

# FAREHAM

## BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Report to the Executive for Decision 6 January 2014

<b>Portfolio:</b>	Strategic Planning and Environment
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Portchester (Castle Street) Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy</b>
<b>Report of:</b>	Director of Planning and Environment
<b>Strategy/Policy:</b>	Fareham Borough Local Plan
<b>Corporate Objective:</b>	Protect and Enhance the Environment

#### **Purpose:**

This report summarises the outcome of public consultation on the draft Conservation Area Character Appraisal & Management Strategy for Portchester (Castle Street) Conservation Area and proposes its adoption.

#### **Executive Summary:**

This report relates to the Council's programme for the review of the adopted conservation area character assessments. It recommends adoption of the revised Portchester (Castle Street) Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy which has taken into account the outcome of the draft document consultation and guidance produced by English Heritage.

#### **Recommendation:**

It is recommended that:-

- (a) The Portchester Castle Street Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy, as set out in Appendix A to this report, be adopted as evidence in support of the Fareham Borough Local Plan Review (June 2000) saved policies, the policies contained within the Fareham Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy and the emerging policies of the Fareham Local Plan Part 2: Development Sites & Policies.
- (b) The preparation of an article 4 direction, as recommended in the character appraisal document, is supported. Delegated authority was granted by the Executive to the Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Environment in July 2010 to make article 4 directions in accordance with the provisions of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (England) Order 2010 and this proposal will be the subject of a further detailed report

(c) Delegated authority is granted to the Director of Planning and Environment in consultation with the Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Environment to make minor factual and formatting alterations, including updating of photographs where appropriate, prior to publication of the adopted document.

**Reason:**

To continue the Council's programme for re-appraisal of the adopted Conservation Area Character Assessments and the addition of a management strategy. These documents play a key role in helping to identify the heritage significance of conservation areas and in preserving and enhancing their character and appearance through the development management process and in liaison with statutory undertakers.

**Cost of proposals:**

The operation of the management strategy will be undertaken through existing officer resource and departmental budgets. Any environmental improvement works will be subject to the availability of additional funding.

**Appendices: A:** Draft document consultation comments, responses and action table  
**B:** Portchester (Castle Street) Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy

**Background papers:** Individual responses to the public consultation.

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## BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Executive Briefing Paper

**Date:** 6 January 2014

**Subject:** Portchester (Castle Street) Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy

**Briefing by:** Director of Planning and Environment

**Portfolio:** Strategic Planning and Environment

#### INTRODUCTION

1. This report seeks adoption of the revised Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy document for Portchester (Castle Street) Conservation Area following public consultation. This continues the programme of re-appraisal of the Council's adopted character appraisal documents.
2. English Heritage guidance concerning conservation area management advises Local Authorities to produce conservation area character appraisals and management strategies and to keep them up to date. The current Portchester (Castle Street) Conservation Area Character Assessment was adopted in 2008.
3. The draft Character Appraisal and Management Strategy document was considered by the Strategic Planning and Environment Policy Development and Review Panel on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sept 2013. The consultation draft incorporated the changes to the text recommended by the Panel before being published for public consultation during October and November.

#### THE ROLE OF CHARACTER APPRAISALS

4. A Conservation Area Character Appraisal identifies the qualities of a conservation area that give it heritage significance. Character can derive from the age and style of individual buildings, the way groups of buildings are arranged, the spaces between them, their historical significance in the development of an area and their use. Other factors such as; open spaces, landscaping, trees and important views all interact to form the overall character of an area. In order to make informed decisions about development that affects the character of a conservation area it is essential to have a clear understanding of its heritage significance through an up to date character appraisal document.

5. The appraisal documents also have a general role to play in informing local residents and others about the history of the borough's older settlements and those aspects of their character and appearance that it is important to protect.

## **THE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

6. In line with current English Heritage guidance the updated character appraisal has been amended to include a management strategy that sets out the Council's approach to the conservation of the conservation area. It outlines the procedures currently in place to manage change and proposes additional measures and opportunities for enhancement as identified by the appraisal.
7. The draft management strategy (as published for public consultation) proposed measures and enhancements to preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area including the following:
  - Monitoring by photographic survey every four years and periodic street audit.
  - Liaison with other bodies, including statutory undertakers and other Council departments who are responsible for, or undertake, works or re-instatements that are likely to affect the character and appearance of the conservation area.
  - Opportunities for enhancement including:
    - Waterside Lane Car Park - surfacing, marking out, signage, lighting low level planting, improvements to the definition of Waterside Lane adjacent to the car park.
    - Clearing of undergrowth and planting from the Gunpowder Store which is a scheduled monument on the outer earthworks of the castle.
    - Improvements to the sea wall when opportunity arises to introduce a softer edge.
    - Strengthened low level planting to screen the small car park close to the land gate of the castle.
    - Resurfacing of Church Road with a material more appropriate to its historic context.
    - Removal of overhead cables from the open space east of the castle and the southern end of Castle Street.
    - Improvements to west end of Wicor Path including cemetery gates and wall.
    - Review of signage and street furniture placement throughout the conservation area, including for example highway signage, bins, seating etc; including in the scheduling area within and around the castle.

