

# FAREHAM

## BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Report to the Executive for Decision 10 July 2017

<b>Portfolio:</b>	Planning and Development
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Fareham Town Centre: Final Regeneration Vision for Publication</b>
<b>Report of:</b>	Director of Planning and Regulation
<b>Strategy/Policy:</b>	Local Plan Review
<b>Corporate Objective:</b>	Protecting and Enhancing our Environment Maintaining and Extending Prosperity A Balanced Housing Market

**Purpose:**

To consider and approve the Final Regeneration Vision for Fareham Town Centre (set out in Appendix A).

**Executive summary:**

The report briefly outlines the public consultation undertaken as part of the Council's Draft Regeneration Vision for Fareham Town Centre. This Report sets out the key changes to the Draft Vision which have emerged from this public consultation. The Final Vision therefore sets out the Council's ambitions for regenerating Fareham Town Centre to meet the existing and future needs of the Borough and takes on board the views and issues expressed by the local community and how working with landowners and key partners we can improve the town centre.

**Recommendation:**

It is recommended that the Executive approves:

- (a) the Final Regeneration Vision for Fareham Town Centre set out in Appendix A for publication; and
- (b) approves that the Director of Planning and Regulation be authorised to make any necessary minor changes to the Final Regeneration Vision for Fareham Town Centre, providing that these do not change the overall direction, shape or emphasis of the document, prior to the document being published on the Council's website.

**Reason:**

To encourage and actively promote the regeneration of Fareham Town Centre, encouraging development on brownfield land and future investment and funding for its future prosperity of the town centre and wider Borough.

**Cost of proposals:**

The costs involved in producing the Final Vision are met within existing operational budgets.

**Appendices:**

**A:** Final Regeneration Vision for Fareham Town Centre entitled 'Planning the Future of Fareham Town Centre'.

**B:** Summary of Consultation.

**Background papers:** None.

**Reference papers:** None.

# FAREHAM

## BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Executive Briefing Paper

<b>Date:</b>	10 July 2017
<b>Subject:</b>	Fareham (Town Centre): Final Regeneration Vision for Publication
<b>Briefing by:</b>	Director of Planning and Regulation
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Planning and Development

#### INTRODUCTION

1. This Executive Report outlines the background to the attached document, the Final Regeneration Vision for Fareham, which has been developed through the Fareham Town Centre Members' Working Group and is based on the Draft Regeneration Vision for Fareham Town Centre. It also explains how in late February through to March 2017 the Council undertook extensive public consultation on the Draft Regeneration Vision for Fareham Town Centre. The report also includes a brief summary of the key outcomes from this public consultation and how these have been incorporated into the Final Regeneration Vision for Fareham Town Centre. The main purpose of this Executive report is to recommend that the Council approves the finalisation of this corporate document, the Final Regeneration Vision for Fareham Town Centre.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF THE DRAFT REGENERATION VISION FOR FAREHAM

2. On 08 February 2016, an Executive report established the Fareham Town Centre Members' Working Group for Fareham Regeneration to be chaired by the Executive Member for Planning and Development. The purpose of the Members' Working Group was to develop a corporate vision document which focused on opportunities to improve and enhance Fareham Town Centre.
3. The preparation of the Draft Regeneration Vision for Fareham Town Centre was steered by the Members' Working Group and looked at opportunities to enhance the attractiveness of Fareham Town Centre as a destination for people to live, work and visit. A key focus was looking at how we can encourage development on brownfield sites in Fareham Town Centre which can provide new homes and new commercial development to support the future needs of the Borough. The Members' Working Group also looked at a variety of other opportunities to stimulate the regeneration of Fareham Town Centre, including how to develop the centres 'evening economy.'
4. Different sites within Fareham Town Centre are owned by various independent companies and private landlords, as well as some public bodies. The Council itself does have some landownership, such as most of the land around the 'Civic Gardens' and all

public car parks, but our control beyond this area is limited. Therefore, Officers have been in early dialogue with a number of landowners and key partners in preparing this Draft Vision in order to understand their on-going needs and their ambitions for Fareham Town Centre.

5. The Council also conducted some early consultation to help focus the document on important issues which concerned local residents and businesses. Three resident engagement group meetings took place to elicit the views of those who regularly used the centre through to those who rarely use the Centre. Five structured interviews were held with local businesses, traders, community groups and service providers.

### **CONSULTATION OF THE DRAFT REGENERATION VISION FOR FAREHAM**

6. On the 6 February 2017, the Executive agreed the Draft Regeneration Vision for Fareham Town Centre for consultation. The consultation on Draft Regeneration Vision for Fareham Town Centre ran from 20 February to 26 March 2017.
7. The consultation was promoted through a wide range of different methods. This included publication on the Councils' website and the Council's E-panel, as well as through various press releases and social media channels. A static display was also present in the Shopping Centre. The Draft Regeneration Vision for Fareham Town Centre also had a dedicated page in the February 'Fareham Today'.
8. The Council hosted a number of consultation events, including a stall at Saturday Farmers Market on the 04 March 2017 and at the weekly Monday market on 13 March 2017. A 'drop in' consultation session was held at Ferneham Hall (2pm - 7pm) on Tuesday 07 March 2017. Over 300 people came to one of these consultation events. A breakfast meeting was also held with local business on 23 February 2017 in which 50 people from local businesses and organisations attended.
9. The consultation asked the community to fill in a questionnaire about the Council's Draft Vision for Fareham Town Centre. Paper copies could either be filled in at the consultation events or taken away and returned to a 'drop box' in the Shopping Centre or the Council Offices. Alternatively, the survey could be filled in online. Overall over 660 people completed the Council's survey on the Draft Regeneration Vision for Fareham Town Centre.

