

Farnham Town Centre Conservation Area Management Plan

Final Draft

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Introduction

Farnham Town Centre is one of 45 Conservation Areas (CA) within Waverley Borough Council. Originally designated in 1970 it has been extended and revised a further two times (in 1979 and 2005 – see map in Appendix A). In 2005 the Farnham Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA) was adopted by Waverley Borough Council as 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.

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 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).

The document has been subject to a robust consultation process involving various stakeholders and is proposed to be adopted as a material planning consideration by Waverley Borough Council at Full Council on 16 October 2012. The document also accords with English Heritage guidance “Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management”.

The Need for Action

The character of CAs is rarely static and is susceptible to incremental change (such as the replacement of windows and doors) as well as dramatic change such as the wholesale redevelopment of a building block). In Farnham the pressure for redevelopment persists at all scale both within and on the fringes of the CA. Positive management is essential if such pressure for change, which can alter the very character that makes the area attractive, is to be limited.

The proactive management of CAs gives clarity and robustness to decision making, which means that issues are more defensible in, for instance, planning appeals. Alongside the Farnham Town Centre CAA, this management plan will be of use to Waverley Borough Council when determining planning applications for change within or at the edges of the CA, and for property owners and their agents when considering schemes for refurbishment, alteration or new development.

Aims of the Management Plan

The designation of a CA is a means to safeguard and enhance the sense of place, character and appearance of our most valued historic assets and places. CAs are living environments that, despite their history, will continue to adapt and develop.

Designating a CA does not mean a prohibition on development, but it does mean the careful management of change which ensures that the character and appearance of

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these areas are safeguarded and enhanced for the enjoyment and benefit of future generations.

The aim of this management plan is to complement the existing national and local planning policies, but provide further advice on the management of the Farnham Town Centre CA. All the recommendations set out in this document are intended to preserve and/or enhance the character and appearance of the CA without compromising the historic environment.

The key objectives arising from the Farnham Town Centre management plan are:

- to develop an awareness of the importance of the local heritage and history of Farnham for the benefit of those who live, work and visit the area,
- to provide clear guidance as to how to preserve and enhance the special character of the area, as identified in the CAA, and
- to provide guidance for the enhancement and improvement of the area.

Community Involvement

In order to ensure that the management plan is a robust document, it has been important to include key stakeholders throughout its evolution. A Steering Group was set up incorporating:

- Councillors and officers representing Waverley Borough Council
- Councillors and officers (from the Highways Department) representing Surrey County Council
- Councillors representing Farnham Town Council
- Representatives of the Farnham Society

The Steering Group undertook the survey work and evidence gathering that forms the basis of the recommendations set out within the management plan.

In addition, a formal, six week consultation was undertaken to seek the communities view on the management plan. A summary of how the consultation responses influenced the final management plan can be found in the accompanying consultation statement (to be produced following the consultation).

The extent of the consultation ensures that the document is robust and able to be used as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Conservation Area Policy Context

The Council is required to prepare Management Plans for CAs in conjunction with CAAs. The Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (Section 71), sets a statutory duty upon Local Authorities to periodically review CAs and to undertake proposals for their management and enhancement.

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National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's national planning policies on the conservation of the historic environment. The policies within the NPPF are a 'material consideration' which must be taken into account when local planning authorities exercise their planning powers.

Whilst the content of the NPPF has condensed previously published guidance, it is considered that the level of protection for listed buildings and conservation areas has not been reduced. The overriding document remains the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. However the NPPF does not give much detail about the correct approach to managing the historic environment and therefore lower tier documents, such as conservation area appraisals and management plans will be important to give certainty and clarity.

It is considered that this Management Plan conforms to the NPPF.

Local Planning Policy

The Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002 (relevant policies saved through Secretary of State's Direction issued on 20 September 2007) sets out the local planning policy background against which development proposals within the Farnham Town Centre CA will be assessed. Policy HE8 considers conservation areas (and can be found in full in Appendix B) and has a number of criteria against which proposed development is considered.

Recent changes to planning law mean that Waverley Borough Council must now produce a new type of development plan called the Local Development Framework (LDF); this will eventually replace the Local Plan of 2002. Unlike the old Local Plan which was a single large document, the LDF will be comprised of a variety of documents setting out planning policy and giving additional guidance for Waverley. Work is currently underway to produce various LDF documents relevant to Waverley which will eventually become the basis upon which planning applications are judged. It is anticipated that this document will compliment the LDF documents and forthcoming policies related to the historic environment.

Additional Guidance

In addition to the national and local planning policy framework, a number of guidance documents have been produced and are relevant to the conservation area.

Farnham Conservation Area Appraisal

This document was produced jointly between Waverley Borough Council, Farnham Town Council and other heritage organisations (including the Farnham Society). Adopted as a SPD in 2005, the appraisal considered the character of the conservation area and proposed an extension to the boundary. It is currently used as a material consideration in the determination of relevant planning applications.

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Town Design Statement

In July 2010, Farnham Town Council produced and Waverley Borough Council adopted the Farnham Town Design Statement (TDS). This is now a material consideration for use when determining planning applications.

The TDS includes a chapter related to the Farnham Town Centre CA with two key principles:

1. It goes without saying that any development, which harms the Conservation Area, will be unacceptable.
2. Any new development should be designed to preserve or enhance the Conservation Area.

Shop Front advice

Waverley Borough Council produced a 'Shop front Design Guide' in the early 1990's. This sets out guidance against which proposals for new shop fronts are assessed. The guidance covers the whole of Waverley.

Additional shop front guidance can be found within the adopted Farnham CAA (2005).

