

**Durham City Neighbourhood Planning Forum
Working Group Meeting, 4 October 2016, Wharton Park**

Present: Sue Childs, Roger Cornwell (Chair), Ann Evans, David Hook, Peter Jackson, John Lowe, David Miller, Matthew Phillips, Ros Ward.

Apologies: John Ashby, Pippa Bell, Adam Deathe, Karen Elliott, Nigel Martin, Kirsty Thomas, Angela Tracy-Smith.

In attendance: Gavin Scott, Carole Dillon: Durham County Council

Gavin reported that he would be leaving DCC at the end of the month and introduced Carole who would be taking his place. The group thanked Gavin for his valuable contributions and hoped he would retain contact with our ongoing work.

1. Notes of Working Group Meeting 20 September 2016

The notes were agreed and **Sue** will post them on the website.

2. Scrutiny of Draft Policies

We discussed the following themes (just a few highlights are noted here):

Sustainable Future: John L noted a few minor amendments that were agreed.

Heritage: **Gavin** would circulate notes to the group providing generally supportive comments from colleagues at DCC. We need to add that we are supportive of extending the inner setting of the WHS. There is an issue as to whether the university buildings on Elvet Riverside should be included in this extension. Gavin noted that the details about character areas add weight to the DCC's appraisal.

Green Infrastructure: We need to distinguish between “essential” and “desirable” requirements. A detailed map of green spaces is needed. As far as the Emerald Network is concerned, what we are doing is safeguarding the route rather than setting it up. We need to specify what counts as “appropriate use” of the Green Belt.

Employment: Gavin pointed out that the County Plan will deal with strategic employment sites. We need to add a policy about what should happen to sites that already have planning permission if this lapses or if their development is unsuccessful. Peter noted that city centre retail is not well used. We need to define the primary area in E4 and omit E5 since it is beyond the plan area. E6 and E7 need rewording to include generic principles that would apply to any improvement scheme in the city centre.

Transport: Matthew presented a significantly revised draft based on the Durham City Sustainable Transport Strategy's hierarchy of walking, cycling, public transport and services, and private vehicles. Peter commented that it was a charter for cyclists and pedestrians rather than a transport policy and stated that city centre parking was not sufficient and that the congestion charge had not been successful. Matthew acknowledged that the policies might need moderating to ensure the success of the plan as a whole. Further comments were invited via the website. **All.**

Community: There was not time to discuss this but **Roger, Angela and Sue** would meet to discuss this.

3. Arrangements for the Full Forum Meeting

The Thompson room at the Miners' Hall, Redhills, has been booked for 6.30 on Thursday 20 October. The main purpose of the meeting will be to ask the Forum members to endorse the policies we have drafted. **John L** will produce an executive summary to be distributed at the meeting. **Final drafts must reach Sue by noon on Sunday 9 October** so she can post them on the website. **Sue** will then inform all Forum members that they are available and ask them to study them before the meeting. She will also ask them to email any questions before the meeting to npf@durhamcity.org.uk or to use the "Comments" box on the website. The MP will be attending the meeting and will be invited to speak. At the end of the meeting **Ros** will explain the next steps in the process of preparing the plan.

4. Public consultation

Pippa, Roger and Ann will form a sub-group to draw up plans.

5. Grant Application

Ros has submitted the application and will discuss our needs with the planning consultant.

6. Environmental Screening Report

Ros asked for comments on the draft by the end of October. **All**. This then has to go to English Heritage and the Environment Agency.

7. Neighbourhood Planning Networking Event

Roger reported that we had been invited to host this event. We agreed that we were too busy but **Gavin** would take it forward through DCC. **Roger** would send him the details.

8. Consultation on the Neighbourhood Planning Bill

John L was asked to respond to this. (Post meeting note: done)

9. Future Meetings

There will be a meeting of the full Forum on Thursday 20 October at 6.30 in Redhills to agree the version of the policies to be submitted to the County Council.

There will be an **extra meeting of the working group on Tuesday 25 October at 10.00 in Wharton Park**. This will include a review of the Forum meeting and consideration of the public consultation arrangements.

Wharton Park has been booked on **Tuesday 1 November** and **Tuesday 6 December**. A decision about holding meetings then will be taken on 25 October.