

**Durham City Neighbourhood Planning Forum Working Group
19 June 2018, Miners' Hall**

1. Welcome and apologies

Present: John Ashby (Chair), Sue Childs, Ann Evans, Peter Jackson, John Lowe, John Pacey, Matthew Phillips, Angela Tracy.

Apologies: Pippa Bell, Roger Cornwell, David Miller, Ros Ward.

John A chaired the meeting in the absence of Roger.

2. Notes of 12 June 2018

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

Matters arising:

- John A reported that DCC's Executive Summary of their *Preferred Options* and the full *Sustainability Appraisal Report* will be available from the start of the consultation period on Friday 22 June.
- **All theme convenors** were asked to prepare brief draft responses to the *Preferred Options* for our meeting on 3 July.

3. Some issues relating to the revision of the Transport Theme

Matthew had prepared a paper identifying some issues that needed clarification:

- **Air quality:** a number of responses had expressed concerns about air quality. It was **agreed** that we should identify local opportunities to improve air quality. **John A** will ask Carole Dillon about the possibility of introducing restrictions on HGVs in the city centre. Perhaps there could be a project to do this.
- **Bus station:** It was **agreed** that we should test options through the SA process. If the bus station is to be retained on the present site then Hopper House / Metcalfe House might become available for sheltered housing.
- **Connectivity between bus and train stations:** it was **agreed** that we needed to improve this connectivity to improve the entrance to the city via North Road. Perhaps there could be a competition to develop a regeneration scheme for this area.
- **Aykley Heads:** it is possible that this development will lead to congestion. A transport assessment is needed and it was **agreed** that this should be referred to in Themes 3 and 5.
- **CPZ Parking:** DCC's *Preferred Options* might imply that additional parking spaces must be provided if extra bedrooms are built. This could have adverse impacts on the appearance of conservation areas and increase the risk of flooding. It was **agreed** that we should await the availability of the *Sustainability Appraisal Report*, but DCC officer advice might be needed.
- **Electric car charging:** it was **agreed** that we might need an additional policy on this.
- **Pedestrian safety:** It was **agreed** that pavements shared between cyclists and pedestrians present a safety hazard.

4. Open Spaces Assessment

Sue emphasised that spaces needed to meet stringent multiple criteria to be designated as Local Green Spaces. There are other ways to protect green spaces that do not meet these criteria.

It was **agreed** that SA assessment is needed for:

- Riverbanks LGS (p.3,5,12,15)
- Observatory Hill LGS (p.17-18)
- Woodland strip on south of City LGS (p.18-19)

It was **agreed** that SA assessment is not needed for:

- Aykley Heads (p.5)
- Flass Vale (p.7)
- Nevilles Cross Battlefield (p.11)
- Pelaw Wood (p.14)

It was **agreed** that Sue's improved definitions clarified our approach to open and green spaces.

5. Revision of Theme 2b Green Infrastructure

G1: It was **agreed** that additional protection should be included for dark corridors. All open spaces should now be dealt with in Theme 2b and not in Theme 6. Additionally, there should be protection for the setting of buildings in Our Neighbourhood in Theme 2a.

G3: It was **agreed** that the Emerald Network must be linked by public rights of way and so those areas not thus connected should be deleted. Observatory Hill and St Margaret's cemetery and allotments should be added.

G3.2: It was **agreed** that the reference to S106 should be in the text rather than the policy. The additional paragraph on page 18 was welcomed as a clarification of the purpose of the Emerald Network.

G4: It was **agreed** that this should now contain reference to only two specific green belt sites, land to the west of the A167 (now deleted from G3) and Sidegate / Frankland Lane to protect outer and inner bowl views respectively. We need to check that policy H1 deals with this issue.

It was also **agreed** that the text of G4 should be amended to clarify that it was not promoting building developments in the green belt but only supporting improvements to access and enhancements of its quality.

It was **agreed** that there should be an additional project to monitor changes to the green belt.

6. Arrangements for AECOM Visit on 26/27 June

The consultants wish to meet the Forum 9.00 – 11.00 on Tuesday 26 June in the Miners' Hall. They

will then conduct site visits. In the afternoon they will meet DCC officers and Forum members to discuss the SA process. **John A** will ask Ros for further programme details to be circulated.

7. Any other business

Roger had asked for suggestions about a suitable location for his TV interview about DU expansion. **John A** will write to suggest Silver St. in front of empty shops or the Claypath PBSA.

It was **agreed**, in view of the volume of business, to defer John P's paper on references to DU in the plan to the working group meeting on 10 July.

8. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 19 June at 9.00 am at the Miners' Hall. It will be a combined meeting of the Forum, the working group and the AECOM consultants.