of the way in which it would be delivered through the development management process. In other cases, elements of the policy conflict one with the other.
- 7.21 I recommend the following package of modifications to remedy these matters as follows:
- the combination of the first and four parts of the policy to achieve consistency;
 - the inclusion of a replacement Table 1 as proposed by APC in its response to the clarification note;
 - a simplification of the language used; and
 - the relocation of explanatory text into the supporting text.
- 7.22 Otherwise, the policy meets the basic conditions. It will contribute to the delivery of each of the social and the environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

Replace the first and second parts of the policy with:

‘Proposals for residential development should include a mix of housing types that reflect the scale, grain and character of surrounding dwellings and respect neighbouring residential amenity and respond positively to the Alfold Design Code. Subject to viability, new development should also contribute towards delivery of the mix of housing sizes given in Table T1.’

Replace the third part of the policy with: ‘Insofar as planning permission is required, planning development proposals that would result in the overall loss of 1- or 2-bedroom homes will not be supported.’

Delete the fourth part of the policy.

In the fifth part of the policy delete: ‘including smaller homes that offer opportunities for downsizing, such as bungalows,’

Replace Table 1 with that included in APC’s response to the clarification note.

At the end of paragraph 5.24 add: ‘Policy H2 addresses this important matter. Its first criterion requires a housing mix which reflects the character of the immediate locality and which meets local needs. Proposals for a mix that significantly departs from that

in Table T1 (on local needs) should be supported by information that demonstrates the way in which meeting local need and/or the extent to which it has been informed by viability issues.'

ANP H3 Affordable Housing

- 7.23 This policy addresses affordable housing. In doing so it responds to the national agenda on First Homes. It includes other elements about the way in which affordable housing should be incorporated within overall housing developments.
- 7.24 In the round the policy takes a positive approach to this matter. I recommend modifications to the first and second parts of the policy to ensure that the approach taken is complementary to that being taken by WBC throughout the Borough. I also recommend consequential modifications to the supporting text. Otherwise, the policy meets the basic conditions. It will contribute to the delivery of the social and the environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

Replace the first and second parts of the policy with:

'All qualifying developments should provide First Homes at a discount of 30%.

All affordable housing, including First Homes, should be integrated into the design and layout of the overall proposal and be of an equal quality in terms of its design and use of materials to its open market housing element.'

Replace paragraph 5.28 with: 'In respect of the Government's 'First Homes' scheme, Alfold will follow national guidance and local policy. It is noted that Waverley BC is applying a 30% discount and prioritising the provision of social rented housing, and this will therefore apply in Alfold. For clarity, the Parish Council notes that proposals offering First Homes at a discount of greater than 30% are permitted, and this level of discount would be supported subject to the development also delivering the full range of affordable housing tenures.'

ANP H4 Allocation of Affordable Housing

- 7.25 The policy comments that APC will seek to prioritise affordable housing for those with a local connection to the Parish, by working with WBC (as allocating authority) and other stakeholders to achieve this ambition.
- 7.26 In its response to the clarification note APC commented that:

'(it) acknowledges that this policy may not be strictly seen as a land use policy. It was the subject of considerable debate in the drafting stages of the Plan, and it was finally agreed to include it to reflect the strength of local opinion that affordable housing should be made available as a priority to people with a local connection to Alfold (Appendix J, Q19). Inclusion in the Housing Theme was felt to be the best 'fit'. However, we also acknowledge representations by Waverley BC which correctly outline the 'Choice Based Lettings system' operated by the Borough Council, and clearly APC is not in a position to change that in the NDP. Our intention behind Policy H4 was to encourage the allocation system to go beyond those with a connection to the Borough to those

with a connection to the Parish. WBC's representation is that this is in conflict with the Choice Based Lettings/Homes England regulations.'

- 7.27 I have considered the matter very carefully. It addresses an important local need. However, it is not a land use matter. As such, I recommend that it is deleted. Given its importance to APC I recommend that the issue is included as an additional matter in Section 9 of the Plan which addresses non-planning matters.