A-board advice

Currently, Waverley is working to produce guidance for retailers on the acceptable usage of A-boards to promote their business. Whilst in many instances A-boards can be removed through planning powers or through Surrey County Council, it is considered pertinent, given the current economic climate, to aid retailers to promote their businesses in an appropriate manner that neither has a negative impact on the character or appearance of the streetscape nor impedes pedestrian flow (i.e. access and movement for all users of the highway).

Special Interest of the Farnham Town Centre Conservation Area

Farnham is often quoted as the finest Georgian town in the country and it has, at its heart one of the finest streets. Castle Street is a wide main street with a predominantly Georgian feel to it, although there is evidence of its longer history. At the top of the hill the Castle spreads a dramatic façade overlooking the town. The Keep, its curtain wall and the moat provide the rounded form of the Conservation Area which marks the original historic built core of the town. Immediately beyond the Castle are the fields and parkland which belonged to the Bishop, now forming part of the surrounding Green Envelope.

The Keep and the Castle were built for defence, benefitting from their position on the chalk hills running from East to West along the Hogs Back to Guildford. In the past,

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armies of defenders or attackers have marched up and down the steep slope from the town to the Castle. Remains of a deep town ditch mark the edges of the town and the same area marks also the edge of the Conservation Area to the East. To the West, the Conservation Area has been extended to include the residences and historic houses on both sides of the street.

Equally important for Farnham today is its strategic positioning on the route from the southern coastal ports to London, a benefit which has given Farnham its prominence as a market town. A destination for travelling Kings and Queens as well as Bishops, the Castle was built in 1138 as a fortress, subsequently becoming the Palace of the Bishop of Winchester, fifty three of whom have taken up residence in the subsequent years, and all of whom have had a role in the enhancement and protection of the Castle and the Town.

Castle Street is still wide, although the original sheep pens and market stalls have been replaced by car-parking. The iron-stone cobbles which provided raised side-walks for pedestrians are still in evidence at the bottom of the street, where the modern equivalent of market stalls can still be found, and the cobbles remain in front of many of the Georgian houses. Castle Street also hosts a significant group of Almshouses, established and built by Andrew Windsor in 1619, and they retain their original external appearance: brick-built, low-roofed and with eight porched doorways.

The Conservation Area was established by the Borough Council in 1970 and subsequent additions have included the Bishops Meadows, a second open green space to the South of the town, through which the River Wey flows. From the banks of this river, the land rises to the Parish Church of St Andrews. Two Church Lanes approach it from different directions, and these are paved entirely with iron-stone cobbles, providing a frontage to some of the essentials of past communities: a school, a rectory, a church and a blacksmith. There has been a religious settlement on this site for one thousand three hundred years, the present church dating from the fifteenth century.

Significantly also placed by the river and on the banks opposite the church are the Maltings, a group of buildings bought by the people of Farnham from the brewery when it closed, and now an attractive Arts Centre of both regional and local popularity. Crossing the bridge at Longbridge, one of the oldest river-crossing points in Farnham and still lining the river is Gostrey Meadow which leads to Borelli Walk and still more green space.

Much of the town's past and many of its heroes survive in the names of the yards, streets, alley ways and public houses which are tucked behind the main streets; Borelli's Yard named after the jeweller's shop founded in 1828; the Hop Blossom in Long Garden Walk; Timber Close off West Street; the Wagon Yard car park; the Shepherd and Flock roundabout; the William Cobbett pub – all these are testimonies to the past and to the resourcefulness of its early inhabitants.

Historic areas are now widely recognised for the contribution they make to our cultural heritage, economic well-being and quality of life.

Management Actions

Designation

As well as being a designated Conservation Area, Farnham Town centre also benefits from additional designations:

Listed Buildings

There are over 1,700 listed buildings within Waverley of which around 360 are within Farnham. The quality of the historic buildings within the conservation area is considered to be very high, and there are some especially important groups of Georgian buildings. As the value of properties within Farnham is higher than the national average (in August 2011 a 3 bedroom property is approximately 40% higher in value than the national average – source www.mouseprice.com), this supports owners to keep their buildings in good order.

Buildings at Risk

There are no buildings on the Buildings at Risk Register in the conservation area.

It is important to ensure that any listed buildings that fall into disrepair are identified early so that Waverley can work with the owners to find appropriate solutions and bring the building into a productive use. Whilst the main responsibility falls with Waverley and the owner, it is advantageous that others interested in the built heritage of Farnham 'keep an eye' of the historic fabric and report anything of concern.

Buildings of Local Merit

There are 350 Buildings of Local Merit (BLM – previously the local list) within the whole of Farnham of which 135 are located within the CA. BLM's are intended to recognise the importance of buildings that, though not meeting the national criteria for statutory listing, are nevertheless of local historic or architectural interest.

The 2005 CAA identified a further 21 buildings within the CA that should be included as BLM's, however these have not been formally adopted by Waverley Borough Council.

Waverley has recently set up a new project to identify review, identify and adopt additional BLM's. This is a community led project which includes a consultation process with owners and local amenity societies, where the Parish or Town Council take the lead with support given by Waverley.

Under the NPPF these are considered to be designated heritage assets.

Recommendation:

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That Farnham Town Council undertakes a review of the BLM's within Farnham, reassessing those previously put forward within the CA and identifying potential new BLM's throughout the town.

Heritage Features

Heritage Features are those landmarks, structures, gardens and items of street furniture which are significant and valuable part of the history and character of Farnham, but are not statutorily protected. These include letter boxes, war memorials, milestones, inspection covers and boot scrapers.

There are around 38 heritage features within Farnham Town Centre CA. Again these are considered to be designated heritage assets by the NPPF.

