

Fleet Neighbourhood Plan

2018-2032

Adopted Plan



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Photos courtesy of Aldershot, Farnham and Fleet Camera Club, Dai Pierce, Amy Stanton and Fleet & Church Crookham Society.

Foreword by Chairman of Fleet Town Council

Fleet has been recognised nationally as a great place to live and is highly valued by its residents, but it has been placed under significant development pressure in recent years with major new estates, within the Town Council Area and in the adjoining parishes including Edenbrook, on Hitches Lane, Crookham Park, Sandy Lane, Watery Lane, Church Crookham and Grove Farm on Hitches Lane. At the end of 2017 Hart District Council approved a planning application for a further 1500 new homes on the National Gas Turbine Research Site at Pyestock, soon to become Hartland Village. In addition to these substantial new estates Fleet has experienced a significant number of office to residential flat conversions which have been carried out under Permitted Development Rights. This has seen office blocks on Ancells Farm Business Park, The Old Mill Site on Minley Road, Fleet Road, Albert Street, Church Road, and Reading Road North converted into 1 and 2-bedroom flats and studio apartments. As a consequence, there is little new development that the people of Fleet can have a say in that will affect our town's future.

The increasing population is going to place pressure on the town centre and it is vitally important that much of the spending capacity of the new residents is captured by the retailers and service providers in Fleet so that we can provide sustainable amenities and services that will ensure the long-term vitality and vibrancy of our town centre. The emphasis of this Neighbourhood Plan therefore is to promote appropriate development within the town centre focused on the "civic quarter."

Another key theme of this Plan is Development Control which is aimed at ensuring that any proposed new development within our urban area, and very particularly in our Conservation Areas, is sympathetic to the local character in scale, style and density.

Not too surprisingly the third main theme is protection and enhancement of our green spaces and the very sylvan character of the town area as a whole.

The UK Planning System is hierarchical with the National Planning Policy Framework establishing the national planning policies. Below this sits the Local Plan, developed by the Local Planning Authority, Hart District Council, which sets the District wide planning policies. The latter are more focused than the generic national policies but are still of a general nature applicable to the whole of Hart. Forming a third tier, the Neighbourhood Plan can establish very local, focused planning policies that are specific to the designated area. The only constraint is that the Neighbourhood Plan policies cannot counter or contradict higher policies.

This document reflects many conversations, surveys, open days and meetings that have been held with members of the community and local voluntary organisations.

Fleet was given the opportunity to develop a Neighbourhood Plan as a result of the Localism Act of 2011. Whilst this Act helps communities such as ours to shape their own future, it must be pointed out the Plans only deal with how land is used. This often means that there are critical issues of interest/concern to you that cannot be addressed in a Neighbourhood Plan as they are not directly related to planning.

Producing a Plan for Fleet has enabled us to have a say on housing development and design, employment opportunities and green space. It also allowed us to create a vision for our town that will serve the whole community young and old, new to the area or established resident.

Producing this Plan has been a huge, and at times, challenging task. My thanks go to many people: to everyone in the Fleet Town Council Area who took part in surveys, attended open days and offered their views; to the Steering Group members who, as volunteers, have devoted a great deal of time and energy in order to move it forward; to the Town Councillors for their support; and to our planning consultants, O'Neill Homer.

- Bob Schofield, Chairman Fleet Town Council

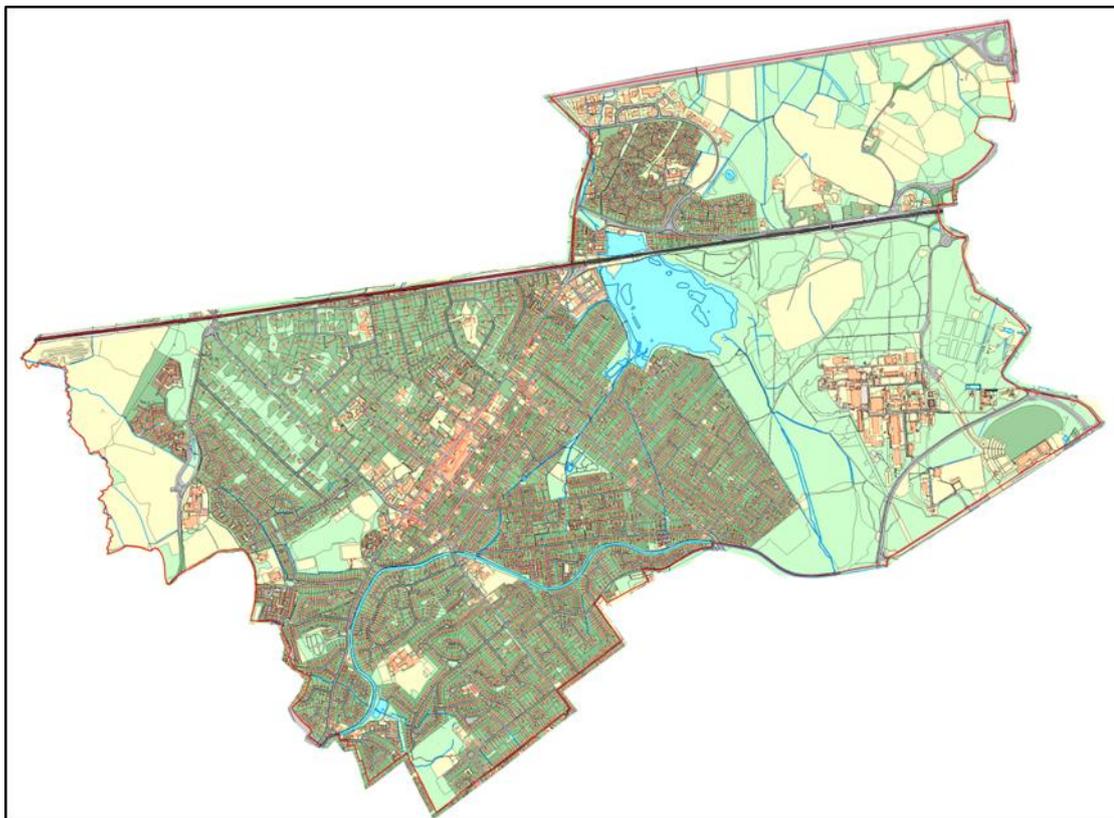
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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Fleet Neighbourhood Plan

1.1 Fleet Town Council (FTC) has prepared a Neighbourhood Plan for the area designated by the local planning authority, Hart District Council (HDC) under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 and of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The area covered by the Plan is shown in Plan A below and was designated on the 15th April, 2015.



Plan A: The Designated Fleet Neighbourhood Plan Area

1.2 The Plan presents planning policies that will be used to determine planning applications in the Fleet Town Council area. These policies are designed to protect the special character of our town and encourage development proposals that benefit the local community.

1.3 Neighbourhood Plans provide us with the chance to shape the future development of our area. Now approved at referendum and adopted by Hart District Council, the Neighbourhood Plan becomes a statutory part of the development plan for Fleet and carries significant weight in how planning applications are decided. Neighbourhood Plans only cover land use planning policies. They do not cover other important issues of interest to our community, such as health or education as these issues are not directly related to planning. However, the Neighbourhood Plan can identify proposals that relate to other matters not directly related to planning applications.

1.4 Although there has been considerable scope for the local community to decide on its planning policies, Neighbourhood Plans MUST meet all of the following 'basic conditions' as set out in Paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). These are:

- Have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State
- Ensure that the making of the Neighbourhood Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.
- Ensure that the making of the Neighbourhood Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the Development Plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area)
- Ensure that the making of the Neighbourhood Plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.

1.5 In addition to meeting the above 'conditions', the Neighbourhood Plan must be able to show that it has properly consulted local people and other relevant organisations during its preparation and has followed the relevant Regulations.

1.6 The Plan has been tested by an independent examiner. The examiner recommended to Hart District Council, as the local planning authority for this area, that the Neighbourhood Plan go to referendum. In July 2019 Fleet Town Council resolved "To approve the External Examiner's proposed amendment to the Neighbourhood Plan" and to notify Hart District Council accordingly. The referendum was held on the 7th October 2019, and the Plan was approved by 74% of those who voted. The Referendum version of the Plan was passed to Hart District Council which agreed at its meeting on the 28th November 2019 "That under Section 38A(4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 the Fleet Neighbourhood Plan be 'made' (brought into legal force) to form part of the Development Plan of Hart District Council with immediate effect".

The Planning Policy Context

1.7 The Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with national and local planning policies. At national level, these are set by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) of 2012, which is complemented by the Planning Practice Guidance. These documents set out the key national planning principles that must apply when preparing plans and managing development proposals across the country. While the NPPF was updated in July 2018, the Plan was examined within the transitional period under the 2012 Framework.

1.8 At local level, the key documents are the Hart District Local Plan (Replacement) 1996-2006 and First Alterations – Saved Policies ("Adopted Hart District Local Plan") and the Proposed Submission Version (dated February 2018) of the emerging Hart Local Plan Strategy and Sites (HLPSS) 2016 -2032. The District Council anticipates that the new Local Plan will be adopted in 2020 and hence the Town Council has been mindful that this new Local Plan is likely to replace the saved policies of the Hart District Local Plan soon after the adoption of the neighbourhood plan. Hence the neighbourhood plan has been assessed for general conformity against the strategic policies of the new Local Plan. Appendix 5 of the HLPSS sets out the saved policies that will be replaced upon adoption of the new plan and Appendix 6 the saved policies that will remain. The policies in **Bold** in paragraph 1.15 overleaf are those which the District Council intends to retain.

1.9 The Fleet Neighbourhood Plan was originally conceived at the time of the Housing Development Options Consultation Paper ("HDOCP") produced by the District Council in

August 2014. This Paper outlined a strategy to deliver 7,500 new homes in Hart District between 2016 and 2032. By May 2014, 3,500 of these houses had been built or planning permission granted, leaving a balance of approximately 4,000 further to be delivered. At the time the Pre-Submission version of the Fleet Neighbourhood Plan was being presented, the Draft Hart Local Plan Strategy and Sites 2016 – 2032 was promoting about 94 new homes on “brownfield” sites within the Fleet Settlement area and on land brought forward by landowners for development but added the comment that ‘given the unpredictable nature of “brownfield” sites, this source of supply will continue to be updated and reviewed throughout the plan period’.

1.10 For this reason, combined with the allocation of 1500 homes at the mixed use development of Hartland Village approved in outline under planning application 17/00471/OUT on the 13th July 2018, the pressures from development in surrounding areas and the fact that Hart District Council has not identified a housing target for the Fleet neighbourhood plan area, that the Town Council has chosen not to focus on allocating new sites for residential development in the plan.

1.11 The HLPSS 2016-2032 also highlighted (at paragraphs 106-7) that Hart District might be obliged to take some of the “overspill” new homes from Surrey Heath and that Hart’s housing needs might have to be further revised, given the changes proposed by Government to the methodology for assessing housing need.

1.12 It would seem clear, therefore, that the number of new homes proposed to be built in the area is sufficient, at this time, to meet local housing needs given the advanced stage of the draft Local Plan. In any case the sources of housing supply within settlement boundaries (Table 1 Page 31 of the HLPSS) may be an under estimate of the sites available and other sites may come forward.

1.13 Given the parameters set out in 1.11 and 1.12 above, the Town Council has chosen to focus the neighbourhood plan on ensuring that the quality of the environment is protected and that our town centre meets the needs of the increasing population from surrounding areas who will be utilising its facilities, both commercially and culturally.

1.14 The Fleet Neighbourhood Plan was submitted for its examination during 2018 ahead of the Hart District Local Plan, it has been assessed for general conformity against the relevant saved strategic policies of the Adopted Hart District Local Plan.

1.15 Hart District Council has defined which of its saved policies are ‘strategic’ for the purpose of guiding the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans (see appendix Schedule of Evidence - Strategic Policies of the Hart District Local Plan April 2016). Those strategic policies considered by Hart to be relevant for Neighbourhood Plans are listed below and those it intends to continue to save after adoption of the new Local Plan are in **Bold**:

- **GEN1: General Policy for Development**
- GEN4: General Design Policy
- CON1–3: guidance for the protection of European, National and Local ecological designations
- **CON8: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows**
- **CON10: Basingstoke Canal**
- CON13: Conservation Areas
- CON17 - 18: Listed Buildings and Buildings of Local Interest – extension, alteration and change of use

- **URB 1: Definition of Areas Covered by URB Policies**
- URB 2-7: Economic Development policies
- URB 8-10: Retail
- **URB11 – Shop Fronts**
- URB15: Town, District and Local centres
- **URB18: Residential Densities in North Fleet and Yateley Conservation Areas**
- URB21-22: Open Spaces
- T1: Land use and Transport
- T3: Public Transport: Fleet Town Centre
- T7: Fleet Inner Relief Road
- T8: Highway network east of Fleet
- T10: Safeguarding land for cycleway and footway networks
- T11: Public access for mobility impaired
- T14: Transport and Development
- F1: Fleet Town Centre - General Policies
- F2: Fleet Town Centre – Primary Retail centre
- F3: Secondary Retail area
- F4-11: Area policies
- DEV12-13: Pyestock¹
- NRM6 (SE Plan saved policy)

1.16 Hart District Council's saved urban policy URB 1 "Definition of areas covered by URB policies" states that Fleet is to be regarded as an urban settlement to which any of its saved Urban Policies must be applied (until such time as they are replaced). In its introduction to the Urban Economy and Rural Centres Policies (paragraph 5.4) Hart states that the policies for the urban areas and rural centres of the District are principally concerned with "sustaining and encouraging economic activity, and meeting the District's needs for housing, shopping, social services and recreation."

1.17 Appendix 4 of the Proposed Submission Version of the Local Plan Strategy and Sites (Document CD1 February 2018) includes the following strategic policies which are considered the most relevant to the objectives of the Fleet Neighbourhood Plan and to which the plan is in general conformity. There are other non-strategic policies of relevance however such as Policy NBE10 Design:

- SD1 Sustainable Development
- SS1 Spatial Strategy: Scale and Distribution of Growth
- SS2 Hartland Village
- H1 Housing Mix
- ED1 New Employment
- ED2 Safeguarding Employment Land and Premises
- ED4 Town, District and Local Centres
- NBE4 Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area
- NBE5 Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- NBE6 Managing Flood Risk
- NBE7 Water Quality

¹ See Appendix 5 of Hart District Council's Local Plan Strategies and Sites 2016 – 2032 which may supersede the current policies

- NBE9 Historic Environment
- I1 Infrastructure
- I2 Green Infrastructure
- I3 Transport
- I4 Open Space, Sport and Recreation
- I5 Community Facilities
- NRM6 (SE Plan saved policy)

1.18 The emerging Local Plan strategy acknowledges the strengths of Fleet as the main shopping destination in the District (Paragraph 117) and the town centre's significance is expressed through Policy ED5. In preparing the Fleet Neighbourhood Plan, consultation with the community demonstrated that the economic development, vibrancy and vitality of the town centre is a major priority for residents.

1.19 Policy SS2 Hartland Village' (formerly Pyestock) on which a hybrid planning permission (part full, part outline) has been granted, lies within the Neighbourhood Plan Boundary. The planning permission includes proposals for 1500 homes with associated social/community infrastructure, open space and Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) mitigation. The planning conditions require a comprehensive approach to development which demonstrates how the development will integrate with and complement its surroundings. These include measures to connect the site to Fleet Town Centre. It is likely that many new residents of Hartland Village will look to Fleet Town Centre, rail station and other services, to meet their day to day needs, which is why improved connections and sustainable travel options should be encouraged to reduce pressure on the local highway network. The key objective of the neighbourhood plan to enhance the retail and cultural offer of Fleet Town Centre by improving its attractiveness and accessibility therefore has additional significance set against retail competition from other centres.

History and Town Council Area Profile

1.20 The following sections of the Plan, describe our neighbourhood, define the town council boundaries and nearby settlements and outline a brief history of our town.

Profile of the town

1.21 Situated in the north east corner of Hampshire, Fleet is the administrative and commercial centre of the District of Hart. It is surrounded by thriving towns, including Basingstoke, Camberley, Guildford, Reading and Winchester, and many rural villages. It is 38 miles from London and has fast links to the capital either by the M3 or by a 40-minute journey to Waterloo by rail.