Delete the policy

Delete the final two sentences of paragraph 5.30

ANP BT1 Retail and Service Facilities

- 7.28 This policy seeks to safeguard the retail and service facilities in the parish. It has three principal elements. The first is that proposals for the provision of new small-scale retail and service facilities (Use Classes E(a), E(b) and E(c)) will be supported if they complement and support the vitality and viability of existing retail and service facilities within the Neighbourhood Plan Area. The second advises that Alfold Post Office is classified as Use Class F2(a). It then advises that proposals for change of use will not be supported unless a replacement, of equal or better quality, is provided within the vicinity of the existing premises. It also comments that proposals that would result in the loss of the Post Office will need evidence to be submitted to demonstrate that ongoing use is not economically viable. The third is that insofar as planning permission is required proposals involving the loss of any retail, financial and professional services and food and drink units (Use Classes E(a), E(b) and E(c)) will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that the continuing use of the property concerned for such uses is either demonstrably unviable or the proposed new use would offer an equal or greater community benefit to the village itself. It also comments that changes of use to residential use will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.
- 7.29 I looked at the various facilities carefully during the visit. I saw their inherent importance. I saw the community's specific use of the Post Office. I also appreciated that this importance was heightened due to the relative isolation of the parish from larger settlements which provide similar and higher-level services.
- 7.30 In general terms I am satisfied that the policy is appropriate to the parish. I recommend a series of modification to ensure that the policy has the clarity required by the NPPF as follows:
- a recasting of the second part of the policy which includes the relocation of unnecessary explanation of its Use Class into the supporting text;
 - the combination of the overlapping third and fourth parts of the policy;
 - the deletion of the connection between the fifth part of the policy and the delivery of new housing in the parish.
- 7.31 Otherwise the policy meets the basic conditions. It will contribute to the delivery of each of the three dimensions of sustainable development.

Replace the second part the policy with:

‘Proposals for change of use of the Alfold Post Office will not be supported unless a replacement, of equal or better quality, is provided within the vicinity of the existing premises. Proposals that would result in the loss of the Post Office should be accompanied by evidence about the extent to which it remains economically viable and substantiated through appropriate evidence of market testing.’

Replace the third and fourth parts of the policy with:

‘Proposals for the development of new retail or service facilities should respond positively to the scale and grain of the existing built form as expressed in the Alfold Design Code. Wherever practicable, proposals for new development, including change of use to new retail and service facilities should retain or create active street frontages.’

Relace the final sentence of the fifth part of the policy with:

‘Proposals for the change of use of retail, financial and professional services and food and drink units to residential accommodation will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.’

ANP BT2 Employment Sites

- 7.32 The policy seeks to promote appropriate commercial development. It comments that proposals that create new employment development (Use Class B2, B8 and E(g)) and opportunities, including the intensification of existing employment sites, will be supported subject to their compliance with a series of criteria. The second part of the policy addresses proposals which would involve the loss of business uses.
- 7.33 The policy takes a positive approach to this matter and has regard to Section 4 of the NPPF. I recommend the following modifications to bring the clarity required by the NPPF and to allow WBC to apply its contents in a consistent way:
- the deletion of the initial sentence of the first part of the policy as the delivery of employment opportunities specifically for local people is not a land use matter;
 - detailed changes to the wording used; and
 - the deletion of the connection between the second part of the policy and the delivery of new housing in the parish.
- 7.34 Otherwise, the policy meets the basic conditions. It will contribute to the delivery of the economic dimension of sustainable development.

Delete the first sentence of the first part of the policy

In part 1.6 replace ‘adversely’ with ‘unacceptably’

Replace the final sentence of the second part of the policy with: ‘Proposals for the change of use of business and commercial premises to residential accommodation will only be supported in exceptional circumstances.’

ANP BT3 Home Workers

- 7.35 This policy continues the approach in Policy BT2. It advises that insofar as planning permission is required, proposals which would assist home working will be supported subject to a series of criteria.
- 7.36 The policy takes a positive approach to this important matter. It will contribute to the delivery of the economic and social dimensions of sustainable development. It meets the basic conditions.