Article 4 directions

There are two Article 4 directions within the CA. One relates to the Lowdnes Buildings (a terrace of nine dwelling) and the other to 2-14 Long Garden Walk (a terrace of seven dwellings).

Both Article 4 directions were served in 2006 and removed permitted development rights for:

- The enlargement, improvement or other alteration to the dwellinghouse fronting a relevant location (Class A).
- Any alteration to the roof of a dwellinghouse that fronts a relevant location (Class C).
- The erection or construction of a porch fronting a relevant location (Class D).
- The provision of a hard surface within the curtilage of the dwellinghouse where it fronts a relevant location (Class F).
- The installation, alteration or replacement of a satellite antenna on the dwellinghouse where it fronts a relevant location (Class H).

In 2007 the Lowdnes Buildings were accepted by English Heritage for Grade II listed status which gives additional protection. The terrace row in Long Garden Walk have been identified as being worthy of inclusion as Buildings of Local Merit, but this can only happen after the relevant processes have been followed (see above).

No other areas have been identified as potentially benefitting from an Article 4 direction.

Celebration

Waverley Design Awards

The Waverley Design Awards scheme was introduced in 1995, to encourage an interest in the quality of the built and natural environment of the borough. The

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scheme also promotes an awareness of the need for high standards in design including planning, architecture, sustainable development and landscaping.

The awards are made every two years and in 2011 the Waverley Design Awards culminated in a ceremony took place at the University of Creative Arts in Farnham.

Farnham is always well represented in the scheme, with seven developments being shortlisted in 2011. Of these the Farnham Castle project was crowned the Overall Design Award winner of 2011.

It is important to retain this momentum, ensuring that schemes throughout Farnham and within the CA are represented in the Design Awards where they exhibit outstanding design.

Recommendation

Farnham Town Council and the Farnham Society are encouraged to nominate new, outstanding developments to the Waverley Design Awards.

Farnham Society Amenity Awards

The Farnham Society holds an amenity award programme. This is based on an assessment not only of a projects excellence in design and executions, but also how well the project contributes to the local environment and the improvement of the amenities in and around Farnham. The Farnham Society should be made aware of any potential candidates.

Farnham in Bloom

Every year, Farnham Town Council brings Farnham in Bloom to the town centre and in 2011 this also extended to some of the surrounding villages.

The main aim of Britain and therefore Farnham In Bloom is one of environmental responsibility. Whilst the Farnham In Bloom entry focuses on the flora displays, some of the points are also awarded on the quality of the public realm, specifically the Pride of Place category where work is undertaken to improve street furniture, reduce litter and remove weeds. Whilst the judging takes place in July, it is a year round programme to enhance and improve the whole of Farnham. In addition the Farnham scheme is designed to have a positive impact and to inspire a sense of place, together with community spirit and pride. As such this sits comfortably with the aims and objectives of the Management Plan.

Shop Front Awards

The 2005 CAA identified that Farnham town centre contains many fine traditional and modern shop fronts that are an important element in the townscape. However, it was also concluded that there are still opportunities to improve some of the shops

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so that they make a positive contribution to the appearance, vitality and viability of the town centre.

An option put forward by the 2005 CAA was to encourage traders to have a sense of pride in their premises by setting up a local best kept yard and shop front competition. This would celebrate the efforts and encourage others to participate.

Whilst this would compliment the Waverley Design Awards scheme, it is considered pertinent that this be administered at a local level on an annual basis by Farnham Town Council (possibly to support the Farnham in Bloom scheme).

Recommendation

Farnham Town Council are encouraged to set up an annual shop front award programme to celebrate the best shop fronts within the town centre.

Enhancement Actions

Shop Fronts

A shop front photographic survey in 2005 (as part of the CAA), concluded that the majority of shop fronts within the CA are acceptable and harmonise in terms of design, colour and signage. However, the report went on to say that vigilance is needed to maintain the standard.

A similar exercise was undertaken in 2011 (see Appendix C – to follow). Again this found the majority of shop fronts to be acceptable to the CA setting although a few could be improved.

As previously noted, Waverley has design guidance related to shop fronts, produced in the early 1990's. This document is a material planning consideration for use in the determination of planning applications. Whilst the number of shop front planning applications is relatively low, the guidance is useful and should be reviewed to ensure that it is up to date and relevant.

It is considered that the guidance should cover the whole of Waverley and not be specific to each individual town (or village) centre as the issues are similar.

Additional guidance was also adopted within the Farnham Conservation Area Appraisal. All interested stakeholders, including existing and future shop owners should take this guidance into account when looking to update their shop front.

Recommendation

The Waverley shop front design guidance be reviewed, where necessary updated and considered for adoption as a supplementary planning document to be used when determining relevant planning applications borough wide.

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The majority of changes to shop fronts generally occur when a new proprietor wishes to implement their corporate style to ensure that their business is distinctive within the street scene and to draw in customers. This normally means that the colour of the shop front is changed and new signage installed – both of which may not be controlled through the planning system. It is therefore worthwhile to consider the need for a 'blanket' Article 4 Direction to remove the permitted development right to repaint a shop front (although it would be reasonable to allow owners to repaint in the same colour as is already there).

Recommendation

Waverley Borough Council should consider the opportunity to serve an Article 4 Direction to within the conservation area to control the repainting of shop fronts.

It is important that good quality shop fronts are recognised locally for their contribution to the street scene. As such they should be entered into local competitions such as the Waverley Design Awards. It is also suggested that Farnham Town Centre run a local shop front competition on an annual basis (see celebration above).

Advertisements

Advertisements play an important role within the street scene adding to the vibrancy of an area. However, adverts can also undermine an area, provide hazards to those with mobility issues and add to clutter. In addition, in harsh economic times, there is a fine balance to be made in supporting local businesses and preventing them from adequately advertising their services.