### **BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF THE DRAFT VISION**

10. The Draft Regeneration Vision for Fareham Town Centre looked at the role the centre has and how it is an important destination in meeting the community's needs. However, the Council also recognises that Fareham Town Centre has and will continue to adapt to keep up with changing consumer habits and how it can no longer solely been seen as a retail destination.
11. The Draft Regeneration Vision for Fareham Town Centre also explained the pressures we are facing, the need to provide more housing, and the role brownfield development has on reducing the pressure on green-field locations. The document outlined that for a future Vision to be successful the Council needs to work with the local community including: local organisations/community groups, businesses and particularly private landowners and public bodies like Hampshire County Council.

12. The Draft Regeneration Vision for Fareham Town Centre further emphasised the Council's ambition for Fareham Town Centre to deliver between circa. 700-900 new homes over the next 20 or so years with appropriate supporting parking and infrastructure. It also highlighted the Council's aims to improve the cultural, leisure and retail opportunities within the town centre to meet the current and future needs of the Borough.
13. To deliver this, the Draft Regeneration Vision for Fareham Town Centre looked at redevelopment opportunities in five key areas:
  - **Civic Area:** The redevelopment of land within Council ownership to provide a new Cultural and Arts Facility, a replacement Osborn Road Car Park and residential development in the region of 100-150 new units. There are also opportunities for other public bodies, like Hampshire County Council who own the library and the NHS who own the Health Centre, to work with the Council as part of the redevelopment of this area.
  - **The Transport Hub:** Redevelopment opportunities in this area of about four storeys in height with mixed commercial or community uses on ground floors and residential on upper floors.
  - **Market Quay:** Future redevelopment of site for commercial use, with an emphasis on encouraging food and beverage uses with upper floors for residential development. A new multi storey car park would also have to be provided as part of any redevelopment.
  - **West Street:** Work with business owners and private developers to encourage redevelopment opportunities in this area of around three–four storeys in height.
  - **Lysses:** Potential opportunities to develop residential development in the region of two to three storeys in height, including redevelopment on part of Lysses Car Park.

#### **OUTCOMES OF THE CONSULTATION ON THE DRAFT REGENERATION VISION FOR FAREHAM TOWN CENTRE**

14. Overall there was constructive feedback from local residents about the future regeneration of Fareham Town Centre. People like the convenience that Fareham Town Centre offers, particularly the covered shopping centre. This includes parking availability and public transport as well as the good access to vital services like the library and the health centre. Most people like the independent shopping area of West Street and enjoy the restaurants and historic character of High Street.
15. A clear message from the local community is that what they liked about Fareham Town Centre was that it is distinct from some of the other more modern nearby shopping areas. The Final Regeneration Vision for Fareham Town Centre has been amended to emphasise how redevelopment should look to enhance the distinctiveness of Fareham Town Centre. Other feedback was that there were too many vacant shops, coffee shops and charity shops in the town centre. Whilst the Council has limited powers to control what type of businesses occupy privately owned shops, a clear outcome of the overall feedback is that for Fareham Town Centre to remain competitive it needs to diversify its offer.

16. A key concern of local residents is the potential impact on any redevelopment and how the road network and service providers like local school and health care places can keep up with development. The Final Regeneration Vision for Fareham Town Centre looks to emphasise that the Council is continually working with these key service providers to ensure that any redevelopment is properly supported by the necessary infrastructure. Moreover, the Final Regeneration Vision for Fareham Town Centre emphasises that development will not happen overnight. The regeneration of Fareham Town Centre will take place over the next 20 or so years. As part of any regeneration proposal there will be further opportunities for the local community to express their views on future potential individual redevelopment sites.
17. Overall feedback from the consultation has also shown that there are concerns about references to specific heights in the above areas of development identified in the town centre. Reference to storey height has therefore been removed from the Final Regeneration Vision for Fareham Town Centre. Instead the document looks to encourage developments to make the best use of brownfield land whilst also being well designed to take into account the character of the area.
18. In addition to the above, the following sets out a summary of the key comments and matters raised in terms of the above regeneration and specific changes recommended in the Final Regeneration Vision for Fareham Town Centre. Further information on this can be found in Appendix B.

