

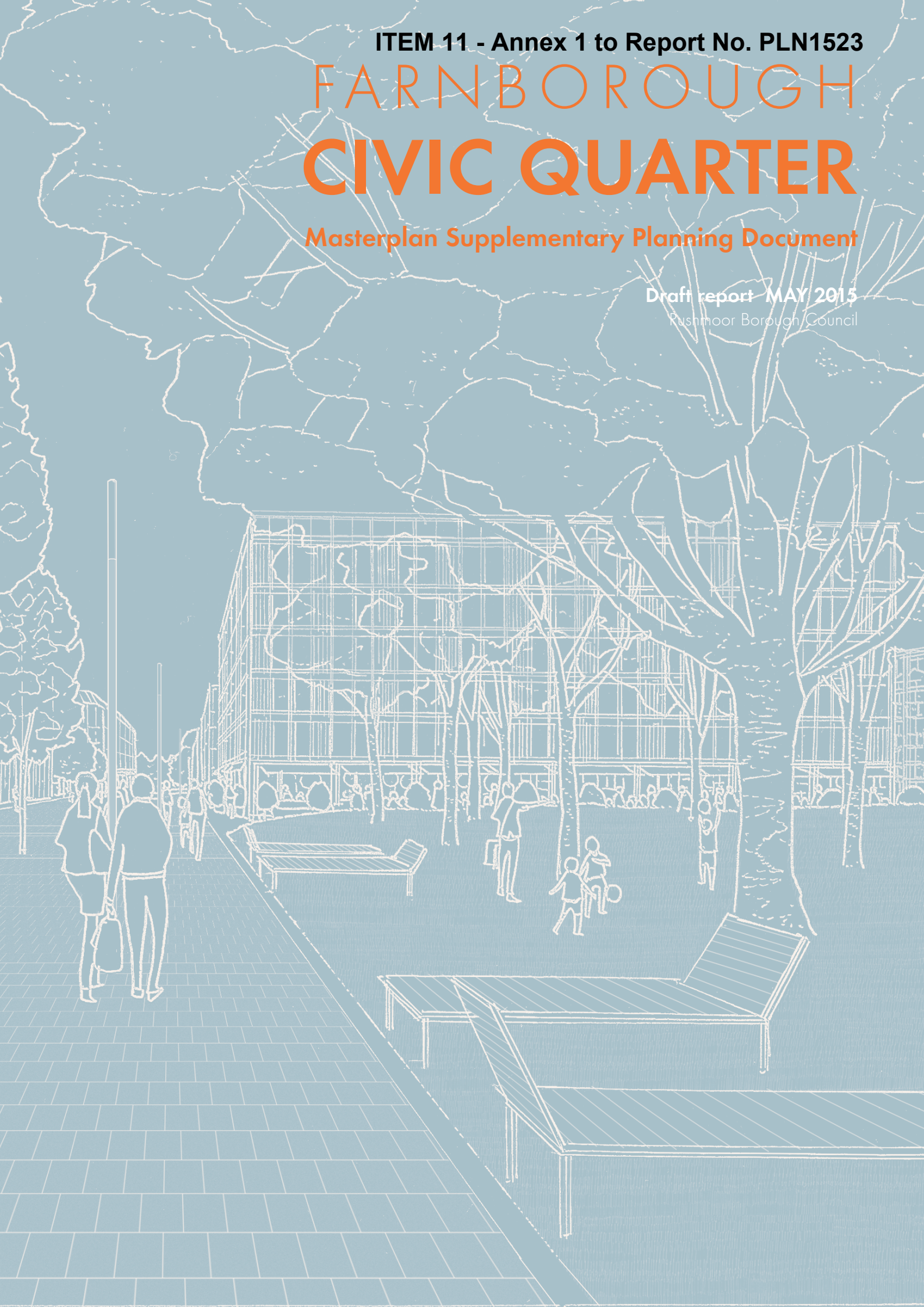
ITEM 11 - Annex 1 to Report No. PLN1523

FARNBOROUGH CIVIC QUARTER

Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document

Draft report MAY 2015

Rushmoor Borough Council



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Farnborough Civic Quarter Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) sets out a vision, design and delivery principles and an example scheme layout to guide future development in the Civic Quarter. This important area of Farnborough sits between the Town Centre and the Borough Council Offices and is currently home to the library, swimming pool, Police Station and Elles Hall Community Centre.

THE NEED FOR AN SPD

The Police Station at the Civic Quarter has recently closed with services relocated and facilities at the Library, swimming pool and community centre will need to be renewed over the coming years as these buildings either fail to meet contemporary accessibility standards or are nearing the end of their lifespan. The green space and pond, whilst valued by the local community, are currently underused and could be improved to ensure more useable green space for the town. The SPD will help to ensure that Farnborough has modern and accessible community facilities to meet residents' needs in the future and a popular central green space that can act as a community heart for the town.

The Civic Quarter has potential to help Farnborough meet its future housing needs for a growing community, by providing homes that are close to shops and services and also within walking distance of Farnborough rail station. By providing guidance on the development of new homes, Rushmoor Borough Council can ensure that homes meet identified need, are developed with regard to the surrounding townscape, and are of high quality design.

THE ROLE OF THE SPD

The SPD will act as a material consideration for Rushmoor Borough Council in decision making regarding planning applications for proposed development in the Civic Quarter area. The SPD has been developed in line with Rushmoor Council's emerging Local Plan, which will inform planning decisions in the area.

Rushmoor Borough Council and Hampshire County Council have significant land holdings within the Civic Quarter area and the SPD has helped the Councils to understand the potential of the area and the priorities for ensuring a future viable scheme that can meet community needs.

PRINCIPLES AND DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

A number of principles and development priorities are identified in the SPD for the Civic Quarter, including:

1. Re-establish a network of connected streets and spaces that historically existed in the area but were lost over time
2. Integrate the site with its context and adjoining streets to overcome its current disconnection for pedestrians and cyclists
3. Enhance the central green space and retain significant trees in the area
4. Establish a balance of uses that contributes to Farnborough's long term vitality
5. Ensure continuity of existing community uses as sites within the area come forward and are redeveloped
6. Deliver practical development plots that can come forward flexibly to accommodate different uses

7. Work within existing ownership and occupancy boundaries as much as possible to facilitate the re-provision of community services
8. Be as flexible as possible in terms of phasing, to respond to opportunities and necessities as they arise
9. Enable as much change as possible in terms of redevelopment before requiring major infrastructure investment

More detail on the principles and priorities is provided from page 28 of the SPD report.

DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The SPD sets out potential for replacement library services and a community centre alongside new homes, office space and a hotel, all set around an enhanced green space and retained sports activity area.

Library services can be integrated with other uses such as homes or office space and potential exists for including performance space within a replacement community centre, should funding and space permit this.

The new community centre is identified on the existing Police Station site, so that this can be developed and opened before groups vacate existing space at Elles Hall. The Elles Hall building, which is not DDA compliant and therefore not suitable for public use, is identified for replacement as new homes or for retention as private office space.

Opportunity is identified for the longer term re-provision of the swimming baths and gym on their current site with a smaller overall footprint. Every opportunity for phasing stages of this development will be explored, to provide continuity of some services during the redevelopment.

Potential for a new hotel is identified at the western end of the Civic Quarter, close to Farnborough Business Park and with improved links to the Park.

A clear network of shared surface streets, bicycle paths and pedestrian routes are identified to support the uses and activities, with street-level crossings for pedestrians that connect to the surrounding areas.

Visual links and pedestrian connections between the southern end of Queensmead and the Civic Quarter green space are improved, to encourage people to use this space.

In the longer term, the development framework illustrates the potential for removal of the Pineshurst and Queensmead roundabouts, simplifying vehicular access and freeing up valuable space for shops and services, homes and strengthening pedestrian connections in the area.

All proposals set out in the Development Framework would be subject to more detailed design, technical and feasibility studies before coming forward and Rushmoor Borough Council will work with partners to move forward with plans for the Farnborough Civic Quarter.

Further detail on the development framework including movement patterns and suggested uses are set out from page 40 of the SPD report. Guidance for each individual site within the Civic Quarter is provided from page 54 of the report.





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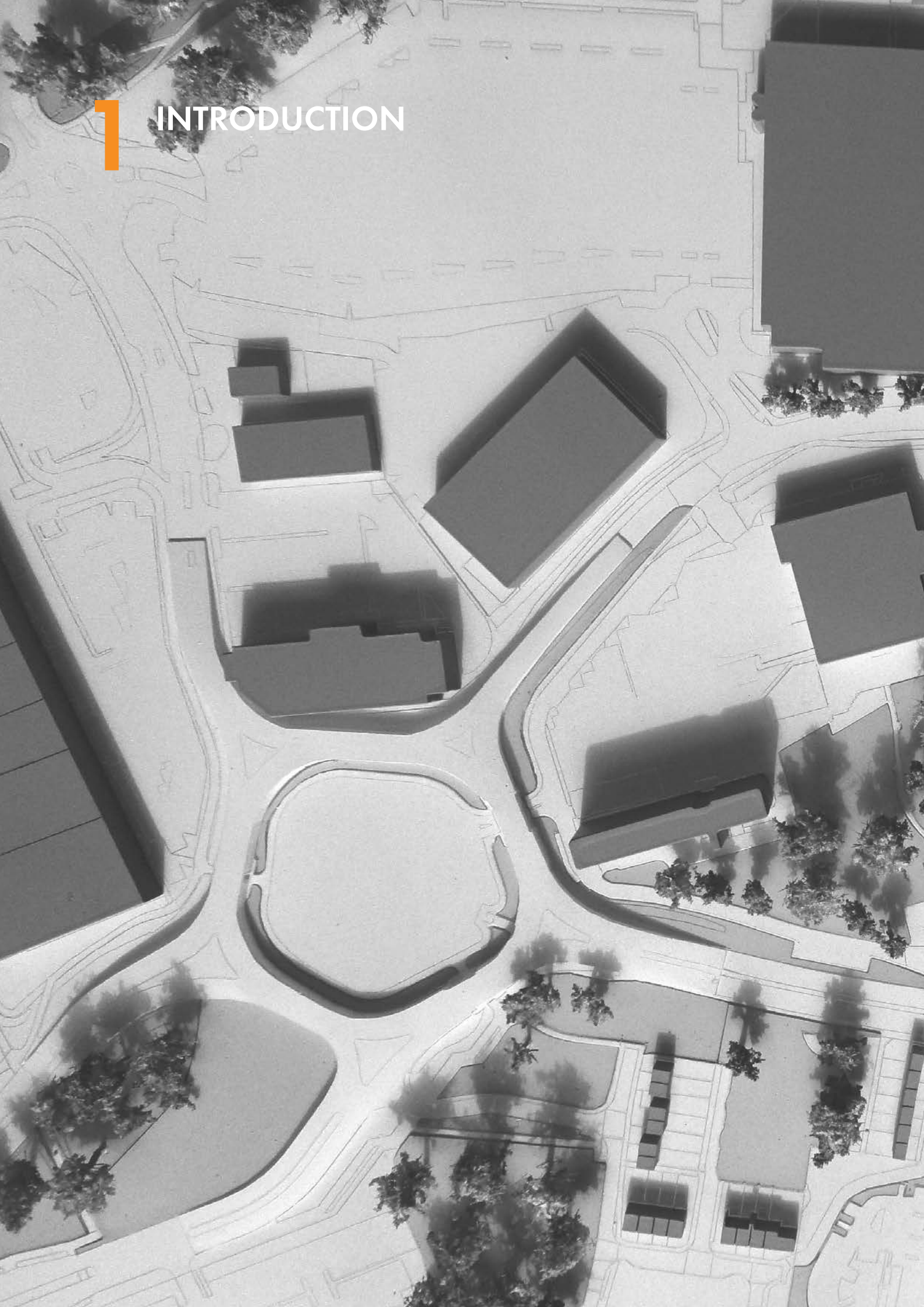
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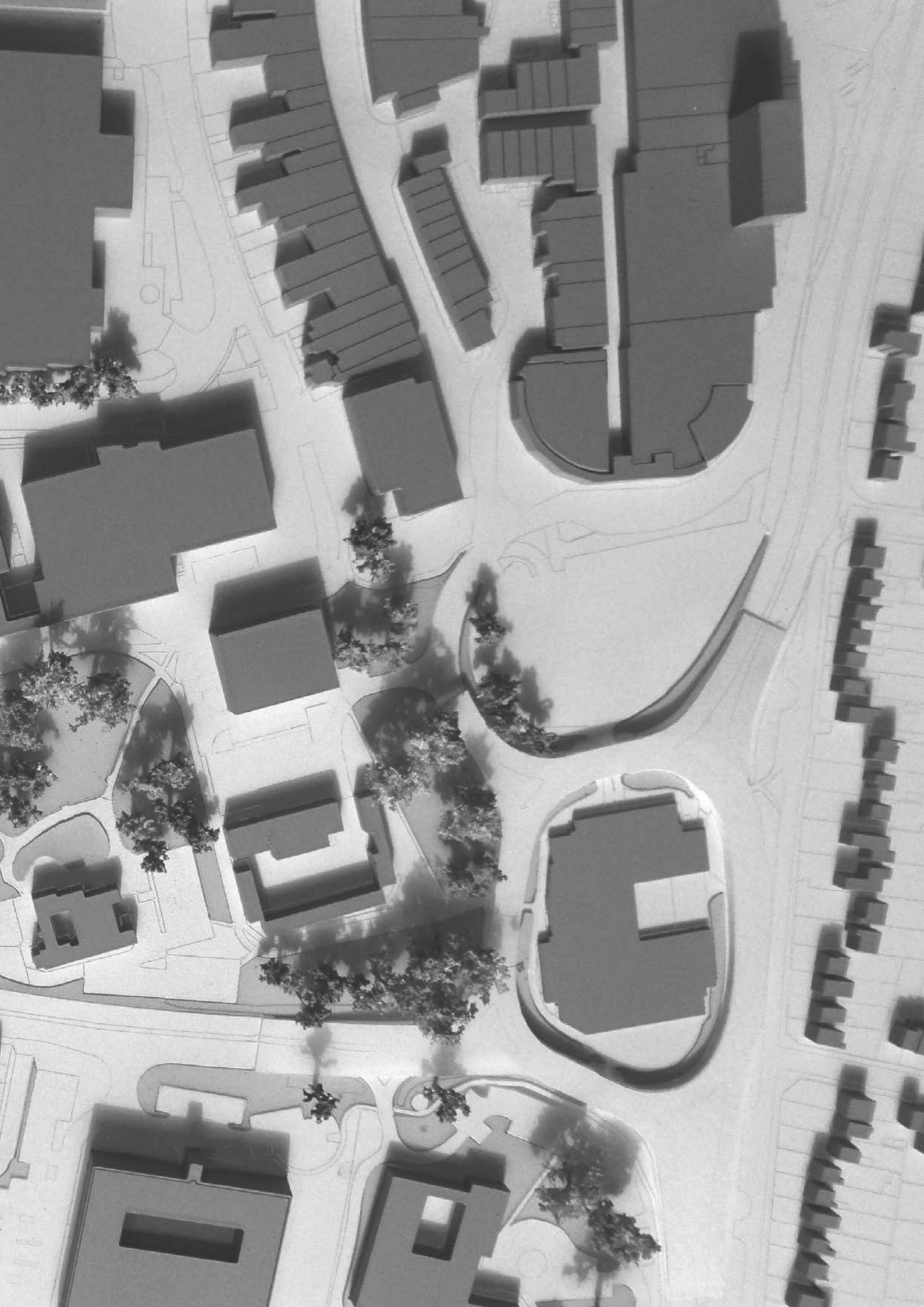
Farnborough Civic Quarter masterplan site area in context

Plans within this document are produced using Ordnance Survey mapping provided by Rushmoor Borough Council (© Crown Copyright)



INTRODUCTION





INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared for Rushmoor Borough Council by Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners and Montagu Evans and sets out a Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the Civic Quarter in Farnborough Town Centre, to guide future development in this area.