Advertisement boards (A-boards) have been identified by the Disability Forum as a particular concern in terms of mobility within Waverley's town and village centres. In order to give guidance and advice to retailers (and others) who utilise A-boards to advertise their services, a guidance note is being produced by Waverley which will include a robust consultation process. This will give guidance in relation to planning matters associated with A-boards. In addition, it is understood that Surrey County Council are also planning similar guidance with the emphasis on their Highways Authority responsibilities.

Recommendation

That all stakeholders get involved with the forthcoming consultations on A-boards, and, once adopted support both Waverley and Surrey in the implementation of the guidance.

Having surveyed the shop fronts within Farnham CA, the use of advertisements, in the main, compliments the streetscene with many retailers taking advantage of traditional hanging signs, fascia boards and complimentary window displays. However, there are a small number of shops located in prominent locations that

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have installed inappropriate advertisements covering the entirety of the windows within the shop front.

In addition to the above, a number of different retailers and organisations display large banners on guardrails around the town. Most notably these are found along South Street, adjacent to the CA boundary, and have a detrimental impact on the entire character of the streetscene given their temporary nature and the way in which they are affixed to the railings.

One option is to consider making an area of special advertisement control within the CA. These would increase the level of advertisement control justified in order to conserve visual amenity within the area. However not all advertisements would be controlled under such an order.

Recommendation

A discussion should take place with the relevant managers of these retail outlets and/or their corporate headquarters to find a more appropriate solution. If this is not forthcoming, Waverley should consider taking appropriate and proportionate enforcement action or look towards alternative controls.

Schemes of enhancement

The schemes of enhancement identified here may be general throughout the conservation area or specific to particular sites. Whilst considered individually here, it would be most efficient to combine with the relevant public realm projects identified later in the document.

Some of those proposed below come directly from the 2005 CAA and some have evolved as a result of this management plan. A plan indicating the proposed schemes of enhancement can be found at Appendix E (to follow).

Standardisation of street furniture

Whilst there has been some co-ordination over the use of street furniture in the past, this appears to have slipped in recent years. It is important to reinforce the distinctiveness of Farnham through a clear and consolidated approach to street furniture, including bollards, lamp posts, benches and litter bins. In Castle Street alone there are at least five different examples of bollards.

In order to ensure consistency throughout the Conservation Area, the following street furniture should be implemented within new public realm schemes. Where this is not possible, the commissioning authority (whether it be Waverley, Surrey or Farnham Town Council) should contact the Planning Projects Team to identify a suitable alternative.

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Table 1: Street Furniture in Farnham CA

Item	Maker	Specification	Example	Notes
Bollard	Broxap	Blackburn (See Appendix D)	Windsor Almshouses	Avoid using other designs and mixing the street furniture
Seats	Broxap	Eastgate (See Appendix D)	Woolmead	Robust seats. These should be installed at appropriate locations throughout the CA.
Crossings	Ketley	Staffordshire Blue plain pavers, square cut	Crossings in West Street; pavement in Upper Church Lane	Looks good with stone sets
Paving in ironstone	Blockley	17 Mixture clay pavers	Lower Church Lane; Long Garden Walk	Blends well with ironstone
Repairing ironstone	Dark brown mortar		Lower Church Lane	Don't lay the mortar flush, the ironstone needs to be proud **
Non slip textured paving	Marshalls	Tecina Charcoal	Crossing at south end of Castle Street (near match, original not available)	Use sparingly
York Stone	Can use recycled		Loundes Buildings	Always looks good!
Concrete paving slabs	Various	Rectangular	Castle Street	Resist tarmac infill
Concrete paving slabs	Various	Rectangular	Downing Street	Good example
Lighting	Existing flutes		West Street	Try to retain some
Kerbs	Stone		Various	Should be retained
Double yellow lines				Should be conservation area type in a softer yellow

** It is not acceptable to repair or replace existing ironstone / cobbles with tarmac and or concrete.

Decluttering

Improving the CA does not just mean the installation of new coordinated street furniture, it also means rationalising what is already there and removing signage and

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street furniture that is no longer required or used. The FCAMP Steering Group undertook a survey with Officers from SCC to identify areas most in need, and specific signs to be removed. This includes:

- redundant posts with no signage
- redundant signage no longer required
- the rationalisation of signage where other, more appropriate signage exists, and
- the upgrade or replacement of signage in poor repair.

There are a number of key areas that have been highlighted as requiring attention including the junction of Park Row with Castle Street and Park Row with Bear Lane. The amount of signage in these areas appears to be 'overkill' with signs being disproportionately large, repetition of similar signs and a number of redundant posts and lights. In addition some of the lighted signs no longer work.

Consideration of the signage on the listed lamp posts is also required and an alternative solution sought.

A map (Appendix F – to follow) and associated photographs have been put together showing where decluttering needs to take place. Surrey have already removed or replaced a number of these (as indicated on the map) as a result of initial discussions.

Decluttering what is already within the CA is important, but conversations should take place between the various agencies prior to additional signage being implemented, especially on the listed lamp posts and more generally within the CA. It is clearly reasonable for Surrey to implement signs where they are required to, but consideration should be given to their size, whether they are lit and their location.

As part of the Decluttering schemes, consideration should also be given to putting the existing overhead wires underground.

Refuse

The historic evolution of Farnham has limited many commercial properties ability to store waste and refuse onsite. Unfortunately this has resulted in a proliferation of commercial sized bins on the main pedestrian routes from the Central car park to both The Borough and Downing Street. Whilst it would be good to have these removed, consideration does need to be given to where these can more appropriately be stored. Discussions need to take place with Environmental Services as well as landowners and the retailers.

