

**Durham City Neighbourhood Planning Forum  
Working Group Meeting, 4 April 2017, Miners' Hall**

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

**Apologies:** Mike Costello, Adam Deathe, Karen Elliott, Kirsty Thomas, Angela Tracy.

## **1. Notes of 31 March**

John A had prepared the notes but there had been a glitch with their distribution. **John A** will send them again after this meeting and asked for comments from **all**. He reported that he, Sue and Ros were working on the Scoping Report this week.

## **2. Sustainability Objectives (SOs)**

The main purpose of the meeting was for the group as a whole to test the suitability of our draft SOs. These have been adapted from the **National** Planning Policy Framework and from Durham **County** Council's SOs developed for the new **County** Plan. We need to check whether they are suitable SOs for our Durham **City** Neighbourhood Plan. It also provided a useful opportunity to practice the forthcoming task of using the SOs to assess our choice of policies. The exercise involved using a grid to record the impact of a sample set of policies on the SOs. The policies involved were S1, H1, H2 and G1.

Theme leaders noted the detailed comments. **The following amendments to the SOs were agreed:**

- **SO8** would have added a reference to the fact that conserving heritage assets contributed to the economy, particularly tourism;
- **SO11 and SO14** would be amended so that the reference to the Green Belt was moved to SO14 to emphasise the need to protect it because of its significance for the city's heritage assets.

**John L** will distribute a revised draft of the SOs.

In addition, **some amendments to policies were also suggested, though these will need to be agreed formally at a later stage:**

- **S1:** Paragraph 2 would be amended to include reference to the Green Belt to emphasise the need to protect it because of its significance for the city's heritage assets;
- **H1:** Paragraph H1.2 would become paragraph H1.2.1 and an additional paragraph H1.2.2 would be added to emphasise the need to protect views to and from the WHYS. **Ann** would draft this and advice would also be sought from Historic England so that we benefited from their experience of similar policies elsewhere. Jules has offered to comment on any revisions to draft Heritage policies, so they need to be sent to him as soon as possible.
- **G1:** There was considerable discussion as to whether we needed to include reference to the provision of natural drainage to minimise the risk of flooding. It was thought that SUDS was a standard requirement for large developments. **Ros** would check this and look at the Witton

Gilbert Neighbourhood Plan for an example.

A further outcome from the exercise was the identification of two additional Projects. **It was agreed to add projects about:**

- Listing the key views in the city, particularly those that contained an element of surprise.
- Listing key Masterplans for the city to assist with the coordination of developments.

It was also **agreed** to include a glossary of key terms used in the policies (such as “developments will be **supported**”) to avoid unnecessary repetition and ambiguity.

The exercise had proved fruitful and it was **agreed that theme leaders** should complete the exercise for the rest of the policies, using the scoring convention of ++, +, 0, –, --. They should also work with other theme leaders to share their views. The outcomes of this work would be reported at a later meeting, probably 18 April.

### **3. Future Meetings**

**The working group will continue to meet weekly on Tuesdays, 9.00 – 11.00 in the Miners' Hall.**

The next meeting on 11 April will focus on the draft Scoping Report.