The Civic Quarter is located to the south of the town centre, between the retail core and the civic offices, and presents a significant opportunity for development that integrates with the town centre and brings wider, strategic benefits, whilst improving the green space.

The study has been prepared to ensure a coordinated approach to the area that can secure the best long-term future for Farnborough.

The Farnborough Civic Quarter Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will be a material consideration for future planning applications.

Rushmoor Borough Council has defined the following aims for the study:

- To create a development that provides a positive contribution to the revitalisation of Farnborough town centre;
- To deliver a form of development based on the principles of sustainability;
- To provide a framework for a viable and vibrant mixture of land uses suited to a civic quarter;
- To create a strong new identity;
- To encourage quality throughout and suggest a means of achieving some degree of local distinctiveness;
- To improve accessibility and permeability between Farnborough town centre and Farnborough Business Park to capitalise upon potential lunchtime trade; and
- To suggest the most appropriate way to phase the development such that funding is focused on projects that give the development an early “critical mass” and that quality criteria are self-evident from the start.

SPD STUDY AREA

The Farnborough Civic Quarter is bound by Westmead to the north, Kingsmead and Pinehurst Roundabout to the east, Meudon Avenue to the south and Sulzers Roundabout to the west.

It acts as an area of transition between the shopping core to the north, and offices and the business park to the south.



Study area

2

POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT
CONTEXT





ELLES
HALL

POLICY CONTEXT

The Core Strategy

The Core Strategy is the key document in the Rushmoor Plan and is intended to guide the location, scale and type of future development in Rushmoor Borough up to 2027. The document identifies the delivery of approximately 1,350 new homes in Farnborough and approximately 164,000 sqm net of new employment floorspace across the Borough.

Policy SP4 sets the strategy for Farnborough Town Centre. It has a focus on encouraging development proposals which maintain the vitality and viability of Farnborough town centre and contribute to the strategy of revitalisation. Other policies within the Core Strategy will also need to be taken into account as the buildings within the masterplan come forward such as CP2 - Design and Heritage.

This SPD sets out more detailed development options for the Civic Quarter specifically set within the revitalisation strategy provided by Core Strategy Policy SP4 Farnborough Town Centre. The SPD will be one of the material considerations that can be taken into account when determining a planning application within the Civic Quarter.

Farnborough Town Centre SPD

The SPD provides the 'bigger picture' for the town centre, identifying a vision and a set of objectives for the town over the next 10 to 15 years, guiding development and attracting investment.

The document guides future development in the area by identifying key development opportunities, based on an analysis of the town centre's urban form, property market demands, demographic and socioeconomic profile and current planning policy. A number of key sites were identified and specific guidance has been drafted to help deliver these sites.

Eight strategic objectives for the town centre were identified;

1. To encourage and facilitate the revitalisation of Farnborough town centre by developing a robust retail core with a broad range of shops and services;
2. To create a high quality network of streets and spaces to provide a more

attractive town centre environment;

3. To encourage the development of the evening economy;
4. To enhance accessibility into and within the town centre by all means of transport;
5. To create a unified and coherent civic quarter;
6. To ensure that the town centre meets the needs of all sectors of its community;
7. To support partnership working; and
8. To promote the town centre as a shopping and leisure destination

The document sets key design and development principles for six main areas in the town centre. For the Civic Quarter the SPD focused upon the need to unify and strengthen the Civic Quarter and its functions and provide a new public space. Five key principles were identified:

1. To create a unified Civic Quarter with a strong new identity
2. To enhance the area's role in the functioning of the town centre
3. To provide an attractive public space which can be used by people of all ages in the town centre
4. To connect the new Business Park in the south to the town centre in the north
5. To improve connections from the residential areas across Farnborough Road to the town centre

Farnborough Prospectus

In 2012 the Farnborough Town Centre Partnership and Rushmoor Borough Council prepared a prospectus for the town centre. The aim of this document was to promote the ongoing work which is being done to improve Farnborough town centre and to attract new investment to the area.

The document reinforces the Council's commitment to improving the town centre and meeting its vision for Farnborough 'to create a vibrant shopping, leisure, service and employment centre which provides for the needs of the local community, local employees and local businesses'.

The document sets out the town's strategy for growth, outlines a number of projects that are currently underway in the town centre and highlights key sites for redevelopment and improvement.



The Farnborough Town Centre Prospectus (2012)



Extract from the masterplan included in the Farnborough Town Centre Prospectus (2012)



Farnborough Town Centre SPD (2007)

DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

Property market research has been undertaken by Montagu Evans for Farnborough Town Centre, and specifically for the Civic Quarter site, to inform the preparation of the SPD. The review relies on a wide range of information sources, including Promis, Focus, Egi, Zoopla and Rightmove, as well as discussions with property agents and potential occupiers. Key property market sectors are discussed, including retail, leisure, hotels, offices and residential, to inform the potential mix of uses that could form a development package for the Civic Quarter site.

Farnborough: Key Characteristics

Farnborough town centre has a number of key characteristics which impact on the property market and should inform future proposals at the Civic Quarter. These include:

Good accessibility: Farnborough has a private airport; is 18 miles from Heathrow Airport; and 27 miles from Gatwick Airport. The town has fast and frequent rail services to London (approximately 40 minute journey time), Basingstoke and Southampton and wider network destinations beyond. The town also has good access to the M3 motorway, which lies immediately to the north of town and connects to the M25.

Competing centres: A significant number of large, strong competing centres exist within an accessible distance of Farnborough. These include Guildford, Camberley, Woking and Bracknell. Basingstoke and Reading are also within easy reach of Farnborough.

Population profile: Farnborough has a high proportion of Social Grade A/B people (higher intermediate managerial/admin/professional residents) living within a 10 mile radius of the centre (2011 census), which is far above the UK average. Conversely, the town has a proportionately low level of social grade D/E representation (Index 55; UK average 100). Farnborough has a higher than UK average representation of adults aged 30 – 55 and children 0 – 14 and a low representation of the 55+ age group.

Population projections: Farnborough's population was 57,486 at the time of the 2011 Census 201, a small increase since 2001. Rushmoor's population is projected to increase to 100,000 (the population at 2011 was 93,807).

Economic indicators: Farnborough has a higher level of home owner occupancy than the UK average. Farnborough has consistently lower levels of unemployment compared to the UK average. For example Q4 2013 unemployment in a 10 mile radius of Farnborough was 1.3% where the UK rate was 3.01%.

The Retail Sector

Retail trends: The UK has seen a polarisation of the retail market in recent years, with stronger centres generally performing better, in particular those offering modern, larger quality retail stock, and smaller centres declining. UK vacancy rates have stabilised, after a period of increasing considerably since 2007.

As a general rule, some retailers are beginning to expand their operations, though many are still in a period of consolidation, and continue to focus their presence in only the strongest of retail centres and on improving their e-tailing capabilities (for example, the Arcadia group).

Farnborough Town Centre

Retail floor space in Farnborough is estimated at 500,000 sq ft, with the main shopping streets being pedestrian only. The town benefits from two indoor shopping malls – Kingsmead and Princes Mead. Princes Mead is the more modern shopping mall. Significant new town centre development has occurred in recent years. The Meads development increased floorspace supply in the town centre. A cinema and restaurant scheme has recently been completed within the Kingsmead shopping centre.

Surrounding the core shopping centre, and

particularly to the west, is Solartron Retail Park and several other stand-alone bulky retail units. Further out-of-town retailing is located at the Blackwater Shopping Park.

Key retail anchors in the town centre include Debenhams, Sainsbury and Asda. The general retail offer is mid market e.g. New Look, Boots, Argos, Superdrug, Claire's Accessories.

Five retailers are recorded on Co-star Focus and 69 retailers are recorded on EGI with requirements for space in Farnborough. Retailer demand includes Aldi, B&M Bargains, Co-operative Food, Lidl, Poundstretcher, Asda, Pizza Express and Subway. Overall, there is a reasonable level of occupier demand for Farnborough. However, the demand for space at the Civic Quarter and the appropriateness of these uses need to be considered. The Civic Quarter site is somewhat separated from the core retail area and retail may not therefore be suitable unless there are synergies with other uses in the area.

Leisure, Health & Fitness

The leisure sector covers a very broad range of uses, including cinemas, health & fitness clubs, bowling alleys, bingo and other niche leisure related activities.

- Cinemas have seen significant growth in recent years - typically there are associated with restaurant, café and bar uses
- The Health & Fitness Sector has seen a strong surge in growth, still with many active requirements.
- Alternative leisure: there is increasing interest in more participative leisure activities e.g. cycling

The low rents and modest yields typified by this sector generally mean that they are located at off-pitch locations or on upper floors. These uses tend to be land hungry and require car parking.

Farnborough has a number of new leisure operators in the town centre. In particular, The Gym has recently opened up as part of The Meads development. A Vue cinema and a number of restaurants have opened at Kingsmead Shopping Mall. Other public sector-led facilities relate to Farnborough leisure centre (pool, gym, ten pin bowling, squash court, health suite) and Elles Hall – a small community orientated centre – all located in the Civic Quarter.

Generally, Farnborough is reasonably well served by commercial leisure uses such as the cinema and gym, given the modest scale of the centre. The Civic Quarter site is already the location for public sector leisure activities (Leisure Centre and open space), and this could provide a foundation for enhancement and clustering of other leisure activities, though these may not be particularly commercial in nature.

Hotels

The hotel market remains buoyant with continued interest from occupiers in this sector, especially for sites in London and the south east. Examples of continued expansion in the hotel sector include Travelodge and Premier Inn, as well as new brands like Tune Hotels and Citizen M. Apartment style hotels are also viewed as a future growth channel. Visible sites with good accessibility are important factors in considering this type of use.

Farnborough's hotel offer comprises Travelodge (opened 2009/2010; part of The Meads town centre development), Holiday Inn Express, Premier Inn, Falcon and Aviator (next to and principally serving Farnborough Airport) and Village Urban Resort (at Farnborough Business Park). There is also a sizeable aparthotel at Victoria Street. Permission has been granted for a further Premier Inn at Victoria Road.

Generally, Farnborough is well served by modern hotels which suit a range of budgets. These are principally feeding off the business trade (e.g. Farnborough Business Park) and the Airport. There might be scope for additional hotels in Farnborough, and especially at the Civic Quarter site which is very visible and accessible. Contact with possible occupiers has not identified any firm demand though this does not rule out this use as the corporate (office) market continues to grow in the area. Hotel uses do contribute to scheme viability and vitality although residential development is likely to command higher land values.

Offices

Farnborough is located within the Blackwater Valley office area. This includes centres of Farnborough, Aldershot, Fleet, Hook, Camberley and Frimley. Farnborough's office market is essentially split into two key categories:

Edge of town/out of town: Prime developments such as Farnborough Business Park command good rents and typically attract strong tenants. The business park is targeted at larger scale regional, national and international occupiers seeking an attractive, modern working environment.

Town centre space: There is much more limited office space in the core town centre area; the focus is far more on local service providers – accountants, solicitors and other financial services - with lower grade stock. Take up here is lower than for out-of-town locations reflecting much more limited stock.

A notable growth sector has been in the serviced office sector, with a particular emphasis on the supply space to small start up enterprises together with offering support services. Westmead House, set within the Civic Quarter site, is a prime example of this. Generally in this area, this office sub-sector has benefited from the strong presence of small technological oriented firms in the area.

Take up in Blackwater Valley is at a five year high (2013 – take up of c. 530,000 sq ft). TAG Farnborough Airport has also increased its

presence at the Business Park. Farnborough Business Park has been the focus for new office development and occupiers in recent years in the area. Supply levels of office space have been decreasing since 2012 in the Blackwater Valley area. However, new speculative Grade A office supply has been started through the development of around 100,000 sq ft of new office space.

Residential

Farnborough is a popular residential development area. New higher density development has focussed in and around the train station and in the town centre. Frequent and fast train services to London are a significant positive attribute.

