

**Durham City Neighbourhood Planning Forum Working Group
20 March 2018, Miners' Hall**

1. Welcome and apologies

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

Apologies: Pippa Bell, David Miller, Angela Tracy, Ros Ward.

2. Notes of 6 and 13 March 2018

The item to be discussed from 6 March was the addendum to the notes about the item concerning the categorisation of the responses on the Transport theme. Point 5 in the addendum stated: “We need to be clear that the Transport policies only refer to new development and that they are not intended to be retrofitted to existing infrastructure.” Matthew pointed out that, for example, it might be necessary to improve existing pavements to provide suitable access to a new development. With this observation the addendum was agreed and **Sue** will post the full set on the website.

The notes of 13 March were agreed and **Sue** will post them on the website. It was agreed that John A, and indeed any member of the working group, could attend any meetings arranged with DCC transport officers.

3. Categorisation of Theme 3 Economy - for review and endorsement

John A will distribute copies of the categorisations and identification of issues provided by Pippa. **All** were asked to email comments to John by the end of this week. They will be discussed with DCC officers and Adam Deathe at our next meeting on Tuesday 27 March.

4. Workshop with DCC, HE and WHS Officers on Theme 2a Heritage

We were joined for this workshop, held very appropriately on the feastday of St Cuthbert, by:

DCC: Carole Dillon, Stuart Carter and Bryan Harris.

Historic England: Jules Brown and Barbara Hooper

WHS Co-ordinator: Jane Gibson

The responses were considered policy by policy.

Policy H1 Protection of the WHS

The public consultation showed that there is overwhelming support for a policy to protect the WHS. Although DCC maintained that sufficient protection is already provided by the NPPF and Saved Policies from the City of Durham, Bryan suggested that it should not be deleted but rather made more local – the “finer grain”. It needed to cohere with the WHS Management Plan. Jane felt that the NPPF was too broad brush and more specific policies were needed. Jules also wanted more local detail. Peter pointed out that it was not so much the WHS itself that needed protection but its setting and the views to and from it. It was suggested that we should use “conserve” rather than “preserve”.

Policy H2 The Conservation Areas

H2.1: Brian acknowledged that DCC's Conservation Management Plan was not yet published, but in any case it could not contain the level of detail required for Durham City and so the policy in the Neighbourhood Plan was important.

H2.1: He also suggested that there should be a greater distinction between the two conservation areas with more emphasis on the green aspects of Burn Hall. This would link with our policy G1.

H2.2.4: Jules pointed out that the test about harm should not set a higher standard than the NPPF.

The final point on page 32 (the numbering of the points is unclear) is about assessing cumulative effects of development schemes. It is difficult to insist on a masterplan for different sites, especially if they are in different ownership. More explanation is required in the text.

Policy H3 The Character Areas

We originally had separate policies for each character area but combined them to avoid repetition. Jules thought we should retain the details for each area in an appendix but reference this in the policy. **Carole** will seek advice about this.

Policy H4 Our Neighbourhood outside the Conservation Areas

This policy provides protection for heritage assets outside the conservation areas but it must not be too prescriptive. It is supported by policy S1.

Policy H5 Listed Buildings etc.

The lists we have provided should be seen as evidence rather than definitive. Designations change and we need to refer to the national register. Jules expressed concern that H5.1 proposed a higher test about harm than the NPPF. We could identify heritage at-risk on the national register and the local register. The latter is not yet complete and we haven't seen it, but **Bryan** said that he would share with us DCC's evidence and methodology.

Policy H6 Non-designated Heritage Assets

Similar points were made as for H5. The city's heritage obviously includes more than the WHS and is important to the visitor economy. The WHS visitor centre clearly focusses on the WHS. The notion of a broader visitor centre needs to be considered in the context of the Community theme.

Conclusions:

Carole was pleased that DCC's concerns were being addressed.

The working group will revise the policies in the light of the discussion and the consultation comments. **Ann** and **Ros** will lead on this and consult Jules, Jane and DCC officers as required, either by email or by meeting.

The working group found the workshop really useful and thanked all our visitors for their contributions.

Sustainability Appraisal

Jules urged us to use Historic England's guidance: Advice Note 8. This can be found at

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/sustainability-appraisal-and-strategic-environmental-assessment-advice-note-8/>

Dates of Next Working Group Meetings

Tuesday 27 March after 9.00 am Forum meeting, including **Economy** workshop.

Tuesday 27 March at 1.30 – 3.30: consideration of the University's responses at the **Palatine Centre**

Tuesday 3 April after 9.00 am Forum meeting, including **Sustainability and Green Infrastructure** workshop.

Tuesday 10 April after 9.00 am Forum meeting: ordinary meeting!

Monday 16 April at 9.30: **Community** workshop.

All meetings at the Miners' Hall except Tuesday 27 March at 1.30 which is in the **Palatine Centre**