

**Arlesey Town Council**

# **Arlesey Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2031**



**Basic Conditions Statement**

**November 2016**

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# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Basic Conditions Statement has been produced to explain how the proposed Arlesey Neighbourhood Plan (ANP) has been prepared in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning General Regulations 2015 (as amended) and how the basic conditions of neighbourhood planning and other considerations as prescribed by Paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 have been considered to have been met.
- 1.2 The Statement addresses each of the four ‘basic conditions’ required of the Regulations and explains how the submitted Neighbourhood Plan meets the requirements of paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act.
- 1.3 The Regulations state that a Neighbourhood Plan will be considered to have met the basic conditions if:
- having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood development plan;
  - 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); and
  - the making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.

## Supporting documents and evidence

- 1.4 The ANP is supported by a Consultation Statement and this Basic Conditions Statement.

## Key statements

- 1.5 Arlesey Town Council is a qualifying body and entitled to submit a Neighbourhood Plan for its own parish. The ANP expresses policies that relate to the development and use of land only within the neighbourhood area.
- 1.6 The neighbourhood area is contiguous with the parish boundary, as shown in the map accompanying the neighbourhood area designation application.
- 1.7 The ANP covers the period from 2016 to 2031.
- 1.8 No provision for excluded development such as national infrastructure is contained within the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.9 The ANP does not relate to more than one neighbourhood area. It is solely related to the area of Arlesey as designated by Central Bedfordshire Council on 16 October 2014.
- 1.10 There are no other Neighbourhood Development Plans in place for the Arlesey neighbourhood area.

## 2 Conformity with National Planning Policy

2.1 It is required that the Arlesey Neighbourhood Plan (ANP) has appropriate regard to national planning policy. This is principally provided by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

### National Planning Policy Framework

2.2 The NPPF in sections 183-185 refers to Neighbourhood Development Plans and seeks that those plans have regard to the policies in the NPPF and to be in 'general conformity' with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. This phrasing is explained more clearly by the Localism Act which refers to the 'adopted Development Plan'.

2.3 This section demonstrates that the ANP has regard to relevant policies within the NPPF in relation to:

- Building a strong, competitive economy
- Ensuring the vitality of town centres
- Promoting sustainable transport
- Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes
- Supporting high quality communications infrastructure
- Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes
- Requiring good design
- Promoting healthy communities
- Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

2.4 The ANP has 18 principal objectives. We summarise them in Table 2.1 below and which NPPF goals each objective seeks to address.

2.5 Table 2.2 then provides a summary of how each policy in the ANP conforms specifically to the NPPF.

**Table 2.1: Assessment of ANP objectives against NPPF goals**

ANP Objective	Relevant NPPF Goal
The design of new housing should be in keeping with, and improve upon, good design in the parish, incorporating design features and styles from existing build.	Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes Requiring good design
The layout of new developments should allow for sufficient off-street parking in sight of properties, and should encourage the development of communities within communities by providing squares with safe play areas for children.	Promoting healthy communities Requiring good design Promoting healthy communities
New development should meet the needs of the community as a whole with affordable housing dispersed throughout the development rather than clustered together.	Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes
New development should help meet these aims by providing cycling and walking connectivity throughout the parish.	Promoting sustainable transport Promoting healthy communities
The current deficiency in car parking for residents and commuters should be alleviated by providing more than the minimum provision for development which borders the existing settlement boundary.	Ensuring the vitality of town centres
The road network should be enhanced to accommodate additional local traffic generated by new development, to encourage the movement of two-way traffic and to improve pedestrian and cycling safety.	Promoting sustainable transport Promoting healthy communities
Bus services should be improved to enable journeys, particularly within the parish, to be taken by modes other than car, and to be better synchronised with rail services.	Promoting sustainable transport
Existing green and open spaces should be retained and new ones provided to benefit the growing community.	Promoting healthy communities
Any new development should ensure that there is no increase in the risk of local flooding, and that sewerage treatment facilities have sufficient capacity to cope with the increase in population.	Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
New development should make provision for green streets and local habitats through the provision of grass areas, hedgerows, trees and front gardens.	Promoting healthy communities
Use good design practices to reduce the environmental impact of new development with particular attention to encouraging sustainable energy and pollution control.	Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