A strong and healthy housing marketing for the south-east is currently being sustained by:

- Increasing employment levels
- Historically low interest rates (0.5% since March 2009)
- Greater availability of mortgage products (though lending criteria has tightened)
- Increased numbers of first time buyers entering the market
- Support from Government housing initiatives – e.g. Help to Buy

New housing development in the Farnborough area includes:

- The Meads - 100+ units above retail in a town centre location.
- Queensgate – residential development comprising housing and flats to the south of the town centre.
- Farnborough Central (Redrow) has also recently completed.

The average asking price in Farnborough is £289,880 (November 2014 – Zoopla). House prices have risen steadily in the last two years by around 10% and house prices in the sub-region are also forecast to increase further – by about 25% in the next 5 years. SPA mitigation in the form of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) would need to be identified and be deliverable alongside new homes for the area.

Private Rental Market

The private rented sector has grown by some two million households in the decade to 2011 in the UK and is a significant part of the housing stock offer. There is strong interest in private rental residential development schemes from major pension and institutional funds, attracted by the prospect of longer term income streams.

To date, major private rental schemes have largely focussed on central London areas and stronger regional centres (e.g. Manchester) though this is beginning to percolate out to other locations. Typically, institutions seek large scale development products – probably well over 100 and in some cases at least 500 units.

At the time of testing, average asking rents for Farnborough are relatively high. Average prices per unit size are shown below and in November 2014 the average rental value was £1,799 per calendar month, perhaps suggesting a predominance of four bedroomed houses for rent. Analysis of rents on a unit size basis shows significant disparity between smaller scale properties and larger homes, and between flats and homes.

Type	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Beds	4 Beds
Houses	£400	£988	£1,140	£2,018
Flats	£696	£1,291	-	-

NB: All rents quoted are on a per calendar month basis, and are based on current asking rents as at November 2014. Source: Zoopla November 2014

Affordable and Specialist Housing

Affordable housing need is assessed through the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for the area (2014 - including Surrey Heath and Hart District). In Rushmoor the shortfall (per annum) for affordable homes is 197 units. Currently, the Core Strategy (Oct 2011) policies prescribe a 35% affordable home allocation for residential development. The SHMA for Rushmoor outlines the estimated requirement for specialist housing.

Estimated Requirements for Specialist Housing (2012 – 2030)

Housing Format	Rushmoor
Sheltered - Affordable	340
Sheltered - Market	160
Extra Care - Affordable	210
Extra Care - Market	0
Total	710

The data points towards Councils needing to provide further specialist accommodation to meet a wide range of residential needs.

Retirement Housing

The predicted growth in persons 65+ years in the coming decades – 10 million in 2013 to 17 million by 2033 - in the UK is expected to increase demand for retirement homes. Typical developments vary depending on care / service levels, but may commonly be in developments of say 30-40 units. Developments tend to be situated close to amenities and transport links. Retirement housing schemes are understood to command similar values to private residential units, though construction costs may be higher depending on the degree of community space and specification required to support this type of living.

There are a number of sheltered housing / retirement homes developments in the area.

These include:

- Fernhill Lodge, Victoria Road
- Cooper Court, Salisbury Road
- Meadsview Court, Clockhouse Road

It is possible that the Civic Quarter site could appeal to this market. The site is very close to amenities and access to public transport.

Other Uses - Health

Multi service healthcare/doctors surgeries/ medical centres are important community facilities. Some dedicated parking is usually required. Health facilities can be associated with ancillary retail services – in particular dispensing chemists, who can pay high rents to secure lettings close to such facilities. There is demand from local practices to relocate and extend their practices, and possibly through co-location approach.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

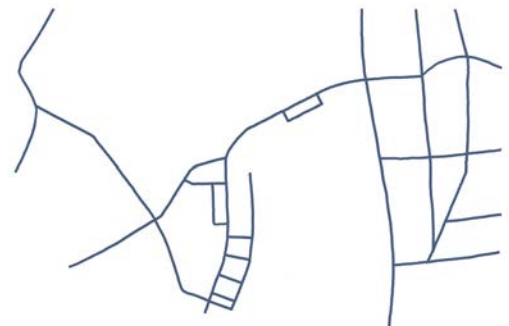
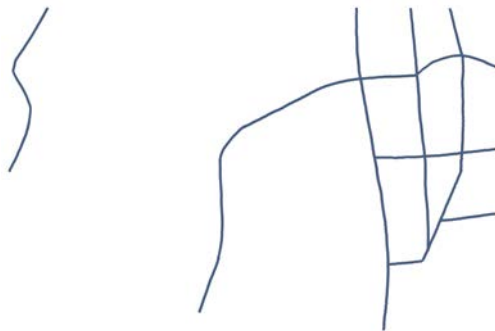
The form of the town centre is the result of several major periods of change through the twentieth century. Farnborough's town centre has a disjointed street network, with weak connections to the surrounding areas and poor links between the Civic Quarter and the main shopping area. Unlike towns with more established historical origins, the urban form has changed radically on more than one occasion as revealed in the diagrams below:

Early 1900s

The pre-war historic map from 1911 shows the suburban development of the land to the east of Farnborough Road. By contrast, the area which is the modern town centre is largely undeveloped.

1930s

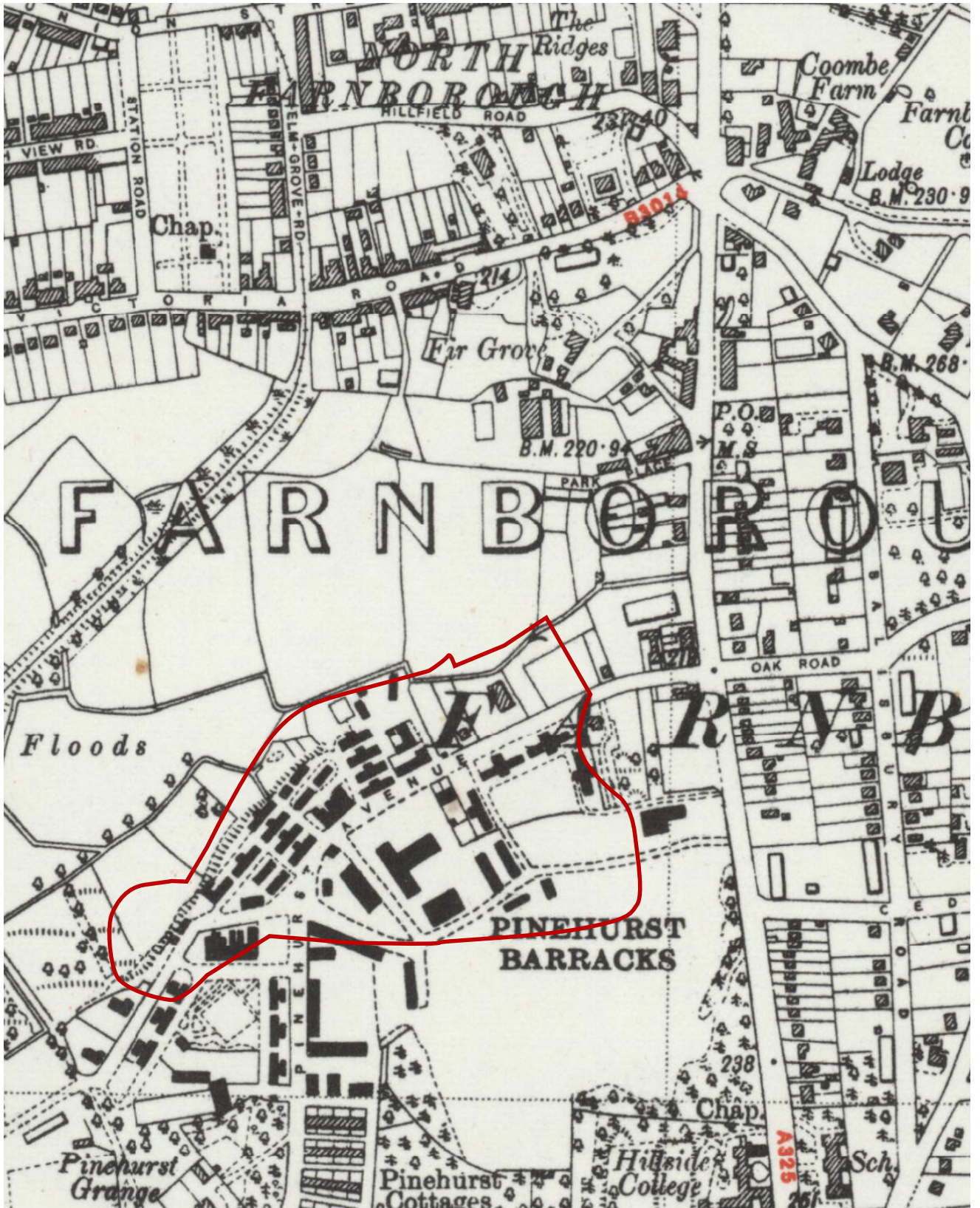
During the inter-war period, the military presence developed rapidly with the development of the Pinehurst Barracks, stretching along the line of Pinehurst Avenue. This included the ladder of terraced houses which still remain to the south and a series of barrack buildings further to the north.



The Tumble Down Dick Hotel c1908



The Pinehurst Barracks (Elles Barracks from 1934) which was demolished in 1970s. The Sergeants Mess is used as the Farnborough Community Centre



Farnborough town centre, 1938, showing the form and extent of the Pinehurst Barracks in the run up to the Second World War

1960s

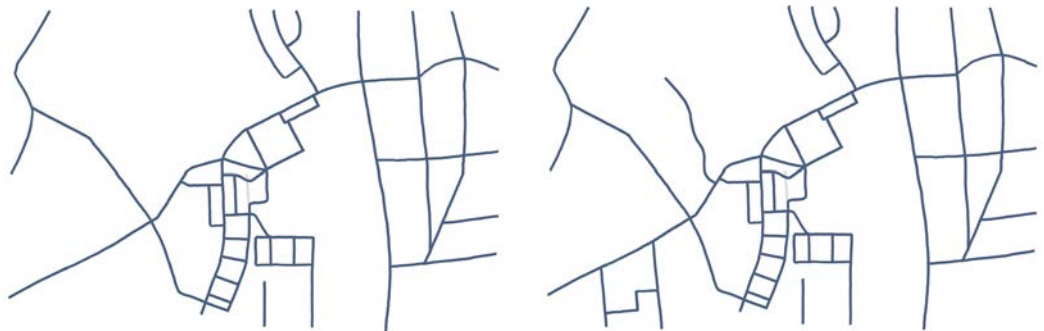
In the post-war period, the barracks continued to expand and intensify in the northern area, establishing the strong grid form, which is still visible today in the layout of the Civic Quarter.

Queensmead appears by this point, and was originally a conventional street with vehicular traffic. The junction with Pinehurst Avenue at the southern end of Queensmead provided a good connection to the area east of Farnborough Road as well as to the barracks.

The Elles Hall building appears on maps of this date, but not on those dating from the early 1930s.

1970s

The 1970s saw a substantial change in the form of the area, with the clearing away of much of the barracks and the emergence of the Civic Quarter in the form of the library, police station and the first phase of the leisure centre. The historic maps of this period show Solartron Road having been constructed as the first element of major new highways infrastructure.



Queensmead Parade c1965

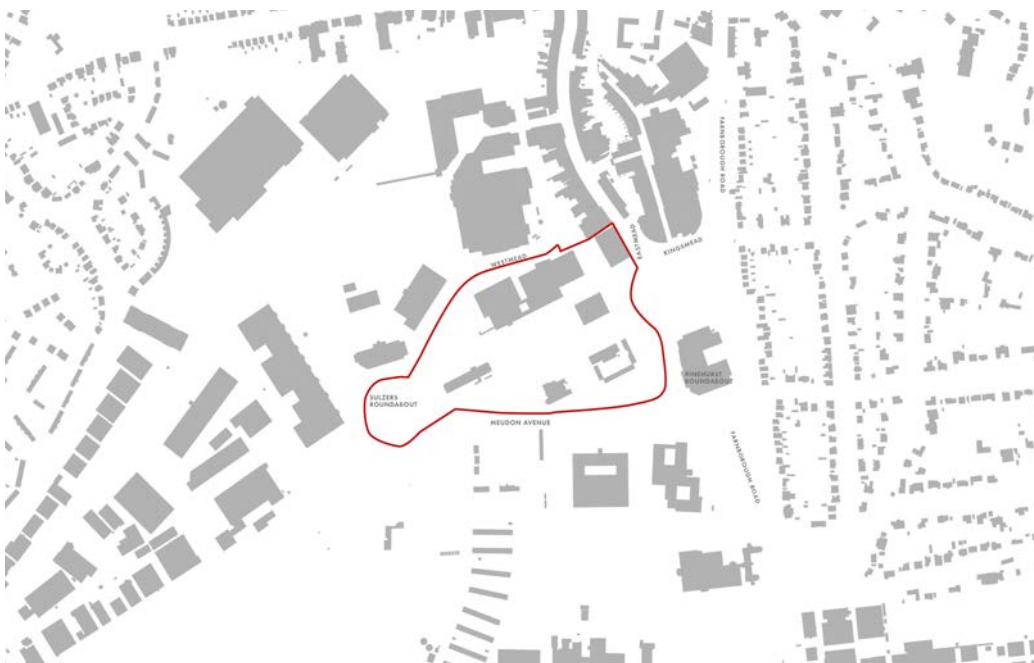
1980s

By the 1980s, Meudon Avenue had been constructed, along with the Pinehurst and Sulzer roundabouts. This change severed the historic continuity of Pinehurst Avenue. The creation of the Pinehurst roundabout and the roads linking to it also played a significant part in weakening pedestrian links to the east.

During this period, the second phase of the leisure centre was constructed as well as Westmead House. Subsequent years saw the replacement of the factories to the west of Queensmead with the Princes Mead shopping centre and major areas of parking.

Farnborough today

The street pattern in the town centre has remained relatively unchanged since the 1980s with some infill development occurring in the centre of the town. The street pattern has altered more significantly to the south of the Civic Quarter where some new residential development and the Farnborough Business Park have been developed.



