

NOTES OF THE MORPETH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP MEETING

MONDAY 10th MARCH 2014 AT 3pm
IN THE CORN EXCHANGE OF MORPETH TOWN HALL

Present

Councillor Nic Best
Councillor Bob Robertson
Councillor David Parker
Councillor David Cowans
Peter Fuller
Councillor Mike Sharp
Councillor David Woodard
Councillor Philip Ashmore
Graeme Trotter

Representing

Morpeth Town Council – Deputy Chairman
Morpeth Town Council
Housing Topic Group
Heritage Topic Group
Transport Topic Group
Mitford Parish Council
Pegswood Parish Council
Hepscott Parish Council
Sports and Leisure Topic Group

In attendance

Ian Campbell Project Co-ordinator
David English (arrived at 3.06pm) Northumberland County Council (NCC)

Clerk

Mrs Dee Cota Morpeth Town Council (MTC)
Miss Louise Davey Morpeth Town Council

The meeting commenced at 3pm.

1. Welcome/ Apologies and Introductions

Apologies for absence were received from, Cllrs Ken Brown, Joan Tebbutt (MTC), Andrew Kelly (Hebron P.C.) and also David Lodge (GMDT), Colin Pearson, (Education Topic Group), David Rowlinson (NCC) and Gillian Turner (MTC).

2. Notes of the meeting held on 10th February 2014 and matters arising

The notes of the previous meeting were approved subject to David Parker being recorded as representing the Housing Topic Group, David Cowans the Heritage Topic Group and Colin Pearson the Education Topic Group.

a) Letter to the Planning Inspectorate re Morpeth Northern Bypass

The letter to the Planning Inspectorate about the Morpeth Northern Bypass has been submitted. This supported the application and outlined how integral it was to plan and reduce traffic in the Town Centre.

Action – Louise Davey to circulate the letter to the Steering Group.

b) Mechanism for co-ordinated responses to consultations

The paper on the mechanism for co-ordinated responses was discussed. Subject to two changes being made referring to consultation “or other relevant matter” and minimum representatives to “quorum” the paper was agreed.

Action – Louise Davey to circulate final version to all local councils

c) Update on the possible disposal of County Hall

It was noted that the e-petition on the disposal of County Hall did not require a minimum number of signatures before the result will be considered at the Petitions Committee at the County. Up to this date 426 have signed the petition. It was anticipated that it would be considered at the July meeting. Members were advised that the closing date has been extended until the end of May.

Cllr Parker requested that an article regarding the petition be included in the April edition of Inside Morpeth.

Action – This was passed to the MTC Communications Group to action

d) For information: MTCs statement to the Bellway hearing on the 18th March 2014

This statement, prepared by Cllr Parker, had been made available to the Steering Group and Strategic Planning at NCC.

3. MNP – Preparation of Pre-Submission Draft/ Feedback from PPG Meetings

a) Briefing Note for Topic Group Chairs following PPG Planning Workshop

A briefing note was circulated to all Topic Group Chairs on the 27th February 2014 following the PPG planning workshop. It was agreed that the structure of the report would be based on the Thame Report. This included a vision and core objectives statement. A “Vision and Plan Objectives” for the Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan was drafted at the PPG for consideration by the Steering Group. Members identified a number of changes to be made to the document.

The following amendments were agreed:

- Insert 2031 in the vision
- Change tenses to future
- Insert “historic” Morpeth Town
- That the Parishes retain their “distinct characters”
- Removal of “Reduce flood risk” in General Development Principles

It was noted that Topic Chairs would provide draft reports by the 3rd May 2014 to inform the draft plan prior to consultation in June and July 2014.

Action – Louise Davey to update the “Vision and Plan Objectives” paper.

b) Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) – Draft Scoping Report for consultation - feedback from consultees

Feedback on the SEA report had been received from English Heritage and the Environment Agency. It was noted that both responses were supportive and made practical points to be followed up. Feedback had not yet been received from Natural England.

Action – Louise Davey to further request a consultation response from Natural England.

Action – Louise Davey to send the report to Barry Rowland (NCC) and cc David English seeking a coordinated NCC response

c) Developer Engagement Workshop 13 March 2014

It was noted that there was to be a Developer Engagement Workshop on the 13th March 2014 in the Town Hall. Cllr Parker outlined the structure of the meeting. Of the fifteen developers who had expressed an initial interest in the Plan eleven were booked to attend the workshop. Presentations from developers had been requested in advance to facilitate a quick turnaround. He confirmed that the objective of the workshop was an introduction to the plan process, to demonstrate consultation but not to go into detailed negotiation with individual developers. It was intended to invite developers to make ongoing contact subsequently. It was requested that further details of the attendees be provided to the Steering Group.

Action – Louise Davey to provide list of attendees and presentations made at the Workshop.

The letter dated 5th March 2014 from Nick Graham, GVA was discussed. It was noted that Neighbourhood Plan evidence submitted in relation to the planning specific application was done so at the explicit request of the chair of the NCC North Area Planning Committee. It was further noted that the Alnwick Neighbourhood Plan SG has agreed not to submit comments on any individual planning application.

It was therefore considered that evidence drawn from public domain NP data such as the Issues & Options consultation could and should be submitted as material evidence to relevant planning applications, and that individual organisations and members of the Neighbourhood Plan process could make whatever comments they felt appropriate. However the NPSG as a hybrid ‘council & community’ group still undertaking an open consultation process should not itself draw conclusions from the data in relation to specific applications. It was agreed that this should be an interim position pending receipt of legal advice

Action: Ian Campbell to seek legal advice

d) PPG Development Strategy Workshop 14 March 2014

It was noted that there was to be a PPG Strategy Workshop to progress the report and map the level of information already obtained. It was stated that some local level information was required from NCC, for example agricultural land classification.

Action – Ian Campbell to request maps from NCC

e) **MNP Risk Register / Project Plan v 3.2**

It was stated that the risk register had not been formally been updated. It was proposed that this would be completed when there were significant changes and an updated version to be circulated shortly.

Action – Cllr Best

4. **Resources and Support**

It was questioned whether a Locality Bid this year would be for

- c£7k, as was available for 2013
- the balance of c£3k (being the £7k available in 2013 less the c£4k secured)
- nothing as funds not available

Action – Ian Campbell to clarify if additional grant funding could be applied for

5. **NCC Update**

It was questioned whether there had been any slippage in the timetable for the consultation period and submission of the NCC Core Strategy. It was reported that an extra consultation phase of six weeks for the full draft core strategy will place in May 2014 with submission of the draft document in Winter 2014, the enquiry in Spring 2015 and adoption in Summer 2015.

6. **Any other business / Date of next meeting Monday 14 April 2014**

A meeting between NCC Transport Officer Stuart McNaughton and MNP SG representatives was scheduled for 13th March to explore NCC Transport engagement with the NP process in the light of commitments relating to Part II of the Morpeth Transport Review.

It was also reported that Cllr Alan Sambrook is carrying out a countywide survey of sustainable transport on behalf of the NCC Policy Board.

Action - Peter Fuller would contact Cllr Sambrook for more information on this.

Cllr Robertson asked how many Councillors were to attend the Developer Engagement Workshop. There was a general feeling that the presence of any or all NPSG members would be welcome.

Action – Louise Davey to contact Leslie Starkie to determine.

Members were advised that there was to be a Seminar on “Neighbourhood Plans Ahead of the Game” at Newcastle University on Thursday 3rd April 2014.

The date of the next meeting is Monday 14th April at 3pm in the Corn Exchange, Morpeth Town Hall.

The meeting ended at 4.20pm.