

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE - 27 MARCH 2012

Title:

FARNHAM TOWN CENTRE CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN

**[Portfolio Holder: Cllr Adam Taylor-Smith]
[Wards Affected: Farnham Castle Ward]**

Summary and purpose:

The purpose of this report is to gain authorisation to undertake a formal public consultation on the draft Farnham Town Centre Conservation Area Management Plan (FCAMP). The long term objective is to adopt the document as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and to amplify the requirements of saved policy D4 of the Waverley Local Plan 2002.

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

The FCAMP document supports the environmental priorities of the Council. The document encourages communication between the different agencies involved in the long term management of the conservation area and sets out a programme of environmental enhancements (amongst other matters).

Equality and Diversity Implications:

There are no equality and diversity implications.

Climate Change Implications:

None directly, however conservation areas and their management are an important aspect of the long term sustainability of the borough.

Resource/Value for Money Implications:

Officer time will be required to co-ordinate the consultation process and future work to enable adoption of the document as a material consideration. This can be accommodated within existing staff resources. The environmental enhancements will, in part, rely on Section 106 (and similar) contributions to enable their implementation.

Legal Implications:

The document (when adopted) will be a material consideration to be used by the Borough Council when assessing planning applications. It will also be used to secure financial contributions for environmental improvements.

Background

1. The Farnham Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal was adopted as a supplementary planning document in 2005, however this was not accompanied by a management plan.
2. Given the adoption of the Farnham Town Design Statement and the 2010/11 service plan commitment to improve the public realm of Waverley's principle settlements, it was considered both appropriate and timely to produce a management plan for the Conservation Area (which now forms a 2011/12 service plan priority). The proposed document will also build on the aspirations outlined within the existing conservation area appraisal.
3. Furthermore, there is a legislative duty under the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Section 71 for Local Authorities to draw up and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas in their districts and to consult the local community about these proposals.

Introduction

4. Farnham Town Centre is one of 45 Conservation Areas (CA) within Waverley Borough Council. Originally designated in 1970 it has been extended and revised twice (in 1979 and 2005). In 2005 the Farnham Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA) was adopted by Waverley Borough Council as a supplementary planning document (SPD). The appraisal outlines the special architectural and historic interest of the area and provides an assessment of its character and appearance. In order to protect and enhance the aspects that make the area worthy of designation, active management is also required.
5. A steering group has been formed to take the document forward, and incorporates key organisations including Surrey County Council (a Councillor and officers), Waverley Borough Council (Councillors and officers), Farnham Town Council (Councillors), the Farnham Society and Farnham Castle. Local retailers and the Chamber of Commerce have also been invited to attend each meeting.
6. The draft FCAMP document is attached at Annexe 1. This management plan outlines a framework for future action, which are primarily the responsibility of the Borough Council, although successful implementation will also depend on the continued co-operation and enthusiasm of the other local authorities (Surrey County Council and Farnham Town Council), local people and local organisations (including the Farnham Society).
7. The management plan will enable improved communication and cooperation between all the key stakeholders when considering proposals for the public realm (in Farnham).

Please note, that the draft FCAMP does not currently include any diagrams or photographs. These will be added to the final document prior to adoption.

The Consultation Process

8. Whilst the document will not be adopted as a supplementary planning document, it is considered pertinent to ensure that it is subject to an equally robust consultation process to ensure that it carries weight at appeal (if the need ever arises).
9. The consultation period will run for a period of three months and the results reported back to the Executive. The FCAMP steering group will contribute to the smooth running of the consultation exercise. The responses received to the consultation will be considered in detail, and where appropriate inform amendments to the document.
10. Following the consultation and any necessary amendments, the document will then follow the formal adoption procedure through the committee process.

Conclusion

11. The FCAMP document will provide a much needed framework for the long term management and enhancement of the Farnham Town Centre Conservation Area. In order to ensure that this meets the aspirations of the local community (as well as key stakeholders) a robust public consultation is necessary.
12. The partnership working established with this project provides a template for similar approaches in future conservation area reviews across the borough.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Executive approves the Farnham Town Centre Conservation Area Management Plan for the purposes of public consultation.

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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