A figure ground of the civic quarter and surrounding town centre

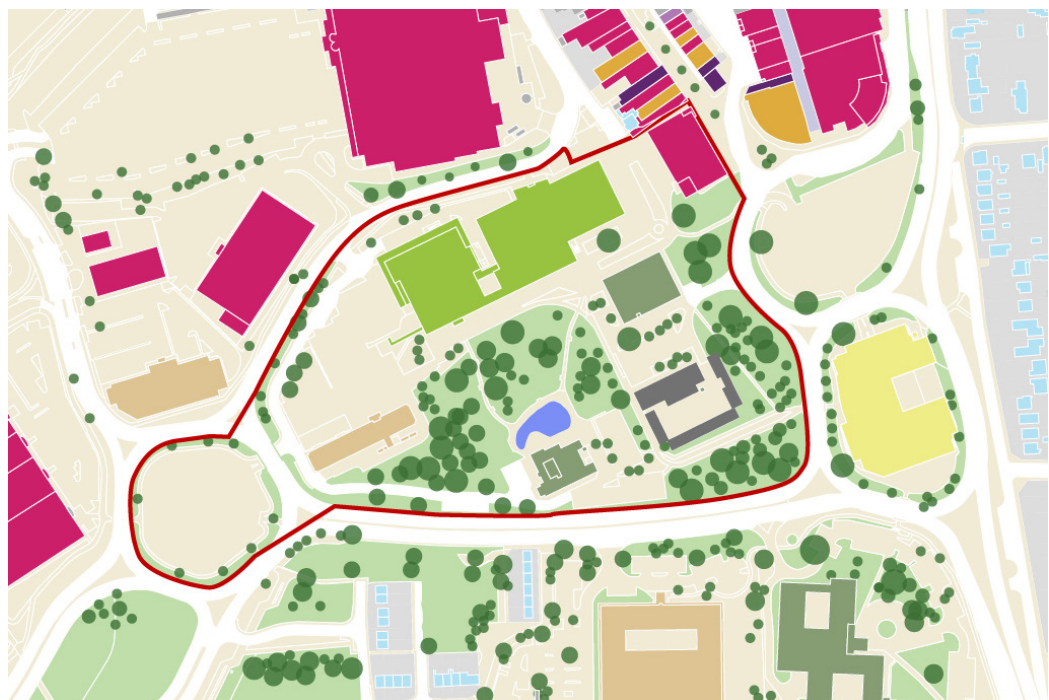
EXISTING LAND USE AND CHARACTER

The Civic Quarter is on the edge of Farnborough Town Centre and has a relatively mixed character and land use. The area is located south of the main town centre and has a number of civic and community uses that serve Farnborough town centre and the adjacent residential areas to the east and south. Uses within the study area include:

- Farnborough Library
- Farnborough Leisure Centre
- Elles Hall Community Centre
- Farnborough Police Station
- Westmead House offices
- An open green space
- A skate park

The buildings which house a number of these uses are no longer fit for purpose but the amenities themselves are well-used and play a valuable role in the civic, leisure and community life of Farnborough.

The open green space and skate park provide an important leisure and recreation facility for the town centre and contain a significant number of larger attractive trees. Although there is currently a larger area of green space it is not all well used.



Existing land uses

■ A1 Shops	■ C1 Hotels and hostels
■ A2 Financial and professional services	■ C2 Residential institutions
■ A3 Food and drink	■ C3 Dwelling houses
■ A4 Drinking establishments	■ D1 Non-residential institutions
■ A5 Hot food take-aways	■ D2 Assembly and leisure
■ B1 Business	■ Sui Generis
■ B2 General industry	■ Vacant
■ B8 Warehouse/distribution centre	



Existing character of the civic quarter

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Stakeholder feedback

A range of local stakeholders were engaged during the preparation of the Civic Quarter Masterplan SPD. Key messages from these meetings have been recorded and anonymised. Suggestions and comments have been organised into themes below.

The stakeholders included:

- St Modwen, the agents for the Kingsmead and Queensmead
- A number of local residents
- Hampshire County Council
- Rushmoor Borough Council
- Lambeth Smith Hampton, the agent for Hampshire Constabulary
- Farnborough Society
- Elles Hall representatives
- The Wilky Group owners of Westmead House
- Knight Frank Investors, agents for Princes Mead

Key challenges

The stakeholders identified a number of key challenges for this area of the town centre and for developing in Farnborough town centre more widely:

- A number of stakeholders commented that Farnborough presented a challenging viability context for new development.
- Increasing the footfall in this area will be an important part of the solution - there is a need to create a 'critical buzz'.
- Improving the connections to the Farnborough business park would significantly help to improve the town centre by drawing people and investment into the town centre.
- Increasing the density and number of activities in the Civic Quarter should be an important aim of the masterplan.
- Farnborough lacks a 'heart' and development in the civic quarter presents an opportunity to create a 'centre' for the town.
- Stakeholders would like to see a bold solution that provides a tipping point to change perceptions and the role of the civic quarter

Physical environment

The current environment is relatively poor quality and a number of issues were identified:

- Farnborough has too much car parking and it was felt that this had a negative impact on the physical environment.
- Much of the retail development in the town centre is inward looking, creating significant areas of inactive frontage and contributes to a poor sense of vitality.
- The skate park is an important asset but an alternative location should be found for it when the Civic Quarter is redeveloped.
- The Redrow Homes development (Farnborough Central) is a good example of quality residential development in the local area.
- A significant, open, green area of public space must be retained in the Civic Quarter - it is the only green space in the town centre.
- It is proposed to move the market to Queensmead which may help to bring footfall to the southern end of the parade and towards the Civic Quarter. Some storage space will need to be provided.
- The need for a quality public realm and meeting place.

Movement

It was felt that the area was constrained by the road infrastructure, including the roundabouts and dual carriageways. A number of important poor pedestrian connections were identified as a result:

- The pedestrian connections to the south of the site are poor with no crossing point over the road.
- The study area needs to be better linked to the town centre via Queensmead. Iceland is a barrier into this part of the town centre.
- The link from Asda to the leisure centre could be improved.

Parking outside community uses was considered an issue, though it was acknowledged that wider parking provision in the area is sufficient.

Social

A number of comments were made about social and cultural facilities in the town centre. It was suggested that increasing the number of people living in the town centre would help to improve the sense of vibrancy in the town centre:

- There is a need for a venue in the town centre of a quality and size for organisations such as the U3A to use and for use for a capacity of 200-300 people.
- Elles Hall community centre is well used but does not have flexible space and is not currently DDA compliant or fire regulations compliant. Future plans should address these issues and provide space that is fit for purpose.
- There is an opportunity to cluster some of the community uses and services in this area of the town centre when the buildings are redeveloped including the library, community centre and leisure centre.
- Other civic and community uses could also be introduced such as a medical centre, a children's centre or a job centre.
- The leisure centre is well used, particularly the swimming pool and the fitness suite.
- A number of the civic/community uses could collaborate on activities and potentially share space

Economic activity

A number of comments were made about the town's retail performance and Farnborough as a location for new businesses:

- Shopping has improved in the town centre, but the Debenhams performs poorly. There is little scope for any further retail development.
- The Council offices are not a good use of land - this is a prime site for new homes.
- It was felt that it was important for the town to retain the Debenhams and that the Council should help to support this.
- The town centre has suffered due to box out of town retailing including a large Tesco and Costco.
- There is an opportunity to develop

the town's strengths in technology, engineering and science by providing start-up space and space for small businesses at reasonable rents.

Development projects in the town centre

There are a number of development proposals currently under-way in Farnborough, which will contribute to improving the retail, leisure and housing offer in the town centre. Key projects and considerations for development projects included:

- A number of developers discussed the issue of building height in the town centre. It was suggested that there was no reason the town centre could not accommodate more significant height. Others suggested that this would not be possible because of the airfield and would not be popular with local residents.
- The new cinema complex in Kingsmead shopping mall contributing to the evening offer in the town centre.
- Other town centre schemes, many coming forward as a result of permitted development rights, converting some of the town centres office stock into new homes.
- The police station is currently vacant and they are currently in the process of selling the site.
- The leisure centre is not currently efficient in terms of the size of the site. If it was redeveloped it could be replaced with a building reduced in size by a third and a building with reduced running costs.
- The leisure centre is an important footfall generator in the Civic Quarter and if it is redeveloped it should stay in situ.
- The extension to the Princes Mead shopping centre will provide new retail floorspace with larger floor plates. A key objective is to improve the connection with the large format stores to the west of the town centre.

CONSULTATION SUMMARY

The Consultation period for the Draft Farnborough Civic Quarter Masterplan SPD ran from Monday 9 February 2015 until Wednesday 25 March 2015. During this time the document was available to download from the Council's website.

An exhibition summarising the vision, development principles and masterplan was on display during this period in the council offices and library. Staff from the consultant team and from the Council were present to answer questions, discuss any concerns with members of the public and receive feedback on the document on Saturday 28 February and Friday 20 March 2015 in the Princes Mead shopping centre.

A feedback form was provided to record comments from residents and visitors and 130 responses were received from local residents and key stakeholders.

These responses have been analysed and have been used to make updates to this document. For a full summary of all of the comments and analysis please refer to the consultation report. The key messages from the consultation on the Civic Quarter Masterplan SPD were as follows;

- Generally comments made were in support of the principles set out within the masterplan, noting that the area needed improvement.
- There was a desire to strengthen the reference to new and improved pedestrian and cycling routes, and for the plan to be more specific about the routes and connections made.
- The responses highlighted support for new community space, a new cultural or performance facility, a bigger and better library, affordable homes and a new health facility within the Civic Quarter.
- Many people also commented that the Elles Hall should be retained, as both an important heritage and community asset.
- Comments highlighted the need to ensure that any new buildings around the space should be relatively low rise to allow sunlight to penetrate the green space.
- Others noted that they felt that the overall quantum of green space had been reduced. In contrast, some respondents felt that the space was unsafe and currently not well used or maintained.
- Many people expressed concern about the loss of the pond and called for a need for a new water feature.
- Many comments provided support for the longer term proposals, whilst highlighting that the new road layout needed further testing and must work for pedestrians and cyclists.
- The responses highlighted a desire for the SPD to strengthen the reference to the continuity of services including the library, leisure centre and community space.



Consultation in Princes Mead shopping centre

FARNBOROUGH CIVIC QUARTER

MASTERPLAN SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

Welcome to the exhibition.
We hope you find it interesting and will want to share your views with us.

ABOUT THE CIVIC QUARTER

The Farnborough Civic Quarter is bound by Westmead to the north, Kingsmead and Pinehurst Roundabout to the east, Meudon Avenue to the south and Sulzers Roundabout to the west. It acts as an area of transition between the shopping streets to the north, and offices and the business park to the south. It is an important but currently underused area of Farnborough town centre.

WHAT IS A MASTERPLAN?

A masterplan is a framework through which an area can change and develop. A set of key principles and spatial guidelines influence the pattern of routes, development and open space but because the framework is at a strategic level, flexibility is maintained for how specific sites can come forward.

HISTORY OF THE AREA

The current shape of Farnborough town centre results from several major periods of change through the 20th Century. It has a disjointed street network, with weak connections to the surrounding areas and poor links between the Civic Quarter and the main shopping area.

The Farnborough Civic Quarter study area (© Crown copyright and database right 2014 Ordnance Survey 100023264)

Farnborough town centre, 1911, showing the form and extent of the Princes Barracks in the run-up to the Second World War

Allies and Morrison
Urban Practitioners

The Urban Engineering Studio

Farnborough town centre, 1911, showing the form and extent of the Princes Barracks in the run-up to the Second World War

Top: Queensmead Park (1980)
Bottom: Farnborough from the air in the 1980s

<p>EARLY 1900s The pre-war historic map from 1911 shows the suburban development of land to the east of Farnborough Road. By contrast, the area which is the modern town centre is largely undeveloped.</p>	<p>1930s The military presence developed rapidly with Pinehurst Barracks, the ladder of terraced houses which still remain to the south and a series of barrack buildings further to the north.</p>	<p>1960s The barracks continued to expand and intensify in the northern area, establishing the strong grid form. The Elles Hall building appears on maps of this date as part of the barracks. Queensmead appears by this point.</p>	<p>1970s The 1970s saw substantial change in the area, with the clearing of much of the barracks and the emergence of the Civic Quarter. Solihull Road is constructed as the first element of major new highways infrastructure.</p>	<p>1980s By the 1980s, Meudon Avenue had been constructed, along with the Pinehurst and Sulzers roundabouts, severing the historic continuity of Pinehurst Avenue and pedestrian links to the east.</p>	<p>FARNBOROUGH TODAY Significant change has occurred south of the Civic Quarter where some new residential development and the Farnborough Business Park has been developed.</p>
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Part of the exhibition used during the consultation period

3

PRINCIPLES AND PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES



PRINCIPLE ONE

RE-ESTABLISHING A NETWORK OF CONNECTED STREETS AND SPACES

The proposals in this SPD demonstrate how a network of streets and spaces might be re-established in and around the Civic Quarter. This will help to improve significantly pedestrian links from the south and provides a clear framework which delineates potential development parcels. The form of the grid draws on the orientation of the historic grid established by Pinehurst Barracks which is still visible in elements of the Civic Quarter today.