ANP BT4 Tourism

- 7.37 The policy offers support for the provision of visitor facilities and associated hospitality businesses which are sympathetic to a rural environment, and where they comply with other development plan policies. It also advises that such proposals must have regard to the Design Code. Finally, it comments that all tourism-related development proposals must demonstrate quantifiable benefits for both visitors and residents including making a positive contribution to local infrastructure.
- 7.38 I recommend that the first and second parts of the policy are combined to bring the clarity required by the NPPF. In the third part of the policy, I recommend the replacement of the ‘quantifiable benefits’ element with one which requires proposals to incorporate measures to encourage sustainable travel and, where appropriate, contribute to the delivery of projects identified in Chapter 9 of the Plan. Otherwise, the policy meets the basic conditions. It will contribute to the delivery of the economic dimension of sustainable development.

Replace the policy with:

‘Proposals for visitor facilities and associated hospitality businesses will be supported where they are sympathetic to the rural environment and respond positively to the Alfold Design Code.

In addition, proposals for visitor facilities and associated hospitality businesses should incorporate measures to encourage sustainable travel and, where appropriate, contribute to the delivery of projects identified in Chapter 9 of the Plan.’

ANP GS1 Local Green Space Designations

- 7.39 The policy proposes the designation of four local green spaces (LGSs). The details of each of the proposed LGSs are set out in Table T2, which includes their compliance with the three criteria in paragraph 102 of the NPPF.
- 7.40 On the basis of all the information available to me, including my own observations, I am satisfied that the proposed LGSs comply with the three tests in paragraph 102 of the NPPF. The proposed LGSs at Jubilee Pond (LGS3) and the Village Green (LGS4)

are precisely the type of green spaces which the authors of the NPPF would have had in mind in preparing national policy.

7.41 In addition, I am satisfied that the proposed designation of the four LGSs would accord with the more general elements of paragraph 101 of the NPPF. Firstly, I am satisfied that their designation is consistent with the local planning of sustainable development. They do not otherwise prevent sustainable development coming forward in the neighbourhood area and no such development has been promoted or suggested. Secondly, I am satisfied that the LGSs are capable of enduring beyond the end of the Plan period. Indeed, they are an established element of the local environment and, in most cases, have existed in their current format for many years. In addition, no evidence was brought forward during the examination that would suggest that the proposed LGSs would not endure beyond the end of the Plan period.

7.42 The policy takes the matter-of-fact approach as set out in paragraph 103 of the NPPF. I am satisfied that it meets the basic conditions. It will contribute to the delivery of the social and the environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

ANP DS1 Dark Skies

7.43 The policy seeks to safeguard the dark skies environment in the parish. It does so in a positive fashion. The policy is supported by technical information in the supporting text.

7.44 I recommend that the reference to IDA in the policy is explained. I also recommend that other similar standards should also be considered as appropriate.

7.45 I recommend that the second part of the policy is modified so that it comments about what would be supported rather than the methods of lighting which should be avoided. I also recommend consequential modifications to the supporting text. Finally, I recommend that the third part of the policy is deleted. This reflects that it explains the way in which the policy will be applied rather than establishing a land use policy. In addition, the matter is already addressed in paragraph 6.12 of the Plan. Otherwise, the policy meets the basic conditions. It will contribute to the delivery of the social and the environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

In the first part of the policy replace 'IDA' with 'International Dark Sky Association or an equivalent organisation'

Replace the second part of the policy with: 'Where lighting is required in the public realm for the safety of pedestrians and cyclists, innovative approaches, including motion sensitive lighting, solar cat-eyes, and ground level lighting, should be used to deliver appropriate levels of lighting necessary for public safety.'

Delete the third part of the policy

At the end of paragraph 6.11 add: 'Policy ANP DS1 comments about the type of lighting which will be supported. Traditional street lighting shall be avoided.'

ANP PSC1 Protect dispersed rural settlement character

- 7.46 This is an important policy in the wider context of the parish. It comments that development proposals must have regard to the Design Code and demonstrate no adverse impact on any aspect of 'Local Character' as set out in the Code, in particular avoiding urbanisation of the open countryside or adverse impacts on the setting of the Surrey Hills AONB. It also advises that development proposals should protect the rural character, landscape, history, scale, dispersal, and sense of place of Alfold, Alfold Crossways, and Stovolds Hill as free-standing, distinctive places.
- 7.47 The policy has been well-considered and reflects the character and nature of the parish. In this wider context, I recommend a series of modifications to bring the clarity required by the NPPF and allow WBC to apply the policy in a clear and consistent way as follows:
- the inclusion of a proportional element in the first part of the policy;
 - a reconfiguration of the second part of the policy;
 - the deletion of the very subjective reference to the perception of coalescence in the third part of the policy; and
 - general modifications to the wording used throughout the policy.
- 7.48 Otherwise, the policy meets the basic conditions. It will contribute to the delivery of the social and the environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

Replace the first part of the policy with:

'As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should have regard to the Alfold Design Code and demonstrate that they do not have an unacceptable impact on any aspect of 'Local Character' as set out in the Code, in particular avoiding urbanisation of the open countryside or any unacceptable impacts on the setting of the Surrey Hills AONB.'

