

**Durham City Neighbourhood Plan Working Party
27 August 2019, Miners' Hall**

1. Welcome and apologies

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

Apologies: Pippa Bell, David Miller, Matthew Phillips, Angela Tracy.

2. Notes of working party meeting on 27 July 2019

- a) **Accuracy:** The notes were agreed and **Sue** will post them on the website.
- b) **Matters arising:** None

3. Response to 4 July email from S Timmiss to Parish Councillors

Following an exchange of correspondence between ST and the Parish Clerk, a meeting had been arranged for 4.00 on Wednesday 25 September at County Hall. ST would be accompanied by Mike Allum and Carole Dillon. The Parish Council would be represented by Elizabeth Scott, Roger Cornwell and John Ashby. The Clerk would be in attendance to take notes and Ann Evans was invited to join to represent the non-councillor members of the working party.

4. Categorisation Documents and Revised Plan Texts

Roger explained that the purpose of this item was to go through Theme by Theme the categorisation of the responses to the Regulation 14 consultation and to consider consequent revisions to the plan text (red/green version). It was not an opportunity for working party members to add material to what had been submitted. Theme convenors had been encouraged to identify issues that most concerned them among the responses they had received.

Theme 1: Sustainability

John L asked for assistance with three main issues:

- It was **agreed** to accept the text suggested by Kier to replace sub-section j) of Policy S1. This helped to clarify issues about flood zones and the sequential test. It was noted that there were other inconsistencies elsewhere in the Plan text in the way flood zones were described. **John L** would work with **Sue** to resolve these.
- It was **agreed** that the reference to public art was somewhat tagged on to sub-section k) of Policy S1 and that it would be better located in Policy C1, at least in the supporting text. **John L** would work with **Roger** to address this.
- It was **agreed** that the treatment of Masterplans in Policy E1 was more complete than that proposed in Policy S2, so the former would be adopted while ensuring it remained generic. Policy E1 would then cross-refer to Policy S2. **John L** would work with **Pippa** to address this.

Theme 2a: Heritage

Ann noted that the frequent references by DCC to the Seaham Conservation Management Plan

were not helpful. **Ann** will amend the reference to the CDP at the bottom of page 16 so it was clear that it does not yet carry weight. Throughout the text it needed to make clear that substantial loss of heritage assets had to be outweighed by substantial gain to the community. **Ann** will complete the categorisation in column 2. **Ann** will also check key definitions in the NPPF and in the glossary of the CDP.

Theme 2b: Green Infrastructure

It was **agreed** not to change any objectives as these were the original basis of the Plan. The supporting text could be amended if it needed updating such as a reference to the climate emergency. **NB: This applies to all Themes.**

It was **agreed** that **Sue** would work with **John A** to check the wording of Policy G1 as Sue felt she was getting conflicting advice. It was also **agreed** to let the inspector decide whether additional protection was appropriate for Local Green Spaces.

At the moment there is a reference in the plan text to Policy 40 of the CDP dealing with Areas of Higher Landscape Value and this is used to help to justify the NP's policy for Local Green Spaces. It was thought unwise to do this as the CDP policies currently carry no weight. However, documents in the evidence base do carry some weight and so the reference should be to them. **Sue** will amend this.

Issues about the designation of Observatory Hill as a Local Green Space are difficult to resolve as there are competing interests wishing to restrict or extend the designated area. It was **agreed** that the issue must be referred quickly to the Parish Council and the earliest opportunity to get this process started is for the matter to be considered by the PC's Planning Committee on Friday 30 August. It meets at 2.00 pm upstairs in the Clayport Library and it open to the public. **Roger** will alert members of the committee about this item. The full PC is not due to meet until Thursday 26 September.

AECOM's SA only considered the proposed boundary so if the PC decided to extend it AECOM would have to be asked to assess the wider area and Durham School would have to be consulted as the landowner. The views of the Dean and Chapter and Durham University would also have to be considered by the PC.

Theme 3: Economy: To be discussed on 3 September

Theme 4: Housing

John A highlighted the following issues:

- Advice about including young people with disabilities had been provided by DCC and the Local Access group.
- **John A** will check that Policy D2 does not prevent extensions to university college accommodation.
- Policy D4 referred to personal homes while Policy C4 referred to specialist care homes.
- It was **agreed** that it was acceptable to refer to Building for Life standards in Policy D6.
- It was **agreed** that 25% of new college and PBSA accommodation should be affordable for students to rent. **John A** will add the DSU report to the evidence base.

Theme 6: Community

Roger highlighted the following points:

- It was **agreed** that the possibility of using converted buildings should be included in Policies C1 and C2.
- The evidence about the usage of medical facilities is in the evidence base on the website and **Roger** will reference it in the text.
- It was **agreed** that the text should also refer to DU's proposed cultural venue in New Elvet and the refurbished Assembly Rooms. The refurbished Miners' Hall is another valuable venue that it is hope will be refurbished and extended. Roger will add the Redhills Appeal brochure to the evidence base. It is important that these venues are all available to the public.

General Categorisation

It was **agreed** that Sue's categorisation of the general comments was fine. **Sue** will be responsible for making the necessary amendments to the text outside the Themes.

6. Any other business

John L asked **all** to let him have information about consultation events they had attended as individuals in order to make the *Consultation Statement* as complete as possible. It was important to demonstrate the essential role that public engagement had played in the genesis and development of the Plan. **Roger** would ask the Chair of the Parish Council to include this in her foreword.

7. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be **Tuesday 3 September at 9.00 am in the Miners' Hall**. It will discuss Themes 3 and 5 then move on to a consideration of the *Consultation Statement*.