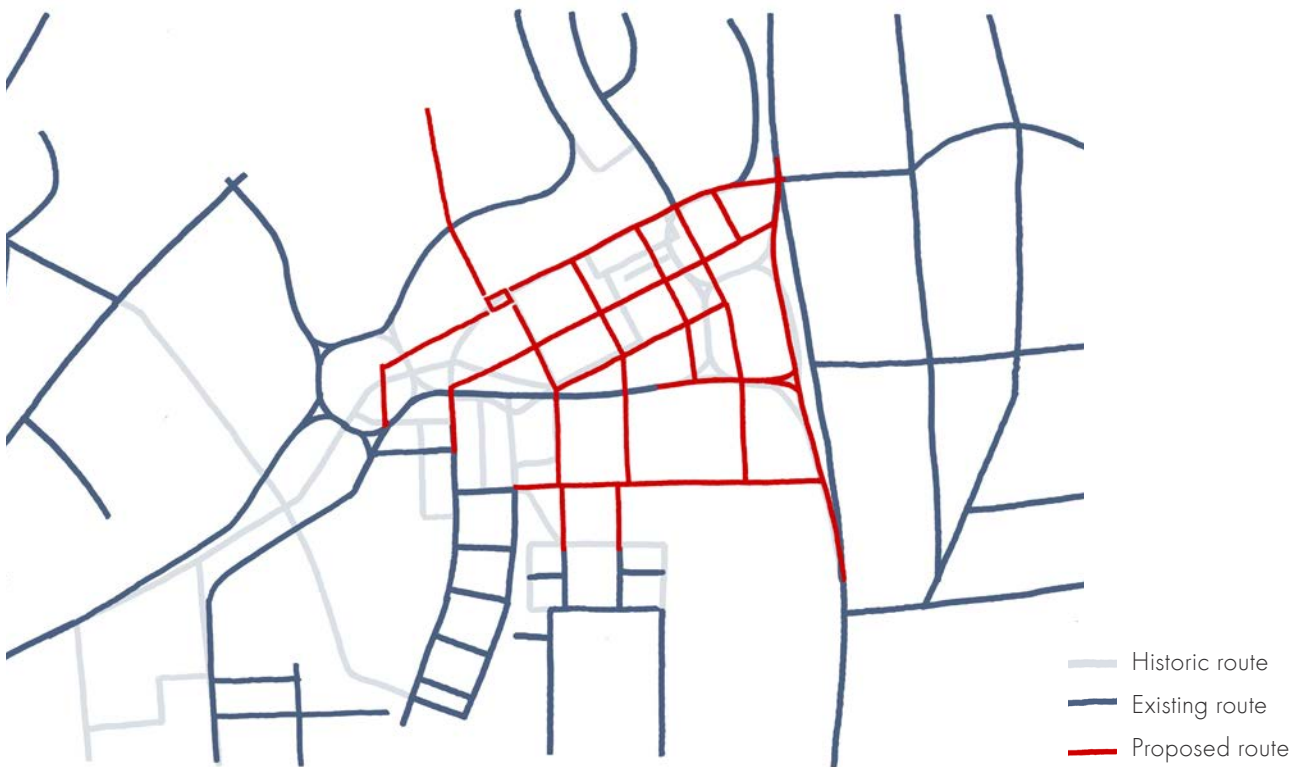
Early phase

The first phase of the development of the street pattern illustrates the scope of change, which is considered to be deliverable without the need to deliver major change to the highways infrastructure. This approach will facilitate the early development of key plots whilst anticipating the eventual future scale of change which could follow.

The form provides for links which connect Farnborough Business Park to the town centre through new routes across the IBM site in the event that this is redeveloped. This approach would include the establishment of at-grade controlled pedestrian crossings of Meudon Avenue, reflecting the existing strong informal crossings.



Existing and historic roads in the study area



- Historic route
- Existing route
- Proposed route

Later phase

The later phase of development anticipates the potential to make substantial changes to the Pinehurst and Sulzer roundabouts, effectively changing them to simpler signalised junctions with a greatly reduced impact on the urban form of the area. This later change will release significant areas of new development potential and will further aid pedestrian connections.

This phase of development also suggests a potential approach to the redevelopment of the Council's own offices, in order to unlock new connections southwards and take best advantage of the development potential created by the new road, in the event that the Council relocates its premises.

PRINCIPLE TWO

INTEGRATE WITH CONTEXT AND ADJOINING SITES

As part of the creation of a clear network of streets and spaces, a key issue for the existing Civic Quarter is the poor way in which it relates to its context. The elevated Sulzers and Pinehurst Roundabouts act as a barrier to movement, with the pedestrian underpasses providing a poor quality option which deters many potential visitors to the town centre.

Given the location of Farnborough College of Technology and Farnborough Business Park to the south, along with the potential for new housing development to the south of Meudon Avenue, there is a significant opportunity to create much better connections which will deliver footfall to the Civic Quarter and on to the town centre.

Observations on site indicate a number of locations on Meudon Avenue which are used as informal pedestrian crossings owing to the strong desire lines. These routes are visible as preferred alternatives to the indirect and unattractive formal routes that use the pedestrian underpasses at the roundabouts.

Consideration of the opportunities for new routes to be established in the wider area outside the Civic Quarter is important in informing the location and nature of the framework that should be established in any new development. Similarly, the existing streets to the east of Farnborough Road should also influence the location and nature of new crossings to better link the residential area into the town centre.

A further consideration is the nature of the connections from the western end of the Civic Quarter to the Princes Mead shopping centre. At present, the pedestrian environment is poor and there is potential to improve the clarity and attractiveness of this route. Opportunities to strengthen and introduce new cycle routes within the area should also be explored.



Informal crossing along Meudon Avenue



Existing desire lines to the town centre



Existing pedestrian underpasses are a barrier

PRINCIPLE THREE

ENHANCE GREEN SPACE AND RETAIN SIGNIFICANT TREES

One of the predominant characteristics of the existing Civic Quarter is the greenery of the trees and parkland. Whilst some areas of green space, particularly those alongside Meudon Avenue are not particularly useable, the central garden square provides a significant body of space which is well used. The space has significant potential for enhancement by the inclusion of more active uses on the building frontages. This is particularly relevant on the north side as part of any sports centre redevelopment and on the eastern side, both of which would provide an excellent sunny location for outdoor seating associated with cafes or restaurants. The green space would also provide an excellent setting for any civic or community uses which may be considered for the area, making it a real 'heart' for Farnborough town centre and contributing to improving the health and wellbeing of its visitors.

Trees are another dominant feature of the site. However, they are not uniform in their character. There are several significant examples, including mature oak trees within the central square and in front of the Council offices to the south of Meudon Avenue. These trees pre-date the current urban form by many years and should be retained and protected within any development layout.

Alongside this, there are also a great many younger trees in the area. Whilst these are established, their loss would be much less significant than the larger trees. Therefore, a more considered judgement may be made about the value of their retention when weighed against the aims of viable and deliverable development in the area. Any loss should be balanced by new street tree planting providing greenery and shade which will establish a pleasant environment and aid with climate change adaptation.



Mature trees within the central green space



Mature trees south of the Police Station site



Existing mature trees - RBC offices

PRINCIPLE FOUR

A BALANCE OF USES THAT CONTRIBUTES TO FARNBOROUGH'S LONG TERM VITALITY

The Civic Quarter currently performs a role as Farnborough's space for leisure and relaxation and the Council see this role continuing in the future. For example the Civic Quarter should provide a space for people to meet for coffee, eat lunch on the grass in the summer, and should support informal play.

Of the existing uses in the Civic Quarter, a number will need to be either retained or re-provided within the area in the future, including:

- A leisure centre;
- A library;
- A community centre;
- A green, open space; and
- An outdoor activity space such as the skate park.

In addition to these, office space in the area that is currently well used is considered a suitable and viable use to be retained and enhanced. Additional office hub space may be added to this to help meet the more flexible work space requirements of contemporary business practices.

The masterplan increases the space available in the Civic Quarter and therefore provides the opportunity to introduce new uses which improve the amenity value of the area. However, the masterplan maintains flexibility in the area, by not determining the exact location of these uses. The following uses, which may complement the existing uses, could come forward in the area as a need is identified:

- A health centre or GP surgery;
- A public sector hub with Council and other related offices;
- Housing;
- Hub style office space;
- A hotel or serviced apartments;
- Small-scale retail to support other uses; and
- Cultural facilities.

It is likely that some overlap of uses across buildings may be desirable. Active ground floor uses for the library, for example, may be complemented by housing or office space above. A GP surgery may be supported by a chemist at ground floor. A small cultural venue could be accommodated within a flexible community space to ensure efficient use of facilities.

Flexibility exists for the location of uses and specific sites are not therefore identified. However, it is considered appropriate for public uses and commercial uses to front the central public space and key routes at ground floor. Retail uses, in particular, are only considered to be appropriate in the north east corner of the civic quarter, to ensure that retail remains consolidated in the town centre.

The Civic Quarter is also an appropriate place for new homes within the town centre (which could include retirement accommodation). The masterplan has identified the opportunity to provide a significant increase in the number of new homes that could be accommodated within the Civic Quarter site, in comparison to previous studies, to support the local plan. Service provision and any new infrastructure would be agreed as planning applications come forward as part the planning obligations for necessary infrastructure. Proposals for residential development must comply with other local planning policy including the requirement for car parking.

The example scheme presents one permutation of how these uses might come forward.

PRINCIPLE FIVE

CONTINUITY OF EXISTING COMMUNITY USES

Whilst redevelopment at Farnborough Civic Quarter must be commercially viable and deliverable, Rushmoor Borough Council will take a long term view regarding the site to ensure that replacement uses contribute to Farnborough's long term vitality and that the site's capital and revenue value is balanced with the public value that community uses provide to the town.

There are a number of existing uses within the Civic Quarter which must be reprovided within the area;

- A leisure centre;
- A library;
- A community centre;
- A green, open space; and
- An outdoor activity space such as the skate park.

The council will need to ensure that any redevelopment of these uses is carefully planned so that there is a continuity of these services and facilities. In some cases, alternative space may need to be re-provided off site while redevelopment takes place.



The leisure centre



The Elles Hall



The existing library

PRINCIPLE SIX

DELIVER PRACTICAL DEVELOPMENT PLOTS

A key part of the success of any masterplan is the establishment of development plots which are logical and which can be developed in a robust and practical manner. This relates to the size of the block and also to the form of the block – regular shapes being much more practical to build.

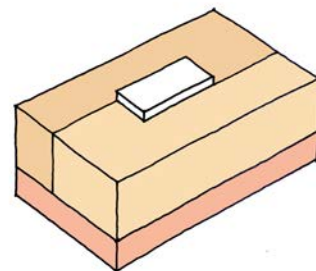
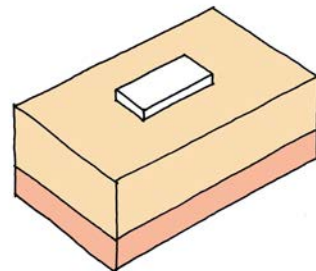
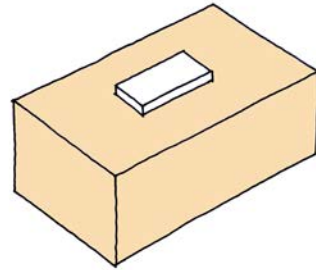
To maintain flexibility of use it is important that the block form is also not specific to one use, but can be adapted to suit a wide range of development, in some cases through subdivision or through amalgamation.

The very regular grid form of the proposed plan reflects the underlying historic barracks grid and the visible elements of the Civic Quarter. This has shaped a series of regular blocks which would be suitable for large commercial office development but which could also be used to accommodate a number of different uses, including smaller format business space, civic uses, community uses, residential or hotel.

The illustrations below show how a typical block of 32m x 60m can be treated either as a single unit, as two blocks above a podium or as two separate blocks.

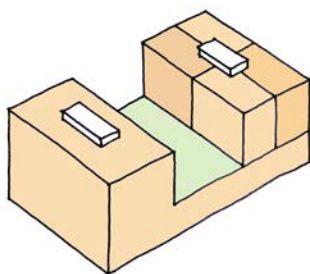
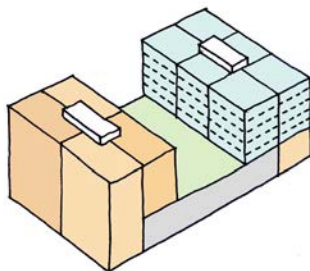
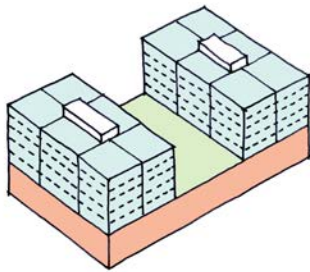
Single block

The large single block creates a major office building. This can be split vertically to accommodate more than one occupier and can also feature a range of complementary retail, civic or community uses at ground floor.



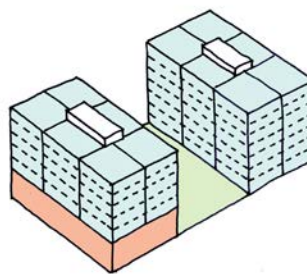
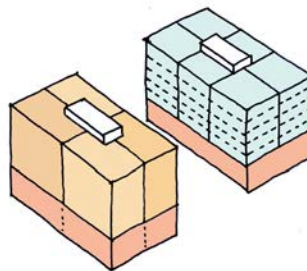
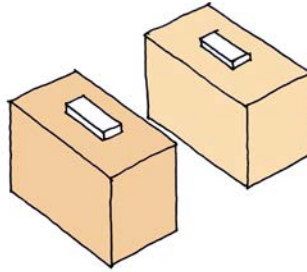
Podium block

Where the upper part of the block is split into smaller units, it can accommodate a range of offices, enterprise space, hotel or residential uses. The podium could accommodate civic, community or retail uses at the ground floor, but could also include an element of parking within the centre of the block.



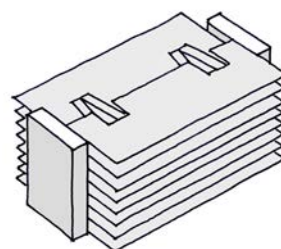
Separate blocks

The block can be built out as more than one stand-alone building. Again, these can be very flexible in terms of use, and the space between them can either form part of the public realm, or could be closed off and retained as private amenity space within the block.



Parking

A block of this size is also ideally suited to delivering efficient decked car parking with minimal ramps. As the density of land use intensifies this is likely to be important to meet future parking demand.



PRINCIPLE SEVEN

WORK WITHIN EXISTING OWNERSHIP AND OCCUPANCY BOUNDARIES WHERE POSSIBLE TO STREAMLINE DELIVERY

The majority of the land in the Civic Quarter is in the ownership of the borough and county councils. This means that a significant core of the development could be delivered within the control of the public sector. This approach is further complemented by the adjoining parcels of land which are owned by a small number of commercial organisations.