Replace the second part of the policy with:

'Development proposals should respond positively to the rural character, landscape, history, scale, dispersal and sense of place and free-standing, distinctive nature of Alfold, Alfold Crossways, and Stovolds Hill

In the third part of the policy delete 'or the perception of coalescence'

ANP BD1 Biodiversity in New Developments

- 7.49 This is a comprehensive and positive policy on biodiversity. It incorporates an assessment of the Design Code and the 2021 Environment Act. The supporting text comments that it has been designed to be consistent and complementary with Waverley's Local Plan Policies (especially Policies NE1 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation and NE2 Green and Blue Infrastructure).
- 7.50 I recommend detailed modifications to the wordings of the third, fourth and fifth parts of the policy so that they are more applicable to the development management process and sit within the context of the first part of the policy.

- 7.51 I also recommend the deletion of the final part of the policy as it is a statement of intent rather than a land use policy. Otherwise, the policy meets the basic conditions. It will contribute to the delivery of the social and the environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

Replace the third part of the policy with: ‘Wherever practicable, development proposals should include existing trees and hedgerows in their layouts, incorporating them within green areas, open spaces and alongside walking and cycling routes, in accordance with the principles in the Alfold Design Code.’

Replace the fourth part of the policy with: ‘Where new green infrastructure is to be provided, it should provide connectivity for wildlife through and around development and should be functional wildlife habitat.’

Replace the fifth part of the policy with: ‘Where landscaping is to be provided, it should incorporate native species appropriate to the area wherever practicable.’

Delete the sixth part of the policy.

ANP BD2 Improving the Existing Environment

- 7.52 This policy comments about development proposals by landowners to enhance the natural environment and planting on their properties. Its second part offers support for the designation of new Local Nature Reserves (LNRs).
- 7.53 I recommend that the first part of the policy is simplified by the deletion of any direct reference to landowners and to acknowledge that some such proposals may be permitted development.
- 7.54 I recommend the deletion of the second part of the policy. Whilst LNRs will play a valuable role in the promotion of biodiversity, the policy acknowledges that their designation is not as land use matter. Otherwise, the policy meets the basic conditions. It will contribute to the delivery of the social and the environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

Replace the first part of the policy with:

‘Insofar as planning permission is required, development proposals to enhance the natural environment and planting, to adopt sustainable management practices, to preserve and extend ecological networks such as ‘green corridors’ and the management and development of areas of public space (including designated Green Spaces and Public Rights of Way) will be supported. ‘

Delete the second part of the policy.

ANP WA1 Wey & Arun Canal

- 7.55 This is a comprehensive policy on the Wey & Arun Canal. Paragraph 6.38 of the Plan (as supplemented by Figure 5) provides a very helpful context to the policy as follows:

‘The Wey & Arun Canal (which opened 1816 and closed in 1871) is being actively restored by the Wey and Arun Canal Trust. The route of the former canal runs for

8.5km through Alfold Parish from south-west to north-east, and includes two sections now back in water and being close to coming into active recreational use. Land ownership along the route is diverse, and in several places presents a barrier to reconnecting sections of the former canal. In addition, and although rights to towpath use can be a challenge, this former transport corridor does provide potential recreational, active transport and health benefits to the community as well as tourist potential.'

7.56 In the round the policy takes a positive approach to this matter. In summary it:

- offers support to the restoration of the Canal;
- seeks to ensure that adjacent proposals so not affect its wider integrity; and
- seeks to ensure that appropriate access is secured to the Canal.

