PLANNING THE FUTURE OF FAREHAM TOWN CENTRE
Fareham Town Centre is the community, retail and cultural hub of our Borough.

In the past decade much has been done to improve the vibrancy of the town centre. We have seen a range of new shops, cafés and a wide variety of community events in the precinct. Fareham Town Centre has stood up to the challenges of internet shopping but is not as popular a place to shop as our neighbouring cities.

Now there’s an important role for us in helping to meet a pressing challenge here and across the country. Our population is growing and we must find more places to build homes between now and 2036. As a Council, we want to see new developments happen on brownfield sites as much as is possible. Fareham Town Centre has a lot of this land.

With new homes comes the opportunity to look at how we can build upon the strengths of Fareham Town Centre and make it a dynamic place where people enjoy working and living, as well as somewhere people see as a destination for retail and leisure. Developers can bring money to help us achieve this.

We talked with residents, local businesses and landowners throughout the development of this Vision. You told us that you like the independent retailers and shopping experience the town centre has to offer, as well as the historic character around the High Street. The convenience the centre offers by providing vital shops and services to meet residents’ day to day needs is also a positive.

Some of you felt the signage and walkways between the different parts of the town centre could be better, along with the public transport links. A number of you wanted to see fewer charity shops and vacant shops. It is important to note that the Council only controls a very limited amount of the commercial space in town. The vast majority is in private ownership. Whilst we can encourage a diverse range of shops and uses we cannot directly control what private owners choose to do with their units.

We have taken into account your feedback. The final Vision identifies key locations for new developments, what these might include and how the town centre’s parking, retail, leisure and cultural facilities can be improved. Our emphasis is on improving what makes Fareham Town Centre distinct and creating accessible community facilities with enough housing to ensure we have affordable homes in 20 years’ time. The majority of you agreed with this approach and our priorities when we consulted on them early in 2017.

The town centre must change to meet the needs of the Borough’s growing population and changes in shopping habits and the way we use our leisure time. These changes won’t happen overnight and there will be challenges in developing land identified in this Vision. Places where we have greater control such as parts of the Civic Quarter and Lysses Car Park, are likely to be developed first. Others will take longer. We will continue to work with the community, landowners, developers and our partners, like Hampshire County Council, to create the best possible town centre. Any future developments will involve full engagement with the community.

Councillor Keith Evans
Executive Member for Planning and Development

“We also welcome your views on anything else you think could lead to positive change for the town centre.”
"Improving what makes Fareham Town Centre distinct."
Fareham Town Centre is well connected for business, shopping and leisure, with facilities that attract people from across the Borough. However, it finds it difficult to compete with the more diverse retail experiences in Portsmouth and Southampton.

Like many town centres around the country, Fareham has felt the effects of recession and competition from out of town outlets and online shopping. Yet it remains very much in business with more shops occupied here during the past five years than in other parts of the country.

We want to build on this success and attract businesses that really add something to the visitor experience, such as a wider choice of restaurants, whilst retaining services that local people need. Creating this kind of thriving town centre for existing and future generations calls for investment.
FAREHAM TOWN CENTRE: A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

The way we live is changing. People are living longer than they used to; more people choose to live alone; and young people want a home of their own. On top of that, our population is growing. Government estimates tell us there will be an increase of around 10% in the population living in Fareham over the next 20 years.

We are under significant pressure from Government to make sure we have enough new homes so that people have somewhere affordable to live in the next 20 years. We know we need to find room for at least 2,000 extra homes than already planned between now and 2036. That's on top of the 6,000 new homes being built at Welborne and other sites already identified for development.

Our challenge is finding somewhere to put these new homes. We want to balance the need for housing against preserving green spaces. We, like the Government, think using brownfield and urban sites could be the answer. In particular, Fareham Town Centre could accommodate more than 600 new homes over the next 20 years. This is because of its access to community facilities, transport links and shops. This will help to ease some of the pressures to build on greenfield land.

It is important the redevelopment of Fareham Town Centre improves the experience of living, working and visiting here. Roads, schools, health centres, leisure and community facilities must keep up with new housing. We are already talking to partners in these sectors to make sure we are prepared for a growing population.

Making sure there is enough parking for private homes is also key, together with providing adequate public parking in the right places for those who work in and visit the town centre.

