

Wells Neighbourhood Plan Working Party Minutes Thursday 14th October 2021 10am Wells Community Hospital, Mill Rd.

Present: Roger Arguile (RA-Chair), Lindsay Dew (LD), Cheryl Curtis (CC) John Edwards (JE),
Nichola Holmes (NH), Peter Rainsford (PR)
Rachel Leggett (RL) & Andrea Long (AL) attended via Zoom

1. Apologies: Received from David Fennell (DF), Jacqueline Gray (JG), Greg Hewitt (GH)
and Jimmy Tottle (JT)

2. Minutes of last meeting, 16.9.21
Accepted as a true record.

3. Matters arising
There were no matters arising.

4. Feedback on public consultation event, October 1st & 2nd 2021 – RL

The working party expressed their heartfelt thanks and admiration for the excellent display material produced by RL and AL and for Rachel's clarity and dedication during both days of the consultation event. It was agreed that the arrangements worked well.

190 people attended the drop-in sessions to view the display boards and give their opinions on the policy ideas and submitted sites for development. RL said it was a good response for a town of this size. All but 7 attendees live or work in Wells. There have been 10 further emails already, providing some more detailed comments and the website will be available until the weekend.

RL will continue analysis of the results next week. First indications are that the policy ideas do broadly reflect the town's priorities and concerns. Housing policy proved the most diverse area for comment, as expected. The draft housing policy ideas should be amended to take account of the strength of local feeling and this work will be tackled at the next WP meeting on Nov. 4th, with AL attending in person.

5. Feedback on AECOM's Assessment of Sites – AL

AL had received earlier this morning a summary report from AECOM on the sites submitted during May/June's call process. Andrea shared some of the technical assessment information and agreed to forward this interim report to the working party pending AECOM's delivery of the full assessment. The final report will form part of the Neighbourhood Plan evidence. Its content is required to be in harmony with NNDC's new Local Plan and national planning law.

6. Review of NP Process and forward timetable – RL

RL reviewed the Wells NP process with the group and will send to the working party a revised timetable.

There is still work to complete on the Green Spaces and NDHAs which are loaded onto the GoogleDrive and it's important to have this extra evidence in support of the NP policies.

RL will send examples of wording for CC to add text to PR's pictures. As DF was also involved during June, PR to invite him to look again at providing more information on specific items.

The next step is to develop the policy ideas, incorporating the results of the various consultations and the final AECOM report, to produce a draft NP early in 2022. The Design Guide is still a draft document. RL said this should be revisited at the 25th Nov. WP meeting to settle the text and include any extra points.

Ideas raised during the consultation exercise which are outside the remit of the NP can be appended to the relevant policy as suggestions for Community Action Projects. PR remarked that this would be useful to bring such matters to the attention of WTC or other relevant authorities who could act on the suggestions. It would also be important to acknowledge concerns within the local community about specific issues requiring action.

RA and JE asked about ongoing feedback and consultation from interested parties. RL confirmed that while the NP is still drafting, all comments are relevant to the discussion. Once the NP is in its final draft, there will be another interactive public consultation in early Spring 2022 where attendees will be given the finer detail and asked to comment further on the policies and Design Guide. When this happens, it will also mark the beginning of the 6 week statutory consultation, called the pre-submission or Reg.14 consultation.

7. Communications

PR was thanked for his work on press releases to the EDP before and after the public event. The November Quay deadline has passed but RA says there will be an article in the December issue thanking the local community for their interest and involvement and providing information on the next steps. RA will report in general terms to WTC on the results of the public consultation and the AECOM report.

8. Any Other Business

1. PR brought to the working party's attention, reports of recent policy changes by NNDC apparently removing financial support for the purchase of outdated local authority housing for renovation by Homes for Wells. If true, this has significant implications for the future of the affordable housing supply in Wells. The new chair of HfW, Lynne Burdon, is to meet with Nicky Debbage, NNDC's Housing Strategy Manager to find out what the current situation is.

2. CC is to follow up with Alastair Ogle, Principle of APHS, the idea of involving secondary school students in commenting on the NP policy ideas. This will be easier to achieve once the draft policy ideas are refined in the light of October's public consultation.

9. Dates of next meetings

Thursday 4th November, 10am at the WI Hall, Burnt St./High St., Wells.

Thursday 25th November, 10am via Zoom.

Meeting closed 11.35am.

NH