

**Durham City Neighbourhood Planning Forum
Working Group Meeting, 25 October 2016, Wharton Park**

Present: John Ashby, Pippa Bell, Sue Childs, Roger Cornwell (Chair), David Hook, Peter Jackson, John Lowe, Nigel Martin, David Miller, Matthew Phillips, Kirsty Thomas.

Apologies: Adam Deathe, Karen Elliott, Ann Evans, Jonathan Lovell, Angela Tracy-Smith, Ros Ward.

1. Notes of Working Group Meeting 4 October 2016

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

2. Notes of Forum Meeting 20 October 2016

Roger reported that several people had told him they thought the Forum meeting on Thursday had been a success. Colleagues agreed.

The notes were agreed. **Sue** will post them on the website and inform all Forum members.

Pippa will prepare a press release.

3. Review of Policies following the Forum Meeting

Policy H1: It was agreed that the title should be “The Protection of the World Heritage Site”. A map is essential. It was agreed that **Roger** would consider the whole issue of maps, drawing up a list of what is needed and consulting Gavin Scott and DCC as necessary.

Policy H2.1.9: This concerns permeability that is threatened by large blocks of development. It was noted that we need to support permeability throughout Our Neighbourhood, not just in the conservation areas. Policy S1.9 does this.

Policy H2.2.2: It was agreed to delete the words “by reinstating the cobbles/setts in the public realm” and refer to the issue in the supporting text.

Policy H2.3.2: Note – this item is wrongly numbered as H2.2.2 in the text. It was noted that DCC is considering an Article 7 Direction to control “To Let” signs and advertising boards. We need to cross reference this to Policy E6.1 concerning shop front signs.

Policies H3 – H9: All agreed.

Policies G1 and G3: Both agreed.

Policy G2: It was agreed that the linear park at Mount Oswald should be added to the list of Local Green Spaces. A request had been received from John Pacey, Secretary of the Quarry House Lane Residents' Association, that the Browney Valley that formed part of the boundary of our area should also be included. **Sue** thought it might be included in the Emerald Network in Policy G3. She would check this and contact Mr Pacey. Sue also observed that DCC is currently conducting an Open Space Needs Assessment that would provide evidence about green spaces. Others could be added in future.

Policy E1: It was agreed that incubators and business start-ups would be appropriate at Mountjoy.

This would be consistent with the university's original intentions for the site. **John A** offered to find evidence for this.

Policy E2: It was agreed that Mainstreet USA and Framwell House would be removed from the list of possible commercial development sites. They would remain listed for housing in Policy D1.

Policy E3: It was clarified that there was no need to refer to planning permission lapsing because a change of use is possible when a new planning application is made. **Pippa** will determine the new wording and list significant sites.

Policies E4 – E7: All agreed.

Policy D1: The estimates of housing numbers for sites are based on the SHLAA last updated in 2014. A revised version will be issued shortly and our list will have to reflect that.

Policies D2 – D4: All agreed.

Policy D5: Roberta Blackman-Woods had suggested that the reference in the “justification” section about housing for families should be in the policy itself. This was agreed and **John A and Sue** will amend the text.

Policy D6: Nigel Martin had asked for explicit reference be made to requiring Broadband Fibre to the Property. It was agreed that it should go in the supporting text. **John A and Sue** will amend it.

David Freeman had asked that we should include in this theme some comments on sites proposed for deletion from the Green Belt so they could be developed for housing.

Roger Cornwell had made the following response:

“Our approach is that the Neighbourhood Plan is subservient to an overarching Development Plan which currently is the saved policies of the City of Durham Local Plan but which will be the County Durham Plan when that is adopted, which won't be till November 2018 on the published timetable. We cannot propose major housing in the Green Belt as that would be contrary to the existing Local Plan Policies. Green Belt deletions are contentious and may or may not form part of the adopted County Durham Plan, and even if they do, these particular sites may or may not be included. The Neighbourhood Plan will need to be reviewed when the CDP is adopted to ensure it is still in conformity.”

It was agreed that **Roger** would add this position statement, or something like it, to the supporting documentation.

Policies T1 – T4: All agreed.

There had been considerable discussion at the Forum meeting, and it continued at this meeting, about whether our treatment of transport was unbalanced and biased against car users. A particular concern was that we made no reference to the significance of roads for the transport infrastructure. It is the responsibility of DCC as the Highways Authority to maintain the road network, so we should include action(s) for it as a statutory body. We also need to make it clearer that we are following the DCC's *Sustainable Transport Strategy* for the city. **Ros** will seek advice about this from the consultant. **Matthew and David M** will work together to revise the text.

Policies C1 – C6: All agreed.

4. Public consultation

Pippa, Roger and Ann will form a sub-group to draw up plans. It will be important to engage with schools, religious groups, the humanist society, the university and residents' associations.

5. North Road Regeneration and the Bus Station

The group discussed a paper that had been prepared by David M. It was considered appropriate for the NPF to make representations about the proposals in the light of our objectives and policies concerning transport, economy and heritage. It was agreed that both North Road and the bus station need improving in keeping with the conservation area and as a crucial gateway to the city. It was clarified that the money for regeneration is not coming from the sale of the bus station site and it was thought that a new major store would not necessarily rejuvenate North Road. Hopper House had potential for commercial development. **John A and David M** would draft a response.

6. Future Meetings

It was agreed that **the group will not meet on 1 November.**

All convenors were asked to send their **full final text to Sue by Tuesday 8 November.**

Sue will format the texts ready for publication and while doing so will note any issues that still need to be resolved. Where possible she will do this by consulting convenors by email.

The next meeting of the group will be on Tuesday 6 December at 10.00 in Wharton Park. This meeting will then decide the definitive text of the pre-submission plan and the consultation arrangements.