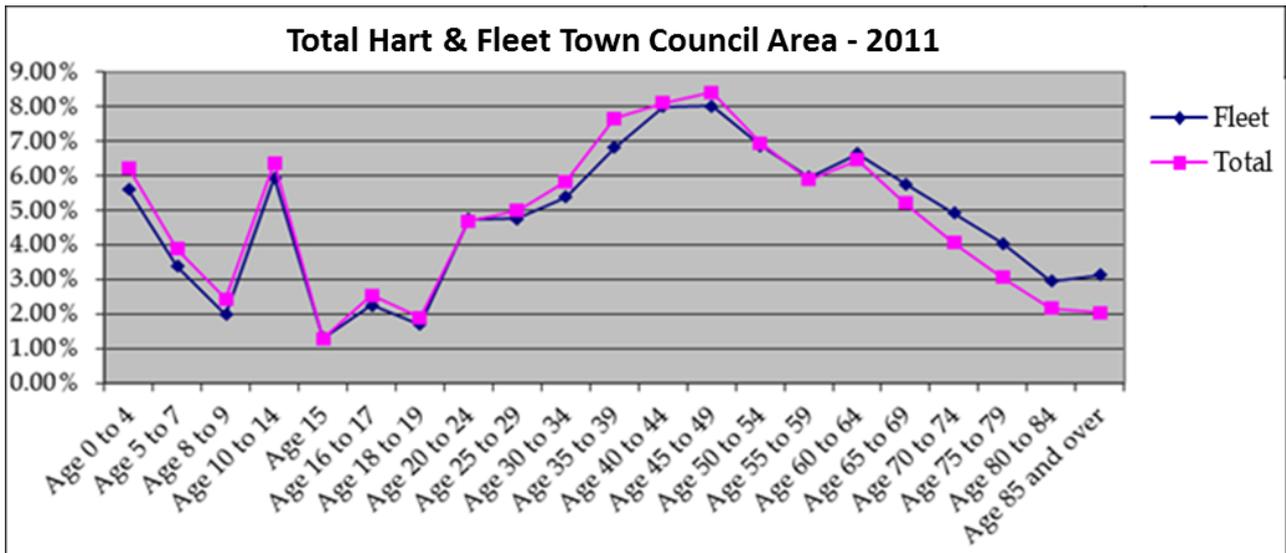
1.22 Fleet, and its surrounding area, is one of the more prosperous parts of the country. In fact Hart District was recognised in the Halifax Quality of Life survey as the best place to live in Britain in 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2017.

1.23 Home ownership is amongst the highest in the country and house prices are well above the national average. There is, however, a shortage of affordable housing, and more would be welcomed within new development planned for the neighbourhood area and these are expected to come forward principally at Hartland Village. Fleet has expanded significantly in the past few decades with new residential areas being built in and around Fleet, including Ancells Farm, Zebon Copse, Elvetham Heath, Edenbrook, Queen Elizabeth Barracks, and further development is planned at Hartland Village, Grove

Farm and Watery Lane as well as other smaller sites nearby. The sheer scale of this rapid growth has resulted in pressure on the local infrastructure, education, public transport and the provision of health services.

1.24 The Fleet Town Council area is home to six multi-denominational churches, a small community hospital and excellent schools. There are also good community facilities in the town centre, including the Hart Shopping Centre, The Harlington, the Civic Offices and the Library. A new Leisure Centre has very recently been built on the edge of the town.

1.25 The Fleet Town Council area has a population of just over 23,000 (2011 census) and its age profile mirrors that of the Hart District as is shown in the graph below.



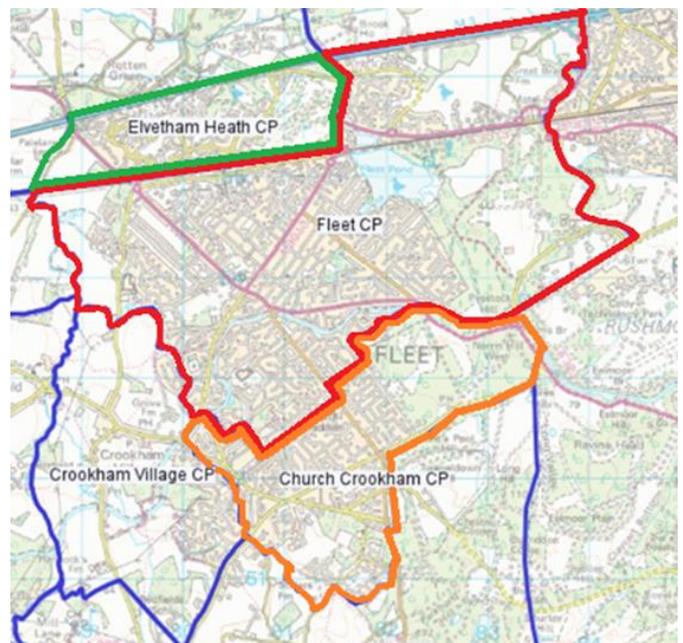
1.26 The Office for National Statistics forecasts show an increase in the population aged 65 and over between 2011 and 2018 of 13%. The number of those aged 10 to 14, is also predicted to grow by 9% in the same period.

1.27 26% of the population is classed as professional and 16% as directors or managers (average figures for England are 17% and 11%, respectively).

Fleet Town Council Area Boundaries

1.28 Until 2010, the Fleet Town Council area was not defined as a parish and was administered by Hart District Council. Following a referendum in 2008 the urban area was divided into three parishes; Fleet, Church Crookham and Elvetham Heath.

1.29 The eastern side of the Town Council area (from the old Ively Road in the South to the M3 Motorway in the north) is bounded by a strip of land designated as a strategic gap to physically and visually separate Fleet from Farnborough. This land, predominantly owned by the Ministry of Defence (MoD), also provides a training area



for the MoD linking the Aldershot and Minley Garrisons.

1.30 The Southwood estate running along the eastern side of the Minley Road and the Ancells Farm estate defines the western edge of the strategic gap.

1.31 Farnborough represents the closest major residential and commercial area, with significant high technology employment opportunities along Summit Avenue, Farnborough Airfield, Farnborough Business Park, and Farnborough town centre's retail area. Hart District Council's recent acquisition of the tract of land called Bramshot Farm as SANG will ensure that Farnborough and Fleet remain separated.



Historical Fleet and growth of development in the area over the last century

1.32 Fleet is a relatively young town with few roots in the rural history of the surrounding area. In Saxon times Fleet Pond was called "Fugelmere" meaning a wildfowl lake. The name Fleet is a derivation of the Norman word for a stream, "la Flete". H. W. Brake, a local land agent, bought most of the land that now forms Fleet town in 1878. He set out a grid pattern of streets and divided the land into saleable plots, of which Fleet Road formed the centre. Much of that original grid exists today.

North Fleet

1.33 The first, and main, impetus for development was in North Fleet and came after the 1880s. The sale of land by the Elvetham Estate in the early 1920s led to a large number of substantial detached houses being built on the land which now forms the North Fleet Conservation Area. These large houses, on spacious plots and set back from the road, give the area its special character.

Fleet Road

1.34 Fleet Road appears on the earliest maps of the area dating from the mid-18th century. The railway line was built in 1847, with a small station at the intersection of the railway and the road on the edge of Fleet Pond. Although some relatively large residential houses had already been built before the station arrived, they were then joined by a group of small shops and formed an area of Fleet Road called, briefly, the Market Place. A further number of buildings, mainly commercial, were added in the 1960s, and in the 1980s

these were replaced by a shopping mall (the Hart Shopping Centre) between Fleet Road and Albert Street on land previously occupied by County Tractors.



Hart Shopping Centre



Fleet Road

Pondtail

1.35 The street grid covering the Pondtail area was set out in the 1870s. The Ordnance Survey map of 1912 shows a concentration of buildings around Fleet Road, Dunmow Hill, Kent Road and Avondale Road, with small groups of houses elsewhere in the area. Infill development followed during the period between the wars and, in the later 20th century, larger groups of houses were built as cul-de-sac developments.

South Fleet

1.36 The 1897 map shows scattered residential development along Aldershot Road, Albany Road and Regent Street, as well as several plant nurseries. By 1912 a small park, Oakley Park, had been created to the north of Albany Road and the gradual development of housing continued throughout the early 20th century. During the late 20th century development was on a larger scale, with building on the bigger gardens plots and nurseries to create cul-de-sacs and short side streets of housing, as well as continuing the infilling development on the original roads.



Oakley Park

West Fleet



1.37 In 1912 the area to the west of Fleet was woodland with the exception of the cricket ground close to The Oatsheaf Public House and Reading Road North. In 1946, the Hon. Dame Rachel Anstruther-Gough-Calthorpe generously gave 34 acres of land in West Fleet to be used only "as a public park and recreation ground for the District of Fleet and Church Crookham." This area of land is known as Calthorpe Park.

Calthorpe Park

1.38 There was some residential development along Crookham Road between World War I and II but most development took place from the 1950s onwards, with the construction of a number of different estates. Starting in 2007, a site to the west of Hitches Lane, known as Edenbrook, has been developed with a mix of houses and flats, and a new Leisure Centre.

More recent developments that have affected Fleet

1.39 The introduction of the M3 Motorway in the 1970s and the building of the large estates on the edges of Fleet have had an enormous impact on the town and have added increased pressure on social infrastructure including education and medical facilities. Future planned developments, including Hartland Village, Grove Farm and Watery Lane will increase this pressure.

Conservation areas and how they affect Fleet

1.40 The North Fleet Conservation Area, designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (listed Buildings and Conservation areas) Act 1990 requires the Local Planning Authority to preserve or enhance the special architectural or historic character and appearance of the designated area. Areas within and on the perimeter of the area have been affected by modern higher density developments and it is now ever more important to preserve and enhance the special character of the area and protect its historic significance to the character of Fleet Town.

1.41 The North Fleet Conservation Area was designated in 1994 and lies on the northern side of the town of Fleet, a largely Edwardian development of former heathland which followed the growth of nearby Aldershot and Farnborough from the 1860s onwards.

1.42 The conservation area provides contrasting areas of residential development, some of it laid out in a grid pattern, and some set to either side of gently curving roads. Historic maps confirm that few buildings remain of pre-1846 date, or even of 1890. The majority of the buildings appear to therefore date to between 1890 and 1922, or even later, with several streets not being completed until the 1930s. However, the spacious plots, with the mainly detached houses set back from the road behind mature trees and other planting, provide the defining feature of the conservation area. It is this sylvan quality, allied to some unmade roads, grass verges, and (in places) undulating topography, which gives the conservation area its special character albeit there is some established development which is of merit dating from late C19th and early C20th up to the 1940's.

1.43 As stated earlier it was the sale of land by the Elvetham Estate that led to early development in North Fleet. The large houses in spacious plots set in a green environment established the early character of the area and this was preserved through the designation of the area as the North Fleet Conservation Area in 1994. The conservation area has a rural quality, stated to be "in close proximity to Fleet Town Centre, but separate from it." The retention of the conservation area protects a unique part of Fleet's history. Fleet, as the primary urban area in Hart District, has been under constant pressure for ever more housing at ever greater densities.

1.44 The Fleet Town Council Area falls within the 5 km control zone of the Thames Basin Heaths' Special Protection Area (SPA) and parts of our area fall within the 400m residential development exclusion zone of the SPA, which has been put in place to protect the habitat of three species of vulnerable ground nesting birds.

1.45 In 1951, Fleet Pond became one of the first Sites of Special Scientific Interest to be named in Hampshire due to its range of birdlife and its rich aquatic and heathland flora and its status was confirmed in 1984, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act. In 1972, Fleet Urban District Council purchased the pond, together with adjacent heathland and woodland, from the Ministry of Defence. The Fleet Pond Society was founded four years later and in 1977 the land was declared a Local Nature Reserve. (Hall 1997)

1.46 The Fleet Pond Society believes the status of Fleet Pond as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), is threatened by the existing high usage of the Fleet Pond Nature Reserve's footpaths (see appendix) which is leading to erosion and damage to the local ecology. The society believes this will only be exacerbated by the significant increase in the population in close proximity to the pond area. However, Natural England has raised no objections to a major new housing development, Hartland Village, in the area.



Fleet Pond



Basingstoke Canal

1.47 Basingstoke Canal and Fleet Pond provide precious space for walking and enjoying wildlife. The Canal and some of the adjoining areas are designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. The Basingstoke Canal Conservation Order came into force in 2009. The Canal is unusual in not being owned by the Canal & River Trust, but by Hampshire and Surrey County Councils, and is funded by a mixture of County, District and Parish grants. The continued maintenance of Basingstoke Canal has been raised as an important issue and donations, fund raising, and voluntary work continue to provide much needed additional support.

Transport infrastructure which has impacted Fleet

1.48 The major large scale transport infrastructure projects that have impacted Fleet Town Council area are the building of the M3 and later the introduction of J4A. Only one new road corridor has been built in the last 40+ years -the New Ively Road. The canal crossing at Norris Hill and the railway crossing at the approach to Elvetham Heath have been improved. Both are now subjected to increased traffic congestion as traffic numbers continue to increase.

1.49 Car ownership is high and during the morning and evening peaks there is increasing congestion on the roads into and out of Fleet, exacerbated by the narrow bridges, over both the canal and the railway line.

1.50 There is, however, severe congestion around all the school sites, at similar times of the day.

1.51 Recent consultations with the local community suggest that a network of safe cycle routes would be welcomed to improve access to the town centre and reduce the numbers of cars. Whilst on-road cycle



Cycle Path

paths, such as the one along Kings Road, have limited use, a welcome off-road cycle path from Fleet Town Centre to Calthorpe Park secondary school and the new Leisure Centre was opened in July 2013. Further cycle routes are identified in the Fleet Town Access Plan (FTAP).

The Neighbourhood Plan Preparation Process

1.52 In line with statutory requirements, the Submission Neighbourhood Plan was accompanied by the following documents:

- A Consultation Statement, summarising the engagement with residents, businesses and stakeholders which meets the requirements of Section 15(2) of part 5 of the Neighbourhood Plan Regulations and includes how the main issues raised through the consultation have been considered and where relevant addressed in the Plan.
- A Basic Conditions Statement which explains how the Neighbourhood Plan meets the requirements of paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act
- HDC determined that a Strategic Environmental Assessment was not required.

1.53 Throughout the preparation of the Plan, emphasis has been placed on consulting and engaging with the people of Fleet, the business community, local voluntary organisations and landowners.

1.54 The documents listed above ensure the neighbourhood plan meets the legal requirements of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as later amended) and the EU Directive 2001/42 (the SEA Directive).

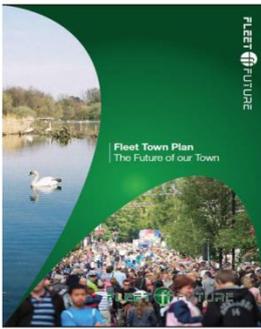
Consultation with the Community

1.55 In November 2012 a Public Meeting was held at The Harlington in Fleet Town Centre to ask residents which infrastructure and services projects should be paid for with the developer funding that would result from housing developments being accepted in our area. Over 600 people attended. The majority of comments suggested that town centre improvements (38%) and the redevelopment of The Harlington (27%), were the highest priority, whilst transport and better pedestrian and cycle access came in third and fourth place with 10% and 7% respectively.

1.56 Using the findings of the public meetings, a voluntary group of local residents called Fleet Future, was formed to work on the key issues raised. In the summer of 2013, they developed the Fleet Town Plan and, again, consulted the community. This time there were 1,335 responses. We now see the Neighbourhood Plan as being a way of taking forward the community's views.

1.57 In particular, the Town Plan (page 27) proposes the "redevelopment of the land centred on the Civic Offices, The Harlington, Library and Gurkha Square for mixed use which might include residential, commercial, community entertainment and cultural activities while preserving a town square and links to 'The Views'".

1.58 The recommendation received an overall majority, with 56% of those who voted approving against 39% who disagreed (9% had no opinion). Neighbourhood planning process is a way of progressing this recommendation whilst continuing to consult with the community.



