

Durham City Neighbourhood Planning Forum
Working Group Meeting, 14th February 2017, Miners' Hall

Present: John Ashby, Pippa Bell, Sue Childs, Roger Cornwell (Chair), Carole Dillon, Ann Evans, Claire Hattam.

Apologies: Adam Deathe, Harvey Dowdy, Peter Jackson, John Lowe, Nigel Martin, Matthew Phillips, Kirsty Thomas, Angela Tracy-Smith, Ros Ward.

1. Historic England's letter of 26th January 2017

Principles

Historic England and the Environment Agency letter of 26th January 2017 advised that Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) are triggered, despite their constructive letter of 16th January making detailed comments and ending by saying that they looked forward to seeing further stages of the Plan.

Carole had held intensive discussions with HE but advised us that they insisted on an SEA. She confirmed that the necessary SEA work should be undertaken in advance of the forthcoming consultation, otherwise the Plan could be open to legal challenge as it could be construed that the significant effects had not been adequately considered and mitigated when formulating the Plan proposals. The screening exercise would have to be revised accordingly too.

Claire provided examples of SEAs and toolkits:

- [www.tandridge.gov.uk/Tandridge%20District%20Council/Planning/CR3SEAScreeningFINAL.pdf] Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Opinion (Tandridge District Council)
- [Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment](#) (Historic England Advice Note 8)
- [Screening neighbourhood plans for Strategic Environmental Assessment](#)
- 'DIY SA' (SA guidance for neighbourhood plans)
- Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan SEA
- Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan Inspector's Report
- Durham County Council: Environmental Assessment of Neighbourhood Plans

Carole and **Claire** will try to find an example from the County Plan work and also try to work up a model text for one of our policies.

We agreed to develop a draft framework and share it with Carole, Claire and Jules of HE to make sure that we were on the right road.

We cannot accomplish the work within the present timetable. Cancel all four drop-in bookings. New start date for consultation would be no earlier than 24th April. Groundwork will need to have their funding returned to them and a fresh application made. DCC will support our application.

John A to ask AECOM whether they could undertake the SEA task for the Economy and Housing themes' policies.

No need to re-consult all other bodies, just HE. We would wish to be involved in discussions with them.

If new sites emerge during the consultation stage we should add them to the SEA - it is a living document.

Details

We discussed particular points in HE's letter. John A will send suggested bullet points for Carole/Claire to put to HE.

2. Future Meetings

- The next ordinary meeting will be on Tuesday 7th March, 10.00 – 1.00, at the Miners' Hall.
- Continue with Tuesday 9-11 special meetings: 21st and 28th February.