

Approved Minutes - Tarsset and Greystead NDP Steering Group, meeting held on 18 February 2014 at 9.30 am

1-2. Introduction and apologies

Present: Megan Nixon (Chair), Rex Cooper (Secretary), Anne Monroe, Jenny Ludman, David English, Richard Powell. Apologies were received from John Holland, Preston Hoggan and Sarah Dyer.

3 – 4. Minutes and Matters arising from meetings of 21 January and 4 February

Minutes:

The Minutes of both meetings were approved.

Matters arising:

ACTIONS

21 January

Rex to check if Sustainability Appraisal is available online – has not been supplied by NNPA.

Jenny to be sent Evidence Base and check for additions/omissions

4 February

Group – read Upper Eden & Allendale plans to assist in drafting T & G policies

Group – draft Sustainability Objective 7 for next meeting

Jenny, Rex & Group – Jenny to send Rex for circulation document on ‘Drafting a Neighbourhood Plan’ – key document for all to consult

Input from David English:

David English confirmed that the Allendale Plan has been submitted; the first in Northumberland.

David stressed that Condition Reports must be submitted. If the Plan is to be passed, certain basic conditions have to be approved. As well as conforming to policies in core strategies and to national policy, environmental assessments and human rights issues must be addressed.

We must also show that the Plan contributes to sustainability objectives; David suggested we now start work on this. All policies have to be reviewed against sustainability criteria, so this has to be carried out in retrospect.

ACTION:

Group to:

- 1. Begin thinking about sustainability aspects of plan**
- 2. Consider commissioning a Sustainability survey as per Allendale plan (David English has a copy)**

Jenny pointed out that one policy in the Plan (use of redundant buildings) will conflict with NNPA policy, but is in accord with national policies, and David English confirmed that Allendale have a similar objective

Megan thanked David for the above very useful input

5. Architects' quotes

Two architectural practices had submitted quotations, Spence & Dower and Mosedale Gillatt Architects.

David enquired if we had scored the two appraisals. The Group had not done so, but members had compiled points for and against.

Assessment of proposals:

Anne tabled her scoring for the Spence & Dower proposal, which she considered had a higher number of positives than the Mosedale Gillatt Plan. These included: specific Design Guide experience, including the involvement of Professor Colin Haylock who has a very strong CV in this area and has worked on the Allendale Plan; greater knowledge of the Parish; proven conservation and archival experience to help with heritage assets; clearer understanding of brief than MGA's and well-set out chart of proposed action, including what appears to be a commitment to a more detailed study of the Parish than MGA's proposals; proven community engagement strengths, and more planned feedback to the Steering Group. These, to her, outweighed the advantages of a more competitive quotation from Mosedale Gillatt, and their bringing to the table of an independent landscape consultant (Spence's & Dower's landscape expertise being within the architectural practice).

All agreed that Spence & Dower's particular experience/expertise in writing Design Guides, including North Pennines, Allendale and Northumberland Coast, together with the firm's greater experience of the area and excellent team, made this the stronger proposal. Colin Haylock's community engagement skills will be crucial. Feedback received from Preston confirmed that he also supported Spence & Dower's appointment. This leaves a majority of the Group (four) in favour, with no opposing views received. All felt that Mosedale Gillatt, while a very good firm of architects, did not have comparable expertise in this area.

Price and funding:

Although Spence & Dower's price is higher than Mosedale Gillatt's, the Group felt that more work surveying the Parish was included in the quotation, and that price should not be an issue given the key role of the Guide in the proposed Plan. However, concerns were expressed that the price quoted is for a draft, not the final product; although NNPA/NCC will pay for the actual production, the Group expects that Spence & Dower will include all work up to that point in their fee. All agreed that normally one would expect a breakdown of hours & costs, which neither firm had provided. Funding will be via the Locality grant, with the balance coming from front-runner funding.

It was agreed that Spence & Dower should be formally appointed once clarification about what the price includes had been received.

All agreed that this should not just be a Design Guide, but an evidence-based document. It must be built into the policy.

Jenny felt that the brief needed to be amended to reflect this and that the brief must be more specific and set out how the guide will be incorporated into the Plan.