To aid development, it is important to ensure that, as much as possible, proposed development blocks do not straddle different land ownerships. This increases the complexity of ownership within the delivery of a phase of development and so makes it much less likely to be realised.

A further streamlining of the delivery process can be achieved by ensuring that proposed blocks do not straddle existing uses such as the library. As with the land ownership, the ability to deliver individual units of development whilst displacing as few existing uses as possible will reduce the barriers to successful and viable development.



Land ownership within the study area

- RBC freehold
- RBC freehold with leaseholders
- Hampshire County Council
- Hampshire Constabulary

PRINCIPLE EIGHT

LEAVE AS MUCH FLEXIBILITY AS POSSIBLE AROUND PHASING SEQUENCE

Flexibility around the delivery of individual phases will aid the delivery of development in the Civic Quarter. Where parcels of development are locked into a particular sequence or progression the process is necessarily more convoluted and subject to delays.

The Police Station was vacated and secured in 2014. It is therefore likely that this could be the first phase of any new development as it would not require any existing uses to be displaced to deliver new buildings.

The Elles Hall site and the library site are also considered to be opportunities for early phases of development, subject to the ability to re-provide space for the existing uses.

PRINCIPLE NINE

ALLOW AS MUCH CHANGE AS POSSIBLE BEFORE REQUIRING MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

The cost of any significant infrastructure change is an impediment to the delivery of development. Whilst it is hoped that changes to the Sulzers and Pinehurst roundabouts can be achieved in the longer term, it is desirable to see as much change achieved as possible in the shorter term. Therefore, the framework for the area identifies the scope of change which can take place within the constraints of the existing road network.

It should be noted that although the later phases of development are contingent on the road changes being delivered they are still important in that the framework established for the area anticipates their delivery and will allow them to be seamlessly integrated as and when they are developed. It is also important to take this approach to reinforce the point that the primary phases of development should not simply take their existing context as fixed and respond only to this character. This would risk development continuing to constrain the limits of the Civic Quarter by turning inwards and risks perpetuating the existing poor quality of many of the pedestrian links.



View of Elles Hall Community Centre

4

FRAMEWORK





SPATIAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter sets out guidance for potential development sites within the Civic Quarter. The framework is indicative and provides guidance for future detailed designs and an illustration of how the development principles in the previous chapter could be applied. The example scheme should, therefore, be read in conjunction with the key principles from the previous chapter. The framework provides a legible block structure for the area but the detailed design of these buildings, including further information about material and form, will be refined as the individual plots come forward for development.

The framework proposes shorter-term physical improvements and will help to act as a guide for planning applications as they come forward. Longer-term strategic transport and development projects have also been proposed.

The site guidance should help to inform development opportunities as they come forward in the Civic Quarter and be read alongside the guidance in national and local planning policy in addition to the SPD principles.

Other projects may come forward which have not been included in the example scheme. The SPD is not designed to be prescriptive in terms of uses or locations and the Civic Quarter can accommodate a variety of new development scenarios. However, future projects should comply with existing policy and the principles outlined in this SPD.

Replacement retail at the end of Queensmead with homes above, to integrate with the civic quarter

Redevelopment of the Library services in a new mixed-use building fronting the central green space

Reprovision of parking in a decked car park to service the community, civic and commercial uses

The BXM and skate park is retained in its existing position

Public sector offices and services providing a civic heart alongside library, community and cultural uses

Redevelopment of the leisure centre on a more efficient footprint, with new community/cultural centre

The central green space is retained and enhanced to provide more useable open space for visitors

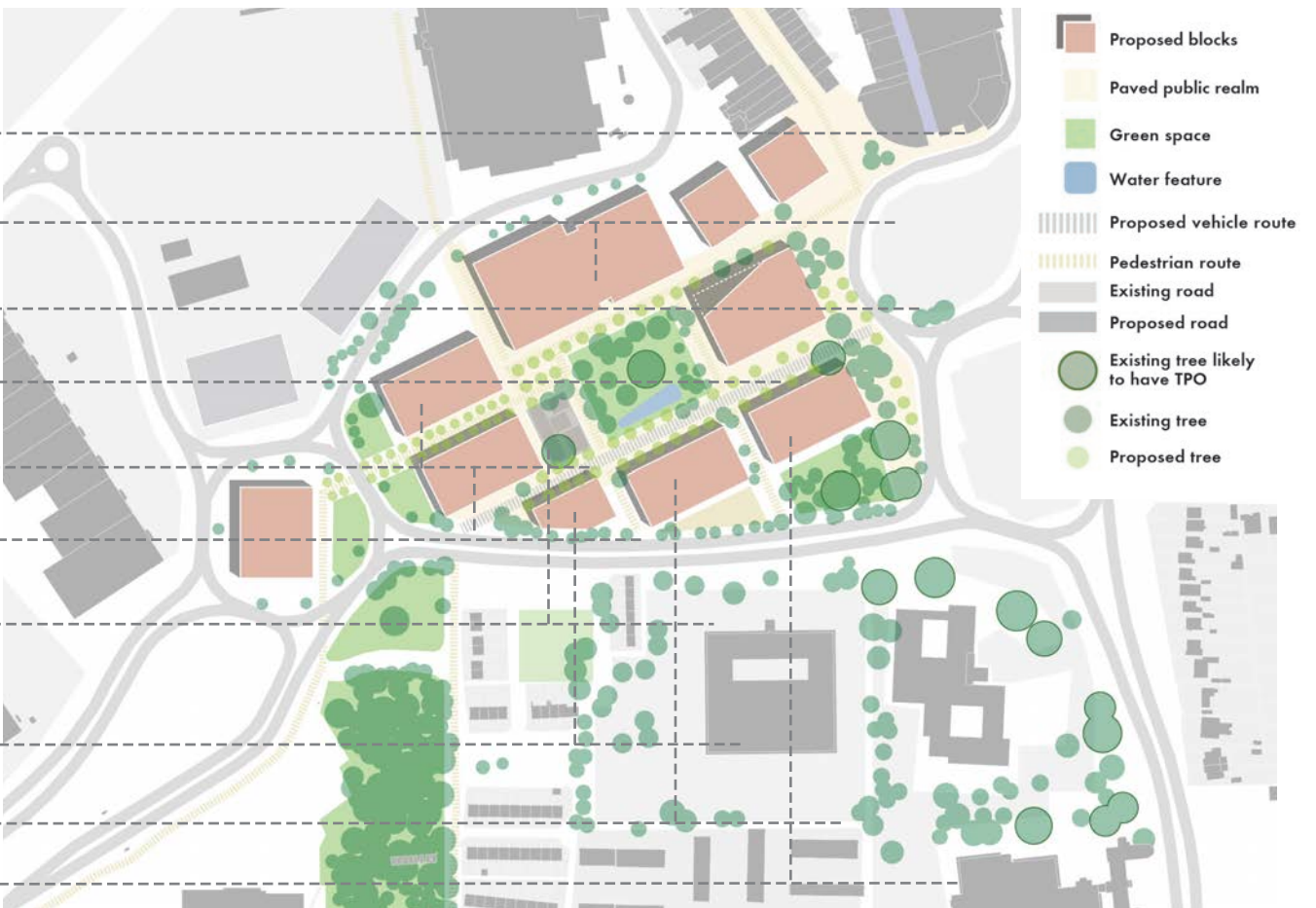
Office and hub space is expanded and enhanced, connecting the Business Park to the town centre

A quality hotel to service both the Business Park and the town centre

New duplex homes with roof gardens and/or balconies to bring more activity to the town centre



The existing study area



The development framework

- Active frontage
- - - Passive frontage



The development framework with active frontages illustrated. Solid lines indicate active frontage and dashed lines indicate passive frontage

- Cycle routes
- Pedestrian routes



The development framework with cycle and pedestrian routes indicated



- Main road
- Minor road
- - - Proposed road with shared surface treatment
- ➔ One-way
- ➔ Service access
- ▭ Signal crossing
- ▭ Underpass
- ⊙ Bus stop
- Bus movement

The development framework illustrating the hierarchy of routes and service access to blocks



New Road in Brighton provides an attractive shared space environment along the edge of Pavillion Gardens. The new road along the south of the green space, illustrated on the plan above,



St Andrews in Bromley-By-Bow uses shared surface treatment for the smaller roads between the new residential blocks

- Residential
- Retail
- Civic/cultural/community
- Leisure
- Hotel
- Multi-storey car park
- Office



Potential ground floor land uses

- Residential
- Retail
- Civic/cultural/community
- Leisure
- Hotel
- Multi-storey car park
- Office



Potential upper floor land uses



A sketch illustration of the Farnborough Civic Quarter masterplan



The existing view of the Civic Quarter from the edge of the leisure centre. A visualisation of the proposed is provided on the following page



An artists impression of a view from the corner of the leisure centre, looking across the re landscaped open space



LONGER TERM OPPORTUNITIES

The framework is indicative and proposes a number of longer term strategic transport and development projects.

Longer term opportunities exist to simplify Pinehurst and Sulzers roundabouts as signalised junctions and release land for town centre uses. Future investment could include redevelopment of the Council's own offices and IBM site to unlock new connections southwards and take advantage land created by the new road alignment. This redevelopment would provide space for a significant number of new homes.

The key movement changes include;

- The removal of Pinehurst roundabout to be replaced with a T junction;
- The removal of Sulzers roundabout;
- Access by car into the Civic Quarter will be from Kingsmead and Westmead;
- Bus stops will remain in their existing position on Kingsmead.

Any transport proposals would be subject to further testing including the modelling of traffic levels and the impact of highways changes and assessment of costs. Rushmoor Borough Council and Hampshire County Council plan to undertake a study once the SPD is complete.



The development framework indicating longer term opportunities



The development framework illustrating the hierarchy of routes and service access to blocks

- Active frontage
- - - Passive frontage



The development framework with active frontages illustrated. Solid lines indicate active frontage and dashed lines indicate passive frontage

- Cycle routes
- Pedestrian routes



The development framework with cycle and pedestrian routes indicated



Potential ground floor land uses - phase 2 once road has been redeveloped



Potential upper floor land uses - phase 2 once road has been redeveloped

DEVELOPMENT PARCELS

BLOCK 1 - SULZERS ROUNDABOUT

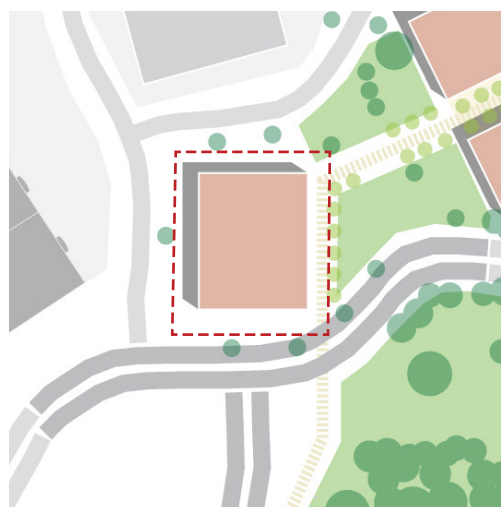
Block 1 is located within the existing Sulzers Roundabout, an area currently used for car parking. The site is important as it is a significant threshold on the approach to Farnborough town centre from the west and has the potential to make a positive contribution to a first impression of the town.

At present, the car park is also an important pedestrian route between Farnborough Business Park and the town centre. The quality of this route is poor, and a well designed building would have positive benefits for this link. These pedestrian and cycle routes towards the Business Park should be strengthened with a clearly landscaped path.

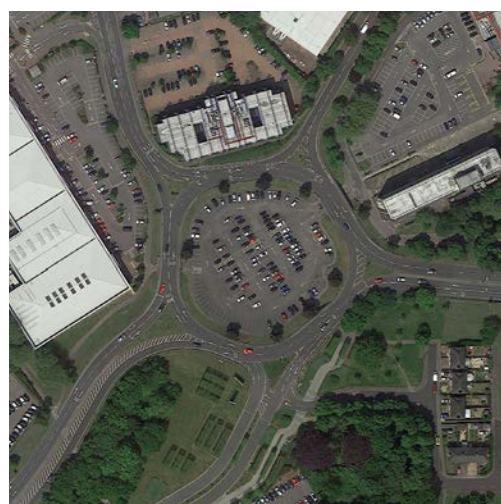
The site represents a point of transition between the strong grid of the business park, reflecting the underlying historic form of the aerodrome, and the angled grid of the Civic Quarter, which is derived from the former Pinehurst Barracks.

The plot would be much more strongly integrated with the rest of the Civic Quarter if the Sulzers Roundabout could be remodelled to create a simpler junction and remove surplus carriageway space. This would allow for uninterrupted pedestrian and cycle routes towards the southern end of Queensmead.

Development on this site is most likely to be suited to business space or commercial uses such as a hotel. Residential development would not be considered appropriate in this location. It is anticipated that this project is likely to be one of the later phases of development and may be reliant on other projects delivering new car parking capacity before this site can be redeveloped.



Proposed development block



Existing site area



Sulzer Roundabout facing Westmead House

BLOCK 2 - LEISURE CENTRE CAR PARK

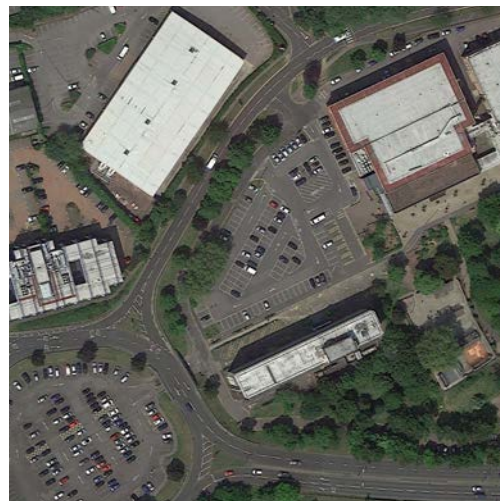
This area currently provides open parking, and is primarily used by visitors to the leisure centre. It adjoins the leisure centre on the eastern side, has frontage onto the east-west pedestrian route to the south and backs onto the Westmead service road to the north.