1.59 A further recommendation in the Fleet Town Plan was that “more cycle routes should be developed to improve access around the town and encourage people to use alternative methods of transport to the car”. The importance of safe, designated cycle routes was also identified in the Fleet and Church Crookham Town Healthcheck, and further supported in Fleet Town Access Plan. This Neighbourhood Plan addresses these issues in the green policy section.

1.60 The development of the Neighbourhood Plan drew on the valuable work that local organisations had already done, including Fleet & Church Crookham Society's early research undertaken during 2007-10, FTC's survey on housing development in 2011 and Fleet Future's consultation for the Fleet Town Plan in 2013/14.

1.61 In August 2017 a brief introduction to the town centre section was discussed by the Board of the new Fleet Business Improvement (BID) Company. As the town centre has been identified as providing a major opportunity for change, it was felt important to gather the early views of its key stakeholders and these have been incorporated into the policies within the Plan. The Steering Group also consulted Fleet Town Councillors on the town centre policies and their recommendations have been included as well.

The Pre-Submission Plan

1.62 The Pre-Submission Plan, together with its supporting documents was approved by the Fleet Town Council on 7 March 2018 to be published for a statutory public consultation for a six-week period from 04 May 2018 to 15 June 2018 in accordance with Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations. An online survey was created to test support for the 19 policies in the plan, and hard copies of the questionnaire were sent to every household in the neighbourhood plan area. A public meeting was held in The Harlington to present the policies to the public and an exhibition was on display in the Hart Shopping Centre to enable people to comment in their own time. 505 responses were received along with some letters and additional emails.

1.63 The results of the consultation on the Plan were reviewed by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, with advice from its Planning Consultant. Recommendations from statutory consultees and the public were all considered and some modifications were agreed. These formed part of the Submission Plan.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) / Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

1.64 Fleet Town Council requested a screening opinion from Hart District Council in respect of the need to prepare a Strategic Environment Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment under the EU Directives 42/2001 and the 2004 Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations. The original opinion was based on the proposal to allocate sites for housing development in the Neighbourhood Plan and the Screening Report (dated 4th April 2016) concluded that the Fleet Neighbourhood Plan was therefore likely to give rise to significant environmental effects and hence an SEA would be necessary, but English Nature concluded there would be no requirement for an HRA.

1.65 The proximity of the area to the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area (TBHSPA) also required that the plan was screened for a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) to ensure that the Plan avoided significant adverse effects on the integrity of this

internationally important nature conservation site. As a fall-back position, the neighbourhood plan includes a mitigation policy (Policy 17) to address these matters.

1.66 Given the Neighbourhood Plan no longer intends to allocate sites for housing development a further SEA/HRA Screening Report was commissioned and this concluded that neither an HRA nor an SEA would be necessary because:

* Development within the plan is small in scale unlikely to exceed 8,000sqm of retail floorspace and complementary development; and

* The policies of the plan when taken as a whole and in combination with other policies in the Hart Local Plan 1996-2006 (Replacement) and First Alterations and proposed policies in the Hart Local Plan 2016-2032 will likely have positive effects.

2. Vision, Objectives and Aims

Vision

2.1 The vision for Fleet Town Council area in 2032 proposed within this Neighbourhood Plan is to:

“Create an accessible, sustainable, green town with an active population and a vibrant business, cultural and community focus”

Objectives

2.2 To achieve this vision a number of key objectives have been identified:

- To create a vibrant, modern Civic Quarter in our town centre that will be fit to serve our expanding population and act as a key attractor for visitors
- To ensure that development sites within the town are planned and built in such a way as to support the vitality of the town centre.
- To protect and improve the unique green character of Fleet, with its open space and parks, to ensure that its verdant arterial routes are preserved for the future, and new cycle networks link the town's community assets
- To make sure that the height and scale of any new development fits within its surroundings and compliments and enhances the existing townscape.

Fleet's Neighbourhood Plan policies

2.3 The next section of the Plan sets out the adopted policies. Each policy has a number and title and the policy itself is written in bold italics for ease of reference. There is also a short statement explaining the intention of the policy and any other relevant background information.

Town Centre Policies

2.4 The town centre of Fleet is the main shopping centre in Hart and serves a rapidly expanding population. The main retail, leisure and entertainment facilities are located along Fleet Road and include the Hart Shopping Centre and The Harlington community building as well as thriving business and retail outlets.

2.5 Fleet is the centre of a prosperous community. However, competition from neighbouring towns is increasing. Camberley and Basingstoke have already established successful Business Improvement Districts (BID) and, in March 2017, Fleet businesses also voted for Fleet to become a BID. Farnborough and Aldershot have been identified by the M3 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) as of strategic importance and both these towns are benefiting from significant investment by the LEP. Nearby Waverley Borough Council has recently agreed a £100m regeneration scheme for Farnham Town Centre. So pressure is increasing on Fleet retailers and businesses. Fleet Town Centre must respond by offering something unique, attractive and special to ensure that it continues to succeed even in tough conditions.

The changing shape of the high street

2.6 It must be appreciated that the high street is changing. Nationally, the number of retail outlets in Britain is shrinking – forecast to drop by 20% from 2013 to 2018². Many town centres have too much retail floor space and, subsequently, high vacancy rates – Fleet at 9% is typical of a town of its comparable size. It is well known that the impact of out-of-town supermarkets and retail parks has contributed to a shift in shopping patterns and that, more importantly, internet and multi-channel retailing will continue to divert trade from physical shops for at least another decade. In future, all but the strong, dominant centres will require a smaller, more focussed retail core.³

2.7 As a result of these changes, the balance on the high street will alter; retail shops may disappear, whilst service outlets like nail bars, hairdressers, coffee bars, restaurants, entertainment establishments and licensed premises will prosper. Fleet has already experienced, and will continue to experience, these changes.

2.8 The future of our town centre must focus on attracting a range of visitors that not only wish to shop but also to eat, drink and visit leisure facilities. The encouragement of additional community, cultural and leisure activities is, therefore, vital for future economic development and growth.

2.9 The strategy to ensure the ongoing vitality and viability of Fleet town centre, therefore, has two main thrusts:

- Policies that encourage the social and community offerings in the town centre and provide a key attractor for visitors and the local community
- To safeguard the existing retail provision in the town centre with appropriate planning policies whilst recognising that current national trends may lead to a reduction in retail outlets on Fleet Road.

Constraints

2.10 With the local population growing, the town centre will be under pressure to provide amenities for the increasing number of people and opportunities for expansion will need to be explored. The current high street is long and linear and studies, including Hart District

² [Centre for Retail research](#)

³ "Beyond Retail", page 6

Council's 2009 "Vision for Fleet Town Centre" have identified the need for the high street to expand in width rather than length.

2.11 However, future potential is restricted by the lack of available land and the fact that the large majority of properties within the town centre are in private ownership. Development within the area will, therefore, necessarily be brought forward only through private sector investment.

2.12 In its Saved Local Plan Policy F1, Hart District Council outlines the commitment "to support Fleet's position as the District's principal shopping centre by concentrating principal retail uses along Fleet Road, encouraging a mix of uses in order to maintain the centre's vitality and securing environmental quality. Where appropriate, landscaping schemes will be encouraged in association with new developments in order to enhance the attractiveness of the town centre". Policy ED5 of HLPSS also outlines the commitment to Fleet Town Centre; "Fleet town centre will be the main focus for future town centre development in the District. As set out in Policy ED4, there is capacity for additional retail floorspace (Class A uses) to be located within Fleet town centre over the plan period." Within that context, our Neighbourhood Plan seeks to identify the areas that are available to make a difference to our town.

Land Use Planning Policies

Land Use Policies

2.13 Land use policies are used to determine planning applications. They can be used as the basis for retaining or changing the use of land and set the conditions against which development proposals will be judged.

2.14 The purpose is to either encourage planning applications to be made for things the local community will support or to discourage applications for developments that they will not support. Policies must be clearly written so they can be easily applied when considering planning applications.

2.15 Our Neighbourhood Plan avoids repeating existing national or local planning policies and focuses on a relatively small number of key development issues in the area.

Policy Issues

2.16 Consultation with the community raised a number of issues for the Neighbourhood Plan to address:

- How can the Plan assist the long term viability and vibrancy of the town centre?
- Can the Plan deliver the town centre regeneration that the community seek?
- Can the Plan help secure community benefits as a result of this regeneration?
- What town centre development plans will be supported by the local community?
- How can the Plan control design management within the area to maintain the character of the town that resident's value?
- How can the Plan assist with the provision of a safe network of footpaths and cycle ways within Fleet?
- How can the Plan protect the green character and open spaces in our area?

2.17 The Pre-Submission consultation took account of the views of the community and others on how to address these issues. The Submission Plan and subsequent adopted version have included amendments to policies as a result of extensive consultation.

What the Town Centre policies are seeking to achieve and how they align

2.18 The Fleet Town Centre policies, which cover the area shown on the Policies Map, support the development of retail, social, cultural and civic uses, including the creation of a new 'Civic Quarter' and the management of the mix of uses within the town centre, through consultation and agreement with the business community.

2.19 In its Saved Local Plan Policy F1, Hart District Council outlines the commitment "to support Fleet's position as the District's principal shopping centre by concentrating principal retail uses along Fleet Road, encouraging a mix of uses in order to maintain the centre's vitality and securing environmental quality. Where appropriate, landscaping schemes will be encouraged in association with new developments in order to enhance the attractiveness of the town centre". Policy ED5 of HLPSS also outlines the commitment to Fleet Town Centre; "Fleet town centre will be the main focus for future town centre development in the District." Within that context, our Neighbourhood Plan identifies the areas that are available to make a difference to our town.

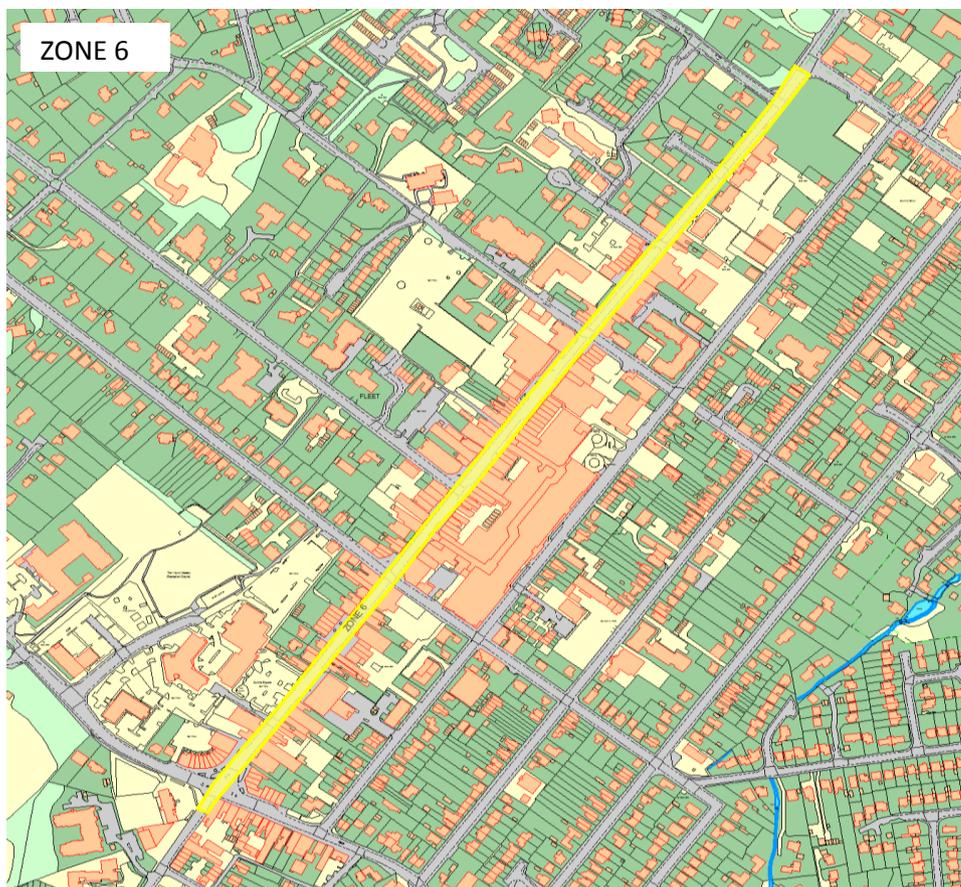
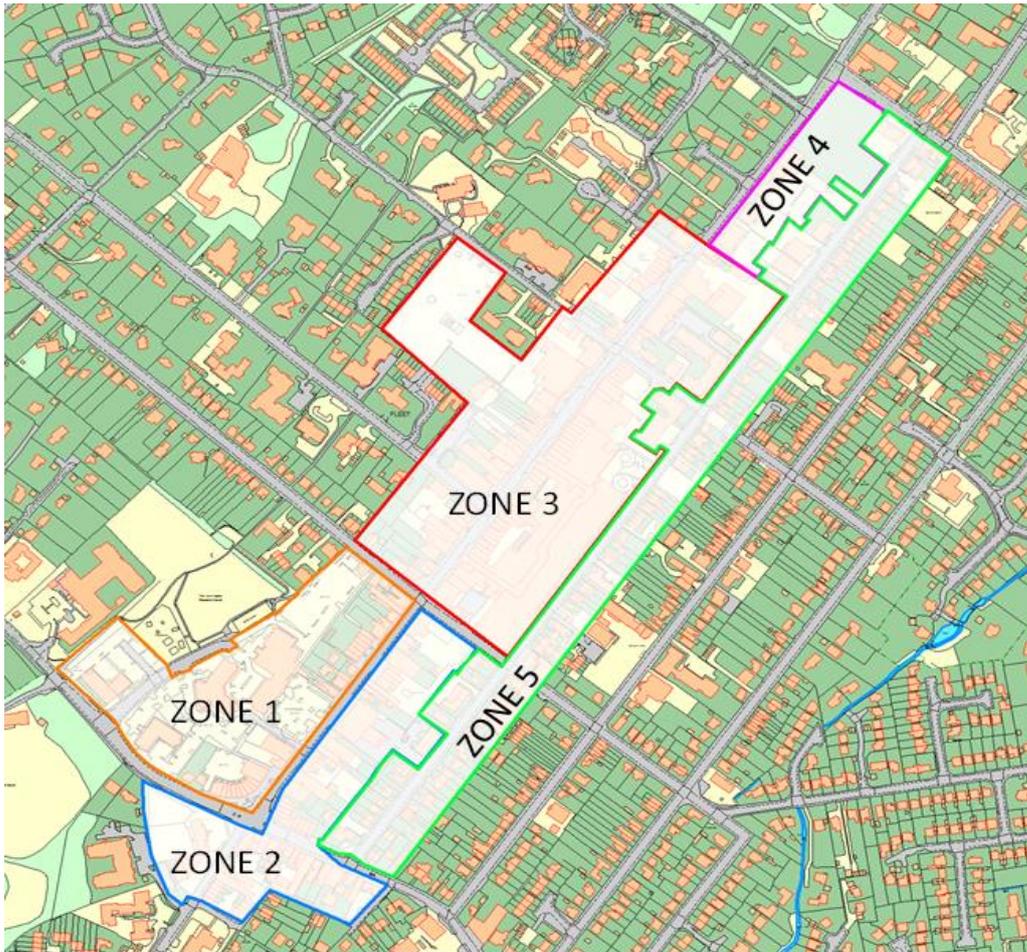
2.20 The town centre policies within the Plan have the following objectives:

- To promote the vitality and vibrancy of Fleet Town Centre
- To enhance accessibility and improve the public realm within the town centre
- To create a modern and vibrant "Civic Quarter" which forms a hub for civic functions, entertainment, recreation and leisure activities
- To improve the green and urban environment

2.21 The Plan sets out to manage the design features for all development within the town centre area and to identify any areas which will add to its vitality and vibrancy. To best describe this, the town has been defined within the following areas:

- Social and Community Zone
 - Civic Quarter – Zone 1a (the catalyst for future development)
 - Future expansion zones – Zones 1b – 1d
 - Leisure and Night time economy – Zone 2
- Core Shopping Zone
 - Area between Church Road & Victoria Road/Upper Street and area between Church Road & 151 Fleet Road – Zone 3
- Other areas
 - Residential – Zone 4
 - Land at Albert Street – Zone 5
 - Fleet Road public realm – Zone 6

As illustrated by the policies maps below:



The major opportunity for change

2.22 The major opportunity for change lies in the creation of the new Civic Quarter. The town centre policies provide a framework to deliver this change whilst acknowledging that areas of land will come forward within different timeframes. The framework provides the flexibility to deliver the overall vision for this area of the town centre as part of the planning process.