All of this needs to be done within tight budgets. Private investment from developers will help us achieve our Vision for Fareham Town Centre. It’s also important to say that not all of the improvements needed are within our control. We will have to work with developers and partners, such as Hampshire County Council, to realise our Vision.

FAREHAM TOWN CENTRE COULD ACCOMMODATE MORE THAN 600 HOMES OVER THE NEXT 20 YEARS

"MAKING SURE THERE IS ADEQUATE PARKING IN THE RIGHT PLACES..."
WHAT YOU TOLD US

We held a range of engagement activities with residents and local businesses between summer 2016 and spring 2017.

- Interviews with local traders, businesses and landlords
- Small group discussions with residents
- A business breakfast
- Consultation display in Fareham Shopping Centre
- Held engagement events at the Monday Market and Ferneham Hall

Over 350 people attended the events and around 660 people completed a survey about our draft Vision. This work has helped us understand their needs and ensure that we have the best plans in place for the future of the town centre.

A number of themes about what people want from the town centre emerged from this work and have helped shape the proposals in the final Vision:

- Good transport connections are an important aspect of good town centre living.
- A greater variety of restaurants, bars and shops would attract people to the centre.
- The walkways between the different areas of town could be improved.
- Most support encouraging more commercial and residential uses on the edge of the town centre.
- Most support more housing with parking in the centre.
- A better cultural and leisure offer would be welcomed.
- The right amount of parking in the right places is important to the success of the town centre.
- A greater variety of restaurants, bars and shops would attract people to the centre.
- Housing aimed at a range of people should be encouraged.
OUR VISION FOR FAREHAM TOWN CENTRE

Our aim is to build on the strengths of the town centre to make it an even more attractive place to live, work and visit.
OUR VISION

We want to offer a town centre experience which builds upon the distinct identity of Fareham Town Centre to encourage good use of the centre throughout the day and into the evening.

We believe this can be achieved by increasing the variety of retailers and independent shops in the town centre, providing plenty of choice for social and leisure activities and encouraging residential development for town centre living.

As more people use the town centre it will become a more attractive proposition for new businesses and retail outlets. Consequently the shopper and visitor experience will continue to improve and our town will grow in appeal and vibrancy.

Key sites have been identified that will help drive the regeneration. Our Vision is to ensure Fareham Town Centre can adapt and thrive in the years ahead and be ready to face future challenges.
WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

Our Vision has the following objectives:

- Use brownfield sites to build much needed housing with appropriate parking that is in keeping with the area
- Promote a diverse selection of retail and commercial uses, including independent shops and traders
- Encourage the evening economy through a greater choice of restaurants and leisure uses
- Work with our partners and providers to make sure that the infrastructure meets the needs of the Borough
- Enhance the cultural, community and leisure offer
- Provide convenient and accessible parking
- Improve the walkways and signage around the town centre
Our Vision looks at five key areas each with their own distinct character.

OUR AMBITIONS

CIVIC QUARTER
WESTERN QUARTER
MARKET QUAY
STATION QUARTER
GEORGIAN QUARTER
The area we call the ‘Civic Quarter’ lies to the north of Fareham Shopping Centre and is made up of civic buildings and Council car parks.

In the current Local Plan this site is identified as a place where new commercial and residential development could happen.
WHERE DO WE START?

We begin by looking at:

• PALMERSTON AVENUE CAR PARK
• OSBORNE ROAD MULTI STOREY CAR PARK
• FERNEHAM HALL AND SURROUNDING CAR PARK

Osborn Road Multi Storey Car Park is a redevelopment priority for the Council and local residents. It’s not attractive and through our consultations some people have expressed concerns about safety there, particularly at night. It’s also not well used, being less than half full during the week.

Due to the condition of the building, the car park will need heavy investment or replacing within the next ten years.

Fernham Hall is the Borough’s main venue for theatre, arts and community events but is also becoming dated. The Council’s budget for subsidising the theatre is under pressure and we must look at how we can achieve best value for tax payers. We have been talking to the Hampshire Cultural Trust, which runs the nearby Ashcroft Centre, about how we can work together to improve cultural and arts facilities.
OUR VISION FOR THE CIVIC QUARTER

This is an important community area with well used facilities. We want to develop our land to provide better parking and the right cultural offer for our community.