ANP Objective	Relevant NPPF Goal
To ensure that Arlesey remains a distinct settlement, separated physically and visually from neighbouring communities.	Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
The historic built environment should be protected for future generations and heritage features utilised in new build.	Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
To maximise leisure opportunities for all sectors of the community by preserving existing facilities and providing a range of new facilities to meet demand.	Promoting healthy communities
To deliver new and improved social facilities and amenities in appropriate locations to meet the needs of the community.	Promoting healthy communities
Support the development of small scale enterprises and other businesses that meet the needs of the community.	Building a strong, competitive economy Supporting high quality communications infrastructure
Recognise key retail areas and set out criteria to support the positive development of these areas.	Ensuring the vitality of town centres Building a strong, competitive economy

**Table 2.2: Assessment of how each policy in the ANP conforms to the NPPF**

No.	Policy Title and Reference	NPPF Reference (paragraph)	Commentary
1	ARL1: Settlement Boundary	17, 55, 109	Defines the settlement boundary to ensure consistency with the need to deliver housing and to protect the open countryside beyond the urban edge from inappropriate uses.
2	ARL2: Design of residential development	7, 9, 17, 56, 58, 60, 63, 64, 95	Seeks to ensure that housing development is not out of keeping with the design of surrounding housing, without stifling good or innovative design.
3	ARL3: Housing mix	7, 50, 54	Addresses the need for a mix of dwelling sizes – and particularly a greater proportion of smaller dwellings than has been delivered in the past – in order to provide for local needs.

No.	Policy Title and Reference	NPPF Reference (paragraph)	Commentary
4	ARL4: Provision for cycling and walking	17, 23, 29, 30, 35, 41	Seeks to improve access to key facilities within and beyond Arlesey and ensure that non-car users have alternative routes to the existing road network. Identifies specific routes to achieve this.
5	ARL5: Improvements to traffic pinch points	30, 32, 33, 36, 38	Seeks to ensure that developments do not have a cumulative severe impact on the highway network and permit safe access by pedestrians.
6	ARL6: Bus and community transport provision	17, 30, 35	Encourages the improvement of all types of public and community transport provision as a means of reducing car usage and the associated greenhouse gas emissions and congestion that is created.
7	ARL7: Off-street car parking in Arlesey	17, 35, 40	Seeks to protect the current levels of publicly available off-street parking in Arlesey, particularly along the High Street and Hitchin Road, in order to help alleviate traffic pinch point problems and to ensure the continuing vitality of the retail and service offer.
8	ARL8: Protection and maintenance of Local Green Spaces	7, 37, 73, 74, 76, 77, 109, 113	Makes use of the provision for making a designation and applies the site selection criteria.
9	ARL9: Public open space	7, 37, 73, 74	Seeks to protect existing public open space, ensuring that any re-provision addresses key criteria in terms of its accessibility, function and value to the community.
10	ARL10: Flood risk management	99, 100, 103	Seeks to ensure that development does not worsen the impacts from flooding and ensures that the flood attenuation network is protected.
11	ARL11: Listed Buildings and Buildings or Structures of Character	17, 126, 128, 136	Seeks to afford protection to the list of identified buildings and structures of character as identified in the Plan.
12	ARL12: Provision of sports facilities	7, 34, 37, 70, 73, 74	Seeks to protect against the loss of leisure facilities that are important to the well-being of residents in Arlesey.  Seeks to promote the provision of additional leisure facilities and ensure that they are provided sustainably in terms of their accessibility by the local community.

