

**Durham City Neighbourhood Planning Forum  
Working Group Meeting, 18 January 2017, Miners' Hall**

**Present:** John Ashby, Sue Childs, Roger Cornwell (Chair), Ann Evans, Peter Jackson, John Lowe, Matthew Phillips, Angela Tracy, Ros Ward.

**Apologies:** Pippa Bell, Adam Deathe, Karen Elliott, David Miller, Kirsty Thomas.

**In attendance from DCC:** Carole Dillon, Michelle Robinson.

This was a special meeting to discuss the comments of DCC colleagues on the draft plan. We thanked Carole and her colleagues for their hard work in providing such thorough feedback so promptly at a time when they are already busy with the County Plan.

## **1. General Considerations**

- The aspirational Projects chapter will be kept completely separate from the planning policies as it will not form part of the final plan for which we are seeking approval. However, the projects are important to the people of Our Neighbourhood and we wish to show them that we have listened to their views and to consult them about how well we have dealt with them. All references to statutory and community bodies will also be confined to this chapter.
- Carole explained that we are not required to include a chapter on monitoring though it is good practice to do so. Indicators and targets can be developed once the policies are finalised, but it will be good to take the opportunity of the consultation to seek ideas about them.
- The end-date of the plan will be 2033.
- We need to ensure that our policies don't stray beyond our geographical area; this is certainly not our intention. It will help to talk about "Our Neighbourhood" rather than "Durham City", except where the context requires it.
- Responses from the statutory consultees about the SEA and HRA are starting to arrive. Issues can be picked up during the consultation stage.
- The "Basic Conditions" statement is not required at this stage.
- John A has drafted a statement clarifying the relationship between the Neighbourhood Plan and the emerging County Plan. We need to be aware of the danger of straying into strategic issues and thus avoid the possibility of clashes with it.
- David M has satisfactorily reworded the paragraph about the "democratic deficit".
- A number of concerns were raised about the availability to the NPF of key DCC documents: OSNA, SHLAA and the refreshed list of Parks and Gardens. **Angela** will contact Ged Lawson about this list. **Michelle** will check whether we can have access to the latest OSNA and SHLAA reports in advance of their publication which is being delayed by the pause in the County Plan process. We can present our own evidence about sites that are not included

in the SHLAA.

## 2. Issues relating to specific policies

- **Sustainability:** **John L** is confident that he can amend policies S1 and S2 in the light of the comments.
- **Heritage:** Fine-tuning is required to align the policies with the exceptions in the NPPF. It would also be desirable to reduce some repetition. In Kirsty's absence, **Ann** will work with **Sue** and **Angela** to make the amendments.
- **Green Infrastructure:** Policy G1.6 concerning biodiversity needs clarifying and **Sue** will contact Carole. We are not able to add sites after the plan has been approved to either the Emerald Network or Local Green Spaces. It is permitted to designate Local Green Spaces that already have some form of protection. We cannot include the Linear Park at Mount Oswald as part of the policy, but we can mention it in the accompanying text.
- **Economy: Policy E1.1** about Aykley Heads needs modifying to remove the reference to use class A2. Ros has drafted a revised version and emphasised that it is our intention to promote high-quality employment on the site.

The list in **Policy E2** concerning small brownfield sites needs to be definitive and we need to hold discussions with landowners.

**Policy E3** concerning reconsideration of site usage is unacceptable procedurally and must be deleted. However, we can choose to move allocated sites to E1 or E2 as appropriate.

In **Policy E5** we need to provide evidence for the threshold of 20% of the total street frontage being in non-retail use.

The requirements of **Policy E6** go beyond planning policy and should be moved to the Projects chapter. We could, however, develop a “shop fronts” policy.

**Policy E7** looks to the future usage of developments rather than the developments themselves and should thus be moved to the Projects chapter. We need to avoid raising unrealistic expectations.

- **Housing:** John A has addressed the issues, but we need advice about rewording **Policy D4** concerning housing for older people. **Sue** will send Carole a draft.
- **Transport:** Matthew has addressed the issues. We have to bear in mind that Our Neighbourhood is very different from the rest of the largely rural county; it is small and walkable with a large population of young people well able to walk and cycle.

The material on transport assessments needs moving from the policy to the accompanying text.

**Policy T3** concerns residential parking and the intention is to extend controls to the whole CPZ. **Matthew** will contact Carole about this.

- **Community:** no comments.

Carole expressed her willingness to discuss further issues in the interests of producing a robust plan.

Roger thanked Carole and Michelle for their valuable assistance. They then left the meeting and the rest discussed the implications of the necessary changes for the public consultation arrangements.

### 3. Consultation Arrangements

It was **agreed** that we obviously need to seek approval from the full Forum for the necessary changes and that, because of the time constraints on using our funding for the consultation, we cannot afford to wait until the AGM on 17 February. It was thus **agreed** that we should seek approval of the revised policies by email. **John L** will draft an email that will accompany the draft policies. **Sue** will send them from the NPF address on **Tuesday 24 January** and Forum members will be asked to reply by **Friday 27 January**.

**All changes to policies must be submitted to Sue by Sunday 22 January.**

**Other measures agreed were:**

- The leaflets would have to be printed by the end of January.
- The AGM would still be held on Friday 17 February but it would be held in St Nicholas' downstairs church hall rather than in the Town Hall Lantern Room.
- The first consultation event on Wednesday 1 March would be held in the North Road Methodist Church rather than in the Town Hall Lantern Room.
- **Roger** will check urgently with the funding body whether we can extend the end of the consultation by two weeks.

### 4. Future Meetings

It was agreed to meet on Tuesdays 24 and 31 January, 9.00 – 10.00, at the Miners' Hall to deal with detailed preparations for the public consultation.

The next ordinary meeting will be on Tuesday 7 February, 10.00 – 1.00, at the Miners' Hall.