

APPENDIX J

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 29 JUNE 2010

Title:

FARNHAM DESIGN STATEMENT

[Portfolio Holder: Cllr Adam Taylor-Smith]

[Wards Affected: All Farnham Wards]

Summary and purpose:

The purpose of the report is to recommend that the Farnham Design Statement (FDS) be adopted by the Council as a material consideration when determining planning applications and other information and comments in the document be taken into account when developing future planning policy related to the town. The document has been prepared by Farnham Town Council.

How this report relates to the Council's Corporate Priorities:

The FDS supports the environmental priorities of the Council. The document not only sets out the distinctive character of Farnham, but it also encourages good quality design in new developments.

Equality and Diversity Implications:

There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

Climate Change Implications:

The document identifies the need for all new developments to be sustainable, both in terms of location and also in terms of energy consumption.

Resource/Value for Money implications:

There are no resource/value for money implications. The document will be used when relevant to assist in determining planning applications and as evidence to consider when developing new planning policy. This will be managed within existing resources.

Legal Implications:

The Farnham Design Statement will be a material consideration to be used by Waverley when assessing planning applications in Farnham.

Background

1. A Town Design Statement is a published document that gives a detailed guide to the character of a town. It sets out the specific nature of the buildings and landscape which make the town distinctive, with recommendations on how to encourage new development that enhances and compliments what already exists. A Town Design Statement is similar in concept to a Village Design Statement but the scale and complexity of towns means that a carefully coordinated approach is required in its production (The Countryside Agency, March 2003).
2. Given the pressure for new development in Farnham, the Town Council decided to prepare its own Design Statement. This is expected to give guidance to residents, developers and the Planning Service for consideration when preparing plans for development, for pre-application discussion and in the determination of planning applications.

The Farnham Design Statement

3. It is intended that the FDS will serve a number of purposes. It contains specific design guidelines that are intended to be used in the consideration of proposed new development within the town. It also provides local views and comments on wide planning issues in the town, with the intention that these will be taken into account by the Council when developing future planning policies. The specific aims of the FDS are:
 - To develop guidelines, which will have a positive influence on development throughout the town.
 - To represent the views of local residents about future development in the areas in which they live.
 - To raise awareness of the important features of the town and its surrounding villages and countryside.
 - To conserve the best of the architecture, by ensuring that any new development respects and complements the area's character.
 - To ensure a sustainable and attractive environment for future generations.
 - To assist developers and architects in providing developments which are appropriate to Farnham.
4. Farnham Town Council began work on the FDS at the beginning of 2009. A copy of the latest version of the document is available in the Members' Room, at the Locality Offices, on the Waverley website with the Executive agenda papers or on request.
5. The FDS will directly relate to the Development Plan. In this case the policy to be amplified is Saved Policy D4 (Design and Layout) of the Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002.
6. The document is split into a number of chapters, both thematic (i.e. infrastructure) and based on location (i.e. Moor Park etc.). This approach acknowledges the similarities and differences between the different areas and ensures that the design guidelines respond directly to an areas character, rather than producing a set of guidelines to cover the whole of Farnham.

7. The supporting text has evolved out of the significant public consultation that has taken place (see below). It identifies residents concerns and also highlights aspirations for the future of the town.

The Consultation Process

8. The FDS has been subject to a comprehensive consultation process, ensuring that it will be a robust document and stand up through the planning process. The following table outlines the key dates and events in the consultation process:

Key Date	Event
May 2009	Three workshops for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members of Farnham Town Council • Residents' associations and local organisations (x2)
29 September 2009	Meeting with Planning Services (WBC).
January 2010	Questionnaire on Farnham Town Council website.
19 & 22 January 2010	Two stakeholder workshops.
26 January 2010 – 9 February 2010	Series of seven roadshows in the following locations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rowledge • The Bourne • Farnham Town Council (3 events) • Badshot Lea • Uppe Hale
5 February 2010	Meeting with Planning Services (WBC).
22 February 2010	Meeting with Planning Services (WBC).
15 March 2010 to 30 April 2010	Formal consultation co-ordinated by Farnham Town Council. A total of 1,300 people were consulted including 21 statutory bodies and organisations and 64 local developers and architects. This consultation included Waverley Borough Council.
Various	Various coverage in the press, including an article in the Roundabout magazine (March 2010) which is delivered free to every household in Farnham.

9. Farnham Town Council have co-ordinated all of the responses, and where practicable accommodated changes in the document. In addition a number of changes have been made to the document reflecting the response to the consultation by WBC Officers. These changes include:

- Details of fact (e.g. that Farnham Park is a designated Local Nature Reserve and no longer a proposed one).
- Clarification on how the document is to be used (e.g. the design guidelines will be used for development control purposes and the text used to inform future policy formulation through the LDF).
- Ensuring a consistent approach to density throughout the document.
- Amendments to the wording of specific design guidelines to ensure that they do not conflict with local, regional or national planning policy (e.g. replacement of the word 'must' with 'should').

- Guidelines that are not design based have been relocated into the main body of text.
 - Inclusion of additional information (e.g. affordable housing, University of Creative Arts etc.).
10. These amendments are not considered to be at odds with national, regional or local plan policy. The design guidelines, as set out in the document, are considered to comfortably supplement the policies of the local plan.
11. The supporting text for each section and the introductory chapters, particularly the chapter on infrastructure, go beyond commenting on design principles/guidelines, and embrace issues more appropriate to the LDF. This information will help to shape future policies for the town of Farnham.

Conclusion

12. The FDS is a well-constructed document providing a comprehensive study of the character of the town. It has also been subject to a robust and transparent consultation process to ensure that residents and interested stakeholders have had the opportunity to comment on, and shape the final document. This means that the document is considered ready to be published as a material planning consideration when determining planning applications. Given that the document serves a number of purposes, it is important to stress that when using the document to assess planning applications, the focus will be on the specific design guidelines for the relevant part of the town, rather than the general text of the document which, for reasons explained above, goes wider than just setting out specific design guidelines.

Recommendation

It is recommended to the Council that the Farnham Design Statement be adopted as a material planning consideration.

Background Papers

There are no background papers (as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) relating to this report.

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