#### **Civic Quarter (formerly referred to in the Draft Vision as 'Civic Area')**

19. Feedback from the consultation supported the provision of a replacement multi storey car park. There was also strong support for a new cultural and arts facility, many would like to see some form of community provision as part of any new facility. Feedback highlighted the important role the Civic Gardens have and how well liked and should be retained as part of redevelopment. Opinion was split, whilst many people were supportive of more housing being developed, some were against introducing more housing in this area of the town centre.
20. The Final Regeneration Vision for Fareham Town Centre has therefore reconsidered the quantum of housing proposed in this area to be at least 100 units. The document also emphasises that any redevelopment of this area will need to be of high quality design.
21. A further recommended change is amending the 'Civic Area' to be renamed 'Civic Quarter' to highlight that whilst the Council will focus on developing land within our control, this goes beyond just the area around the Council's ownership and the potential redevelopment of nearby land and buildings, many of which are owned by other public bodies. The Final Regeneration Vision for Fareham Town Centre makes it clear that whilst the Council will proceed to look at options to develop land within our control we are engaging with other landowners and partners in the area to ensure their future needs are accounted for in the Regeneration of this area.

#### **Market Quay**

22. The feedback from the consultation on the Draft Regeneration Vision for Fareham Town Centre showed that people were mostly supportive of the redevelopment of this area and the development of an evening economy (with some housing on upper floors). Some concerns were expressed in terms of the loss of views to Fareham Creek and

potential traffic congestion. Other concerns were about the loss of well used surface car park.

23. The potential redevelopment of this area has already been established in the Council's Adopted Local Plan. The area has been identified to accommodate the retail growth required to support the long-term growth of the Borough. The Final Regeneration Vision for Fareham Town Centre has therefore looked to emphasise that the redevelopment of this site is a long-term prospect and will be subject to further community engagement. The document has also highlighted that any development should be well designed, including strengthening vistas to Fareham Creek. Any re-provided parking provision would have to be similarly well designed so that it is easily accessible and user friendly.
24. Further to specific comments from the local bus service operator, the Market Quay area has been amended to include the Fareham Bus Station. This is in recognition of how well used this vital service is and how the Council will continue to support the future needs of the bus providers in this location within the town centre.

#### **Station Quarter (formerly referred to in the Draft Vision as 'Transport Hub')**

25. Most people agreed that the area around Fareham Train Station should be developed for residential uses, potentially with some limited commercial uses. However, some queries were raised about what 'transport hub' meant. The term 'hub' was meant to highlight the strong public transport connections this area benefits from, including the Train Station, bus stops and good pedestrian and cycle routes. However, feedback from the consultation identified that the term 'hub' led many to raise concerns that the bus station, located in the centre of the town, would be moved to this area. The Council has no plans to move the location of Fareham Town Centre Bus Station from its current central position. Therefore, for clarity it is recommended that this area be renamed 'Station Quarter'.

#### **Western Quarter (formerly referred to in the Draft Vision as 'West Street')**

26. The consultation on the Draft Regeneration Vision for Fareham Town Centre highlighted that most people like the independent retailers in this area and that some development in this area would be a positive change. However most consider that West Street shopping area lacks diversity or could potentially be too long. Feedback from local traders is that they believe there needs to be greater promotion and support for these independent retailers. An example of how this can be done is potentially by improving the signage to this part of the shopping area and the pedestrian footpaths from the town centre car parks. The Council will also seek, through the review of its Local Plan 2036, a more flexible planning policy which permits 'active' uses of vacant shops, to ensure Fareham Town Centre continues to attract and cater for the needs of its residents, businesses and visitors. However, loss of long-term vacant shop units on the periphery of West Street may be permitted for residential use where viable commercial uses cannot be developed and the development is well-designed.
27. In order to reflect the fact that this area relates to both West Street itself and the various roads leading off it, it is recommended that this area be renamed 'Western Quarter'.

#### **Georgian Quarter (formerly referred to in the Draft Vision as 'Lysses')**

28. Mostly, there was in principle support for some residential development in this area. However, there were some concerns about the potential impact on the historic

'Georgian' character of the High Street. The Final Regeneration Vision for Fareham Town Centre therefore highlights that any development will have to preserve and enhance the historic 'Georgian' character of the Conservation Area. In the light of this consultation feedback, it is recommended that this area be renamed 'Georgian Quarter'.

29. Whilst there was a general consensus about the potential redevelopment on part of the under-utilised Council owned Lysses Car Park (behind the historic 'Georgian' High Street), some suggestions have been made that a better area would be to redevelop the areas furthest away from the town centre. Therefore, the potential redevelopment of part of this car park for public use would need to be well-linked to the High Street.

### **NEXT STAGES**

30. The Final Regeneration Vision for Fareham Town Centre has been positively prepared in collaboration with local residents, local businesses and other key partners including Hampshire County Council. It is recommended to the Executive that this document be approved for publication. This includes the 'Next Steps Section' which explains that whilst change will happen this will not happen overnight; the Council will actively look to engage and work with key partners and the community to deliver these key positive changes to Fareham Town Centre. Importantly, many of these potential development sites will be incorporated into the Draft Local Plan (Local Plan 2036), which will be consulted upon this autumn (2017).

### **Enquiries:**

For further information on this report please contact Claire Burnett, Head of Planning Strategy and Regeneration (Ext 4330).