With the proposed implementation of a new domestic refuse and recycling scheme throughout Waverley, it is considered timely to produce guidance. This guidance would advise architects, developers and residents on the best approaches to accommodate the bins into new developments. This should be a joint project with Environmental Services.

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Overall there needs to be a considered and co-ordinated approach to refuse and recycling (both domestic and commercial) within the Conservation Area.

Shared spaces

Shared spaces remove the traditional segregation between motor vehicles, pedestrians and other road users. Conventional road priority management systems such as kerbs, road markings, signs and signals are replaced in whole, or in part with a more integrated approach aimed at bringing together different road users.

The thought behind such installations is that the lack of the traditional management systems will influence behaviour, being controlled by natural human interactions rather than artificial mechanisms. Often this can result in slower traffic speeds, lower accident rates and significantly improve the public realm. There are many examples of successful shared spaces around the UK, including in Ashford, Kent and Brighton.

In Farnham Town Centre there are a number of locations that might benefit from a shared space.

The top of Downing Street at the junction with West Street and The Borough, there is an existing crossing point marked by an uninspiring concrete island. Guardrails prevent pedestrians from crossing at their desired point and the convergence of vehicles can cause confusion. Vehicles have priority over pedestrians even though this is a busy crossing point linking the heart of the town with retailers along West Street and into Downing Street.

The proposal here would be to remove the existing island and replace with a more comprehensive shared space spanning the existing junction. Careful consideration would need to be given to the existing pelican crossing and the volume of traffic using the junction.

A second location for a potential shared space is outside the existing Police Station. This is a gateway location into the Town Centre which is dominated by traffic, and at peak times can be congested. This key area linking the Town Centre to the Gostrey Meadows and beyond, is often used by families to cross the road to get to the play area. The shared space here could aid in increasing pedestrian priority and the public realm, but it would also help to mark the entrance to the town centre. Links could also be made with the proposed shared space at the top of Downing Street

The third area has been identified at the junction between Castle Street and The Borough. This is a busy area that is used by vehicles and pedestrians alike. Whilst there is currently a courtesy crossing in this location, a fuller shared space (in combination with other highway improvements) could potentially slow traffic, and give pedestrians greater priority.

These are aspirational projects that may be better suited as part of a comprehensive review of traffic movements around the town.

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Pedestrian guardrails

Throughout the Conservation Area there are many examples of pedestrian guardrails at junctions (including Downing Street, West Street and The Borough). Guardrails are usually installed where there is a risk, or perceived risk, that pedestrians will, in its absence, cross carriageways away from designated crossing points, or will otherwise wander into places where they can come into conflict with motor traffic (Manual for Streets 2, 2010).

However, guardrails are considered to be an intrusive element within the street scene that prevents pedestrians from walking their desired path and also creating an unpleasant feeling of restraint.

Many of guardrails around Farnham have been damaged or are in a poor state of repair. Whilst the long term ambition would be to remove all those that are not necessary from a highway safety perspective (following LTN 2/09), it is more likely that the removal of the guardrails would happen in conjunction with other highway improvements (such as the shared spaces).

Public Art

The CAA of 2005 identified a variety of opportunities throughout the CA for the potential installation of public art. Various sites were identified including: Robert Dyas Yard, the traffic island at the top of Downing Street and Gostrey Meadow. Additional sites have also been identified outside but adjacent to the CA including the roundabout at the end of West Street. There is also potential for temporary installations throughout the town including a permanent plinth that may allow for various temporary installations throughout the year.

When Public Art installations are proposed, developers, architects, and the Local Authority are encouraged to work with the University of Creative Arts and The Farnham Public Art Trust.

Further consideration should be given to how public art is commissioned by public bodies (Surrey County Council, Waverley Borough Council and Farnham Town Council) to ensure that relevant and interested local bodies are included. It is suggested that the Farnham Public Art Trust lead on this piece of work.

Historic Painted Signs

There are a number of historic painted signs on the side of various buildings dotted around the Conservation Area. Careful consideration should be given to their long term preservation; this may include the repainting of the original artwork.

Street Name Plates

There are a number of existing yards that have lost, or have never had name plates installed. This includes Goats Head Passage, the un-named yard adjacent to

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Evitavonni and the un-named yard at the top of Downing Street. Consideration should be given to naming those passages without an existing name, and installing nameplates in an appropriate location.

History Plaques

A number of history plaques have already been installed through the town and these need to be repaired and maintained where necessary. In addition further plaques could also be installed to highlight key historic sites, including the Bishops Steps. However, it is important to use the plaques sparingly and not to add to the general street clutter seen throughout the town.

Those plaques already installed should be repaired and maintained where necessary.

Car Parks

Car parks within Farnham tend to be the arrival point for visitors and residents coming into the town centre. Whilst these are very functional spaces, more could be done to improve their environment. Consideration should be given to a specific project to enhance these areas.

Graffiti

Whilst not a significant problem within the CA, graffiti can significantly undermine the quality of the environment. When undertaking a survey of the CA, graffiti was found on a footpath to the rear of the Jolly Sailor Public House. This footpath has no natural surveillance and set to the rear of adjacent properties (defined by fences and walls). It would be incredibly difficult to change the form of this footpath, but there is a need for this area to be checked regularly and cleaned. Co-ordination with landowners and the Police may also be necessary to help to prevent further instances occurring. Waverley is responsible for cleaning graffiti in public areas (including around footpaths). All groups involved in this project should keep an eye out for graffiti within the CA and report using the online form at www.waverley.gov.uk (offensive examples will take priority for removal).

