

# NOTES OF THE MORPETH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP MEETING

## MONDAY 19<sup>th</sup> May 2014 IN THE BALLROOM OF MORPETH TOWN HALL

### **1. Present**

Councillor Nic Best  
Councillor Bob Robertson  
Councillor Joan Tebbutt  
Councillor David Parker  
Councillor David Cowans  
Peter Fuller  
Councillor David Woodard  
Councillor Ashmore

### **Representing**

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

### **In attendance**

Ian Campbell  
David English  
David Rowlinson

Project Co-ordinator  
Northumberland County Council (NCC)  
NCC

### **Clerk**

Miss Gillian Turner  
Miss Louise Davey

Morpeth Town Council (MTC)  
MTC

The meeting commenced at 3pm.

### **1. Welcome/ Apologies and Introductions**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Ken Brown, Mike Sharp, Andrew Kelly and David Lodge, Graeme Trotter and Colin Pearson.

### **2. Notes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2014 and matters arising**

The notes of the previous meeting were approved.

As a matter arising it was noted that Cllr Joan Tebbutt was taking over as Chair of the Committee from the 9<sup>th</sup> June 2014.

#### **a. Legal Advice on GVA letter – verbal update**

Ian Campbell (IC) updated the position regarding legal advice on the GVA letter. He advised that obtaining professional advice had been difficult as the majority of the practices contacted were unwilling to engage as they would have a conflict of interest.

He indicated that one practice had estimated that it would be around £500 to £600 to review the letter.

It was confirmed that the information had been submitted to NALC however the response remained outstanding.

It was agreed that a holding letter would be sent to GVA until legal advice was secured.

**ACTION:** Cllr Best

### **3. MNP – Preparation of the Pre-Submission Draft/ Feedback from PPG meetings**

#### **a. Progressing the Plan/ revised Plan Preparation Timetable – to include notes on the meeting with NCC 30 April 2014**

It was stated that the Plan Preparation Group (PPG) had agreed to progress a comprehensive plan at this stage. .

David English (DE) confirmed that NCC was to have two consultations probably starting mid-August 2014. It was agreed to work collaboratively with NCC and share their evidence base especially to make representations on applications that are premature or prejudicial to the emerging neighbourhood plan.

Cllr Parker understood that the MNP was to continue with the current timetable but not submit to NCC. Cllr Best referred to the resource availability and emphasised that the draft plan has to be completed by 31 December 2014 and that would require consultation to be started mid-October 2014 at the latest.

#### **b. Summary of Progress on Plan Workstreams – verbal report from Topic “leads”**

IC confirmed that he had followed up the progress on the 15 workstreams and that the templates from Planning Aid and NCC had assisted with progress. He raised concern on the lack of evidence of progress on workstream 3 “Strengthen Morpeth’s visitor economy” and 5 “Site specific development opportunities”.

Peter Fuller (PF) stated there had been some delay progressing the transport workstreams 4 and 13 due to personal reasons. He had reviewed NCC material and hoped to submit his report to PPG shortly.

David Woodard advised that workstream 15, Pegswood, identified employment sites and have preliminary agreement with Wellbeck Estates to move site. He stated that the current industrial estate was about 50% under occupied and its location could be a contributory factor

Cllr Best gave Members an opportunity to ask additional questions.

#### **c. Developer Engagement event – written report on meeting with Persimmon**

Cllr Robertson summarised the meeting with Persimmon on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2014 as very forthcoming. He stated that they had expressed frustration at the speed of applications.

He advised that at the meeting of the DEG on the 7<sup>th</sup> May 2014 it was decided that a meeting with GVA would not be necessary as the information already provided was sufficient.

**d. Strategic Environmental Assessment – Verbal report on URS support/ further workshops**

IC gave an update on external support for the SEA process. NCC would be incorporating consultee responses on the draft SEA Scoping Report into a revised report. URS were to give support for a further workshop for preferred locations for development together with reasonable alternatives. It was also proposed that they would make a critical review of the final SEA Environmental Report particularly with regard to legislative and regulatory requirements.

The report must be approved by MTC and delegated powers for this approval had been given to the Planning and Transport Committee.

**e. MNP Risk Register/ Project Plan v3.2**

Cllr Best stated that Cllr Brown was stepping down from the Steering Group but was to remain on the PPG to facilitate the updating of these documents.

**4. URS and locality bid**

It was restated that URS were continuing to provide resources. IC stated that the “Locality Bid” for grant of £2840 was to be submitted.

**ACTION:** Louise Davey/ Ian Campbell

**5. NCC Update**

DE stated that there was to be a restructure in the Planning Department however he did not anticipate that this would result in any delay to the planning process.

**6. Any other business / date of the next meeting**

Cllr Tebbutt asked about the Steering Group with reference to Rule 6. It was confirmed that the Group should not make an objection to the application however it could provide statistics or documents as evidence to assist the Inspector. The deadline for proofs of evidence for the Stobhill hearing was stated as 26<sup>th</sup> June 2014.

Date of the next meeting 9<sup>th</sup> June 2014 in the Corn Exchange.

The meeting ended at 15.38pm.