

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE - 2 OCTOBER 2012

Title:

FARNHAM TOWN CENTRE CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN

[Portfolio Holder for Planning: Cllr Bryn Morgan]

[Wards Affected: Farnham Castle Ward]

Summary and purpose:

The purpose of this report is to recommend that the Farnham Town Centre Conservation Area Management Plan (FCAMP) be adopted as a material planning 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 is an important aspect of the long term sustainability of the Borough.

Resource/Value for Money Implications:

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, it was considered both appropriate and timely to produce a management plan for the Conservation Area. 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 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 was formed to produce the document, including Surrey County Council, Waverley Borough Council, Farnham Town Council, the Farnham Society and Farnham Castle. Local retailers and the Chamber of Commerce have also been invited to attend each meeting.
6. The 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 FCAMP does not currently include any diagrams or photographs. These will be added to the final document after adoption but prior to being fully published.

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 sufficient weight as a material planning consideration both in decision making by the Borough Council, as the Local Planning Authority, and at any appeal (if the need ever arises).
9. A formal consultation was undertaken for a period of two months commencing on 8 May and closing on 9 July 2012. Each residential property within the CA was sent a letter about the consultation and each business premises was hand delivered a leaflet giving an overview of the document. Full details of the consultation can be found in the Consultation Statement at [Annexe 2](#).

Consultation Responses

10. The consultation resulted in 29 responses being made by key stakeholders, local organisations, local businesses and residents. A summary of these can be found in the Consultation Statement at Annexe 2. However, the issues raised included:
 - Public Art
 - Traffic
 - Shared Space
 - Adverts
 - Planning Policy
 - Trees & Open Space
 - Environmental Enhancements
 - Retail (general comments)
 - Funding
 - Designations
 - Celebration
 - General Matters
11. A number of changes have been made to the proposed Management Plan in response to the consultation. These include:-
 - Decluttering – a note added about consideration being given to putting overhead wires underground.
 - Shared spaces – identification of a third potential area at the junction of Castle Street and The Borough.
 - Short sections added about historic painted signs and street name plates.
 - Note added about potential public realm enhancements at Harts Yard.
 - Trees – note added to encourage tree planting in the Conservation Area.
 - Advertisements – note added about investigating whether the Conservation Area could be designated as an Area of Special Control of Advertisements.
 - Note added about consideration being given to the enhancement of car parks in the Conservation Area.
 - Public Art – note added regarding consideration being given to how public art is commissioned by public bodies.
 - Recent implementation of the Farnham Greenways noted and note added regarding improvement of cycling and pedestrian facilities.
 - Action Plan – amended to indicate whether projects are short, medium or long term.

- Some re-ordering of sections for clarity.
12. Many of the issues raised during the consultation are not within the remit of the FCAMP group; however they will be forwarded to the relevant Officers, Services or organisations. Those matters which are relevant have, where appropriate, been addressed in the document (a full list can be found in the Consultation Statement at Annexe 2).

Conclusion

13. The FCAMP document provides a much needed framework for the long term management and enhancement of the Farnham Town Centre Conservation Area. This has been subjected to a robust consultation.
14. 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 to the Council that the Farnham Town Centre Conservation Area Management Plan 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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