Pigeons (West Street)

The issue with pigeon excrement was raised in the 2005 CAA, however it continues to be a problem in 2011. The end of Church Passage with West Street is a particular problem area, as is the passage adjacent to Boots through to the public car park. Whilst Waverley's Environmental Services can instruct the street cleaning team to deal with the issue in public places (where Waverley is responsible), a longer term solution is needed to prevent the problem from occurring in the first place. In this instance a discussion with the adjacent building owner will be needed to look at the installation of preventative measures (as it appears that the pigeons are roosting in the eaves).

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Recommendation

That the various schemes of environmental enhancement (identified above) are implemented in accordance with the agreed action plan. The schemes should be regularly reviewed and updated.

Public Realm Enhancements

The public realm enhancements are specific projects identified around the CA. When implementing the projects, they should be considered alongside the schemes of enhancement identified earlier in the document.

A plan indicating the proposed public realm enhancements can be found at Appendix E (to follow).

The Bishops Steps

The Bishops Steps provide an important pedestrian link from The Castle to Castle Street and the town centre. These steps have a very interesting history that is not clearly evident, except in the unusual configuration of the steps themselves. Unfortunately over the past few years the steps have deteriorated to a poor state and are in need of maintenance and repair.

The steps are in Surrey's ownership, and they are currently working to develop a scheme to repair the steps. In conjunction with this maintenance programme, it is hoped that Waverley, Farnham Town Council, the Farnham Society, Farnham Preservation Trust, the Castle Street Residents Association and Farnham Castle can contribute to improve this area by installing suitable lighting, improved hard and soft landscaping, replace the existing (poor quality) litter bin and the installation of an interpretation panel to explain the history of the steps.

This has been identified as a project to commemorate the Queen's Jubilee and the ambition is to have it complete and opened by September 2012.

Robert Dyas Yard (including WBC footpath)

The yard running to the south of Robert Dyas is a key entrance point into the town from the central car park. This incorporates a pedestrian footpath which is in the ownership of Waverley.

Unfortunately the yard does not give the most inspiring welcome to the town and is in need of a makeover. However, this needs to be realistic, given that it is also a service yard for the retail unit.

The existing fence denoting the edge of the footpath is in need of replacement and the surface materials of the yard and footpath should be upgraded. There is potential to liven up the existing side elevation of Robert Dyas with a public art

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installation. In addition the areas that are currently used as a dumping ground should be cleared out and blocked off to prevent further problems.

At one point along the footpath a wall has been removed, leaving a jagged edge of brick work. This needs to be improved or ideally removed to ensure the width of the footpath remains consistent along its length and is safe for passing pedestrians.

Consideration also needs to be given to the storage of refuse and recycling bins.

The River Wey Railings and Bridge

There is a section of railings adjacent to the River Wey, along the footpath linking Long Bridge to The Maltings (and the WBC carpark). Whilst these railings serve a very functional and practical purpose, they add little to the public realm. It is proposed to upgrade these railings taking a more art/craft based approach, to retain the functionality, but add to the wider environment of this well used footpath. Benches and planting could also be incorporated to generally upgrade the area. It would be useful to coordinate with Farnham in Bloom on this project.

Farnham Town Council has identified some funding to be used towards this project as a possible Jubilee celebration scheme.

In addition, the existing bridge can be problematic in wet and freezing weather. Consideration should be given to the installation of a non-slip surface (or improvement of the existing one) to improve safety in poor weather conditions.

West Street pavement resurfacing

Overall, West Street is considered to be in good condition; however the quality and aesthetics of the pavements undermine its character. Whilst it is accepted that the pavements are unlikely to cause a safety issue, the variety of surfaces and textures implemented detract from the aesthetics of the area. It is therefore suggested that a uniform paving is installed along the length of West Street (excluding those areas of iron stone cobbles and vehicular accesses).

Downing Street pavement resurfacing

Farnham Town Council along with Surrey, partially repaved Downing Street in 2008/9 . Unfortunately this work was not completed because of the lack of funds. It is therefore advantageous to complete this work and improve the entirety of Downing Street.

Middle Church Lane resurfacing

Middle Church Lane links Lower Church Lane to Upper Church Lane. Both Lower and Upper Church Lane have iron stone sets within the highway and that are in good repair. However the surface material of Middle Church Lane is worn and in

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need of maintenance/repair. Ideally the existing surface should be replaced to match both Lower Church Lane and Upper Church Lane, ensuring consistency within the area.

Harts Yard and surrounding area

Harts Yard is also a key route into the town centre and conservation area. Funding has been agreed through Surrey County Council to improve and refurbish the existing Scout Hut; however the surrounding area could also benefit from updating. However, this needs to be considered in context of the areas use. Harts Yard, whilst a pedestrian route is also a service yard, so a balance needs to be struck between the competing users.

Recommendation

That the various public realm enhancements (identified above) are implemented in accordance with the agreed action plan. The schemes should be regularly reviewed and updated.

Street and Traffic Management

Whilst the Farnham Town Centre CA is very unique and distinctive, one of the continual underlying problems to blight the town is the level of through traffic and congestion. Unfortunately (and as identified in the CAA), this can affect the quality and enjoyment of the public realm.

The problems associated with traffic extend beyond the boundary of the CA, therefore it is considered inappropriate to consider the CA in isolation. A number of studies have been undertaken (nine since 1994), commissioned by various agencies, to look into the problem and seek to find appropriate solutions. To date few significant schemes have been implemented.

Farnham TC is also partially covered by an air quality management area (AQMA), monitored through Environmental Health at Waverley. Recently Waverley has secured some funding from DEFRA to undertake research into assessing traffic management options and introducing new low emission options that would deliver a sufficient reduction in emissions below the UK Air Quality Objectives for NO₂. This project will include both Waverley and Surrey County Council.

