

**Durham City Neighbourhood Planning Forum  
Working Group Meeting, 24 May 2016, Redhills**

**Present:** John Ashby, Sue Childs, Roger Cornwell (Chair), Ann Evans, John Lowe, David Miller, Matthew Phillips, Kirsty Thomas, Angela Tracy-Smith, Ros Ward.

**Apologies:** Pippa Bell, Adam Deathe, Karen Elliott.

**In attendance:** Cllr David Hall (Starting to prepare a plan for Sherburn).

This was a special meeting to review the current drafts of the policies for each theme. The first part of the meeting was spent talking to each other about the drafts. Convenors made notes at this stage. The second part was a feedback session when convenors reported on significant amendments to their drafts and noted points for further action. The following notes cover the second stage only.

Roger opened this stage by thanking David M. for his expert contributions and special support for the convenors of four of the themes: Heritage, Economy, Transport and Climate Change.

David tabled an updated version of his paper *Scope, form and content of Durham Neighbourhood Plan (24<sup>th</sup> May 2016)*. This paper will be circulated.

**Heritage** (Kirsty):

**Policy H6: Management of heritage assets:** this proposes the establishment of a limited liability company. It was thought that the appropriate body to deal with this would be the new Town Council and it was suggested that we seek models elsewhere. Meanwhile we need to prioritise work on those policies that relate specifically to planning issues.

**Ros** will draft design policies that will apply to the whole Neighbourhood Plan area.

It was agreed that the issues of **Enhancement of the public realm in the city centre and Economic, social and cultural benefits** would be dealt with by the Economy theme.

**Green Infrastructure** (Angela):

**Policy GI2: Enhancing and creating new multifunctional green infrastructure:** additional green spaces such as St. Margaret's churchyard and allotments and Observatory Hill should be specified and clearly marked on a map.

**Policy GI5: Enhancing the beneficial use of the Green Belt:** it was agreed that this should be amended to read: "Any development on the Green Belt in the Neighbourhood Plan area will not be supported, except when allowed by the NPPF".

It was noted that by adopting saved policies from the Durham City Local Plan (2004) we are refreshing them and giving them new currency so that they become material considerations when planning applications are considered.

**Community** (Roger):

**Policy C1: Community aspirations:** policy should support community associations, churches, etc. that provide facilities for the benefit of the community as a whole. There should be a community hub, preferably in Millennium Place, including a tourist office.

**Policy C2: Improved neighbourhood facilities:** we need to investigate whether there are statutory requirements for health and education provision per head of population to accommodate growth in both the student and resident populations.

**Policy C3: New arts venue:** it was agreed that we need a new arts centre for activities as well as a gallery. The preferred venue would be in Millennium Place which was always intended to be the cultural centre for the city.

### **Economy** (David M.):

**Policy E1: New employment opportunities:** it was agreed that developments at Aykley Heads should not be on the Green Belt.

**Policy E3: Retail developments affecting the city centre:** it was agreed that the impact assessment should include parking issues.

### **Housing** (John A.):

**Policy D1: Land for residential development:** Sue has the details supplied by residents' associations of available plots. A walk should be undertaken to identify any further plots.

**Policy D3: Housing for older people:** we need to establish criteria for the suitability of housing for older people.

**Policy D5: Starting out homes:** we need to give explicit support to the conversion of PBSAs.

**Policy D6: Affordable Housing:** the required affordable housing must be built within the Neighbourhood Plan area.

**Policies D8 & D9: Design requirements:** it was agreed that these should apply to all buildings, not just to housing. **Ros** will develop design policies.

The issue of housing density was discussed. Greater density can encourage the provision of public transport. On the other hand, a balance needs to be struck with the need to provide sufficient green infrastructure. The design policies will address this issue.

### **Transport** (Matthew):

**Policies T3, T4 & T8: Controlled parking:** it was agreed that controlled parking zones should be extended to areas where PBSAs are being built. We should question whether there are any areas within the Neighbourhood Plan areas that would not benefit from being designated as controlled parking zones.

With reference back to **Policy E6** in the Economy theme, it was agreed that the Bus Station should remain on its present site.

### **Climate Change** (John L.)

**Policy R1: Combined impact of policies:** It was agreed to remove this from the list of policies and incorporate it in the introductory text.

### **Next meetings:**

The next scheduled meeting will be on Tuesday 7 June at 10.00 at Redhills and the following one will be on Tuesday 5 July at 10.00, probably at Antioch House.

The main business of **the meeting on 7 June** will be to decide the next steps in the development of the plan, including a revised project timetable. **All convenors are asked to update their list of policies in the light of these discussions and to circulate them in advance of 7 June.**

Other brief items for that agenda include:

1. NPF presence at St. John's EcoFestival on 19 June
2. NPF attendance at Neighbourhood Planning Working Group meeting at Great Aycliffe on 7 July: this is about the County Durham Plan
3. Recent amendments to the *Planning Practice Guidance* notes concerning neighbourhood plans
4. Notes of our meetings on 3 and 24 May
5. NPF meeting dates over the summer