

## **Durham City Neighbourhood Planning Forum Working Group Meeting, 9 May 2017, Miners' Hall**

### **1. Welcome and apologies**

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

**Apologies:** Pippa Bell, David Miller, Angela Tracy.

Roger reported that Nigel Martin had resigned from the Forum following his resignation from DCC. **John L** will write to any new county councillors in our area to invite them to join the Forum.

### **2. Notes of 25 April**

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

John L noted that the SHLAA and OSNA had now been received and he had thanked Carole. **John A** would check whether any new housing sites had been identified. Even if incomplete, it was the best evidence that DCC could make available at this stage to assist with our development of the neighbourhood plan.

John L also noted that Carole was seeking the travel plan information we had requested. Matthew Wright had supplied some information about the university's travel plans.

### **3. Renewal of Data Protection Registration**

It was **agreed** that **Sue** would renew this at a cost of £35.

### **4. Funding Arrangements with the City of Durham Trust**

Our grant can only be paid into the account of an incorporated body. In principle the Trust is willing to receive the funds on our behalf and disburse them as significant expenditure is incurred. The Trustees will next meet on 16 May and make a decision about how to proceed.

### **5. Scoping Report**

John A reported that Historic England had not yet responded to the draft report. He checked by phone during the meeting. **John** was asked to check whether any response had been received by DCC. (Post-meeting note on 10 May: HE has not yet studied the draft report.)

Claire Hattam, on the other hand, had submitted very detailed comments on behalf of DCC. John, Ros and Sue had studied these and agreed their response, but they would await the HE comments before finalising it and proceeding with the Scoping Report. What was clear was that more analysis was needed of the policy context and improvements were needed to the evidence base. It was thought that further evidence could be drawn from the plan itself. They would bring the document back to the working group once the HE comments had been received and considered.

## 6. Timeline of Tasks

Ros had prepared a timeline of tasks for the working group to do before we can consult on the draft neighbourhood plan. A copy is attached with these notes.

The details were considered and it was **agreed** that the consultation would have to be delayed until September and October. It was not thought that there was potential for conflict with the possible consultation on DCC's *Preferred Option*. Sue would decide on the deadline for final changes to the draft plan.

## 7. Sustainability Objectives, Decision-making Criteria and Policies

- The item was preceded by a discussion about **the strength of the evidence base for the proposed transport policies**, particularly the perceived emphasis on cycling. Peter presented the view that the suggested justification for investing in a city-centre cycling network, namely to reduce climate change, was unrealistic as it was unlikely to reduce car use sufficiently to make a difference. Matthew responded that there was justification in national and local strategies and the 2011 census data. He acknowledged that more evidence is needed from travel plan surveys. These are currently being sought from DCC and Durham University. (Post-meeting note: Matthew Wright has asked for us to be given access to the university's survey data.)

Ann noted that cycling was not a realistic option for many people and improved electric bus circular services would be more helpful for many. John L asked that Matthew should clarify the purpose of the map showing cycle routes. It could be misinterpreted as a definitive map of cycle routes to be implemented rather than, as apparently intended, a guide to decision-making when considering particular planning applications.

John also noted that the transport theme contained 7 objectives and only 4 policies. Other themes had a closer correlation between the number of objectives and policies. It might be that some of the objectives were covered by “other actions” rather than just by planning policies, but this needed to be checked. **All theme convenors** were asked to check this matter.

- John L explained that the purpose of this item was to test **the appropriateness of the Sustainability Objectives and the Decision-making Criteria**. He had produced a spreadsheet giving an overview of the relationship between the policies and the objectives.

It was **agreed** to amend SO9 to read: “To alleviate poverty and deprivation and promote social inclusion.” A number of policies, particularly in the transport and community themes, do promote social inclusion. It was also **agreed** to move it to No.8 so that it didn't come between two SOs (currently 8 and 10) dealing with heritage matters.

It was also **agreed** to accept the proposed decision-making criteria and to adopt the DCC's term for them, namely “probing questions”.

## 8. Future Meetings

There will only be a meeting on **Tuesday 16 May** if we have received Historic England's feedback by then. If required it will be 9.00 – 12.00 in **Antioch House**.

The next definite meeting will be on **Tuesday 23 May**, 9.00 – 12.00 in the **Miners' Hall**. The main focus of the meeting will be to consider the feedback from HE (if not received earlier and presuming it has at least been received by then). It was also provide an opportunity to reflect on the University's Masterplan presentation which will be given on the evening of 22 May and attended by several members of the working group.

## 9. Other Business

Roger will be giving a talk about the NPF after the City of Durham Trust's AGM on Wednesday 10 May in room 141 in Elvet Riverside 1. The AGM starts at 7.15 and the talk at 8.00. **Sue** will publicise this on our website.

It was **agreed** to invite the new portfolio holder for economic regeneration to a future meeting of the working group.