In addition to the above, the Farnham Greenways has recently been implemented throughout Farnham, providing a useful corridor within the conservation area that also links the existing green spaces. The Scholars Greenway and Weyside Greenway make up the network for non-motorised traffic. The intention is to improve cycle and pedestrian facilities and encourage more people to switch from cars.

Recommendation

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A long term strategy for the town (within and surrounding the conservation area) is required and the evolution of this should involve all the key stakeholders including Waverley Borough Council (Planning Projects Team, Environmental Health), Surrey County Council (Highways), Farnham Town Council and the Farnham Society.

Utility companies

Utility companies often carry out works on the highway (road or pavement). Whilst these are often considered essential to the service provision of different utilities, it has been noted that the works are not always completed to the required standard.

Utility companies (and their contractors) are required to ensure that the surface is made good, to the same standard that was originally there. In addition, it is understood that they can implement a temporary surface for a period of six months before making the area good.

Within a CA this can undermine the character of the area and have a detrimental impact on the appearance of the street.

It is therefore critical that all the agencies (Surrey, Waverley and Farnham TC) work together to:

- 1) Identify when major works are proposed within the CA;
- 2) Ensure utility companies and contractors are aware of their obligations within the CA,
- 3) Ensure that the surfaces are made good immediately (and that a temporary surface is not implemented), and
- 4) Enforce against poor contractors who have not reused or appropriately replaced the historic materials to a good standard.

Communication between the agencies is critical to ensure that when problems occur they can be rectified swiftly. It is also suggested that when in doubt, the utility companies and their contractors contact the Conservation Officers at Waverley for advice.

Recommendation

Utility Companies should be made aware of the Management Plan document, and in particular be encouraged to ensure that their work is completed and 'made-good' as soon as practically possible. Where this has not happened (and within the existing guidance) the local authorities (Surrey, Waverley and Farnham TC) should work together to enforce against poor contractors.

Longer term consideration should be given to establish a Waverley wide Code of Conduct for companies and their contractors who work within the public realm.

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In addition to the wider traffic problems, there are a number of associated enhancements that have been identified that would improve the public realm and the quality of the CA.

Trees and Open Space

Farnham Town Centre has limited opportunities for tree planting given the closeness of development, however this means that the trees that do exist stand out, providing an important additional amenity value. However, there is some limited scope for additional planting within the public car parks, within the Church grounds and within private gardens.

All trees within a CA are protected and a Conservation Area consent application is required before any work to a tree is carried out.

Some of the key views towards the Castle, from Castle Street have been obscured by a number of significant trees. Whilst there is a tree clearance programme planned to open up views of the Castle, some of the trees are within private ownership. Given the wider scheme, it would be appropriate to contact the land owner to look at opportunities to improve the view, and if necessary replace the trees with more appropriate species.

The Gostrey Meadows provides some formal, structured open space close to the town centre. The area includes a play space for children (of various ages) as well as a bandstand, informal seating areas, public toilets and a war memorial.

In addition the Bishops Meadows provides a significant area of informal open space adjacent to the town centre.

In general tree planting is encouraged throughout the CA. Where trees are removed, encouragement should be given to their replacement (with an appropriate species).

Funding

Waverley Borough Council no longer has a dedicated fund for environmental improvement works. However Section 106 money (and in the future the community infrastructure levy (CIL)) can be accessed to fund some of these works.

Where new development takes place immediately adjacent to an environmental improvement, the developer should be required to pay for the works rather than contribute to the general fund.

It is also recommended that a higher percentage of the Section 106 / Planning Infrastructure Contribution / Community Infrastructure Levy be retained by Waverley to spend on environmental enhancements, rather than be transferred to Surrey County Council for more transport focused schemes.

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Surrey County Council through the local transport funds (controlled through the Waverley Local Committee) and County Councillor's local allocations can also be accessed to facilitate projects.

Ideally partnership working with various organisations will identify alternative sources of funding (the Bishops Steps will become a very good example of this), and match funding should be used as much as possible to maximise the money available.

Longer term, and for a number of the larger projects, the Management Plan may enable Waverley (or others) to apply for a Heritage Lottery Fund.

Recommendation

That various forms of funding are investigated, and where necessary applied for to facilitate the implementation of the Management Plan.

Monitoring

In order to monitor the progress of the Management Plan and ensure that the programme of environmental improvements is on track, it is suggested that the FCAMP Steering Group continue to meet regularly. This will also ensure that Officers, Councillors and members of the key interest groups continue to work together to achieve the aims of the Management Plan.

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Table 2: FCAMP Action Plan

Action	Lead / Responsibility	Timeframe
Management Actions		
That Farnham Town Council undertakes a review of the BLM's within Farnham, reassessing those previously put forward within the CA and identifying potential new BLM's throughout the town.	Farnham Town Council in conjunction with Waverley Borough Council	Medium Term
Celebration		
Farnham Town Council and the Farnham Society are encouraged to nominate new, outstanding developments to the Waverley Design Awards.	Farnham Town Council	Short Term (2013)
Farnham Town Council is encouraged to set up an annual shop front award programme to celebrate the best shop fronts within the town centre.	Farnham Town Council	Short Term (to coincide with next Farnham In Bloom)
Enhancement Actions		
The Waverley shop front design guidance be reviewed, where necessary updated and considered for adoption as a supplementary planning document to be used when determining relevant planning applications borough wide.	Waverley Borough Council	Short – Medium Term
Waverley Borough Council should consider the opportunity to serve an Article 4 Direction to within the conservation area to control the painting of shops.	Waverley Borough Council	Medium Term