2.23 It is worth noting that, in 2009, Hart District Council in its "Vision for Fleet Town Centre" also outlined plans for the strategic redevelopment of this area of the town but the withdrawal of a major supermarket as a potential development partner left the project in abeyance at that time. The Neighbourhood Plan provides the driver to take this vision forward.

2.24 The importance of the development of the Civic Quarter was further recognised by the community as part of the 2013 Fleet Town Plan consultation which recommended that:

"the land centred on the Civic Offices, The Harlington, library, and Gurkha Square should be redeveloped for mixed use which might include residential, commercial, community, entertainment and cultural activities, whilst preserving a link to a town square and The Views".

2.25 Policy 1 (Zone 1a) is therefore the core policy which will drive the overall vision for this new community area. It can be applied on a standalone basis to deliver the principal objectives for the creation of the new Civic Quarter and provides the catalyst for the development of the adjoining areas (Zones 1b – d)

2.26 The area of land within Zone 1a is owned by the three local authorities (Hampshire County Council, Hart District Council and Fleet Town Council) and, since it is in restricted land ownership, its development is deliverable within the plan period. The first action will be to move forward with a comprehensive development plan agreed by the three parties.

2.27 Policy 2-4 cover the neighbouring/adjacent areas which are in multiple ownership and have the potential to come forward as part of longer term regeneration over, or beyond, the plan period. Whilst, this ownership makes land assembly more difficult, it is important that the development of all the land within Zones 1b–d are seen within the context of the overall vision. It is anticipated that the development of the Civic Quarter will provide the stimulus for this further development but, if Zones 1b – d are developed before Zone 1a, Policies 1 and 2 will provide the strategic framework that ensures that the overall vision is respected.

Policy 1 – Fleet Civic Quarter (Zone 1a)

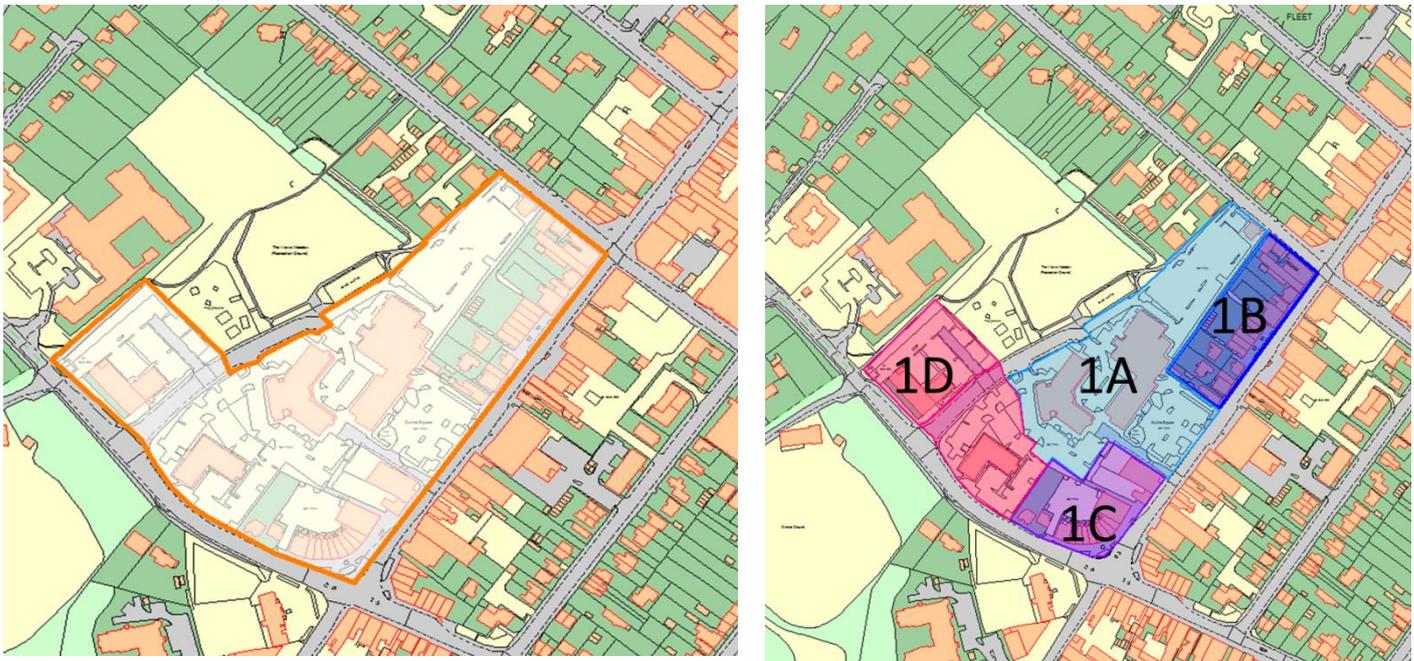
Development proposals within Zone 1a will be supported where:

- 1. They are consistent with a comprehensive regeneration plan for the whole site***
- 2. They will not result in an overall loss of public parking provision within the town centre***
- 3. Building uses and layout have regard to the general design principles set out in Policy 10 and are designed to provide positive enclosure and oversight of the public realm with active frontages which contribute to the vibrancy of the area***
- 4. Development proposals that provide for the following uses will be supported:***

- i. a performance/community facility*
 - ii. a library*
 - iii. facilities to accommodate Hart District Council and Fleet Town Council civic functions*
 - iv. a pedestrianised public space connecting to the high street*
- 5. Development proposals which depart from the uses identified in part 4 of this policy will only be supported where:**
- i. The non-customer facing services can be practically and more economically provided elsewhere or*
 - ii. The existing premises/uses are no longer required*

Alternative town centre uses will be supported where it can be demonstrated that they support the vitality of the town centre, and are justified to ensure the viable redevelopment of the site.

Zone 1 is identified on the map below:



2.28 This area includes the Hart District Council offices, The Harlington and the Fleet Library buildings. It also includes two public car parks, Gurkha Square and Victoria Road.

2.29 As detailed in "The major opportunity for change" above, it has the greatest opportunity to make significant improvements to the town centre. Its scale and depth offers an opportunity to create a vibrant community space that will provide a focus for the cultural and social activities of the town and, in so doing, contribute to the success and ongoing resilience of the town centre.

2.30 Fleet Town Council is already investigating the replacement for the existing Harlington building. The intention is to provide improved facilities for a theatre/cinema/performance space and a variety of other community activities. Discussions have already started with Hart District Council and Hampshire County Council and in consultation with the local community.

2.31 The opportunity to create the Civic Quarter will be through collaboration between Hart District Council, Hampshire County Council and Fleet Town Council. Hart District Council own and currently occupy the Civic Offices adjacent to Harlington Way as well as the Gurkha Square and Victoria Road public car parks. Fleet Town Council own the land occupied by the War Memorial in Gurkha Square and that portion of Harlington Way that lies within Zone 1a. Hampshire County Council owns the land and building forming Fleet Library immediately adjacent to Gurkha Square. The Harlington, which includes a performance space and accommodates a number of community uses, is owned by Hart District Council and managed by Fleet Town Council.

2.32 The Harlington is in need of refurbishment or replacement and its future has been the subject of consultation with the local community. A planning application was submitted by Fleet Town Council to build a new Harlington on Gurkha Square but this has subsequently been withdrawn after the results of a second public consultation with the people of Fleet in October 2018. The consultation showed that, whilst people wished to see improvements to The Harlington, they wanted these to be set within the context of the wider regeneration of this Zone and wished the local authorities to work together to deliver these improvements.

2.33 This policy, therefore, retains the community facilities (a performance centre/facility and District and Town Council functions) as part of a comprehensive regeneration plan designed to improve this area as a vital part of the town's economic sustainability and long-term vibrancy.

2.34 The Policy supports uses that may be required to contribute to the redevelopment of the site including; continued residential, retail, commercial and office uses, provided they meet the objectives set out in this policy.

2.35 It supports Hart District Council's Local Plan Saved Policy F1 which outlines a commitment to encourage "a mix of uses in order to maintain the centre's vitality and securing environmental quality" adding that "where appropriate landscaping schemes will be encouraged in association with new developments in order to enhance the attractiveness of the town centre". It also supports draft Policies ED4 and ED5 of HLPSS. This approach is entirely in line with the Grimsey Review 2 (July 2018) conclusions which highlight the need to reshape town centres into community hubs which incorporate health, housing, arts, education, entertainment, leisure, business/office space, as well as some shops, while developing a unique selling proposition.

Policy 2 - Land between Victoria Road & Gurkha Square (Zone 1b)

The development of the land fronting onto Fleet Road between Victoria Road and Gurkha Square, as identified in the Zone 1 Policies Areas map, for suitable town centre uses will be supported.

2.36 This area lies along Fleet Road between its junction with Victoria Road and Gurkha Square. It is in multiple ownership which may prevent it coming forward as a single development within the plan period. It currently has an active commercial street frontage that contributes to the high street and some buildings of architectural interest which this policy seeks to sustain or enhance. This policy will support parts or all of this land coming forward in conjunction with Policy 1.

2.37 The rear areas of the properties within this Zone are mainly given over to parking and service uses which may detract from the character of the new Civic Quarter as set out in Policy 1. It is anticipated, however, that the redevelopment of this area is only realistic if the development of the new Civic Quarter provides the catalyst for regeneration of the town centre. This will create additional commercial value within these rear areas which in turn will provide a commercial incentive for their redevelopment.



Policy 3 - Land on the corner of Reading Road North & Fleet Road (Zone 1c)

The comprehensive redevelopment of land on the junction of Reading Road North and Fleet Road, as identified as Zone 1c on the policies area map, will be supported provided that:

- 1. The built form, massing and scale create a strong corner that contributes to the function of this area as a key gateway to the town (up to a maximum of four storeys for new development);***
- 2. Town centre uses are proposed which include retail at ground level (predominantly A1 and A2) with residential or commercial above; and***
- 3. The resulting layout improves pedestrian access and connections to the town centre, with consideration given to traffic flow and safe pedestrian crossings at road junctions***

2.38 This land forms a part of, and is recognised as, a key gateway to the town centre by Hart District Council in the Fleet Legibility and Movement Map⁴. The redevelopment of this site could provide significant improvements to the character and quality of this gateway and contribute to the appearance, vitality and activity of the Civic Quarter and the town. As with Zone 1b the land is in multiple ownership, which may prevent it coming forward as a single development.

2.39 The main building mass that forms the junction of Reading Road North and Fleet Road is a three storey curved block with retail uses at ground level and residential and commercial above. The building line is set back from the street edge creating a wider street and landscaping. Both the buildings and the public realm have scope for improvement and the potential to increase access to the Civic Quarter by opening up routes and vistas at ground level and above. Building scale in this location could be increased to create a stronger gateway and such development would be supported.

⁴(https://www.hart.gov.uk/sites/default/files/4_The_Council/Policies_and_published_documents/Planning_policy/UCDS_Fleet_Legibility_and_Movement_Map%20-%202010.pdf)

2.40 As with Policy 2, the rear areas of the properties within this block are mainly given over to parking and service uses which may detract from the creation of the new Civic Quarter. Again, it is anticipated that the regeneration set out in Policy 1 will provide a commercial incentive for the redevelopment of these service areas, providing that suitable alternative service arrangements are provided.

2.41 This area has greater potential than the Policy 2 area for a more comprehensive redevelopment that utilises the full depth of the site.



Policy 4 - Land off Harlington Way (Zone 1d)

Redevelopment of the two land parcels either side of the Harlington Way junction with Reading Road North as identified on the policy map will be supported provided that:

- 1. The built form, scale and massing create an appropriate gateway to the Civic Quarter and a positive relationship to the Campbell Place Extra Care housing,***
- 2. Layout and uses contribute to the commercial, civic and cultural activities of the town centre,***
- 3. Existing landscape and trees which contribute to the setting are retained, and***
- 4. Active frontages are created to provide surveillance of the footpath/cycleway link from The Views to Calthorpe Park***

Subject to being in compliance with HLPSS Policies ED4 and ED5, retail at ground floor level (predominately A1 and A2 with residential or commercial above) will be supported.

2.42 The area of land on either side of the Harlington Way junction with Reading Road North is currently occupied by two large office buildings, one of which is currently for sale and may result in its conversion to residential flats.

2.43 This Policy seeks to develop the two areas on either side of the Harlington Way so that they contribute to the formation of an appropriate gateway to the new Civic Quarter as part of the regeneration of Zone 1. This policy also highlights the potential for ancillary retail uses at ground floor level where such development would be complementary to the wider ambitions of the policy. Any such retail floorspace will need to be assessed against wider development plan policies in general, and their potential impact on the Fleet Core Shopping Area in particular.

2.44 This policy supports business (B1) use and residential.

Policy 5 - Leisure and Night Time Economy - Fleet Road between Upper Street & the Oatsheaf crossroads (Zone 2)

Proposals for development within Use Classes A1 – A5 or uses within Class C1, D2 and D3 will be supported. The loss of ground floor A1 – A5 Use Class uses will not be supported.

Where appropriate, residential use above retail units will be supported, provided that the active frontage is not compromised and that satisfactory residential amenities can be achieved.

2.45 This Policy is intended to complement the proposals for the Civic Quarter and covers the area of Fleet Road between the Upper Street junction and the Oatsheaf crossroads and is a combination of traditional buildings with a building line along the pavement edge and parades that are set back from the kerbside. The architectural character is a mix of late 19th and early 20th century styles with brick and slate, terrace and gable frontages. There is interest in building a hotel in this area which could have a positive impact in terms of character and activity.

2.46 This area provides a number of food and drink outlets serving the night time economy, as well as small businesses. As the night time economy is an expanding and important part of the Town, a leisure offer that consists of a broad range of restaurants, cafes and cultural/recreational activities, together with opportunities to widen the evening offer, will be supported subject to appropriate traffic studies, the preparation of an equalities impact assessment, and acceptance by the Local Highways Authority.

2.47 This zone adjoins the Civic Quarter and should, therefore, be considered alongside the development of that area. Opportunities to provide “shared space” or “raised table” on Fleet Road within this area will be supported subject to appropriate traffic studies, equalities impact assessment, and acceptance by the Local Highways Authority, to provide pedestrian friendly entry to the Civic Quarter with gateway treatment at key locations.

2.48 Development and changes of use will be supported where they introduce A1 (shops), A3 (restaurants and cafes), A4 (drinking establishments) and A5 (hot food outlets). Offices and residential uses at first floor level will also be supported. High quality environmental enhancements in the form of paving, street furniture, street trees, landscaping and lighting, improved pedestrian and cycle access and the incorporation of street art as an intrinsic part of such improvements will be supported.