No.	Policy Title and Reference	NPPF Reference (paragraph)	Commentary
13	ARL13: Provision of community facilities	69, 70, 72,	Seeks to ensure that communities have an early involvement in the definition and phasing of additional community facilities.
14	ARL14: High speed broadband	42, 43	Seeks to ensure the expansion of electronic communications networks, in particular high speed broadband, in new developments within the parish.
15	ARL15: Local Retail	7, 9, 23, 56, 58	Seeks to protect and enhance the retail offering within Arlesey, including within the new proposed local centre, to prevent loss of units to uses that would affect the vitality and viability of the local centre.
16	ARL16: Small-scale commercial development	7, 17, 20, 21, 22, 28	<p>Seeks to protect commercial land and premises that is valuable in maintaining the vitality of the local economy.</p> <p>Strongly supports the provision of small-scale, start-up units which will address a growing need and opportunity for micro-businesses to flourish in Arlesey.</p>

### 3 Contribution Towards Sustainable Development

- 3.1 The NPPF states in paragraph 14 that a presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of the NPPF and ‘should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking.’
- 3.2 Table 3.1 below summarises how the objectives and policies in the ANP contribute towards sustainable development, as defined in the NPPF.

**Table 3.1: Assessment of ANP objectives and policies against sustainable development**

Deliver Economic Sustainability	
NPPF Definition – ‘Contribute to building a strong, responsive economy’	
<b>ANP Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the development of small scale enterprises and other businesses that meet the needs of the community</li> <li>• Recognise key retail areas and set out criteria to support the positive development of these areas</li> </ul>
<b>ANP Policies</b>	ARL14 High Speed Broadband ARL15 Local Retail Centre ARL16 Small-scale Commercial Development
<b>ANP Comments</b>	The ANP seeks to enhance the vitality and viability of the existing retail in the town ensuring that the new proposed ‘local centre’ complements this with a focus on providing space for retail units that meet existing and future local demand. The ANP also seeks to support existing businesses based in the parish, many of which are home-based, by ensuring that the right conditions are in place – especially relating to broadband availability – for them to flourish. Finally it places a focus on the expansion of micro-businesses and ensuring that their needs are catered for.

## Deliver Social Sustainability

### NPPF Definition – ‘Support strong vibrant and healthy communities’

<b>ANP Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that Arlesey remains a distinct settlement, separated physically and visually from neighbouring communities</li> <li>• New development should meet the needs of the community as a whole with affordable housing dispersed throughout the development rather than clustered together</li> <li>• The layout of new developments should allow for sufficient off-street parking in sight of properties, and should encourage the development of communities within communities by providing squares with safe play areas for children</li> <li>• The design of new housing should be in keeping with, and improve upon, good design in the parish, incorporating design features and styles from existing build</li> <li>• New development should help meet these aims by providing cycling and walking connectivity throughout the parish</li> <li>• Existing green spaces and open spaces should be retained and new ones provided to benefit the growing community</li> <li>• To maximise leisure opportunities for all sectors of the community by preserving existing facilities and providing a range of new facilities to meet demand</li> <li>• To deliver new and improved social facilities and amenities in appropriate locations to meet the needs of the community.</li> </ul>
<b>ANP Policies</b>	<p>ARL1 Settlement Boundary            ARL3 Housing Mix            ARL4 Provision for Cycling and Walking            ARL9 Public Open Space            ARL12 Provision of Sports Facilities            ARL13 Provision of Community Facilities</p>
<b>ANP Comments</b>	<p>The ANP seeks to maintain a thriving community within Arlesey, recognising that the community has certain social infrastructure needs (particularly in respect of leisure provision) that must be addressed. This it seeks to achieve by seeking to protect existing leisure assets, have early involvement in new ones proposed as part of Arlesey Cross and encouraging walking and cycling. It also seeks to maintain the character and vitality of the town which includes ensuring that Arlesey retains a green buffer between other nearby settlements. Housing meeting the needs of the local community is supported.</p>

## Deliver Environmental Sustainability

**NPPF Definition – ‘Contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment and mitigate and adapt to climate change’**

