

## Minutes - Tarsset & Greystead NDP Steering Group meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 at 10 am

### **1-2. Introduction and apologies**

Present: David Watkins (Chair), Mary-Lou Downie, Preston Hoggan, Megan Nixon, Anne Monroe, Robin Dower (Spence & Dower), Jenny Ludman, Charlotte Colver & Kevin Tipple (NCC). Apologies were received from John Holland and Rex Cooper

### **3 – 4. Minutes and Matters arising from meeting of 25<sup>th</sup> March**

#### **Minutes:**

The Minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

#### **Matters arising:**

No response from NNPA to Rex's mapping enquiry.

Anne has contacted Jan Ashdown.

Preston has given John Grundy material to Tina.

#### **ACTIONS**

Heritage lists have been forwarded to Spence & Dower; work ongoing by PH/AF to re-format Parish Council (via David Watkins) to sign up to agreement on mapping (OS GIS service), then NCC can then release mapping data. Meanwhile S & D to identify information required and this can be supplied in PDF format. When agreement in place, Charlotte to contact Tina to progress. Data comes in 'shape' files which allow layers of data to be superimposed. S & D priorities are: Lanehead, Greenhaugh, Greystead/The Hott

#### **MAIN AGENDA**

**The main purpose of the meeting was to discuss the landscape aspect of the draft Plan with Robin Dower (Spence & Dower).**

Robin has written an 'understanding' document. He queried who the target audience is, and how the document would be drafted; he sees it as an educational/discussion document (like previous S & D Design Guides) as well as a planning tool.

#### **Introduction: outline of parish features**

Robin outlined the geological structure of the Parish: much high ground at 300 metres; rivers forced to flow along valleys, with crucial 'watersmeet' of Tarsset/Chirdon/North Tyne forming a focal point in the Parish; previous attempts at arable along the river, but now

mostly pasture; much of Parish formed of rough, unimproved grazing on high ground, and 20<sup>th</sup> c forestry.

Vegetation cover of alder/ash along river banks is centuries old & an important feature of the landscape. Semi-natural birch and oak on higher ground.' Gentry' residences have more exotic trees. Most upland farms do not have shelter belts, so new designs cannot retreat behind these. A recent exercise at Wallington identified much carbon retention in unimproved boggy grassland; important to preserve this feature within the Parish & could have relevance for wind farms. Durham University has done research on carbon retention. Bill Burlton did work on carbon store in (?) 2009.

### **Settlements and settings: Greenhaugh**

There were more houses in the village at some point in the past.

**Linear nature of Greenhaugh & 'book ending':** book ends are: Greenhaugh Hall and farm to West. New development proposed to north will have to be sequential. It is possible, given 106s and reserved matters, that this development will not be finalised before the NP is submitted. Jenny emphasised the importance of identifying the character of a settlement, and defining how new development should reflect this. In the case of Greenhaugh, the key feature is its linear nature. Anne emphasised any extension of this line should not extend to the point where it impacted on views of Sneep/Thorneyburn. Group agreed importance of preserving limestone outcrop to East. Charlotte emphasised the importance of new housing not all looking as if built at same time

There may be a case for developing the entrance to the village near Greenhaugh Hall; Robin unsure. Square off village at this point? Planting could be strengthened at entry to village. Community orchard will assist.

Old stables formerly attached to Holly Bush could be developed: some of land belongs to Hall, some to pub.

### **Lanehead**

Need to be clear that Lanehead and Greenhaugh should not merge. A designated green space between the two would assist. Also consider green spaces within settlements. Allendale did an additional survey of residents on this: consider for T & G?

Create new evidence-based boxes (in addition to NNPA policy) to avoid poor development at Lanehead.

Aspirational: the Group supported Robin's idea of leasing land and planting trees on east side of road to contain Lanehead envelope on that side & provide shelter. Robin pointed out that both Greenhaugh and Lanehead face west - to benefit from late pm sun.

Note conflicting axes of old road (downhill at cross-road) and new axis (road to Greenhaugh).

## **Landscape and views**

NNPA has a landscape assessment. The key is to bring this down to local level and especially to expand NNPA's Policy 20. This is the policy most used in planning decisions, yet decisions that have a negative impact on the landscape have been approved

We need a solid base to show why views in the Parish should be preserved. Mary-Lou pointed out that many NPs have a landscape assessment naming specific views, showing boundaries etc. Landscapes should be characterised by area, not landscape type.

Higher Stewardship schemes. Most farmers are enrolled, and there are positives, e.g. planting along burns. Concern that many hedgerows are ash, and may be lost with ash disease. Little done recently to supplement this.

Agents for development: most land is owned by private individuals. Could develop collaborative ventures between landowners & community. The Plan cannot require individuals/landowners to do this, but could be an aspiration for action by the PC.

Importance of light pollution issues.

Economic activity: Thorneyburn, High Green

Go back to basics: why are we in a National Park?

## **Mobile viewpoints**

Robin stressed the importance of how tourists see the area and hence of mobile viewpoints, not just one-off views. Anne stressed we want to avoid further mobile views being compromised, eg view of new houses in Bellingham/wind turbines from Lanehead.

Landscape routes – Pennine Way, Bastle trail, cycle routes etc.

## **Smaller scale issues to be addressed**

Vocabulary of planting, boundaries, surfaces.

## **Larger scale issues**

Impact of developments outside the Parish. NCC is undertaking an assessment of the effect of big developments in the Park (due end April 2014).

## **CONCLUSION AND FURTHER ACTION**

Mary-Lou and Megan still unclear how the landscape policies will be written: Robin's input is needed before they can draft policies. We need a methodology: Megan's list of criteria

includes sense of place, wildness, tranquillity, historical associations, planning of settlements. Need to name specific views, show boundaries etc.

Charlotte suggests an 'Impact and Landscape Assessment' for each settlement in Parish. Ways in and out of settlements & settlement edges are key (undertake a SWOT of settlement boundaries). The Landscape Institute's 'Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment Guidelines' (3<sup>rd</sup> edn.) is key. (NCC has a copy; not available online).

Charlotte also suggests a Green infrastructure analysis.

Create new evidence-based boxes (in addition to NNPA policy) to avoid poor development at Lanehead.

Put residents' responses to the Parish landscape onto a map (Charlotte).

Settlements will be mapped as well as routes through: look at connections/separation between settlements.

CPRE to give evidence: has commented on Northumberland's undeveloped landscape

Forestry: NNPA concerns re forestry development near Wark (Kevin). S & D to look at this?

Fracking: country-wide issue, so cannot be included in a NP. However any proposal would need to take account of our NP.

Examine remoter settlements: Emblehope, Birks, Dally Castle.

S & D to pursue carbon retention issues?

Mary-Lou to provide sources to Robin for landscape policy including relevant answers from the Questionnaire. (Post meeting note: attached documents were sent to Robin 9<sup>th</sup> April)