

# Faversham Creek Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Meeting Minutes

Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2012 7pm

The Guildhall, Faversham

## 1 Welcome by the Chairman

The Chairman welcomed the Faversham Creek Trust to the meeting and thanked them for attending. They were Griselda Mussett, Brenda Chester and Chris Wright.

## 2 Apologies and those present

### Present:

Nigel Kay, Faversham Town Councillor (FTC) – Chairman  
Anne Salmon, Faversham Creek Consortium Management Group Member  
Trevor Payne, Faversham Town Councillor  
Andrew Osborne, Faversham Creek Consortium Management Group Member  
Tony Fullwood, Independent Planning Consultant  
Natalie Earl, Swale Borough Council Senior Planner

### Apologies:

Mike Cosgrove, Swale Borough Councillor (SBC) – Vice Chairman  
Mike Henderson, Swale Borough Councillor  
Andrew Culham, Faversham Town Councillor  
John Sell, Faversham Town Council Planning Agent

## 3 The process so far

Tony Fullwood took the group through what had happened to date. The Swale Borough Local Plan 2008 identified a requirement for an Area Action Plan for Faversham Creek. Consultants Urban Initiatives were appointed to provide support for consultation activities and a number of events were held culminating in a workshop which drew conclusions in relation to:

- the Vision
- the supporting Themes
- initial thoughts on objectives for each of the Themes and a list of priorities.

A final Stakeholder and Consultation Report was published setting out the workshop outputs including a series of 'Opportunities Plans' for 2026 and beyond. Comments were invited by the Borough Council.

In June 2010 consultants Tony Fullwood Associates were appointed to take the work forward to:

- Undertake feasibility and viability work building on the earlier Urban Initiatives Report;
- Advise on development options for the Creek Area; and
- To provide advice on the most appropriate planning route to achieve the regeneration objectives for the Creek Area.

His report 'Developing proposals and future planning policy to deliver regeneration of the Faversham creek area' was published in November 2010 and comments on its contents were received by the Council.

He then explained about the formation of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and the work they had undertaken so far. This included commissioning the Streetscape Strategy, holding meetings with landowners to hear their aspirations for the sites, meetings with statutory consultees and a creek site visit and walkabout.

The three Creek Trust members were keen for it to be noted that in their view some of the UI consultation process was poor but that they did not dismiss everything that had been done. They were at this meeting to represent the navigation of the creek and not just as a landowner.

The Trust members did ask that it be noted that they were questioning the apparent reliance of Tony Fullwood and the steering group on developer contributions for achieving any future proposals when there were a range of funding opportunities available.

Andrew Osborne responded that, whilst recognising additional funding sources, these needed to be demonstrably available in order to satisfy the delivery test of soundness of the Local Plan.

#### 4 Future process and timescales

Tony Fullwood explained that the Steering Group would be commissioning viability work, undertaking an SA/SEA, working up development proposals for each site and preparing the Neighbourhood Plan.

The current timetable for the rest of the process was set out as follows:

- Streetscape Strategy Exhibition – 10<sup>th</sup> March 2012
- Faversham Town Council agree to publication version – May 2012
- Formal Public Consultation – July/August 2012
- Submit NP to Secretary of State – November 2012
- Examination – January 2013
- Referendum – August 2013
- Agreement by FTC to suggested changes by the Inspector – June 2013

- Making of the NP by SBC (subject to a 'yes' vote in the referendum) – September 2013

The Creek Trust felt that the public do not understand the Steering Group/ Consortiums' vision for the Creek. A drawing showing how its objectives translate into reality in terms of land uses at each of the sites around the Creek is the first step. Without it the public cannot meaningfully engage with the consultation process

Andrew Osborne explained that the vision had been agreed through the UI process and was then taken forward by the Tony Fullwood report and had therefore been in the public domain for many years. He said that this Steering Group had taken it on and added an extra objective covering heritage.

The Trust members felt that whilst the UI vision had been articulated on paper, the consultation process for the vision was not complete as Tony Fullwood had indicated that the Environment Agency, Medway Ports, nor KCC had been consulted. The Trust members felt at a community level both the Friends of Faversham Creek and the Davington Partners and Community Together forum had contacted UI but neither had received a response at the time.

## 5 Purifier proposals

The Faversham Creek Trust explained that they are a not for profit company with about 200 voting members, all unpaid volunteers. Their aims are to ensure the future of Faversham Creek as a working waterway for the benefit of Faversham. They want to reopen the Basin as working moorings for barges, traditional and historic vessels, and other boats; get the swing bridge opening and the basin dredged and navigable.

They have now got a 35 year lease on the Purifier building, and the wharf rent-free but they must repair the building. The building has been cleared of debris and is considered to be in a fairly sound state. They are now awaiting the outcome of an HLF Lottery bid (expected March) to start the development phase of surveys, proposals and costing before starting work on the roof, windows, stairs, etc. The Trust thanked Fvarehsam Town Council and the Faversham Creek Consortium for supporting their HLF bid. They will be submitting a planning application for change of use of the building to B1 and education uses at the end of February.

They aim to get the apprenticeship programme running again by April 2013. They have an INTERREG bid for the apprenticeship programme with links with a similar scheme in Calais and elsewhere, and other bids in to charitable trusts

Medway Ports have a statutory responsibility for navigation within the Creek which should mean access to the Purifier building and the wharf.

The Trust feels that the basin and the bridge are of regional historic importance and have great potential for tourism in Faversham and the resulting local economic benefit

The Trust are opposed to a block of flats on Ordnance Wharf. As the visual focus of the Upper Creek Basin, this is a critical location, and any development needs to be related to its maritime heritage and context.

## 6 Lottery Projects

Ann Salmon explained that the Faversham Creek Consortium's HLF bid was still at an early stage and that it covered a range of projects. It was to be revealed at the AGM on the 26<sup>th</sup> March.

The Trust members said that whilst the content of any Consortium bid was yet to be made public, they felt the Purifier Apprenticeship scheme was a small but important stand-alone project, and hoped it would complement any future proposals and provide the necessary impetus for the wider regeneration of the Creek .

## 7 Streetscape Strategy

The Trust had met with the consultant preparing the Strategy. Tony Fullwood explained that the consultant had undertaken an analysis of current issues and was now working up proposals which the Steering Group will see at the meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> February. These proposals will be on display on the 10<sup>th</sup> March for public consultation. Once public comments have been received and incorporated into the document the aim is for it to be adopted by KCC and SBC and will be referred to in the Neighbourhood Plan and used in the consideration of planning applications in the creek area.

## 8 Any other business

None.

Next Meetings: 29th February. 22<sup>nd</sup> March 19<sup>th</sup> April

Streetscape Public Exhibition: 10<sup>th</sup> March