The site is capable of delivering a wide range of flexible building types. However, given its location away from the most prominent positions in the area, it may be appropriate to reserve this site so as to allow the longer term delivery of a decked parking solution for the Civic Quarter, particularly in the event that the Pinehurst roundabout is redeveloped which would incur the loss of the existing poorly configured decked car park.

The open parking in public ownership means that the phasing of the site can remain completely flexible to respond to the demands placed on the area by other phases of the plan.



Proposed development block



Existing site area

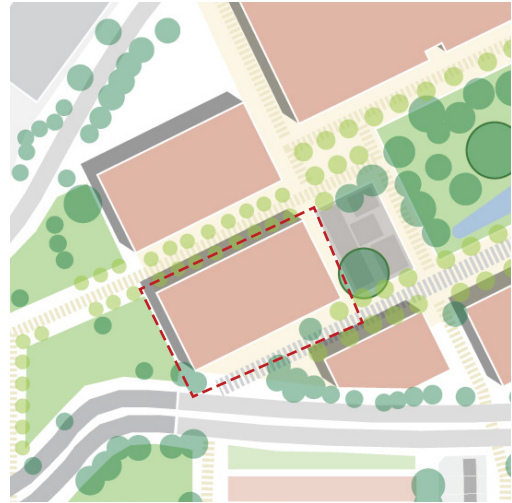


Leisure centre car park facing west

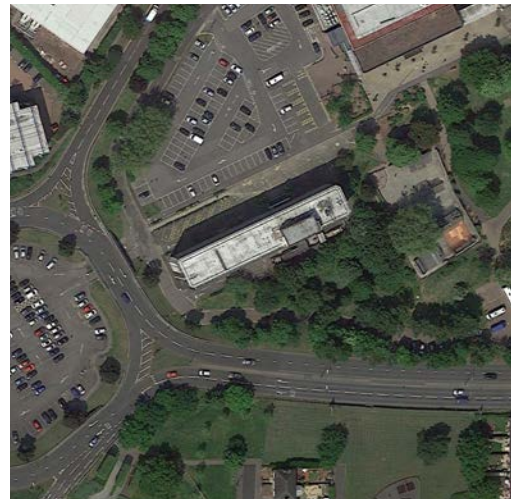
BLOCK 3 - WESTMEAD HOUSE

Westmead House is an office block currently housing a range of smaller businesses and other organisations such as charities. Whilst the building is approaching 40 years old, it is understood that it could reasonably continue in operation in its current form with investment in its fabric and systems. The plan therefore allows for either its retention or redevelopment independently of the other phases of the plan.

The plot, which has been identified is capable of delivering more than double the current floor area if there is demand for larger format office space, or could be sub-divided to create smaller, more flexible units and a richer mix of uses.



Proposed development block



Existing site area

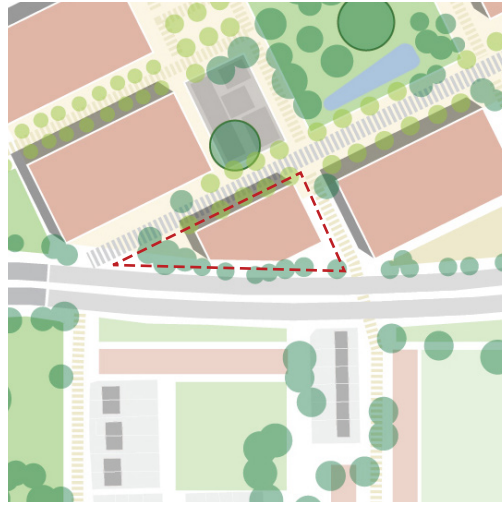


Westmead House

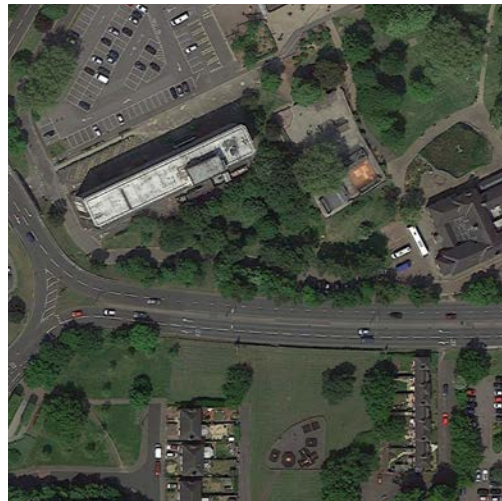
BLOCK 4 - MEUDON AVENUE FRONTAGE

The block to the south of Westmead House is a smaller and more irregular block which provides an opportunity to improve the frontage offered by the Civic Quarter to Meudon Avenue, reinforcing the change in character of this road over time.

It would be suitable for smaller format uses such as residential development or flexible office space, and is considered likely to proceed as a later phase of development once the major building projects are completed.



Proposed development block



Existing site area



Existing parking fronting Meudon Avenue

BLOCK 5 - FARNBOROUGH LEISURE CENTRE

The two blocks of the leisure centre demonstrate the potential for redevelopment of the leisure centre in the existing location, but on a reduced footprint. The existing building dates from the 1970s and early 1980s and either requires significant investment to remain operational in its current form or comprehensive redevelopment.

In the event that comprehensive redevelopment is pursued, consideration should be given to whether phased development of the major parts is preferable to a single major phase of work. The building is split into separate parts at present, which may facilitate this and which could allow for some continuity of use. This consideration will need to be balanced against the potential additional cost and time which this approach may require.

A major requirement of any design for the leisure centre is the need to locate the entrance onto the southern elevation overlooking the central park and to establish opportunities for ground floor active uses such as cafes which animate the space.

Any reduction in footprint should be used to release land at the eastern end of the block, allowing for future phases of the development adjoining the southern end of Queensmead.

Any redevelopment of the leisure centre is likely to be a long term project.



Proposed development block



Existing site area



Leisure centre frontage to the park

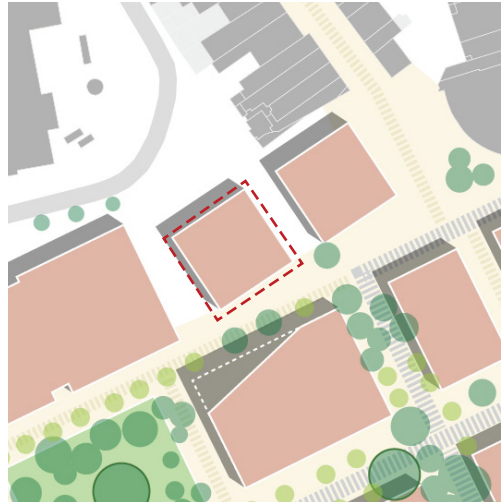
BLOCK 6 - KINGS MOAT CAR PARK

The development shown as block 6 occupies land which is partially covered at present by the eastern end of the leisure centre and partly by the Kings Moat car park. As such it relies entirely on the redevelopment of the leisure centre on a reduced footprint in order to be realised and is therefore likely to be one of the later phases of development.

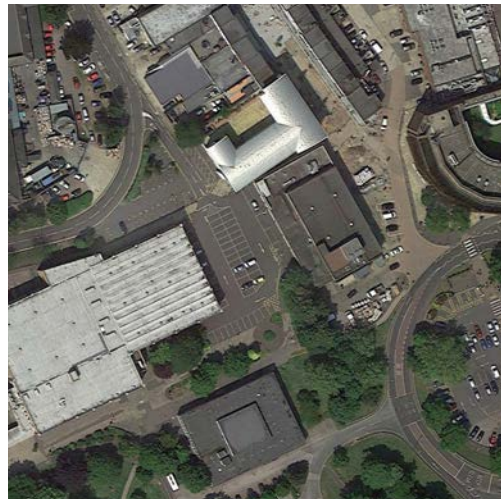
The block is a flexible module which could suit a number of uses, including residential development. However, a primary aim is the delivery of active ground floor uses which help to reinforce the route connecting the Civic Quarter to the southern end of Queensmead.

Service access to this block can be achieved through the Westmead service area to the north, but will need to factor in the existing residents car parking for Dukes Court.

In the shorter term there may be an opportunity to improve the connection and open up the view from Queensmead into the Civic Quarter by removing the vegetation and provided a wider paved path adjacent to Iceland. The existing taxi rank can be re-tailed and reconfigured.



Proposed development block



Existing site area



Existing Kings Moat car park

BLOCK 7 - ICELAND

The proposals for this site indicate the potential for redevelopment of the block housing the existing Iceland store and part of the Kings Moat car park. In addition to the potential to create a significant amount of new floor space in the area, this project is also an important component in improving the quality of the links between the town centre and the Civic Quarter. Active ground floor uses on the eastern and southern elevations are therefore imperative. Subtle changes are also proposed to the alignment of the block to create a more obvious progression from Queensmead towards into the Civic Quarter.

A key constraint on the potential scale and massing of development on this site will be the existing Dukes Court residential block to the north. This has existing upper floor windows which face south over the Iceland building, and so any development on the upper floor will need to respect the existing rights to light and a suitable level of separation for privacy.



Proposed development block



Existing site area



Iceland rear elevation

BLOCK 8 - ELLES HALL

The existing Elles Hall building is occupied by a range of charity and community organisations and is located on the southern side of the Civic Quarter, somewhat separated from the core town centre. The historic maps of the area suggest that the building dates from the late 1930s and was originally built as part of the Pinehurst Barracks. It has been much modified and adapted in recent years. Elles Hall does provide a link to the military history of the site and can be considered as a local non-designated heritage asset, particularly given the relative lack of buildings dating from before the 1950s within the town centre.

Whilst the uses are considered important to the community and should be protected through any development project, the site of the existing building is capable of delivering much more development than at present.

Development option 1

The site has good frontage onto the main green space, as well as being prominent from Meudon Avenue. Therefore it would be appropriate for this to be occupied by a significant building or public use such as the Council's office in the event that this can be achieved within the Civic Quarter.

In considering the future phasing of development, the provision of replacement space for the existing group of community and charity uses within the Civic Quarter will be important. This will help to unlock the development potential of this land whilst minimising disruption.

Being on the southern side of the park in the centre of the Civic Quarter, it will be important to consider the potential for this building to overshadow the space, particularly in the winter months. Therefore it is not expected to be a preferred location for a tall or very bulky building.

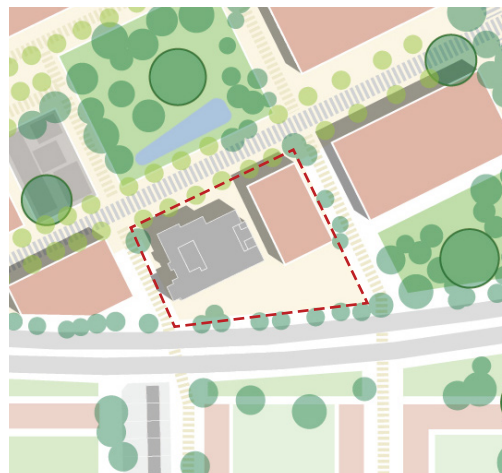
Development option 2

Elles Hall is retained as a building with private office use due to its relatively poor accessibility. However, the Council have

to prioritise the provision of community facilities over the retention of the building, should viability be an issue. A new building is provided adjacent to Elles Hall, to improve frontage to the green space and Meudon Avenue.



Proposed development block (option 1)



Proposed development retaining Elles Hall (option 2)



Existing site area

BLOCK 9 - LIBRARY SITE

The existing library site is currently occupied by a two storey building. This site has an important role to play in strengthening connections between the core town centre and the Civic Quarter, and is capable of accommodating substantially more building floor space than at present, both through increasing the footprint of the block and through increasing its height.

Of all the blocks in the main phase of the development of the Civic Quarter, this is the one that requires the highest intensity of activity at ground floor level, and should present an active street frontage on all faces of the block. The western frontage onto the green square should be occupied by active uses, such as cafes or restaurants, and could provide a suitably prominent position for the entrance to a community venue. The northern elevation and eastern elevation provide an important opportunity to create active frontage which reinforces the pedestrian connections along these routes. The southern elevation is the most likely location for the provision of service access to the block, however, this should be discreetly handled and carefully screened so that it does not detract from the block to the south.



Proposed development block



Existing site area



Existing library elevation

BLOCK 10 - POLICE STATION

The police station site was one of the earliest parts of the current Civic Quarter to be developed, and is also the first to have ceased its original function, with the police station having closed in 2014.

The site therefore offers the chance for an early phase of development without displacing an existing use, particularly providing potential to relocate uses from Elles Hall or to provide space for a new health centre. It is likely that upper floors in the block will be best suited to residential use or sheltered accommodation. In the event that a new public service hub project is considered, this block may form part of the project.

The site is surrounded by trees to the east and the south, and consideration will need to be given to the retention of these, particularly the small number of very mature trees which are in this area. However, it is anticipated that there will be space for the extent of the plot to be expanded into existing green space.

The block should present active frontages at ground floor level, particularly to the northern side which will be the primary approach from the town centre and the eastern side. The southern side of the block will help to provide frontage to Meudon Avenue. This will help to reinforce the quality of pedestrian routes to the south towards the existing Council offices, college and surrounding residential area. The north west corner of the block should be a particular focus for active frontage and could be a principal entrance for any significant public use as this engages with the central green square.



Proposed development block



Existing site area



The boarded-up Police Station building

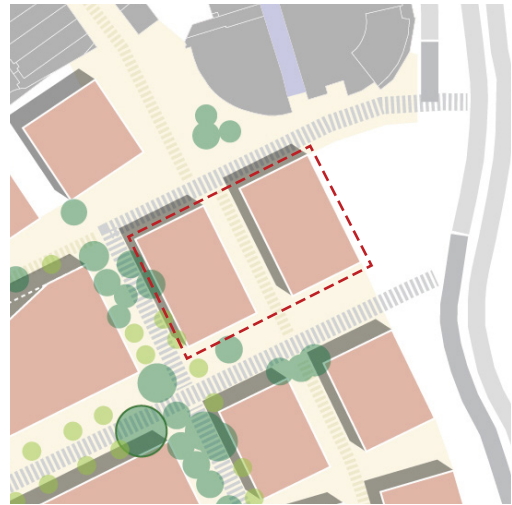
BLOCK 11 AND 12 - QUEENSMEAD CAR PARK

Development on the Queensmead car park site is dependent on the modification of access to the area from Farnborough Road. This does not necessarily require the removal of the Pinehurst roundabout, but the changes could be a first phase of that project. The changes would require the re-planning of bus movements in the area.

