

# **ALFRICK AND LULSLEY PARISH COUNCIL (ALPC) PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT GROUP (PDG)**

## **SCOPE AND SPECIFICATION OF PARISH DESIGN STATEMENT**

Following the adoption by ALPC of the resolution to form an informal planning group, members<sup>1</sup> of the Parish Council have been meeting to pursue the following objectives as set down the Council in its resolution of January 2006

- 1. To determine the scope and specification of a Parish Design Statement and report to the Parish Council on the process and timescale required to produce a document.*
- 2. To inform the review of the next Local Plan with Parish-specific issues*
- 3. To strengthen and maintain contact with MHDC planning and housing departments*
- 4. To address objectives 1 to 3 of the original resolution establishing the PDC in the scoping of the Parish Design Statement*
- 5. To instigate a communication strategy to better inform ALPC of the workings and deliberations of the PDC than the current publication of the minutes perhaps achieves”*

This paper sets out the suggested scope of a Parish Design Statement (“PDS”) and the outline specification. It also suggests the process and timescale required to achieve this important document.

As previously stated, planning is a complex process and there is cascade of strategies influencing development within the Parish. These include:

- National Housing Policy
- Regional Spatial Strategy
- Worcester County Structure Plan
- Malvern Hills Adopted Local Plan ~ currently being revised as the Emerging Local Plan and awaiting the Planning Inspector’s report due July 2006
- Supplementary Planning Documents

A properly consultative Parish policy on planning and development, enshrined in a PDS, can be adopted by MHDC as a Supplementary Planning Document and as such would be a material consideration in planning decisions affecting the Parish.

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<sup>1</sup> Councillors R Jackson (Convenor), P Gilbert, Dr P Brown, G Lowe and P Tebbit

It is also clear that the review of planning applications by ALPC for comment to MHDC must be undertaken using only those factors which are material to the planning process. It will assist ALPC to have a point of reference against which to test planning matters and make pertinent and consistent comments on applications. It will also assist in the process of delegation as delegated decisions can be made against the background of a policy framework agreed by the Parish Council after consultation with the community.

The **scope** of the PDS is likely to be as follows, though this may be subject to change as the project develops:

1. The PDS is likely to be a rolling project as new issues and challenges will affect the PDS over time. This also means that it can be kept current and therefore superceding other regional and national policies as a working Supplementary Planning Document
2. It should encompass the entire Parish. There are thought to be at least four distinct areas in the Parish and the PDS should define the “vernacular” of these. The areas are:
  - Alfrick
  - Lulsley
  - Storridge
  - Alfrick Pound
3. Overlaying these vernacular areas are the two main settlement areas of Alfrick, a Category 2 settlement and Lulsley, defined as Category 3 mainly as it lacks a settlement boundary. Outside of these built environments is Open Countryside, including Old Storridge and Crews Hill, overlaid by landscape designations such as Area of Great Landscape Value and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
4. The PDS should set out how any commercial development in the Parish should be approached and in that regard must take note of the requirements of PPS 7. Such developments can enliven rural communities but inevitably have an impact on life in the immediate environment in respect of traffic and potential disturbance.
5. The PDS should also consider proportionality of any development in the context of existing development in the vicinity and on the site.

6. It is important to recognise that no development is not an option, and therefore it is preferable to get any development on terms acceptable to the Community where possible.
7. The PDS should dovetail with the Local Development Scheme 2006 – 2009
8. The impact of any development on highways and transport issues and on the demand for other services in the Parish.
9. The encroachment of 'street furniture' onto the appearance of the villages.

In order to deliver a workable PDS encompassing the above criteria it should conform to the following **specification** and include:

10. A summary of the process of creating the PDS including the consultation activities
11. A glossary of acronyms used in the planning process
12. A defined vernacular for each area of the Parish, presented photographically.
13. A statement of ALPC policy on issues such as:
  - a. In-fill development
  - b. Extension of the settlement boundaries, or development outside of a boundary
  - c. Conversion of non-residential property to accommodation use
  - d. Commercial development, either new-build or conversion of redundant buildings
  - e. Minor development which would not normally require consent but which is affected by a landscape designation
14. A resume of how the PDS dovetails with the other planning policies affecting the Parish, District, County and at National Level.
15. A list of the features in the Parish encompassing the following:
  - a. History
  - b. Archaeology
  - c. Footpaths
  - d. Architecture

e. Wildlife

16. A photographic representation of the key design features and typical 'street scenes' in the Parish as a point of reference
17. A summary of Census information for the Parish to provide a demographic backdrop for the design statements in the PDS.
18. The consultative process which ALPC will adopt to inform and consult on potentially contentious planning matters in the Parish

The **process** of achieving this document will require substantial time and effort and should be inclusive of members of the Community with relevant skills and interests, though remaining always an ALPC working group led by councillors. There will be a need for continual consultation and the development of the PDS is likely to have a cost. Sources of funding should be investigated.

The PDG would suggest a presentation at the Annual Village meeting to invite volunteers to champion items 15 (a) to (e) above and to assist in compiling the photographic record of the Parish, and any other assistance deemed to be appropriate.