ACTION:

Rex to obtain confirmation from Tammy that she will fund the balance over and above Locality funding.

Group to amend the Design Guide brief at meeting on 25 February in light of Jenny's comments.

Group/Rex to clarify with Spence & Dower that their price will include the final draft of the document after all consultation, and that a specific brief will be provided

Rex - Spence & Dower then to be formally appointed in letter from Rex on behalf of Group

Date of 1st meeting with Spence & Dower: 13th March at 2 pm. Rex to book Hall

Anne – draft letter to Mosedale Gillatt thanking them for their quotation but informing them of result

There was discussion about procurement rules relating to proposed alterations to the brief, but advice on procurement had been received from Tammy, and it was agreed that alterations to the work required are covered in Spence & Dower's quotation.

Settlement boundaries – possible inclusion in Design Guide

David enquired if we have a methodology here. Jenny confirmed we will talk to Spence & Dower about encapsulating this. Greenhaugh is the only settlement in the Parish where a settlement boundary (envelope) might be appropriate. The pros and cons of drawing lines on maps were discussed; as the Plan must demonstrate it is pro development, this would in

effect mean drawing a line where development will be allowed. This needs careful assessment; Spence & Dower to advise. Megan queried how land could be allocated if it belonged to a landowner – the Group would have to show this is deliverable.

ACTION:

‘Envelope’ issue to be added to Spence & Dower’s brief

6. Policy Development – date of next session

All - After the meeting, it was agreed via email that the next policy writing all-day session will be on Friday 28 February. Chris will attend.

7. Key Partners Update

Possible inclusion of Non-Policy (Community) issues in Plan:

There was a very helpful discussion on this point led by David. Alnwick & Denwick have opted for a comprehensive Plan covering everything raised by the community. There must be a differentiation between policies and other objectives, but the merit of this approach is that the Neighbourhood Plan enables everything on which the community has expressed a view to be brought into one place.

It is challenging to express on the same page of a Plan that:

- 1) Objectives inform Policies.
- 2) Objectives also inform community action.

One solution would be an Action Plan for community proposals at the back of the document.

Anne felt strongly that non-policy issues should be included in the Plan: as the T & G community has expressed strong views on, for example, traffic noise & speed and litter, via the Residents’ Questionnaire, she felt this should be expressed in the Plan itself if the community is to feel comfortable with its content.

Richard explained this is the area where he feels he can contribute most helpfully to the Plan. Some agencies, eg Highways, are becoming more involved in Neighbourhood Plans; if a Plan states a community wants specific action, it can be added to NCC’s next year’s budget.

We need to identify who can help in specific areas, and possible sources of funding. There are voluntary organisations (eg Hexham Community Partnership) which might help.

David felt the creation of a Trust might be the right model for T & G. Haydon Bridge created a community plan, and then set up a Trust to implement the issues in it. Someone would need to own these and find a way forward for each. The nearest Trust to us is Redesdale.

New contact for T & G Steering Group:

David explained that NCC is growing its planning team, and has identified link officers for all Neighbourhood plans (8 in preparation). Kevin Tipple, a planning officer, will be T & G's contact.

ACTION:

All - next all-day policy writing meeting (now 28 February) to address issue of how non-policy (community) issues can be incorporated into the Plan. We will need a dedicated session on this proposed aspect of the Plan.

All - debate the feasibility of setting up a Trust for these issues as per David's advice.

Group - supply Richard with list of non-policy issues, eg traffic, litter etc

Richard – in light of list supplied, identify what non-policy issues could be delivered in the short/medium/long term, and by which organisations, and provide list of NCC officers who can assist in specific areas

8. Any other business:

Next Tasset News deadline is 28 February.

ACTION:

Anne to draft update.

Megan to update T & G website

9. Date of next meeting & chair nomination

The next meeting, specifically on the Design Brief, will take place on Tuesday 25th February at 10 am. Megan to chair.

Future meetings, after recent email discussions, are confirmed as:

Friday 28 February: all day policy planning session

Tuesday 4 March: normal fortnightly meeting

Thursday 13 March: initial meeting with Spence & Dower

Tuesday 18 March: normal fortnightly meeting