This redevelopment could include:

- Redeveloping Osborn Road Multi Storey Car Park to provide up to 600 modern-sized car parking spaces
- Creating a new cultural and arts facility to replace Ferneham Hall
- Some potential commercial development
- Preserving the Civic Gardens
- At least around 100 new homes with parking
- Improve the pedestrian linkages to the West Street and the wider town centre

We are working with land owners and partners within the ‘Civic Quarter’ to carefully plan future developments. We will ensure Ferneham Hall will remain open whilst a new facility is being built. Any alterations to the car parking would be done in a way to minimise disruption.
The area we call ‘Market Quay’ lies between the cinema and Quay Street roundabout. It includes the car park, bus station and Fareham Police Station.

In the current Local Plan this site is identified as a place where new commercial and residential development could happen.

“Market Quay is the Council’s premium car park in the town centre with 280 spaces.”
WHAT’S THERE NOW?

‘Market Quay’ is home to the Council’s premium car park, which is also the most used.

Hampshire Constabulary has already announced it is moving its police teams and that the Fareham Police Station is likely to close in the summer of 2019.

The popular bus station is located centrally and easily accessible.
We believe, in the future, ‘Market Quay’ will provide the best opportunity to meet the leisure and retail needs of our growing Borough.

We intend to promote:

- Shops, cafés and restaurants with homes above
- A new multi storey car park to meet increased demand from residents and visitors
- Improving public transport by working with bus providers
- Improving walkways and creating vantage points towards Fareham Creek
STATION QUARTER

This is the area around Fareham Railway Station, and includes the land to the south of the A27. The ‘Station Quarter’ is well connected by rail, road and bus routes.

The land to the east and west of Fareham Railway Station has already been identified for potential development in the Council’s current Local Plan.
There are a number of local businesses and community groups including a solicitors, tool hire company and a place of worship. Some of this land is owned by Network Rail.

We are talking to the land owners about when development might happen. We are also in discussion with Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service about their future needs.
Good transport links makes the ‘Station Quarter’ an ideal place for regeneration.

Options might include:

- A small number of shops, businesses and community facilities on the ground floor with homes above
- Car parking for businesses and residents

We will ensure that existing businesses and community organisations are included in our plans.
WESTERN QUARTER

This is the section of West Street that you can drive along and the roads leading off it.

In the current Local Plan some of this area is already identified as a place where new commercial and residential development could happen. Some of these sites already have planning permission for redevelopment.
WHAT’S THERE NOW?

A mix of smaller, independent shops and businesses, many with flats above, make West Street an attractive place to visit.

The roads off of West Street are home to businesses, community groups and public services, such as the former Magistrates Court on Trinity Street.
We want to encourage a good selection of independent retailers and businesses on the main road.

Any development along West Street and the surrounding roads will need to be well designed.

Options might include:
• Improving signage and pedestrian links
• Supporting development proposals of an appropriate scale and design
• Encouraging vacant shops to be converted into commercial or community uses
• Properties on the edge of the town centre could be converted into new homes.
GEORGIAN QUARTER

This is the area in and around the historic Georgian High Street.

Behind the High Street is Lysses Car Park which is owned and managed by the Council. It is on a slope and is less than half full during the week and even quieter at the weekend.

"THE CAR PARK IS LESS THAN HALF FULL DURING THE WEEK AND EVEN QUIETER AT THE WEEKEND."
WHAT’S THERE NOW?

Most of the area is within a Conservation Area.

We have been told that people don’t tend to park there because it’s relatively far away from the main town centre and has poor pedestrian access and lighting at night. Other people were unaware of the car park. Whilst we can improve the signage to the car park, we can’t improve its location.
We think some careful redevelopment would benefit this part of the town centre. Any development would have to be done in a way which would preserve and enhance the Georgian character of the Conservation Area.

Our plans include:

- Where appropriate, creating new homes in keeping with the Conservation Area
- Potential redevelopment of part of Lysses Car Park for housing
- Improving lighting and walkways from the car park into town.
Change will not happen overnight but new development will attract a greater level of investment and funding. This can help us to achieve our aims.

We recognise that redevelopment needs to be done in a joined up way where infrastructure keeps up with changes.

Our Vision will inform part of the Local Plan Review. Although there is potential that some of these sites may come forward. You will however be able to comment on any planning applications we receive. We will be consulting on the Local Plan Review later in the year.

You can find out more about the Vision for Fareham Town Centre and what progress we are making in realising this Vision, as well as the Local Plan Review on our website:

www.fareham.gov.uk

Alternatively if you would like to see how you can get involved or would like any further information please contact us:

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