Policy 6 – The Core Shopping Zone – from 151 Fleet Road on the South East side of Fleet Road and 78 Fleet Road on the North West side of Fleet Road and extending to the junction of Fleet Road with Upper Street & Victoria Road-(Zone 3)

Proposals for development in the core shopping zone will be supported provided that:

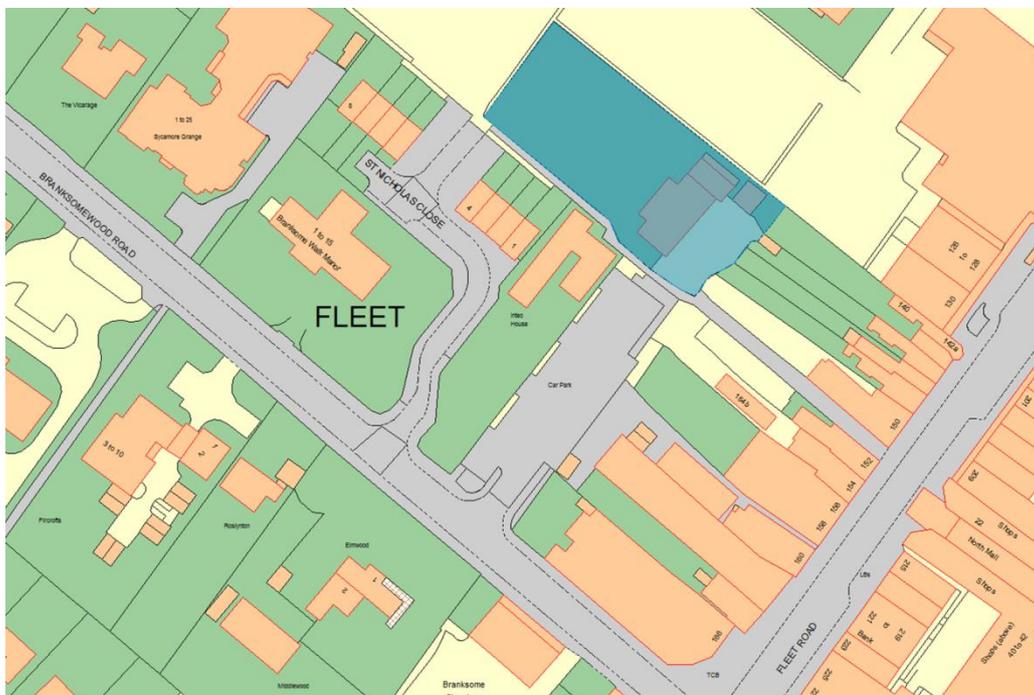
- 1. They are in conformity with other statutory, Local and Neighbourhood Plan policies***
- 2. They do not harm the retail character of the zone; are for a main town centre use which retains or provides an active frontage, have no significant adverse impact on surrounding amenities (noise, odour, waste collection, highways and parking)and enhance the character of the street scene***
- 3. There is no loss of an existing shop front of Heritage and Townscape Value identified in Policy 12,***
- 4. The design of the shop front or signage is in keeping with the character of the building and its surrounding shop frontages; and***
- 5. Access to upper floors is preserved where this already exists***
- 6. Development of the vacant land to the South East of Church Road carpark that contributes to the growth of this zone will be supported, so long as it respects the setting of the Grade II* listed Church in Church Road***

Proposals for uses outside A1-5 or C1, D1 and D2, will not be supported unless they provide sufficient on-site parking to meet Hart District Council's Parking Guidance.

2.49 This Policy centres on the Fleet Road from number 151 Fleet Road (currently the 'Tackle Up' outdoor activity shop) on the South East side of the Fleet Road and 78 Fleet Road (currently the 'Majestic Wines' store) on the North West side and stretching to the Victoria Road/Upper Street junction of Fleet Road. It is where the major convenience and comparison stores are located, including the Hart Shopping Centre. As all the properties are in private ownership, development within this area will be brought forward through private sector investment.

2.50 The Zone comprises both independent and well-known high street stores at ground level, with office and residential accommodation above. It provides access to the Hart Shopping Centre indoor shopping mall and management offices. Development supported in this area includes new retail opportunities with business and residential accommodation above.

2.51 There is one large vacant plot of land (map below in blue) to the south east of Church Road car park (known locally as "The Shed"). This area is accessible (currently for pedestrians) from Fleet Road and also potentially for vehicles via the Branksomewood Road car park. The use of this area for a small shopping mall or other use that will expand the primary shopping area will be supported.



2.52 In line with Hart District Council's Retail Town Centre and Leisure Study (2015), prepared by Nathaniel Lichfield, this Policy seeks to complement the retail offer with a range of services and leisure uses consistent with the scale and function of the centre

2.53 Changes of use in conformity with HLPSS Policies ED4 and ED5 will be supported

2.54 Whilst recognising the importance to the vibrancy and sustainability of the area of promoting retail use (class A1-A5) over non-retail use, the policy supports a balance of class A1 –A5 within the Core Shopping Zone in order to avoid the proliferation of class A5 outlets (takeaways), which could be detrimental to both public health and town centre vitality.

2.55 Fleet town centre continues to experience difficulties associated with development that is not supported by sufficient parking provision that takes account of current travel requirements and car ownership. Whilst not seeking to encourage unsustainable modes of travel, the intention of this policy is to ensure that any new development, either commercial or residential, is designed to cope with likely car ownership, avoids potential safety issues with parking on pavements and junctions and addresses adverse impacts on the local highway network.



Policy 7 - Fleet Road between No. 151 Fleet Road and Kings Road Junction (Zone 4)

Redevelopment proposals in Zone 4 that enhance its role as a gateway to the town centre will be supported provided that:

- 1. Where proposals include residential uses, they offer a varied mix of accommodation, comprising 2 bed flats suitable for young families and accommodation for elderly persons wishing to downsize;**
- 2. They respect and enhance the local gateway character of the area;**
- 3. The scale of redevelopment is in harmony with the surrounding buildings; and**
- 4. Where appropriate to the proposal concerned, public realm enhancements are incorporated that animate the frontage onto Fleet Road and that contribute to the vibrancy in Fleet Road as a whole.**

All proposals for redevelopment will be required to demonstrate that they provide sufficient on-site parking to meet the needs of the development and will be required to satisfy the District Council's Thames Basin Heath SPA mitigation requirements.

2.56 This area of Fleet Road comprises the block of land between the Tackle Up fishing shop and the Kings Road junction. It has included a number of offices and business uses, the majority of which have now undergone, or are in the process of undergoing redevelopment. The character of this end of Fleet Road has changed from business use to residential as more office conversions have taken place under permitted development rights.

2.57 A new large serviced retirement apartment complex now dominates this entrance into the town's main shopping area and acts as the northern gateway to the town centre.

2.58 A new block of luxury apartments has recently been completed and planning applications have been approved for the remaining office blocks (also conversion to residential). This area provides the opportunity to expand the town centre to accommodate the needs of the ever increasing population. This Policy will support any development contribution that adds to character of this area as an important gateway to the town centre.

Policy 8 — Land at Albert Street (Zone 5)

Development on the North West side of Albert Street will be supported provided that it:

- 1. Enhances the street scene;**
- 2. Improves the access available to service Fleet Road premises; and**
- 3. Respects the amenity of neighbours-on the South East side of Albert Street**

Proposals that impact on the predominantly residential nature of the South East side of Albert Street will not be supported.

2.59 This policy seeks to retain the residential nature of this area but not to compromise further the amenity of local residents. Albert Street, which runs parallel to Fleet Road, has an entirely different character and affords service access to the retail uses on Fleet Road. The south-east side of the road is predominantly two storey residential houses and cottages, interspersed with a few small businesses fronting onto the street. The north-west side of the



road also has a proportion of small business units, as well as a number of residential properties but predominantly provides a service and delivery function for the Hart Shopping Centre, as well as shops and businesses on Fleet Road. The north-west side is dominated by the back walls of the Hart Shopping Centre which significantly compromise the character of the road. Better traffic management, such as a formal shared traffic scheme would be supported, as it would slow traffic and allow pedestrians to cross the road more safely along its length.

Policy 9 – Fleet Road Public Realm policy (Zone 6)

Development and redevelopment of the public realm within Fleet Town Centre will be supported provided that it:

- 1. Improves the movement of pedestrians and cyclists around the town centre;***
- 2. Promotes sustainable travel to the railway station;***
- 3. Improves pavements, signage and street furniture;***
- 4. ‘Greens’ Fleet Road by the addition of street trees and soft landscaping as well as Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) where appropriate; and***
- 5. Fosters active frontages such as shop or office windows and doors at ground level***

Proposals for the creation of a “shared space” or a “raised table” on Fleet Road to enhance the setting of Gurkha Square will be supported, subject to appropriate traffic studies, the preparation of an equalities impact assessment, and acceptance by the Local Highways Authority

2.60 The Hampshire Local Transport Plan (2011-2031) produced by Hampshire County Council provides the long term framework for transport policies within the District. The Plan seeks to improve accessibility through the three initiatives to reduce, manage and invest. Hampshire Manual for Streets Guidance, and the movement hierarchy therein, should be used to guide the design of the streetscape and public realm in Fleet Town Centre. SUDS can be an effective means of adding greenery, biodiversity and amenity into cramped urban areas and should be considered where possible.

2.61 The publication by Living Streets⁵ suggests that:

- Well-planned improvements to public spaces can boost footfall and retail performance by up to 40%.
- Investing in better streets and spaces for walking can provide a competitive return compared to other transport projects; walking and cycling projects can increase retail sales by 30%.
- Improved walking routes to and from Wanstead High Street, in east London, increased footfall by 98%.
- Many car journeys are short and as the volume of goods purchased is small, these trips could be made on foot.

2.62 In addition, the recent report ‘High Street UK 2020’ confirms that improving the quality and visual appearance of a town centre is second in a list of 25 priorities that should be actioned locally to increase footfall.

⁵ The Pedestrian Pound; The business case for better streets and places: Living Streets

3. Introduction to the Design Management Policies

3.1 This overarching policy seeks to manage the design features of all development proposals in the six distinct Character Areas, shown on the map on page 34. These Character Areas lie wholly or in part within the Neighbourhood Area whose boundaries are identified in the Hart Urban Characterisation & Density Study of 2010, together with two separately identified Conservation Areas. There is more detail on each of the six areas in the zoned policies in Appendix 5.

3.2 The Study in 2010 has been reviewed by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to ensure its information and analysis is as up-to-date as possible.

3.3 The two Conservation Areas also benefit from appraisal documents undertaken in 2008/9. They, too, have been reviewed to inform these policies. The intention of this series of zoned policies is to provide "robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area. Such policies (are) based on stated objectives for the future of the area and an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics" (NPPF, para 58). As required by that same paragraph, the policies are intended to ensure new development schemes, especially those of a scale and/or prominence in the streetscene, function well and add to the overall quality of Fleet, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development. They require proposals to demonstrate how they are responding to the character and history of their part of the town but they do not prevent or discourage innovation in architectural forms or details. If a proposal does not intend to follow the requirements of the policies, then applicants will be expected to demonstrate why other material considerations apply.

Policy 10 – General Design Management Policy

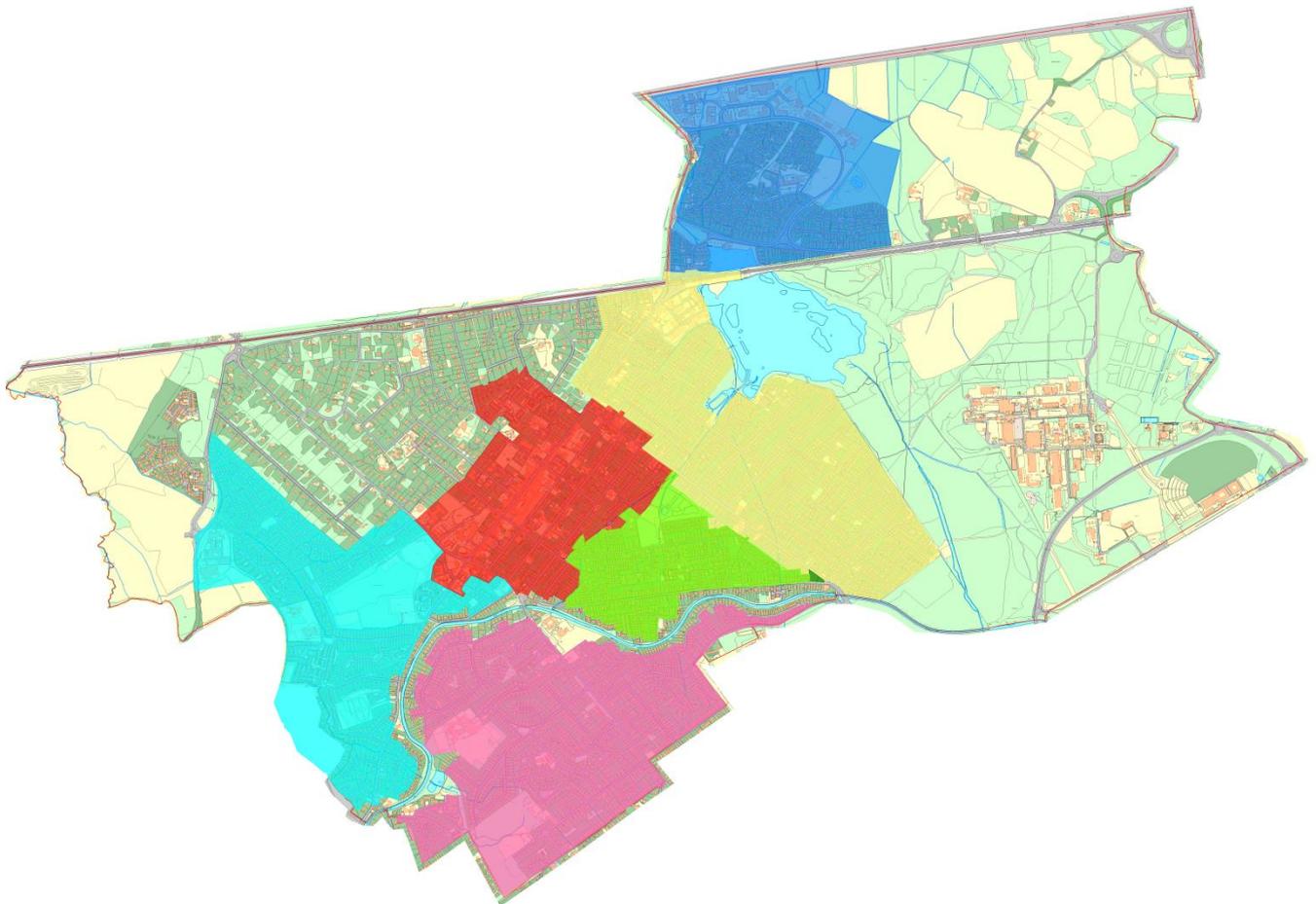
Development, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, will be supported, provided that it is in accordance, where relevant, with the detailed characteristics set out below relating to the six principal and subsidiary areas defined in the Hart Urban Characterisation Study 2010, the North Fleet Conservation Area Management Plan and all other statutory, local and Neighbourhood Plan policies and the following general design principles:

- 1. Development shall complement and be well integrated with neighbouring properties in the immediate locality in terms of scale, density, massing, separation, layout, materials and access;***
- 2. Architectural design shall reflect high quality local design references in both the natural and built environment and reflect and reinforce local distinctiveness;***
- 3. The height of new buildings shall be in keeping with neighbouring properties and roofscapes shall be well articulated to avoid bulky, featureless appearance. Applicants shall respect neighbouring buildings and demonstrate how heights of development will not be over-bearing or dominant in the existing street scene;***
- 4. Strong building lines shall be respected and soft landscaped front gardens and landscaped front boundaries should be retained or enhanced;***
- 5. Development shall seek to retain existing mature hedging and established trees and to enhance landscaping including providing SUDS where appropriate to provide for biodiversity and to also help manage surface water runoff sustainably. Where loss of significant amenity trees is justified, compensation planting must be provided to mitigate their loss.***

- 6. Development shall consider and where possible retain or enhance views both within settlements and out towards the countryside and proposals shall explain how this is achieved;**
- 7. Development affecting the transitional edges between a settlement and countryside shall be softened by landscaping to complement the character of the adjacent or surrounding countryside;**
- 8. Parking on development sites shall be well integrated so as not to dominate the public realm and shall adhere to Hart District Council's adopted parking standard or guidelines;**
- 9. Development which affects any heritage asset shall preserve or enhance the heritage asset and its setting and shall demonstrate how local distinctiveness is reinforced;**
- 10. Development shall be designed to incorporate appropriate energy efficiency measures; and**
- 11. Development shall integrate wherever possible with existing pathways and cycleways and should not restrict transit for cyclists or pedestrians, including those with limited mobility.**
- 12. In relation to flooding, development shall create a safe environment for all uses and not increase off-site flood risk. In areas where surface water flooding is a problem "Finished Floor Levels" may need to be raised and/or Passive Property Level Protection measures installed to minimise the risk of internal flooding. The use of SUDS as a form of flood risk management will be supported where circumstances of the proposed development make such an approach both appropriate and practicable.**

Policy 10A Design Management Policy related to Character Areas

Proposals for development in the various character areas shown on the Map on the next page and as detailed in Appendix 5 will be supported where they have appropriate regard to the design characteristics for the relevant land use in that character area.