7.57 In this broader context I recommend that the policy acknowledges that its effect is only within the parish. I also recommend a detailed modification to the fifth part of the policy so that its emphasis is shifted from a cost and inconvenience approach (which is not planning-related) to one which seeks to retain the integrity of the wider restoration of the Canal along its route. I also recommend that the Canal is capitalised throughout the policy. Otherwise, the policy meets the basic conditions. It will contribute to the delivery of each of the three dimensions of sustainable development.

After 'Wey & Arun Canal' in the opening part of the policy add 'in the parish'

Throughout the policy replace 'canal' with 'Canal'

In the fifth part of the policy replace 'to ensure that future restoration of the canal will be no more difficult or costly than at present' with 'to ensure the wider integrity of the future restoration of the Canal'

ANP HW1 Health, Wellbeing & Leisure

7.58 This is a comprehensive policy on health and well-being facilities. It responds positively to the various issues and emerging proposals in paragraphs 7.4 to 7.21 of the supporting text.

7.59 I recommend modifications to the first two parts of the policy so that their wording will have the clarity required by the NPPF. I recommend a modification to the wording used in the third part of the policy to acknowledge that its ambitions may not always be practicable. I recommend that the fourth and fifth parts of the policy are recast. Whilst their overall purpose remains unchanged, the wording used will allow their consistent application by WBC through the development management process. I recommend that the fourth part of the policy is worded so that it can be applied in a proportionate way. Plainly individual proposals will present different abilities to connect to the cycle and footpath networks in the parish.

7.60 Otherwise, the policy meets the basic conditions. It will contribute to the delivery of the social and the environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

Replace the first and second parts of the policy with:

‘Proposals to provide a facility for use by health services and associated agencies will be supported.

Proposals to provide inclusive facilities for sport and leisure purposes, including an extension to the Village Hall, will be supported.’

At the beginning of 3.1 add: ‘wherever practicable,’

Replace the fourth part of the policy with:

‘Proposals for outdoor sports and leisure facilities will be supported where they do not have an unacceptable impact on residential amenity, including using artificial lighting, or diminish the sense of separation between settlements. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, proposals should include provision for safe and direct walking and cycling routes, enabling access for all.’

Replace the fifth part of the policy with:

‘Proposals that have an unacceptable impact on existing leisure facilities will not be supported. This includes proposals which would have an unacceptable effect on the amenity of those facilities, for example by generating noise, dust or affecting air quality.’

ANP ED1 Education facilities

- 7.61 The policy offers support for accessible pre-school, and school facilities. It responds to the social and educational issues set out in the supporting text. A key element is that the village does not have any mainstream educational facilities apart from a day care nursery on the nearby Dunsfold Park.
- 7.62 I am satisfied that the first part of the policy meets the basic conditions. I recommend the deletion of the unnecessary explanatory elements (and the likely delivery bodies) from the second part of the policy. Otherwise, it meets the basic conditions. It will contribute to the delivery of the social dimension of sustainable development.

Replace the second part of the policy with:

‘Proposals for the development of a primary school within walking distance of the majority of the parish population will be supported, subject to compliance with other policies in the development plan.’

ANP TT1 Sustainable Public Transport

- 7.63 This is a comprehensive policy on the relationship between new development and public transport.
- 7.64 I sought advice from APC on the extent to which the policy added value to national and local planning policies. In its response to the clarification note it commented that:

‘Our rationale behind this Policy (Point 1 in particular) is to emphasise the particular issues that Alfold has in respect of (lack of) Public Transport. These, we believe, go

beyond what National and Local Policy is likely to provide in terms of local solutions. If however, the Examiner feels that it does not sufficiently add to national and local policies, we would be open to suggestions as to how to re-word it

The third part of the policy (400m walking distance to a bus stop) was defined based on advice from our technical consultants. It is widely accepted and recognised as a distance that residents are willing to walk to access bus services and support a mode shift to more sustainable forms of travel..... It is not a requirement that development must be located within 400m of a bus stop, but there is strong encouragement for this.'

- 7.65 I have considered the matter very carefully. On the balance of the evidence in the supporting text (including the isolated nature of the parish), I have concluded that the generality of the policy is both appropriate and locally distinctive. Nevertheless, to bring the clarity required by the NPPF I recommend a series of modifications to the wording used. The recommended modification to the first part of the policy includes an approach which would allow the policy to be applied in a proportionate way. The recommended modification to the fourth part of the policy reflects APC's comments and acknowledges that the approach to bus stops may not always be practicable. Otherwise, the policy meets the basic conditions. It will contribute to the delivery of the social dimension of sustainable development.