The existing site is largely flat and provides open parking. Whilst Farnborough has a substantial volume of parking available in proportion to the existing uses, consideration will need to be given to whether this car parking can be removed without appropriate replacement elsewhere if there has been substantial new development in the intervening years. In this instance, the development of the leisure centre car park to provide decked car parking will provide a valid approach.

These blocks are located at the southern end of Queensmead and so are most likely to be suitable for any potential additional retail space which is required. However, as retail use in the town has been consolidating to the northern area this is likely to be retail uses which are complementary to the civic and cultural uses within the Civic Quarter.

Above the ground floor, the blocks can be flexible and would be suitable for residential, hotel or office space.



Proposed development block



Existing site area

BLOCKS 13-16 – PINEHURST CAR PARK

The Pinehurst car park site is likely to be one of the later phases of development and can only proceed as a result of significant infrastructure change. The removal of the large roundabout and creation of more conventional streets and a signal-controlled junction will release land suitable for four new blocks of development and will assist with improving pedestrian connections to the south towards the college.

The blocks, which have been identified, are flexible and can accommodate a range of uses including business space, hotel, serviced apartments or office uses. The north-south route through the blocks is an important feature in establishing ongoing connections, but it would be appropriate to consider the amalgamation of the two blocks on the eastern side if a very large footprint building is sought. This group could play a significant role in establishing the scale and identity of the area and could be the location for taller buildings.



Proposed development block



Existing site area



Entrance to car park

THE CENTRAL GREEN SPACE

The central square should provide a significant body of open green space. The space should have active uses along the building frontages surrounding the space such as a cafes and outdoor seating outside the leisure centre.

The park would provide a space which could be used by the civic and community uses in the area for events and activities, making it a real 'heart' for the town centre. The design of the space should allow its flexible use for events and sports activities.

The park should also be an appealing place for lunch breaks or meeting for coffee with benches and seating areas provided.

Trees are a dominant feature of the existing site and significant examples such as the oak trees must be retained within the green space.

Although it is recognised that there has been lots of work by community groups improving the Elles Hall pond, in its current position, it prevents the proposed network of streets and spaces. The newly landscaped public space should contain a new water feature.



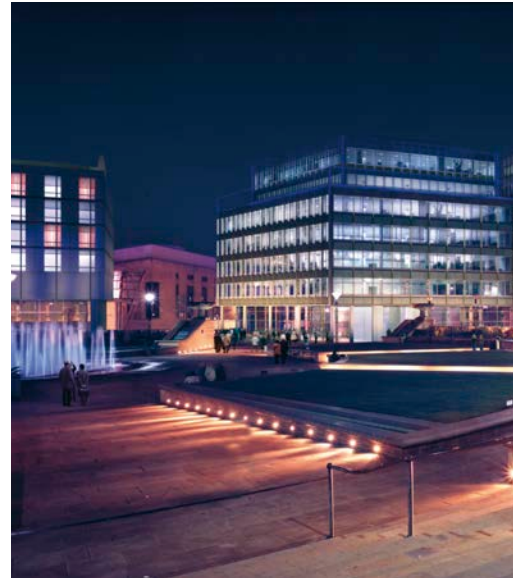
Proposed site



Existing site area



Peace Gardens, Sheffield



Peace Gardens, Sheffield



Pavilion Gardens, Brighton



Eldon Square, Newcastle



Eldon Square, Newcastle



Piccadilly Gardens, Manchester



Howardsgate in Welwyn Garden City

SITES OUTSIDE THE CIVIC QUARTER

The land to the south of Meudon Avenue falls outside the scope of the Civic Quarter, but the potential for development there has a direct bearing on the overall form of the area and the potential for routes and connections to be established. It is therefore important that the framework for the area is established in a manner which ensures that long-term opportunities are protected and connections can be made wherever possible.

IBM site

The existing IBM site covers a substantial area and acts as a significant barrier to connections from the Farnborough Business Park and residential land into the town centre. The area is considered to be suitable for residential development, and the framework, which has been presented, demonstrates how this project can achieve new north-south links. These links have been located to maximise connections into existing streets and have, in turn, influenced the locations of on-going connections to the north of Meudon Avenue.

Observation of pedestrian movements show that there is already a high level of informal crossing on Meudon Avenue. With the creation of these new north-south routes these crossings should be formalised and controlled to create safe at-grade crossing points.

The IBM site is considered to be a location which could deliver town house and lower rise development which could provide new family accommodation close to the town centre.

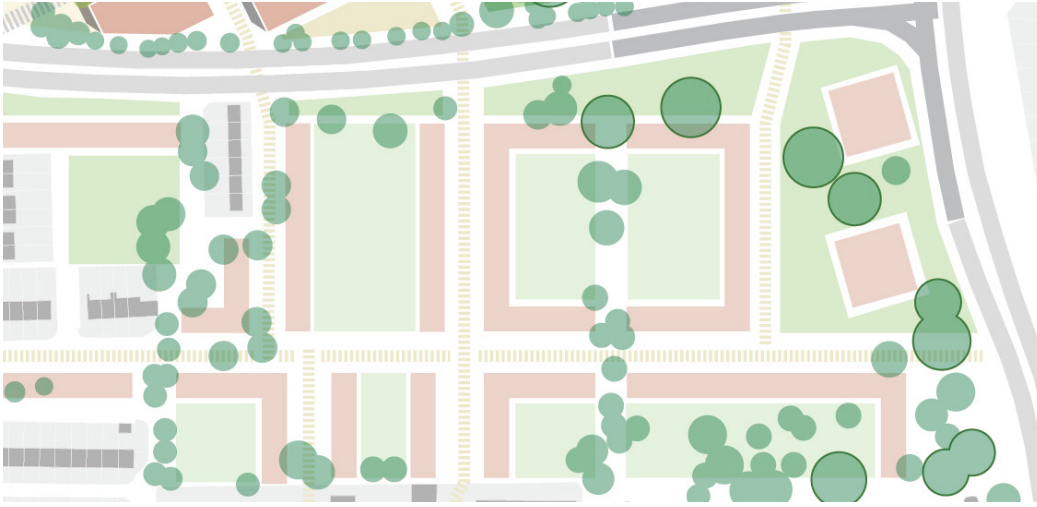
Council office site

As with the IBM site, the Council office site presents an opportunity for new residential development, perhaps better suited to family housing than land to the north of Meudon Avenue. The framework identifies the potential to create good quality east-west links and the site will also play an important role in connections to the south from the town centre.

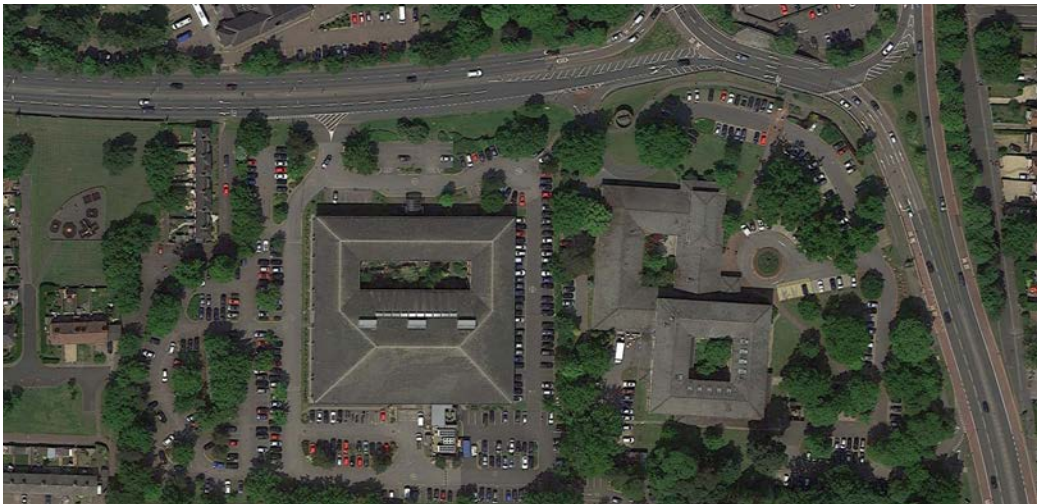
The Council office site is notable for containing several excellent mature trees which long pre-date the existing building. Whilst the smaller and younger trees on the site might be removed and re-provided to facilitate development it is expected that these significant trees will be protected and retained in any scheme developed here.

Residential development on this site will only proceed as a result of the Council choosing to relocate its office to new premises within the Civic Quarter. However, this has a number of potential benefits. Firstly, the project could deliver a modern energy efficient building which is fully equipped and configured to meet modern office requirements. Secondly, the location of the Council within the Civic Quarter would help to integrate it with the town centre, creating greater linked trips and acting as an anchor use for a building which includes other smaller civic and community interests such as Citizens Advice Bureau and adult education.

It is expected that the Borough Council would be a key partner in any potential project to develop a larger public service hub within the Civic Quarter.



Proposed development block



Existing site area



Council offices

5

DELIVERY





DELIVERY

Delivery considerations

In the early stages of the SPD preparation, the matter of delivery was given high regard. Design testing was informed by development costs and commercial values associated with specific land uses and likely occupier demand. The property market review points toward there being current demand for a range of uses in this locality – housing, offices, health, community, parking and perhaps leisure, hotel and small scale ancillary retail uses. The value of the green space in the heart of the site is also important – a vital open space for Farnborough town centre and one which can provide a setting for high quality development which, in turn, drives up property values.

Delivery and scheme design considerations were also informed by land use patterns. These are typically low intensity within the core of the site, set beside higher density areas including, for example, Westmead House, Farnborough Leisure Centre and the retail block at 98 Queensmead. Surface parking is also a dominant feature of the area. The area is also characterised by significant road infrastructure – Sulzers and Pinehurst roundabouts at the western and eastern ends of the site – as well as Meudon Avenue (A327) running through the southern part of the site.

The proposed mix of future land uses in the SPD is also set within the context of the key land ownership characteristics of the site; a series of generally large land plots owned by relatively few owners, with land ownership especially concentrated in the hands of the public sector. This pattern of ownership has further informed the evolution of a realistic and cohesive framework for the area to be prepared.

Phasing

In light of these land use and ownership characteristics, there is clear opportunity for a central, core development area to form an initial phase. The wider area of consideration is likely to offer mid to longer term opportunities for transformation. Nevertheless, the SPD allows flexibility in the phasing approach to be taken,

acknowledging that - irrespective of the sequence that plots come forward – they should be redeveloped in a way which is consistent with the broad design framework set out in this SPD. Early development should not inhibit future development phases to come forward, and enable those integrate well with new development. Where development does occur, then designs should be cognisant of:

- Relocation of existing occupiers where affected and necessary - and where possible ensuring continuity of operation
- Managing the availability of car parking throughout the development process.
- Managing necessary highways works (on and off site).
- Continuity of access and service rights, and other rights of way.

Implementation

Rushmoor Borough Council will seek to ensure that the redevelopment of the site is consistent with the vision set out in this SPD. As the Local Planning Authority, the Council will work closely with all key stakeholders to deliver an attractive and vibrant development scheme that will meet the needs of Farnborough town centre and its community - and which is well designed and integrated into the surrounding area.

Rushmoor Council acknowledges that delivering the vision and objectives for the site is likely to require private sector involvement to respond to the opportunities available and the guidance set out in this SPD. The Council will use its planning powers to manage development proposals from pre-application discussions through to the discharge of conditions and Section 106 (S106) and other planning matters such as a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) so that development is planned, designed and delivered in line with guidance contained within this SPD and planning policy.

As one of the landowners, the Rushmoor Council is also expected to play an important role in the regeneration of the area. Any conditional land agreement which the Council enters into with a developer will be



Phase 1



Phase 2



Phase 3



Phase 4



Phase 5

on the basis that its land contributes to the key objectives of this SPD.

Delivering infrastructure change

The masterplan framework which is presented in this SPD, is divided into a small number of major phases. These relate to the need for major infrastructure change which would be required in order to release land for development, particularly in the form of changes to the Sulzers and Pinehurst roundabouts.

These junctions, and Meudon Avenue which links them, were the product of the 1970s and 1980s and feature elevated roads with pedestrian and cycle underpasses. Whilst this creates a perception of a free flowing road network it severely impacts on the quality of the pedestrian environment and is a barrier to north-south movement. Given the strength of Farnborough Business Park and the large numbers of people who work a short distance to the south of the town centre this is a major concern and opportunities should be sought to deliver change which addresses this.

Although the changes to the two roundabouts are superficially similar they have a different impact on the area and different opportunities are gained through each project. They therefore might be usefully considered as independent projects.

Sulzers roundabout

The Sulzers roundabout could be effectively removed and replaced with a conventional signal controlled junctions. This will create a more legible approach from the west in particular. Connections into the Farnborough Business Park and the retail parks to the north will need to be retained as part of the main junction, but the access to the Westmead service route can be taken as a spur from Solartron Road. This project would help to establish the Sulzers roundabout car parking area as a more attractive development plot, removing the barrier of the road between this and the rest of the Civic Quarter. However, it is not expected to deliver significant new development capacity in itself.

Pinehurst roundabout

The Pinehurst roundabout is the larger of the two junctions and also contains a decked car park. In terms of the main routes, the junction could be replaced with a T-junction, providing access to the southern end of Queensmead from secondary junctions on Meudon Avenue and Farnborough Road.

This project has the potential to unlock significant new development capacity and create an improved and expanded Civic Quarter. It is likely that the loss of parking in this area will either need to be met through the provision of a new, efficient decked car park. This could be achieved on the site of Block 14 but capacity could also be provided by parking on Block 2.



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