- Ancells Farm (part only of the Elvetham Heath and Ancells Road Character Area)
- West Fleet
- Fleet Town Centre
- Pondtail
- South Fleet
- Dinorben (part of the Church Crookham Estates)

Character Areas in Fleet (Boundaries taken from Hart UCD Study, 2010)

Full size maps of each Character Area are available in Appendix 5

Policy 11 - Safeguarding building stock for people of limited mobility including people with disabilities and older residents

- 1. Proposals for the conversion of bungalows (a bungalow is a house which has only one level, and no stairs) to a house comprising two or more storeys that will result in the loss of local homes especially suited to occupation by older people will not be supported.***
- 2. Proposals for the modification of bungalows to adaptable standards to support independent living will be supported.***
- 3. Proposals that result in the loss of homes especially suited to occupation by older people and/or people with limited mobility will not be supported.***

Subject to compliance with Policy 10 the development of new bungalows will be supported.

3.4 This policy aims to maintain the stock of bungalows within the Fleet Parish area for use by people of limited mobility including people with disabilities and older residents. Suitable properties for the increasing number of older persons to down size to are limited. The current choice lies between very small apartments primarily in office conversions or supported living accommodation such as McCarthy Stone's Kings Place on the corner of Fleet Road and Kings Road or the numerous new flatted developments on Branksomewood Road. Limited stock is available for continued independent living.



3.5 Fleet's older bungalows are suitable for single level living and adaptation for people of limited mobility to meet Building for Life standards.

Policy 12 - Buildings of Heritage and Townscape Value

Development proposals that affect buildings of Heritage and Townscape Value detailed in Appendix 3 will be supported provided that:

- 1. Proposals conserve and, where practical, enhance the heritage asset and its contribution to townscape value and demonstrate the design contributes positively to the character of the building.***
- 2. Extensions or modifications are sympathetic to the original building in scale, mass, style and palette of materials.***

Proposals that restore original features lost from previous unsympathetic development will be strongly supported.

3.6 This policy identifies buildings and structures of local architectural and/or historic interest to Fleet for the application of saved policies CON17 and CON18 of the Local Plan. A number of buildings and structures having local heritage and/or Townscape Value have been identified and are listed in Appendix 3.

Those policies manage proposals for the extension, alteration and/or change of use of such buildings, which are now defined as 'non-designated heritage assets' by paragraph 135 of the NPPF 2012.

3.7 The selection criteria are in line with the Historic England guidance on 'Local Heritage Listing' (2016), and are:

- I. directly associated with a significant period in the history of Fleet;
- II. directly associated with the social history of Fleet;
- III. notable example of planned development, or of incidental development in Fleet;
- IV. directly associated with a notable figure of local importance;
- V. especially striking and having aesthetic value and may be singled out as a landmark within the local scene;
- VI. the intrinsic design relates to local styles, building materials or any other distinctive local characteristics;
- VII. part of a group of buildings with a clear visual design or historic relationship, provides the streetscape with interest and variety and/or defines the area in which they stand as Fleet.

The listing of each building in Appendix 3 includes which of these criteria is the basis of the particular selection.

3.8 Fleet has few historic buildings that can be formally listed because the town has only been developed since the railway was built in the 1840s, and much of the town is relatively new (Edwardian or younger). However, Fleet does have many character buildings that positively contribute to defining the town.

3.9 One of the major issues is that a great number of buildings have been altered over time to meet new demands and very few remain in their original architectural state. There are notable examples in Fleet Road where the ground floors of many buildings have been converted to commercial use with frontages that do not respect the original Victorian or Edwardian facade. Updating such buildings provides the opportunity for alterations that are far more sympathetic to the building's historical design than have been the case in the past.

Listed Buildings

3.10 Fleet has three listed buildings, All Saints' Church (Grade II*), in Church Road, Fleet, the War Memorial (Grade II) and Great Bramshot Farmhouse (Grade II), in Bramshot Lane. The Church was commissioned by Mr Charles Lefroy in memory of his wife. It was designed by the famous architect William Burgess in the style of an Italian basilica, and consecrated in 1862. The Church suffered severe fire damage in 2015 and is currently being rebuilt. The War Memorial, built of Portland Stone, was unveiled in 1920. After the Second World War further inscriptions were added, and later in the 20th Century the memorial was relocated from a position behind the station hotel. Bramshot Hall Farmhouse is also Grade II listed. The building dates back to the 17th Century, with later additions.

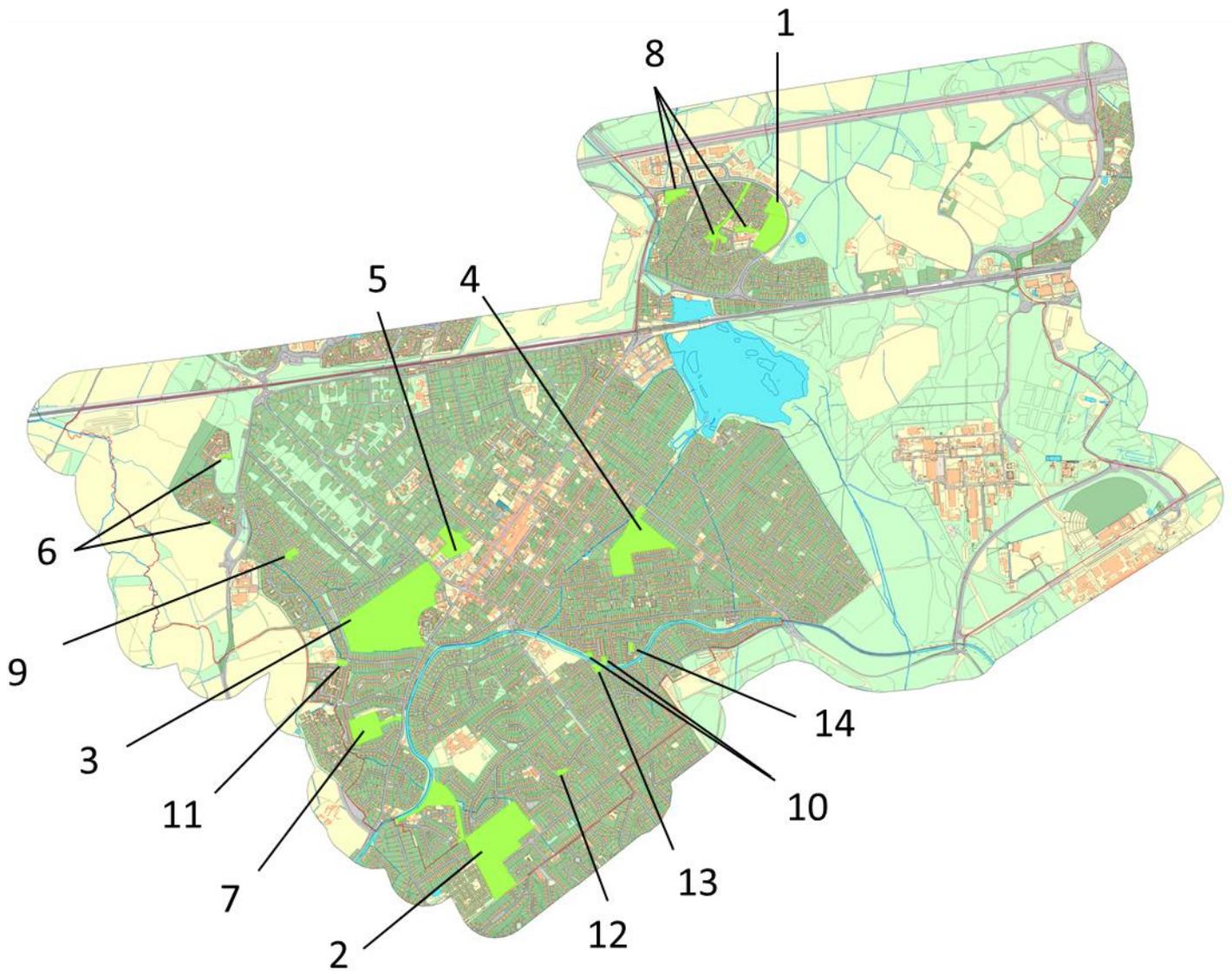
Environment – Open Green Space

Policy 13 – Local Green Space

The following areas are designated as Local Green Space

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Ancells Farm Park | 8. Ancells - various green spaces |
| 2. Basingbourne Park | 9. Dukes Mead - green space |
| 3. Calthorpe Park | 10. Holland Gardens - green space |
| 4. Oakley Park | 11. Leawood Road - green space |
| 5. The Views | 12. Longmead - green space |
| 6. Edenbrook - 2 play areas | 13. Durnsford Avenue - green space |
| 7. Fleet Cemetery | 14. Regent Close - green space |

Development will only be supported on the designated local green spaces in very special circumstances.



Individual maps of green spaces in Appendix 4

3.11 Fleet Town Council Area is defined by its sylvan character, trees line the main roads throughout the area, many gardens support mature trees and woodlands support Fleet's principal parks. The Basingstoke Canal provides a ribbon of trees that snakes through the urban developed area. Many glimpsed views between houses reveal a backdrop of trees. The vitality and conservation of the many trees throughout Fleet is important to maintaining its character.

3.12 Fleet's open green spaces are generally small and dispersed, but provide valuable focal points for their immediate community. A number of these small green spaces are relics of estate development and provide local informal play areas or places of tranquillity in an otherwise chaotic urban environment.

3.13 Fleet's principal parks are gifts from historic benefactors for the recreation and leisure of the people of Fleet. These green spaces provide the much-used sports fields and formal play areas.

3.14 There is significant pressure for more development within Fleet and so it is essential to protect what green space there is, not just for human benefit, but to protect the varied flora and fauna that inhabit these green spaces.

3.15 Apart from our major parks, which are small anyway, there are a number of pieces of green space throughout the town that provide valuable local amenity. The green space policy provides protection to all these identified plots.

3.16 In March 2012 the Government, through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), introduced a new Local Green Space designation. NPPF §76 allows local communities, through the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan process, to identify areas of Local Green Space which are important to them and which should be provided special protection.

3.17 NPPF §77 makes it clear that the designation should only be used where the green space:

- is in reasonably close proximity to the community which it serves;
- is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

3.18 All the locally named green spaces including our parks have been tested against these criteria, and without exception can be classified as Local Green Space as is shown in Appendix 4. Policy 13 designates various areas as local green space and applies the national policy approach in the NPPF. Plainly circumstances may arise during the Plan period where very special circumstances may exist and therefore support limited new development within the designated area. This will be a matter of judgement for the District Council based on the evidence included in relevant planning applications. However, proposals which might be considered to be very special circumstances include those which are ancillary to the use of any of the sites for public recreational or community purposes or if the development was essential for utility infrastructure needs and no alternative site was available.

Policy 14 - Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area

Development within the Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area and its setting including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, will be supported provided that it is in accordance with other, Local and Neighbourhood Plan Policies and the following principles:

- 1. Development which affects the Conservation Area and its setting shall be of a scale and design to reinforce the locally distinctive character of the area, and should aim to preserve or enhance the heritage asset, according to its significance***
- 2. Where planning permission is required, any boundary treatment adjoining the canal or its towpath shall reinforce the green character of the Conservation Area; and,***
- 3. Where it is both appropriate and practicable to the proposal concerned, the replacement of close boarded fences with native evergreen hedging like yew and holly***

- 4. All development proposals that would affect the conservation area, either directly or indirectly (such as through effects to its setting) will be required to demonstrate how the recommendations of the Character Area Appraisal have been addressed, including the protection of the current open views from the Canal and towpath and proposals to preserve and enhance its heritage, landscape, ecological and recreational value.**

3.19 The Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area was designated in 1977 by Hampshire County Council. In 1987 Hart District Council extended the boundary to include land and buildings within the setting of the conservation area. Within the Hart District Local Plan (Replacement 1996 – 2006) the Basingstoke Canal and its setting were specifically protected under Policies CON 10 and RUR 32, in addition to more general policies controlling development. Both policies were retained within Hart District's 'Saved Policies' Application in September 2007. A Characterisation Appraisal and Management Proposals study was conducted in 2008 and adopted by Hart District Council Cabinet on 3rd December 2009. The Canal is an SSSI and is one of the most diverse ecological sites in the country.



The hinterland of woodland, heath, unimproved meadows and fens through which the Canal flows increases the value of the aquatic habitats. Pondtail Heath was included within the SSSI since it is of direct importance to invertebrates such as the dragonflies which hawk over this area. The flora is rich, with species such as oblong-leaved sundew and meadow thistle amongst others.

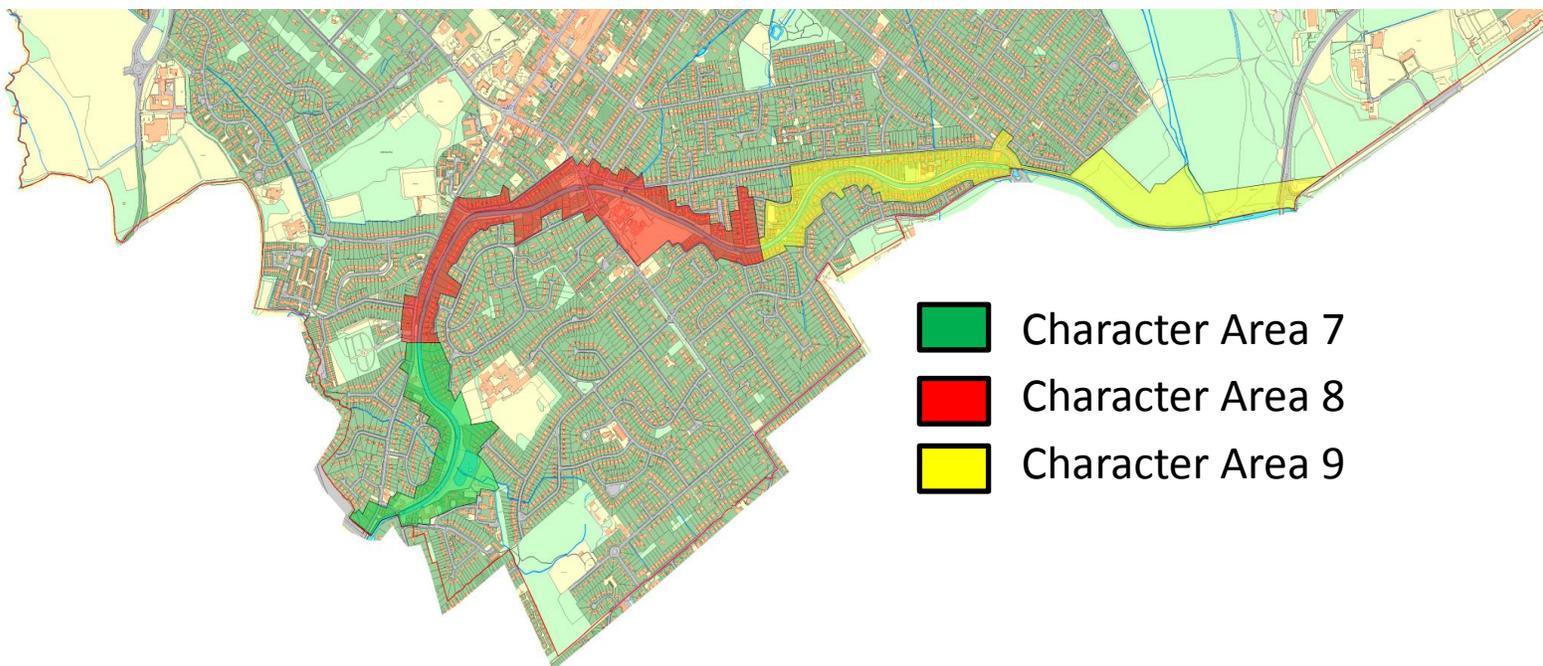
3.20 The canal enters Fleet at the Cox Heath Road bridge and runs through the urban area of the town to Pondtail Bridge from where it runs through open heathland and managed woodland before leaving the parish area at Norris Hill Bridge: this includes the northern part of character area 7 and areas 8 and 9 described in the 2009 Character Appraisal. The conservation area is generally defined as enclosing the first property that abuts the canal. Almost without exception this means that it is the rear of properties that face the canal. The properties to the east of and south of the canal have left open "frontages" onto the canal and many have created informal landing stages for small pleasure craft. The properties to the west and north of the canal have sought to protect their privacy using close board fencing up to 2m high which generally detracts from the character of the conservation area. The third criterion of the policy supports the replacement of close boarded fences with native hedging where that course of action is appropriate to the proposal concerned.