<p><b>ANP Objectives</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The design of new housing should be in keeping with, and improve upon, good design in the parish, incorporating design features and styles from existing build</li> <li>• The current deficiency in car parking for residents and commuters should be alleviated by providing more than the minimum provision for development which borders the existing settlement boundary.</li> <li>• The road network should be enhanced to accommodate additional local traffic generated by new development, to encourage the movement of two-way traffic and to improve pedestrian and cycling safety.</li> <li>• Bus services should be improved to enable journeys, particularly within the parish, to be taken by modes other than car, and to be better synchronised with rail services.</li> <li>• Any new development should ensure that there is no increase in the risk of local flooding, and that sewerage treatment facilities have sufficient capacity to cope with the increase in population.</li> <li>• Use good design practices to reduce the environmental impact of new development with particular attention to encouraging sustainable energy and pollution control.</li> <li>• The historic built environment should be protected for future generations and heritage features utilised in new build.</li> </ul>
<p><b>ANP Policies</b></p>	<p>ARL2 Design of Residential Development            ARL5 Improvements to Traffic Pinchpoints            ARL6 Bus and Community Transport Provision            ARL7 Off-street Car Parking in Arlesey            ARL8 Protection and Maintenance of Local Green Spaces            ARL10 Flood Risk Management            ARL11 Listed Buildings and Buildings or Structures of Character</p>
<p><b>ANP Comments</b></p>	<p>The ANP seeks to protect the character of Arlesey by requiring good design of new development and by designating certain spaces as local green spaces of importance to the local community. It seeks to reduce flood risk, avoid adverse impacts of flooding and places a focus on reducing traffic congestion and travel by the private car to reduce carbon emissions.</p>

3.3 As demonstrated in Table 3.1, the strategic objectives of the Neighbourhood Development Plan are considered to comprise a balance of social, economic and environmental goals.

3.4 Central Bedfordshire Council considered that a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) was not required because the ANP is not likely to have a significant impact upon the environment.

## 4 General Conformity with the Strategic Policies of the Development Plan

- 4.1 The development plan currently consists of the following:
- 2009 Central Bedfordshire Council Core Strategy and Development Management Policies
  - 2014 Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Luton Borough Councils Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Strategic sites and Policies
- 4.2 The policies of relevance are shown in Table 4.1 below, along with a consideration of whether they represent the strategic policies of the development plan. Where they do, consideration is made of whether the ANP is in general conformity with them.
- 4.3 Any policy that is not identified in Table 4.1 is not considered to be relevant to the ANP because the ANP does not have any policies that directly relate to it.
- 4.4 It is confirmed that there are no policies in the Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Luton Borough Councils Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Strategic sites and Policies that the ANP policies have any relevance to.

**Table 4.1: Relevant strategic policies in the 2009 Central Bedfordshire Council Core Strategy and Development Plan Documents**

Local Plan Policy	ANP Policy
<b>Core Strategy Policies</b>	
CS3: Healthy and Sustainable Communities	<p>Policy ARL2 seeks to ensure that new development is designed to be close to public transport routes, footpaths and cycle paths. Also that it incorporates green space for local communities and is designed to be safe.</p> <p>Policies ARL9, ARL12 and ARL13 seek to safeguard and, where necessary, upgrade, existing key services and facilities, as well as extending support for new facilities as Arlesey grows in the future.</p> <p>Policies ARL4 and ARL6 seek to improve the foot-, cycle path and public and community transport linkages between new development and key facilities within the parish to encourage sustainable modes of transport and to reduce social exclusion.</p> <p>Policy ARL8<sub>7</sub> in particular<sub>7</sub> safeguards areas of green space that are of particular importance to the community.</p>