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Action	Lead / Responsibility	Timeframe
Advertisements		
That all stakeholders get involved with the forthcoming consultations on A-boards, and, once adopted support both Waverley and Surrey in the implementation of the guidance.	Waverley Borough Council	Short Term
A discussion should take place with the relevant managers of the retail outlets and/or their corporate headquarters to find a more appropriate solution to full adverts covering the window. If this is not forthcoming, Waverley should consider taking appropriate and proportionate enforcement action.	Waverley Borough Council with involvement of other stakeholders	Short – Medium Term
Schemes of Enhancement		
Consistency in street furniture throughout the CA.	Surrey County Council in conjunction with Waverley Borough Council	Ongoing
Decluttering	Surrey County Council	Ongoing
Refuse – to work with local retailers within the town to appropriately store their refuse and recycling bins.	Waverley Borough Council	Ongoing
Refuse – produce and implement guidance for refuse and recycling and how the bins can be designed into new developments.	Waverley Borough Council	Short – Medium Term
Shared spaces (top of Downing Street and adjacent to the Police Station)	Surrey County Council	Long term (realistically as part of a more comprehensive traffic management scheme)
Pedestrian guardrails	Surrey County Council	Ongoing (realistically as part of a more comprehensive traffic management scheme)

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Action	Lead / Responsibility	Timeframe
Schemes of Enhancement (continued...)		
Public Art installations	Waverley Borough Council in conjunction with key stakeholders (including the Farnham Public Arts Trust and UCA)	Various – as opportunities arise (possibly as part of other enhancement schemes)
Historic Painted Signs	Waverley Borough Council and building owners	Ongoing (as proposals come forward)
Street Name Plates	Waverley Borough Council, Farnham Society, Farnham Town Council, Yard owners	Short Term
History plaques – to ensure existing plaques are repaired and maintained.	Need to determine who responsible (possibly Waverley Borough Council, Farnham Town Council or the Farnham Society)	Ongoing
Car Parks	Waverley Borough Council	Medium – Long Term
Graffiti	Waverley Borough Council	Ongoing
Pigeons	Waverley Borough Council and property owners	Ongoing
Public Realm Enhancements		
The Bishops Steps enhancement project (including the repair of the steps, removal of the chestnut pail fence, landscape, lighting and new litter bin)	Joint scheme involving Waverley borough Council, Surrey County Council, Farnham Town Council, the Farnham Society and Farnham Castle	Short Term
Robert Dyas Yard improvements	Waverley Borough Council and land owner	Short – Medium Term
The River Wey railings – replace the existing railings with a more artistic installation to reflect the location adjacent to the Maltings.	Joint scheme with Waverley Borough Council, Farnham Town Council and possibly the Environment Agency	Medium Term
West Street pavement upgrading	Surrey County Council with Waverley Borough Council and Farnham Town Council	Medium – Long Term

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Action	Lead / Responsibility	Timeframe
Public Realm Enhancements (continued...)		
Downing Street pavement upgrading (completion of previous project)	Surrey County Council with Waverley Borough Council and Farnham Town Council	Medium Term
Harts Yard and surrounding area	Waverley Borough Council, Surrey County Council and owners	Medium – Long Term
Middle Church Lane resurfacing	Surrey County Council	Medium - Long Term
Street and Traffic Management		
A long term strategy for the town (within and surrounding the conservation area) is required and the evolution of this should involve all the key stakeholders including Waverley Borough Council (Planning Projects Team, Environmental Health), Surrey County Council (Highways), Farnham Town Council and the Farnham Society.	Surrey County Council with involvement of key stakeholders	Long term
Utility companies – ensuring that they complete their works to a high standard using historic materials.	Surrey County Council	Short Term and ongoing
Trees and Open Space		
Opening up views of Farnham Castle	Property Owners in conjunction with Waverley Borough Council and Farnham Castle	Long Term

Appendix A

Farnham Conservation Area Map

Appendix B

Saved Policy HE8 – Waverley Local Plan 2002

POLICY HE8 – Conservation Areas

The Council will seek to preserve or enhance the character of conservation areas by:

- (a) the retention of those buildings and other features, including trees, which make a significant contribution to the character of the conservation area;
- (b) requiring a high standard for any new development within or adjoining conservation areas, to ensure that the design is in harmony with the characteristic form of the area and surrounding buildings, in terms of scale, height, layout, design, building style and materials;
- (c) in exceptional circumstances, allowing the relaxation of planning policies and building regulations to secure the retention of a significant unlisted building;
- (d) protecting open spaces and views important to the character and setting of the area;
- (e) carrying out conservation area appraisals;
- (f) requiring a high standard and sympathetic design for advertisements. Internally illuminated signs will not be permitted;
- (g) encouraging the retention and restoration of shopfronts where much of the original detailing still remains. Alterations will take into account the upper floors in terms of scale, proportion, vertical alignment, architectural style and materials. Regard shall be paid to the appearance of neighbouring shopfronts, so that the proposal will blend in with the street scene.
- (h) encouraging the Highway Authority to have regard to environmental and conservation considerations in implementing works associated with its statutory duties, including the maintenance, repair and improvement of public highways and the provision of yellow lines, street direction signs and street lighting.

Appendix C

Shop Front Survey
(to follow)

Appendix D

Existing Street Furniture

- A) Broxap, Blackburn Cast Iron Bollard
- B) Broxap, Eastgate Cast Iron Seating



Broxap Blackburn Bollard (cast iron)



Broxap Eastgate Seat (cast iron - black)

Appendix E

**Proposed schemes of enhancement and public realm
enhancements**

(to follow)

Appendix F

Proposed areas for Decluttering
(to follow)