3.21 The two newest road bridges at Pondtail and Reading Road South have the least clearance of all the bridges on the canal causing boats to lower their stacks, cyclists to dismount and walkers to stoop under the bridges.

3.22 The Canal provides an attractive green corridor running through the built-up area of Fleet used by many people, for leisure and recreation as a route for cycling, walking, pleasure boats and angling, providing an attractive and tranquil route through an otherwise busy urban area.

3.23 The towpath further provides a pedestrian/cycling link to shops, schools, services and some of Fleet's other green space attractions such as Basingbourne Park, Calthorpe Park and Fleet Pond.

Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area



Policy 15 - Residential Gardens

Development within the Neighbourhood Area, as shown on the Policies Map, will be supported provided that:

- 1. It does not result in the loss of or significant harm to the ecological or landscape value of private residential gardens;***
- 2. Conversion to front garden parking retains at least 50% of the original garden area as soft landscape;***
- 3. Permanent storage of waste bins and containers in front gardens are appropriately screened and contained within a slatted timber store or equivalent;***

4. **Where the loss of significant amenity trees is adequately justified, compensation planting must be provided to mitigate their loss**
5. **Where possible a biodiversity net gain is demonstrated**
6. **It incorporates permeable paving, grasscrete, gravel or other forms of permeable parking surface, which do not increase surface water runoff and flood risk.**

The use of vehicle entrance gates, brick walls and timber fences over 1m high to front garden boundaries which are out of character with the surrounding area will not be supported.

3.24 Large gardens are an important characteristic of the Fleet townscape and represent a significant component of the urban landscape. Over time many of these gardens have matured to provide an extensive network of habitats and wildlife corridors adding to the biodiversity and richness of the urban landscape. Soft landscaping helps reduce flooding and absorb carbon dioxide. The Hart Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Hart Green Infrastructure Strategy Report (July 2017, p45) highlight the potential to alleviate some of the fluvial and surface water flooding issues within Fleet through the installation of sustainable drainage systems (SUDS).

3.25 Gardens can also significantly enhance the street scene and ornamental trees support the sylvan character of many of Fleet's residential areas. The area between dwellings and the highway provides one of the best opportunities to maintain character and for enhancing the appearance of new development.

3.26 Pressure for new housing and other development however, can result in existing garden provision being threatened or compromised by inappropriate development. This may take a number of forms including extensions or replacement of existing properties encroaching onto existing garden areas or the replacement of garden areas by parking and hard landscaping. It also may result in the unnecessary loss of trees of amenity value.

3.27 This policy seeks to plan positively to achieve high quality design and a good standard of amenity in line with NPPF paragraph 58 and Hart District Council policies GEN1 and GEN 4.

Policy 16 - North Fleet Conservation Area

Development within the North Fleet Conservation Area and its setting, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, will be supported provided that it is in accordance with other Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan policies and the following criteria:

1. **Development shall be designed to preserve or enhance the special heritage character of the Conservation Area, and shall be of a suitably high quality of design.**

2. **The demolition of existing buildings in the Conservation Area which are considered to be of architectural or historic interest, particularly those which provide well detailed examples of late 19th and the early 20th century design styles or where the existing building makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area will not be supported. The redevelopment of Post-War buildings of the 1950s onwards may be allowed, subject to the replacement building being well designed and similar in terms of height, mass, bulk and footprint.**

Development shall retain the architectural features of the existing buildings, and extensions shall complement and reinforce the character of the principal building.

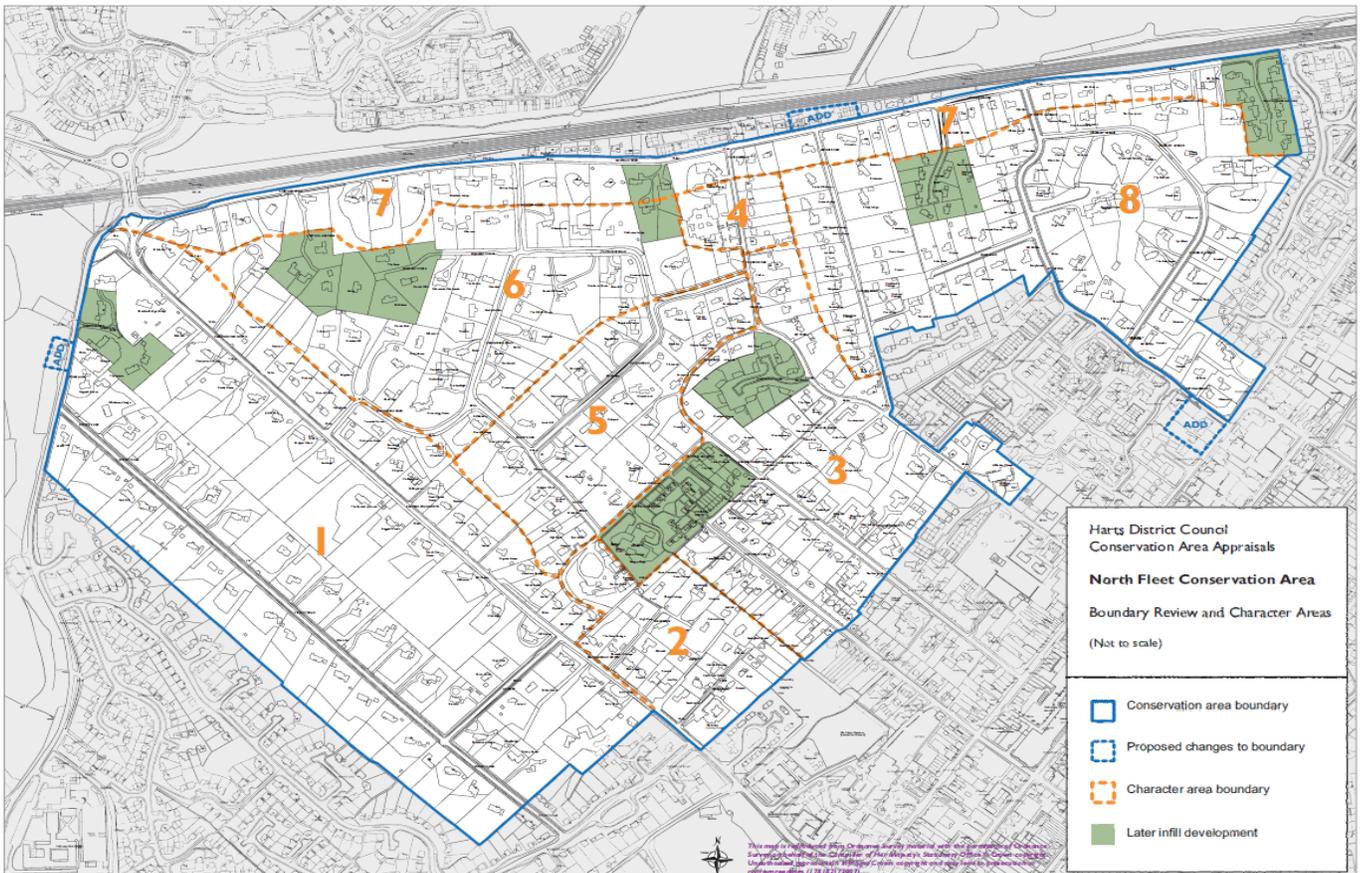
3. Development shall:

- i. **respect historic plot boundaries: the amalgamation or the sub-division of the existing plots will not be supported;**
 - ii. **respect existing building densities within the different areas of the Conservation Area, as described in the North Fleet Conservation Area Character and Management Proposals and defined in Hart saved policy URB 18, namely Area A - dwellings on plots of more than approximately 0.2 hectares (0.5 acres), Area B - dwellings on plots of more than approximately 0.1 hectares (0.25 acres), Area C - developments at a density of less than approximately 17 per hectare (7 per acre), and Area D - developments at a density of less than approximately 25 per hectare (10 per acre);**
 - iii. **follow historic precedent as to traditional form in terms of height, bulk, the use of vernacular materials and detailing and the grain of development;**
 - iv. **respect building lines and plot shapes;**
4. **Existing open green space, including private gardens, shall be protected from unsympathetic development where this would have an adverse impact on the spacious character and appearance of the existing site and the Conservation Area;**
 5. **Boundary treatments shall reflect the semi-rural nature of the Conservation Area and help to preserve the views within, and at the boundaries of, the Conservation Area. The preferred options are hedges, with, if necessary from security considerations, inconspicuous fencing behind, and modest wooden gates to driveways. The replacement of hedges with wooden fences or brick walls, and the use of metal gates, will not be supported. Trees and soft landscaping that frame, punctuate or terminate key views along the principal streets within, and at the boundaries of, the Conservation Area shall be preserved;**
 6. **Development that requires the felling of trees of significant amenity value and as a result degrades the character and appearance of the Conservation Area will not be supported. A number of trees within the Conservation Area are subject to individual Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). Where trees subject to a TPO are removed, they should be replaced with species typical of those in the Conservation Area. Such species should include English oak, beech, Scots pine and sweet chestnut. Where appropriate, desirable 'specimen' tree species could include Atlas cedar, dawn redwood, giant redwood or small-leaved lime. The use of inappropriate trees such as Leyland cypress leylandii will not be supported. The**

maintenance and replacement of trees that are not covered by TPOs and the enhancement of treed areas will be actively supported.

- 7. Development shall respect the significance of heritage assets in the Conservation Area street scene. Particular consideration shall be given to maintaining their role in framing, punctuating or terminating key views along the principal streets within, and at the boundaries of, the conservation area;**
- 8. Development that affects positive buildings and their positive contribution to the street scene must not undermine the significance of that contribution;**
- 9. Development for non-residential uses will be supported where it preserves the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, accommodates on-site car parking provision, and general servicing and associated activity does not negatively impact on the character or appearance of the Conservation Area;**
- 10. Development that creates on-street car parking leading to a highway hazard or limiting the capacity of the highway, or increases traffic flows in a way that cannot be effectively mitigated, or requires night-time servicing, will not be supported.**

All development proposals will be required to demonstrate how the above criteria and the recommendations of the North Fleet Conservation Area Character Appraisal have been addressed.



3.28 This policy establishes design principles for development in the Conservation Area derived from Hart District Council's North Fleet Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Proposals of 2008. This document defines the character of the Conservation Area and provides an important source of evidence that should inform the design rationale of development in the Conservation Area or its setting. This policy uses the existing historic environment evidence base to incorporate the guidance from the NFCA Document to provide locally distinctive policies that supplement national and local policy.

3.29 This policy sets out to regulate the increasing pressure from developers and property owners to maximise the potential of the large gardens which make up a significant part of the essential character of the conservation area. It reinforces Hart Retained Policy URB18 (i) – (iv), which seeks to control the increase in plot densities in different parts of the Conservation Area.

3.30 Planning permission is required for demolition of a building with a volume of more than 115 cubic metres located within in a conservation area. All Saints Church is a listed building controlled by other legislation.

3.31 In 1998, an Article 4 Direction was served, which removed permitted development rights within the North Fleet Conversation Area to erect, alter or remove a gate, wall or other means of enclosure to the frontage of a dwelling. Any change to the enclosure to the frontage of a dwelling therefore requires planning permission. This policy seeks to provide greater clarity over boundary treatments within the Conservation Area.

3.32 The principal feature of the North Fleet Conservation Area, which makes it outstanding, is the 'green' landscape, with many mature trees and the areas of copses, woodland, shrubbery and other planting. The majority of these lie within privately owned land. Because of the very large number of trees, and the difficulty of obtaining access onto the private land, a full tree survey was not carried out at the time of the appraisal survey and the trees were not recorded on a map. Some of these trees are already specifically protected by either blanket or individual Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs), which require the replacement of the tree in the event of death or decay. In addition to the TPOs, all trees within the Conservation Area of a certain size are subject to the provisions of Section 211 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990. 'All trees within the Conservation Area are subject to the provisions of Section 211 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990. These provisions require owners to notify the Local Planning Authority, using a 'Section 211 notice', six weeks before carrying out certain work on such trees, unless an exception applies. The work may go ahead before the end of the six week period if the LPA gives consent. This notice period gives the Authority an opportunity to consider whether to make a Tree Protection Order on the tree. The inclusion of the element of the policy encouraging the maintenance and replacement of trees and enhancement of the treed areas is to ensure the long-term maintenance, conservation and enhancement of the character of the Conservation Area so that it does not progressively become denuded of mature trees over time.

3.33 A number of non-residential uses, such as care homes for the elderly, the Lismoyne Hotel, All Saints Church and to a much greater extent, the Cottage Hospital and the Fleet Medical Centre in Church Road, generate activity and a degree of traffic and pedestrian movements incompatible with the character of the Conservation Area. Night-time service vehicles are a growing problem. The recent expansion of the hospital has created a demand for parking which has caused problems in the immediate vicinity of the buildings, although this has to be balanced against the greater social need. This policy seeks to minimise any further impacts from non-residential development.

Policy 17 - Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area Mitigation

Development which is likely to have a significant effect on the ecological integrity of the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area shall include measures to avoid or mitigate any potential adverse effects in agreement with Hart District Council and Natural England. This will include the provision of, or financial contributions to, SANG (Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space), and a financial contribution towards Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Measures. Avoidance and mitigation measures must be in accordance with the principles set out in adopted Development Plan policies in the South East Plan and Local Plan and with Hart District Councils SPA Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy.

3.34 Hart District Council undertook a SEA/HRA screening exercise on behalf of the Fleet Neighbourhood Planning group in the spring of 2016. One of the recommendations in the Screening Report was to include a SPA Mitigation policy in the neighbourhood plan.

3.35 The following text is from Hart's SPA Interim Guidance document:

“The Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area (SPA) is a network of heathland sites which are designated under the European Birds Directive¹ and the Habitats Directive and protected in the UK under the Habitats Regulations. The SPA provides a habitat for the internationally important bird species of woodlark, nightjar and Dartford warbler. These birds are particularly subject to disturbance from walkers, dog walkers and cat predation because they nest on or near the ground.”

3.36 Under the Habitat Regulations, Hart District Council is the ‘competent authority’ to consider whether applications for development are likely to have significant effect on the SPA. The duty to consider the possibility of likely significant effects applies to all types of development, but it is residential development that has been most affected. Natural England advise that planning applications resulting in an increase in the number of dwellings within 5 kilometres of the SPA are, without ‘avoidance measures’, likely to have a significant effect on the SPA within the meaning of the Habitat Regulations. Natural England also advise that within 400 metres of the SPA ‘avoidance measures’ are unlikely to be effective and net residential development should be avoided.