Replace the opening element of the first part of the policy with:

'As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, proposals for major development should incorporate measures (working in conjunction with Borough and County Council and public transport providers such as Hoppa) that support public transport including:'

In the second part of the policy replace 'must' with 'should'

Replace the third part of the policy with:

'Where practicable, residential areas should be designed so that all residents are within 400 metres or a five-minute walk time of a bus stop.'

ANP TT2 Footpaths, Cycleways and Public Rights of Way

- 7.66 This is a comprehensive policy on rights of way. It supports the development of new rights of way. In addition, it sets out the Plan's requirements for the way in which new residential development is accessible to and from existing rights of way.
- 7.67 In a general sense, the policy takes a positive response to this matter. Plainly it is important that any new housing connects into the wider pedestrian network in the parish and can be incorporated into the wider community.
- 7.68 I recommend that the first, third and fourth parts of the policy are modified so that their wording has the clarity required by the NPPF, and so that they can be applied in a proportionate way. Otherwise, the policy meets the basic conditions. It will contribute to the delivery of the social dimension of sustainable development.

Replace the first part of the policy with:

‘As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, proposals for residential development should incorporate new or improved infrastructure for walking and cycling that support active travel. This includes making suitable connections with existing walking and cycling routes, the Wey and Arun Canal and public rights of way. Where practicable, residential proposals internally should provide safe pedestrian connections with existing communities and recreation areas.’

Replace the third part of the policy with:

‘Development proposals which would unacceptably affect existing public rights of way will not be supported unless appropriate and suitable replacement, diversion or improvement measures are incorporated into their overall design and layout.’

Replace the opening element of the fourth part of the policy with:

‘Development proposals should ensure that walking and cycling routes are safe and attractive for all to use and, as appropriate to their scale, nature, and location, comply with the following criteria:’

ANP TT3 Road Safety and Amenity

- 7.69 The policy comments about road safety. It has two elements. The first comments that proposals for development which include appropriate mitigation measures that contribute towards traffic safety and speed reduction will be supported. The second is proposals for the design of the public realm, and specifically roads, streets, footpaths, and associated verge areas must have regard to the relevant sections of the Design Code.
- 7.70 The policy is well considered. The first part meets the basic conditions. I recommend a detailed modification to the second part of the policy to bring the clarity required by the NPPF. Otherwise, the policy meets the basic conditions. It will contribute to the delivery of the social and environmental dimension of sustainable development.

In the second part of the policy replace ‘must’ with ‘should’

ANP TT4 Movement Corridors

- 7.71 This policy comments that proposals that create or enhance movement corridors, both historic and newly-created, will be supported. It also advises that this approach includes restoration of the Wey and Arun Canal corridor (Policy ANP WA1) as a multi-user corridor, its potential connection to the Downs Link just beyond the Parish Boundary and new off-road active travel corridors to Cranleigh, Dunsfold Park, Godalming and Guildford.
- 7.72 The first part of the policy meets the basic conditions. I recommend a modification to the second part of the policy to bring the clarity to its wording as required by the NPPF and to acknowledge that the implementation of proposals in the Infrastructure Plan will not always need planning permission. Otherwise, the policy meets the basic

conditions. It will contribute to the delivery of the social and environmental dimension of sustainable development.

Replace the second part of the policy with:

‘Insofar as planning permission is required, proposals which would deliver elements of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan will be supported. Proposals which would restrict or preclude future transport options in these movement corridors will not be supported.’

ANP DC1 Digital Connectivity

- 7.73 This is a comprehensive policy on digital connectivity. It has three related parts. The first comments that proposals that improve mobile phone signals in the whole Parish will be supported. The second comments that proposals that improve broadband connections for any areas with a poor service will be supported. The third comments that the location and design of any above-ground network installations should be sympathetically chosen to not adversely affect the character of the local area, reflecting guidance and principles contained in the Design Code.
- 7.74 I recommend that the first and second parts of the policy are combined into a single element. In doing so, I recommend that they have a broader effect rather than concentrating on areas of poor connection for broadband or to ensure that improved access to the mobile network applies across the parish.
- 7.75 The fourth part of the policy has now been overtaken by the introduction of Part R of the Building Regulation (in December 2023). As such, I recommend the deletion of this part of the policy and the inclusion of additional supporting text to explain the situation. Otherwise, the policy meets the basic conditions. It will contribute to the delivery of each of the three dimensions of sustainable development.

