

# GREAT AYCLIFFE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN



## Notes of a joint meeting of the Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and Thematic Groups, held on Thursday 10 December 2015

**Present:** Cllr B Hall – Great Aycliffe Town Council  
 Cllr R S Fleming – Great Aycliffe Town Council  
 Cllr I Gray – Great Aycliffe Town Council  
 Cllr Bill Blenkinsopp – Great Aycliffe Town Council  
 Mr S Howarth – Voluntary Sector Representative  
 Mr B Riley – GAMP  
 Cllr M Dixon – Durham County Council  
 Mr I Wiggett – Public Representative  
 Mr M Rowcroft – Public Representative  
 Mr D Sutton-Lloyd – Community Representative  
 Mr John Snowball – Thematic Groups  
 Mr C Peacock – Thematic Groups  
 Mrs S Cooke – Thematic Groups  
 Mrs K Woodhams – Thematic Groups

**Officers** Mrs C A Walton – Corporate and Policy Officer  
 Mr S Cooper – Environment Officer

Item No	Discussion	Action
1.	<b>Apologies for Absence</b> Apologies for absence were received from Cllr J Atkinson, Cllr A M Chandran, Cllr W P Hillary, Cllr J P Hillary, Cllr M A Dalton, Mrs S Bainbridge, Mrs C Benson, Mr K Robson, Cllr C A Wheeler, Miss A Donald – Town Clerk's PA	
2.	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> There were no declarations of interest.	
3.	<b>Notes of the Previous Meeting</b> It was noted that John Snowball's apologies had been missed from the list, the notes will be amended to reflect this. The notes of the previous meetings were then confirmed as a correct record.	
4.	<b>Draft Consultation Statement</b> CW outlined the purpose of this document and the fact that it is a requirement of the regulations. CW ran through the document and explained the format and briefly outlined what was in the sections, the current situation and what was outstanding. JS asked why comments from 1 <sup>st</sup> survey were not listed considering 2 <sup>nd</sup> survey comments were. CW explained this was due to the volume of numbers associated with the first survey (over 10,000 comments) and said a summary of the first comments results would be included. It was noted that some members included in the thematic	



	<p>group lists had not been to a meeting and some members who had now resigned were not represented. CW will amend the section accordingly.</p> <p>It was agreed that the formatting and tidying up of the document would be done later. There were no additional comments from the group and it was agreed that it was starting to look good.</p>	<p>CW</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p><b>Neighbourhood Plan Draft Sections</b></p> <p>CW again ran through this document highlighting areas which needed further work and seeking clarification about various aspects of the draft. CW highlighted the fact that she had tried to keep the document as simple as possible and had tried not to complicate it with lots of planning 'speak'.</p> <p>A short discussion took place about the inclusion of an Executive Summary; it was agreed to leave this in as the final document would be large and most people would first read any summary.</p> <p>The Foreword was agreed.</p> <p>MD asked for a reference to the NPPF to be included in the section on the County Durham Plan in the Introduction. JS referred to the e-mail he had written and circulated prior to the meeting. He stressed that questionnaire responses had indicated only 5 respondents had identified Copelaw as a suitable location for development, 19 had stated no development, and cited a number of questionnaire response comments indicating what he felt was a strong desire to avoid more urban sprawl, especially on open areas. Given these issues and his own concerns with aspects of the withdrawn draft County Plan, he did not feel that he could support the inclusion of a paragraph supporting a very large development on the Copelaw site. JS also questioned if the committee should have the right to support this development.</p> <p>A lengthy and detailed discussion ensued with both MD and BF giving an overview of the Durham County Plan situation and subsequent judicial reviews and the history of the site, explaining it was a predominantly brown field site. MD pointed out that it was part of the County Durham plan to have 2000 homes for Great Aycliffe and SH added that the original plan for the new town was to have a population of about 45,000.</p> <p>It was noted by a number of group members that although only 5 people had indicated Copelaw as a suitable housing site we did not know what comments had been made on the County Durham Plan (where the site had been allocated). In addition, the fact that only 19 people had said no to development would suggest that everyone</p>	



	<p>else didn't have a problem. BH said people have had lots of opportunities to comment. CW pointed out that the housing allocation sites, including Low Copelaw, have been available at nearly all consultation events and no adverse comments had been received.</p> <p>Maps were consulted as to where the additional 1000 homes could be located if the Low Copelaw site was not developed. It was agreed, with the exception of JS, that the best location would be Low Copelaw. This would also minimise congestion to the existing town without losing existing green space within the town. DSL pointed out that the protection of the green spaces had been the overriding priority for residents and the groups all the way through the preparation of the plan.</p> <p>BH/MD/MR/RF and others pointed out that even if we did not support the Low Copelaw site and it wasn't in the County Durham Plan, if a developer came along with an application the site would be developed anyway, then we would have no control at all.</p> <p>MR suggested by having the Neighbourhood Plan in place in support of such a development at Low Copelaw, the NP would have more of a say during the design and development stage of any development there. CW said there was already a supplementary planning document for the Low Copelaw site that, in her opinion, wasn't very good. The NP would enable us to have a set of policies in place for the site which developers would have to follow.</p> <p>The importance of the inclusion of a CIL/Section 106 policy was agreed and would enable the Town Council to deliver the residents' priorities.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Area section still needed some work. CW asked that the group consider the paragraph on the 4 shopping areas under retail and confirm that details are correct. Guidance will be sought as to what is required on neighbourhood statistics MD asked that the Super Output Areas (for deprivation) be included.</p> <p>It was agreed that Aycliffe Village should have specific pages to reflect the differences from the rest of the Parish.</p> <p>The section on the Key Issues included a summary of all the first rounds of consultation and this will be expanded to include as much as possible about the work undertaken following the consultations.</p> <p>The Vision and Objectives section was agreed.</p> <p>It was suggested it would be useful to have a section on Renewable Energy and some thought will be required as to where this fits into the policy.</p> <p>An up to date sheet with policies was circulated. CW briefly went through the items and noted site specific</p>	
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	<p>policies for The Avenue site and the Low Copelaw site which would address the priorities that the residents have identified.</p> <p>It had been questioned if we require a Sustainability Policy within the plan. MD suggested it was worth having as policies are changing day to day and this may be required in the near future. He also pointed out that the County were required to have a policy on fracking and we need to check to see if we need anything in the NP. CW to investigate further.</p> <p>CW asked the group if there was anything that had been missed, any glaring errors or anything they thought should be included.</p> <p>John Snowball asked at this point, that it be minuted that his objection to the inclusion in the GANP of any expressions of support for a very large development at Copelaw.</p> <p>The remainder of the group had no additional comments and agreed with the information, outcome and comments provided.</p> <p>BF, BH, and MD asked that thanks be recorded to CW for her thorough work so far.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>CW</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>All to note</b></p>
<p>6.</p>	<p><b>Verbal Update</b></p> <p>The final Character and Heritage document had now been received and even after emails to the company and the appropriate person in the communities department the type size would not be made larger. The group was encouraged to read it as it is very interesting. This is a standard template and should be reproduced at A3, AECOM will provide 3 x A3 hard copies as a good will gesture. The document had not cost the NP or Town Council anything as it was part of the technical support received from the Communities Department in support of NPs.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p><b>Next Meeting</b></p> <p>A schedule of forthcoming meeting dates was agreed at the last meeting, with the proviso that these may need to be adjusted depending on future progress.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2016</b></p> <p>Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2016          Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016          And hopefully the final meeting will be          Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2016</p>	