Transport and Public Realm Policies

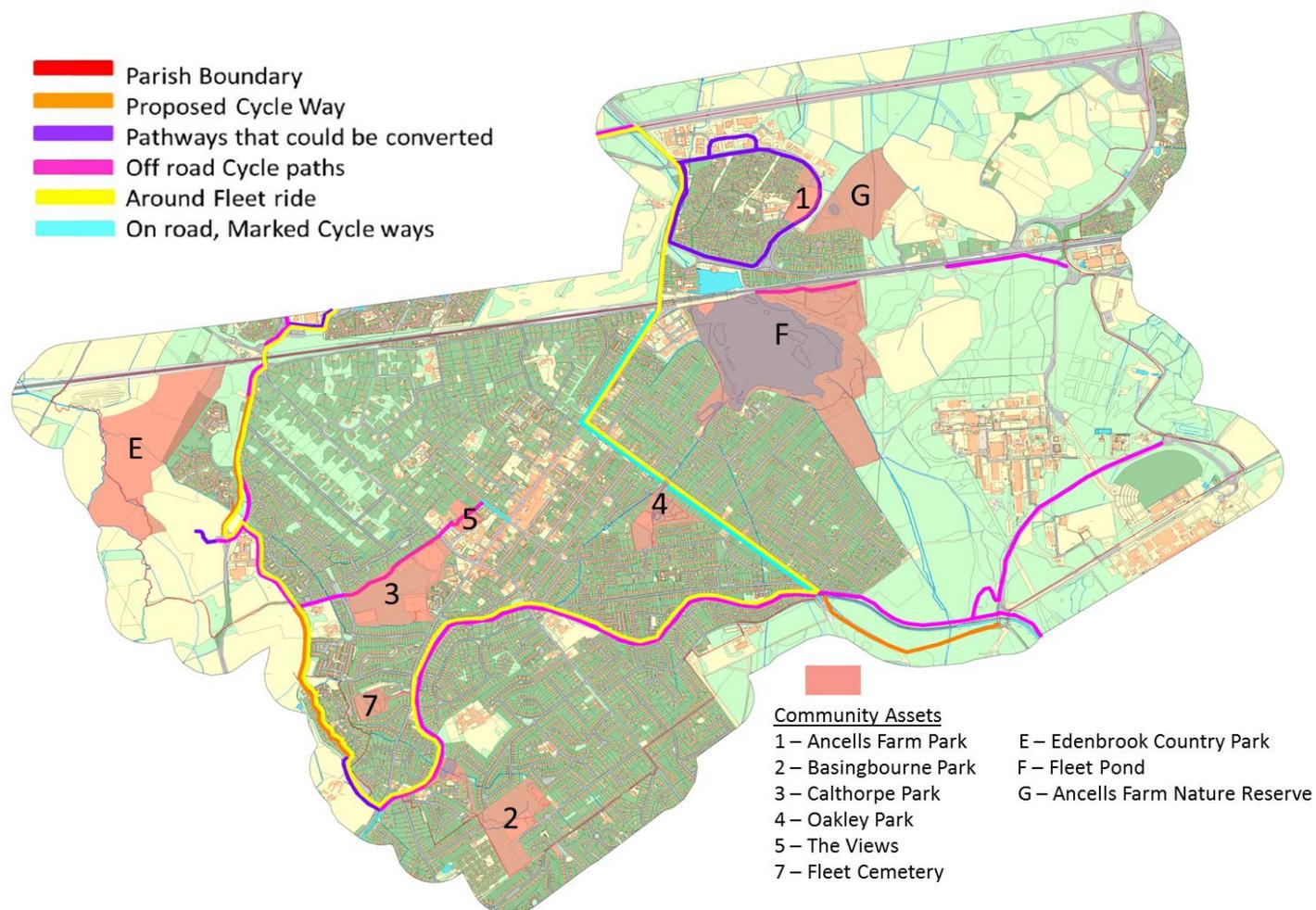
Policy 18 - Cycling Network

Proposals to create new cycle routes to connect the town to community assets within the corridors shown on the Policies Map, will be supported.

- 1. New cycle routes should be created off the highway on either dedicated routes or routes shared with pedestrians when it is safe to do so. Where these options are not practicable other routes will be supported where they would provide safe and convenient routes for cyclists.***
- 2. Contributions will be sought from new developments to fund the design and delivery of the network.***
- 3. Where appropriate, development proposals will provide safe cycle access linkages to the town centre and the identified community assets. Proposals will have particular regard to ways that they can reinforce existing cycle links to the town centre and react positively to any opportunity to broaden local cycle networks within Fleet (see Map below), where such schemes have satisfactory engineering assessments at feasibility and detail design stages. Where appropriate, contributions will be sought from new developments to fund the design and delivery of the network.***

3.37 This policy expects development funding to offer cyclists the benefit of good connections to the surrounding community assets within Fleet and its hinterlands, wherever possible avoiding busy or potentially dangerous roads. Funding will be secured either through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) or through planning obligations where it is necessary to mitigate the impact of development. Such funding will be used to provide cycle routes linking the town centre and other key community asset destinations including, but not limited to, Fleet Pond, Basingstoke Canal and Fleet Town Council parks, and should provide a linked cycle route around the town which also connects to Hartland Village, the new Hart Leisure Centre and Edenbrook Country Park. This will enable visitors and residents to explore these assets when visiting the town. This policy is consistent with the Hart Local Plan which promotes the use of sustainable transport modes. It similarly aligns with policy objective 12 in Hampshire County Council's Local Transport Plan (2011).

Cycle Routes



Policy 19 – Residential Parking

Development will be supported where it provides adequate car parking that does not impact on highway safety and accessibility and meets the following criteria:

- 1. Adherence to the Hart DC parking standards or guidelines for the number of spaces to be provided on site and,**
- 2. The availability of on-street parking where this would not create a significant traffic hazard.**
- 3. Garages with a minimum internal dimension of 6 m by 3 m will be included in the parking provision:**

3.38 This policy has been restricted to Residential Parking as the provision and control of on and off street parking is the responsibility of Hampshire County Council and Hart District Council. It sets out the standards required of planning applications for providing adequate, safe car parking. In doing so, it complements Policy GEN 1 of the Hart Local Plan and refines the Parking Standards Interim Guidance issued in August 2008.

4. Implementation

4.1 So how will it work? The policies above will be taken into account by Hart District Council, as the Planning Authority, when considering any planning applications for Fleet. The neighbourhood plan will be implemented through a combination of the local planning authority's consideration and determination of planning applications for development in the town and through steering public and private investment into a series of infrastructure proposals contained in the town centre section of the plan.

4.2 As most of the land within the Fleet Town Council area is in private ownership, most of the policies will actually be delivered by landowners and developers. In preparing the Fleet Neighbourhood Plan, care has, therefore, been taken to ensure that, as far as possible, the policies are achievable.

4.3 Whilst Hart District Council is ultimately responsible as the local planning authority, Fleet Town Council will use the Fleet Neighbourhood Plan in its role as a consultee on planning applications that fall within our area. Now it has been adopted ('made') the Fleet Neighbourhood Plan forms part of the development plan just like Hart District Council's Local Plan so the District Council must address Fleet Neighbourhood Plan's policies in adjudicating any planning application within Fleet. The Plan will also be taken into account by Hart District Council in determining future sites coming forward for development.

Infrastructure Projects

4.4 Local planning authorities require developers to pay for infrastructure projects that help manage the impact of their developments. The amount of money paid is negotiated between the District Council and the developer in compliance with the Government's NPPF. When established, a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), is set on a District-wide or sub-district level and applied proportionately to the area of development within a parish on the basis of 15% to parishes without Neighbourhood Plans and 25% to parishes with Neighbourhood Plans. The money can be used at the discretion of the parish.

4.5 Having reviewed previous consultations with the local community, this Plan proposes the following areas as priorities for investment from CIL contributions and development agreements.

- Development of the Civic Quarter
- Consolidate and improve the retail offer in the town
- Expansion of growth areas in the town centre as outlined in the plan (e.g. The Shed)
- Improvements to our local green spaces as identified in Appendix 4
- Provision of cycleways

4.6 In addition, there are other policies outlined within this Plan that will require funding for specific infrastructure projects in line with paragraphs 173 and 204 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Monitoring & Reviewing Policies in the Fleet Neighbourhood Plan

4.7 The Fleet Neighbourhood Plan will be monitored by Hart District Council and Fleet Town Council against the objectives, although other data relevant to the Plan may also be included. It is expected that the Fleet Neighbourhood Plan will be formerly reviewed on a five-year cycle or to coincide with the development and review of the Hart District Council Local Plan, if this cycle is different.

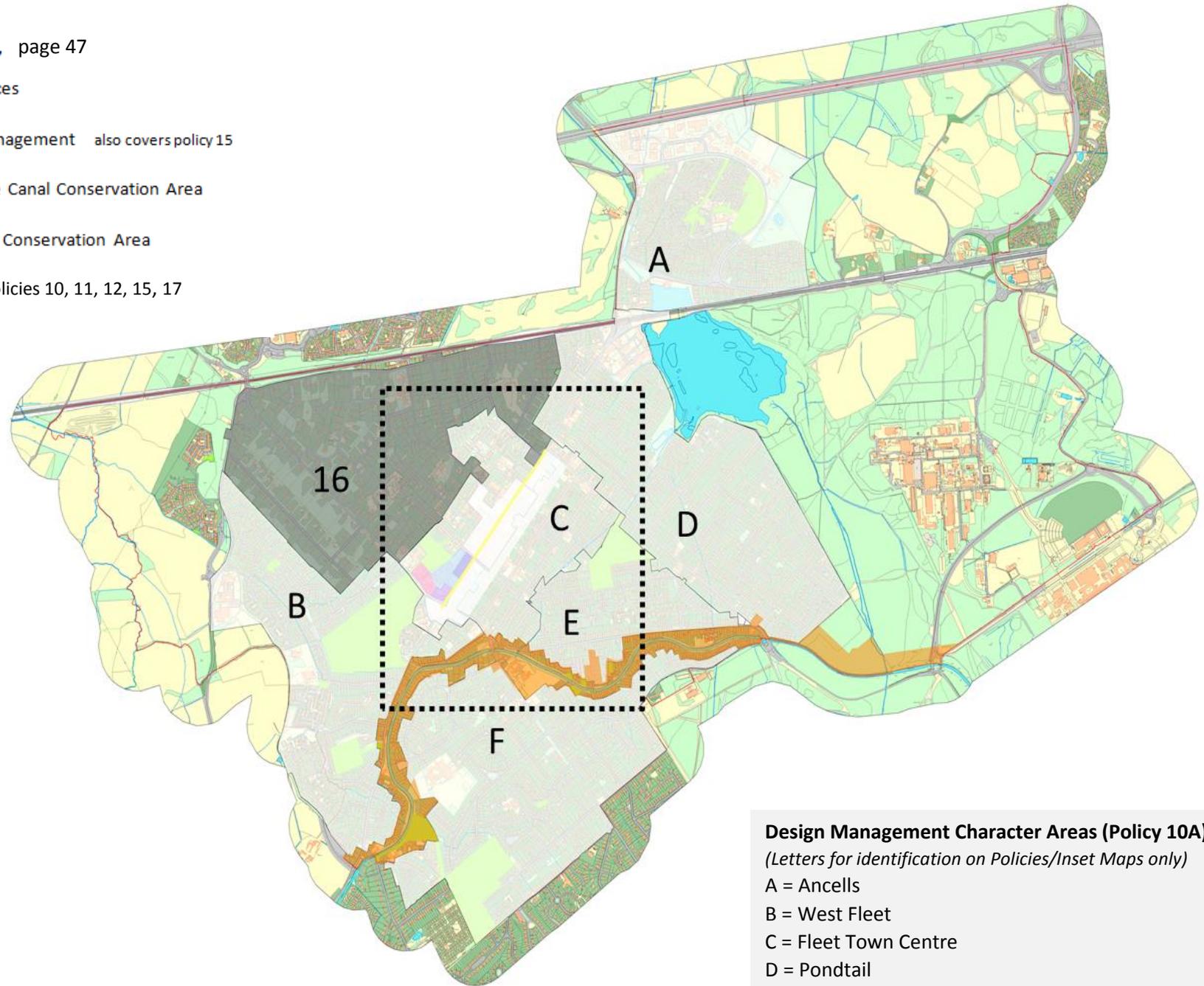
Policies Map

* For Policy 18 – Cycle Routes, page 47

-  Policy 13 – Green Spaces
-  Policy 10 – Design Management also covers policy 15
-  Policy 14 - Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area
-  Policy 16 - North Fleet Conservation Area
-  Map Outline - and policies 10, 11, 12, 15, 17
-  Inset Map

Town Centre Policies

-  Policy 1 – Zone 1a
-  Policy 2 - Zone 1b
-  Policy 3 - Zone 1c
-  Policy 4 - Zone 1d
-  Policy 5 - Zone 2
-  Policy 6 - Zone 3
-  Policy 7 - Zone 4
-  Policy 8 - Zone 5
-  Policy 9 - Zone 6



Design Management Character Areas (Policy 10A)
(Letters for identification on Policies/Inset Maps only)
 A = Ancells
 B = West Fleet
 C = Fleet Town Centre
 D = Pondtail
 E = South Fleet
 F = Dinorben

INSET MAP – Town Centre

* For Policy 18 – Cycle Routes, see page 47

-  Policy 13 – Green Spaces
-  Policy 10 – Design Management also covers policy 15
-  Policy 14 - Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area
-  Policy 16 - North Fleet Conservation Area
-  Inset Map

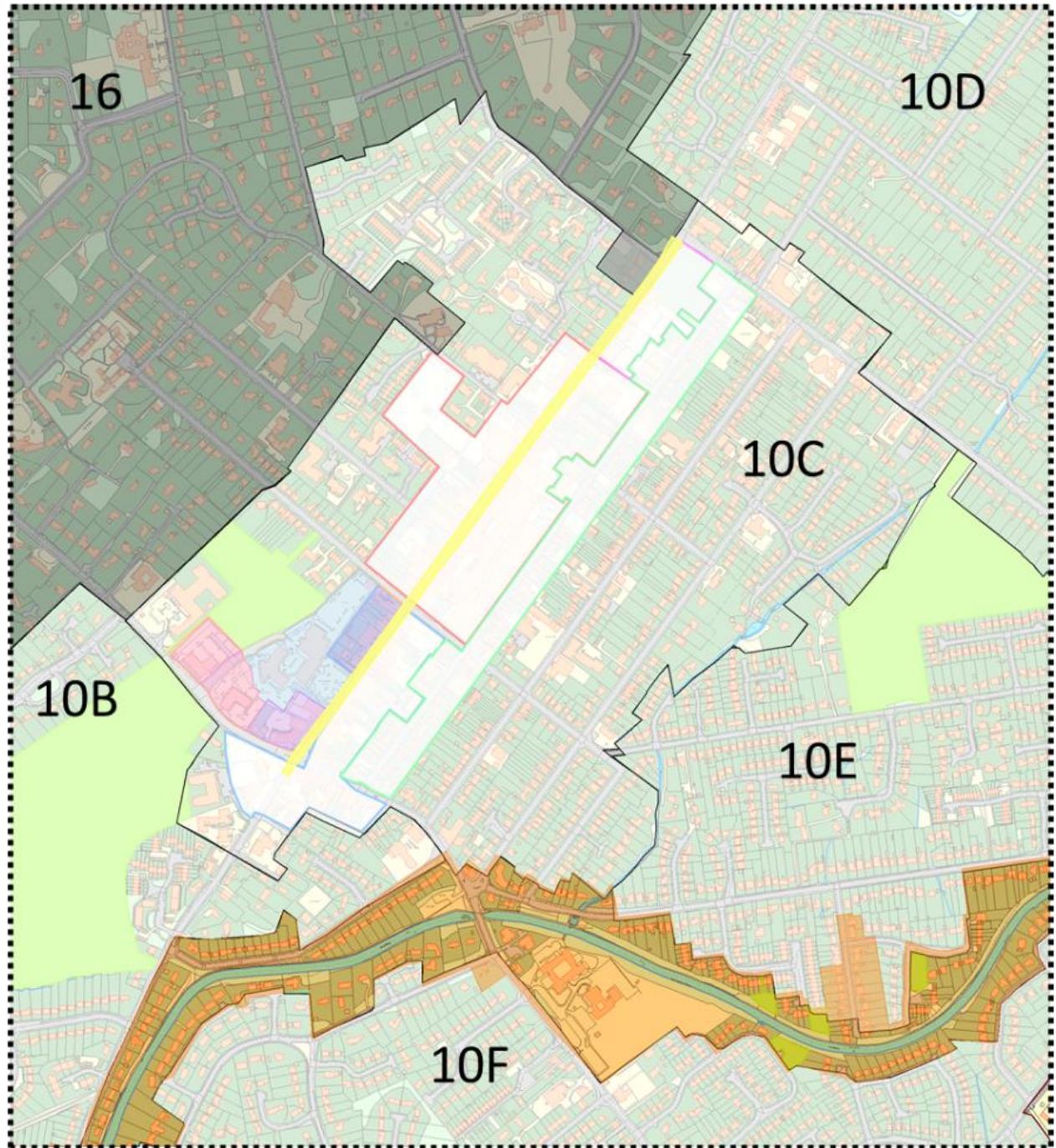
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-  Policy 9 - Zone 6



Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Schedule of Evidence

Appendix 2 - Map of Neighbourhood Plan area

Appendix 3 - Buildings of heritage and townscape value

Appendix 4 - Local Green Space designation evidence and maps

Appendix 5 – Character Area Maps (+ full size)

Appendix 6 – Fleet Pond

Appendix 7 – Consultation Statement

Appendix 8 – SEA / HRA Screening

Appendix 9 – HRA Review