Replace the first and second parts of the policy with: ‘Insofar as planning permission is required, proposals that improve mobile phone signals and broadband connections will be supported.’

Delete the fourth part of the policy.

At the end of paragraph 8.31 add: ‘As the Plan was being prepared the introduction of Part R of the Building Regulation in December 2022 has set out national requirements for the provision of broadband access to new buildings.’

Community Infrastructure Projects

- 7.76 Section 9 of the Plan highlights a series of community infrastructure projects. They are non-land use issues which have naturally arisen during the plan-preparation stage. They are included in a separate part of the Plan as advised by national policy. I am satisfied that they are both appropriate and distinctive to the neighbourhood area. The following Projects are particularly noteworthy within the wider context of the Plan:

- Cycle Link to Cranleigh;
- Pre-School;

- Primary School;
- Local Nature Reserves;
- Health Resource Hub;
- Outdoor Gym; and
- Provision of Allotments

7.77 I recommend the inclusion of an additional element into this part of the Plan to respond to the recommended deletion of Policy H4. I also recommend that this part of the Plan refers to the Waverley Infrastructure Delivery Plan and the associated Delivery Schedule (July 2021).

After the list of Projects add:

'In addition to the infrastructure projects listed above the Parish Council will constructively engage with the Borough Council and other stakeholders to find ways in which those with a local connection to the Parish can be given priority in the allocation of affordable homes.

The Parish Council will also work collaboratively with the Borough Council to deliver the Waverley Infrastructure Delivery Plan and the associated Delivery Schedule (July 2021).'

Monitoring and Review

7.78 The Plan is in the fortunate place of being produced within the context of an up-to-date development plan. Nevertheless, it addresses its monitoring and review in a positive way.

Other matters - General

7.79 This report has recommended a series of modifications both to the policies and to the text in the submitted Plan. Where consequential changes to the text are required directly as a result of my recommended modification to the policy concerned, I have highlighted them in this report. However other changes to the general text may be required elsewhere in the Plan as a result of the recommended modifications to the policies. It will be appropriate for WBC and APC to have the flexibility to make any necessary consequential changes to the general text. I recommend accordingly.

Modification of general text (where necessary) to achieve consistency with the modified policies.

Other Matters- Specific

7.80 The Plan comments helpfully about the way in which APC will seek to use its element of Community Infrastructure level funding to assist in the wider delivery of the Plan. This is a positive approach. WBC suggests that the references to 'Local CIL' throughout the Plan are replaced by 'Neighbourhood CIL'. APC has responded

positively to this refinement in its response to the clarification note. I recommend accordingly

Throughout the Plan replace the references to 'Local CIL' with 'Neighbourhood CIL'

8 Summary and Conclusions

Summary

- 8.1 The Plan sets out a range of policies to guide and direct development proposals in the period up to 2032. It is distinctive in addressing a specific set of issues that have been identified and refined by the wider community.
- 8.2 Following the independent examination of the Plan, I have concluded that the Alfold Neighbourhood Development Plan meets the basic conditions for the preparation of a neighbourhood plan subject to a series of recommended modifications.

Conclusion

- 8.3 On the basis of the findings in this report I recommend to Waverley Borough Council that subject to the incorporation of the modifications set out in this report the Alfold Neighbourhood Development Plan should proceed to referendum.

Referendum Area

- 8.4 I am required to consider whether the referendum area should be extended beyond the designated neighbourhood area. In my view, that area is entirely appropriate for this purpose and no evidence has been submitted to suggest that this is not the case. I therefore recommend that the Plan should proceed to referendum based on the neighbourhood area as approved by Waverley Borough Council on 3 December 2019.
- 8.5 I am grateful to everyone who has helped in any way to ensure that this examination has run in a smooth and efficient manner. APC's responses to the clarification note were both helpful and collaborative.

Andrew Ashcroft
Independent Examiner
19 September 2023