## **THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCESS**

8. Public consultation on the draft Character Appraisal and Management Strategy was undertaken between 21<sup>st</sup> Oct and 18<sup>th</sup> November. It comprised:
  - A notification letter, setting out how to obtain a copy of the draft document and how to respond, sent to properties within the conservation area boundary and to local amenity societies, including Portchester Civic Society, The Portchester Society, The Fareham Society, Portchester Community Association and Portchester Community Centre Limited, statutory undertakers and other relevant bodies including English Heritage and Hampshire County Council.

- Site notices were placed on roads and footpaths and in local noticeboards in the conservation area.
- Details of the consultation were put on the Council's website including the ability to download the draft document and to submit comments electronically.
- A display was located in the foyer of the Library for the first two weeks of the consultation period and was moved to the Community Centre for the second two weeks. Documents and comment sheets were available to take away. The display was periodically manned by the Conservation Officer for a number of advertised morning, afternoon and evening sessions to help with enquiries.

9. The consultation asked for comments on the following:

- **Question 1.** The key features identified in the character appraisal to be preserved or enhanced;
- **Question 2.** The proposed opportunities identified in the character appraisal for enhancing character and appearance;
- **Question 3.** The use of an article 4 direction to control potentially harmful alterations by requiring a planning application;
- **Question 4.** Any general comments.

## **THE OUTCOME OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

10. Representations were received from 22 respondents including The Portchester Society, Portchester Civic Society and local residents. Their comments raised a wide range of issues, some relating to the specific questions asked in the questionnaire and some raising other issues. A summary of the views received is set out below and a more detailed table of comments is attached at Appendix A. The table includes an officer response indicating amendments made to the document where appropriate, or other actions.

### **Responses to Question 1: Key features identified in the character appraisal to be preserved and enhanced.**

11. There were 15 comments received relating to this question. Six were in broad support of the key areas identified. Seven comments related to the importance of long distance views of the castle including those from Portsdown Hill. In particular a number related specifically to the impact of the proposed 10 Storey development at Trafalgar Wharf close to the borough boundary in Portsmouth. Other comments related to the importance of the architecture and age of the buildings, the open gardens and allotments and the setting of the castle and St Mary's Church.

### **Responses to Question 2: Opportunities identified in the character appraisal for enhancing character and appearance.**

12. There were 25 comments received in response to this question. Six of these expressed overall support for the list of opportunities for enhancement set out in the document. Nineteen comments showed support for the the aims of the specific proposals whilst raising concerns such as maintenance of planting/ fencing, no reduction of in car parking provision, highway safety and vandalism.

### **Responses to Question 3: Using an article 4 direction to control harmful alterations to buildings by require planning applications.**

13. There were 23 comments made in response to this question: 22 were in favour of the proposal and one considered that some controls should be made less strict. Other matters raised were concern over loss of boundary walls/ gates, use of front gardens as parking spaces, control of planting, and the need for a consistent approach to implementation.

### **Responses to Question 4: General comments.**

14. There were 38 comments received that related to other issues. Eight of these gave general support for the document. Others raised a variety of matters such as additional historic facts or corrections to the text. The standard of maintenance work by statutory undertakers, the maintenance and management of the open spaces, upkeep of the historic buildings in particular the castle, littering and unsocial behaviour after dark and the need for conservation area guidance documents were also raised.

### **Specific Highway and Traffic Matters**

15. Ten comments related to the management of the highway and traffic. These include issues such as car parking, speeding and signage. These issues will be raised with the Highway Authority. The importance of liaison with the highway authority concerning these matters to ensure appropriate conservation is set out in the Management Strategy of the document.

### **Development and Planning Matters**

16. With regard to wider planning and development issues, these will be considered through the normal planning process having regard to the saved policies contained within the Fareham Borough Local Plan Review (June 2000), the policies contained within the Fareham Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy, the emerging policies of the Fareham Local Plan Part 2: Development Sites & Policies and the evidence set out in the Portchester (Castle Street) Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy. This approach is identified within the Management Strategy of the document.

### **NEXT STEPS**

17. The Character Appraisal and Management Strategy document has been amended following the responses to the consultation and is attached at Appendix B. It is recommended that the Executive agrees to the adoption of the Portchester (Castle Street) Character Appraisal and Management Strategy. The document will then be published on the Council's website.
18. Following adoption the Character Appraisal and Management Strategy will be used as evidence in support of the saved policies of the Fareham Borough Local Plan Review (June 2000), the policies contained within the Fareham Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy and the emerging policies of the Fareham Local Plan Part 2: Development Sites & Policies. As such, the content of the documents is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

## **CONCLUSION**

19. The Portchester (Castle Street) Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy continues the Council's programme for re-appraisal of the adopted Conservation Area Character Assessments. These documents play a key role in helping to identify the heritage significance of conservation areas and in preserving and enhancing their character and appearance through the development management process.
20. The document has been prepared following best practice guidance set out by English Heritage and has taken account of the comments raised by the community of Portchester and interested organisations.

### **Reference Papers:**

Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management – English Heritage (2011)  
Portchester (Castle Street) Conservation Area Character Assessment (2007)  
Portchester (Castle Street) Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy - Consultation Draft (September 2013)