Local Plan Policy	ANP Policy
CS4: Linking Communities – Accessibility and transport	<p>Policies ARL4 and ARL6 seek to improve access to key facilities both within and beyond the parish boundary, promoting alternatives to car usage.</p> <p>Policy ARL5 seeks to ensure that new developments do not place additional strain on the highway network so that congestion does not reach unacceptable levels and also facilitate safer access for pedestrians.</p> <p>Policy ARL7 seeks to retain off-street publicly accessible car parking in the parish, particularly along the High Street and Hitchin Road, to help tackle congestion caused by excessive on-street parking. Similarly Policy ARL2 seeks to ensure that new residential development provides adequate off-street parking to reduce on-street congestion.</p>
CS7: Affordable Housing	Policy ARL3 seeks to ensure that the identified local housing need for Arlesey is delivered via new developments.
CS9: Providing Jobs	Policy ARL14 seeks to ensure the expansion of electronic communications networks in the parish which in turn will support people working in the parish, including at home, thus supporting employment opportunities.
CS10: Location of Employment Sites	Policy ARL16 seeks to protect the existing employment base and promote further provision of small-scale start-up units to address the employment needs of a growing population.
CS12: Town Centres and Retailing	Policy ARL15 seeks to encourage the vitality and viability of the new local centre with a particular focus on providing small-scale retail units that will complement the existing retail offer in the parish.
CS13: Climate Change	Policy ARL10 actively seeks to address drainage and flooding issues, including the reduction of flood risk and avoiding the loss of open watercourses.
CS14: High Quality Development	<p>Policy ARL2 seeks to ensure that the design of housing respects Arlesey’s distinctive character and provides for an attractive, accessible public realm, enhancing community safety.</p> <p>Policy ARL14 seeks to provide electronic communications networks within new development to meet current day demand for broadband access.</p>
CS15: Heritage	Policy ARL8 seeks to conserve local green spaces considered to be of special local interest. Policy ARL11 seeks to conserve historic structures considered to be of special local interest.
CS16: Landscape and Woodland	Policy ARL8 seeks to conserve the varied countryside of the parish, including protecting woodlands.
CS17: Green Infrastructure	Policies ARL8 and ARL9 seek to protect existing green spaces and designate new ones. Policy ARL4 requires new development to link into, where possible, the existing green infrastructure via foot- and cycle paths.

Local Plan Policy	ANP Policy
<b>Development Management Policies</b>	
DM2: Sustainable Construction of New Buildings	Policy ARL2 seeks to ensure that the design of housing development represents a sustainable design which has regard to issues specific to Arlesey. Policy ARL10 seeks to ensure that sustainable techniques are used to address flooding issues.
DM3: High Quality Development	Policy ARL2 provides guidance on appropriate design. Policy ARL4 seeks to provide appropriate access from new development for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport.
DM4: Development Within and Beyond Settlement Envelopes	Policy ARL1 defines the settlement boundary for Arlesey, protecting the identity of the town and protecting the open countryside beyond the urban fringe from inappropriate uses.
DM5: Important Open Space with Settlement Envelopes	Policy ARL8 designates important Local Green Space within the parish.
DM7: Development in Town Centres	Policy ARL15 seeks to enhance the retail offering in Arlesey by supporting retail units in the new local centre that will complement the existing provision across the parish and meet the needs of the growing community as Arlesey Cross development take place.
DM9: Providing a range of transport	Policies ARL4 and ARL6 seek to enhance the existing walking and cycling network through new development as well as public and community transport links. Policy ARL7 seeks to ensure that suitable car parking is provided within developments and also that off-street car parking in the High Street area, and near the local centre, is provided to alleviate congestion caused by parked cars.
DM10: Housing Mix	Policy ARL3 seeks to ensure that all new housing development provides a mix of housing based on the identified need in Arlesey.
DM13: Heritage in Development	Policy ARL11 seeks to safeguard built heritage that is of local importance within Arlesey.
DM17: Accessible Greenspaces	Policies ARL2, ARL9, ARL12 and ARL13 seeks to provide for recreational space and green spaces.

## **5 Conformity with EU Obligations**

- 5.1 The Neighbourhood Development Plan has regard to the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights and complies with the Human Rights Act.
- 5.2 In August 2016 the ANP Group submitted a formal screening request regarding the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and an Appropriate Assessment under the EU Habitats Regulations of the draft ANP. On 11 November 2016 Central Bedfordshire Council formally stated that neither an SEA nor an HRA was required. The formal opinion is included as part of the Consultation Statement.

## **6 Conclusion**

- 6.1 The Basic Conditions as set out in Schedule 4B to the TCPA 1990 are considered to be met by the Arlesey Neighbourhood Plan and all the policies therein. It is therefore respectfully suggested to the Examiner that the Arlesey Neighbourhood Plan complies with Paragraph 8(1) (a) of Schedule 4B of the Act.