

# FAREHAM

## BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Report to Planning Committee

**Date**                    **27 January 2016**

**Report of:**            **Director of Planning and Regulation**

**Subject:**              **REVIEW OF LOCAL INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS**

#### **SUMMARY**

Before planning applications can be registered there is a need for applicants to provide a minimum level of information. Some of the information requirements are set nationally whilst others can be set by local planning authorities. The information requirements set locally are known as 'Local Information Requirements'.

The following report sets out the review which has been undertaken by Officers and recommends changes to Fareham's existing Local Information Requirements.

If Members agree with the proposed changes to the Local Information Requirements they will then need to be subject to public consultation.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

Members are invited to agree the proposed changes to the Fareham Borough Council's Local Information Requirements for public consultation.

## INTRODUCTION

1. Before planning applications are registered they go through a process of 'validation'. The validation process involves ensuring that all applications are supported by information which is required both nationally and locally.
2. The Government prescribes the National Requirements for planning applications. Fareham Borough Council is able to set out what additional information it requires to be submitted with planning applications. The additional information sought by Fareham Borough Council at the planning application registration stage is known as 'Local Information Requirements'.
3. If planning applications are not accompanied by all the National and Locally required information then the planning application will be treated as invalid and the applicant/agent notified. The planning application will not be registered until the required information has been provided.
4. Local planning authorities are required to publish a list of their information requirements for applications in a formally adopted list on their websites. The list should be proportionate to the nature and scale of development proposals and reviewed on a frequent basis. Local planning authorities should only request supporting information that is relevant, necessary and material to the application in question.
5. Whilst there is a statutory requirement to review this Council's 'Local Information Requirements' there are several other key reasons to do so at this time.
6. Members will be aware that the Council is working with Vanguard Consulting to improve the way in which we deliver services to our customers. A wide range of changes have been made to the way in which this Council deals with planning applications which has made the process easier, faster and more inclusive for those using the service. Officers have received a lot of positive feedback from regular users of the planning application service about the changes that have been made so far.
7. One question that has been raised by some planning agents however is whether Fareham's Local Information Requirements are always proportionate to what is being proposed.
8. Reviewing the Local Information Requirements gives the opportunity to further simplify the information which must be submitted, particularly with householder and minor applications, which form the majority of the applications this Council receives.
9. Members will also be aware that at their meeting on the 11th January, this Council's Executive approved the Welborne Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for adoption.
10. Part one of the Welborne Design Guidance SPD sets out what essential information must be submitted with planning applications at Welborne. Officers believe that it is appropriate that the information requirements set out within Part 1 of the Welborne Design Guidance SPD are added to this Council's Local Information Requirements list.

## **REVIEW OF FAREHAM'S LOCAL INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS**

11. The review of Fareham's Local Information Requirements effectively has three stages:
  - i. Review the Local List
  - ii. Consultation on Proposed Changes
  - iii. Finalising and Publishing the Revised List
12. In the first instance Fareham Borough Council needs to clearly identify the reasons for requesting each item on its existing list of Local Information Requirements. These reasons can be statutory requirements, policies in the National Planning Policy Framework or adopted development plans, or published guidance that explains how adopted policy should be implemented.
13. As set out in paragraph 7 above, some regular users of the planning service have raised concerns over the amount of information their clients are required to provide before a planning application will be registered. Officers believe there is scope to reduce the amount of information that must be submitted in association with some planning applications before they can be registered.
14. With the increased dialogue between planning officers, applicants and agents, the best way of identifying the information essential to accompany planning applications is through pre-application conversations and discussions.
15. It should be stressed that if information that is essential to deciding a planning application is not received at the date of initial registration, it can still be subsequently requested by the planning case officer. The most significant consequence of this will be potential delays in the time it takes to make a decision on the application. It is therefore in the applicants and agents best interests to agree in advance what information needs to be submitted with applications where there are any doubts.
16. In the case of Welborne, applicants will need to demonstrate that any planning applications they bring forward will meet the guidance within the Welborne Design Guidance SPD, together with the vision, objectives and policies of the adopted Welborne Plan. Officers therefore propose that any planning applications for new commercial or residential development at Welborne (within the 'policy boundary' as shown on the 'policies map' in Appendix B2 of the adopted Welborne Plan) will need to be accompanied by additional information, unique to Welborne, as set out on the list of Local Information Requirements.

### **NEXT STEPS**

17. At Appendix A, Officers have attached Fareham Borough Council's current list of Local Information Requirements. The list incorporates additions (which are shown in italics) and deletions (which are shown crossed through) so that it is clear what changes are being recommended. The first part of the Appendix sets out what the Local Information Requirement is and when it is needed; the second part of the document sets out in greater detail what the applicant needs to provide.
18. Members are invited to approve the proposed changes to the Local Information Requirements list for consultation. If Members approval is granted, a four week period of consultation will be undertaken on the revised list. The consultation will include local

agents and developers who regularly use Fareham's planning service.

19. At the end of the consultation period Officers will consider any comments received and where appropriate look at what further changes could be made to the Local Information Requirements list.
20. A further report will be brought before Members at the Committee Meeting on 23 March 2016. This will set out details of any comments received and what further changes (if any) are recommended to be made to the Local Information Requirements list.
21. Following final approval by Members in March the agreed Local Information Requirements will then be used in the validation of planning applications after that time.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

22. Members are requested to agree the proposed changes to Fareham's Local Information Requirements for a 4 week period of consultation as set out in the attached list.

### **Appendix A - Local Information Requirements**

#### **Background Papers:**

Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Order) 2015

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (amended by the Growth and Infrastructure Act 2013)

National Planning Policy Framework

Planning Practice Guidance – Validation requirements

#### **Enquiries:**

For further information on this report please contact Lee Smith, Head of Development Management (01329 824427)