

# Consett Area Neighbourhood Forum – Management Committee

## 7pm, 19 May 2024

### Location:

Zoom meeting.

### Attendees:

- Christine Thomas – Chair
- Mike Shiels – Secretary
- Anne Louise Grant – Treasurer
- Lucy Reed – Data Protection Officer
- Mark Russell – MC member
- Niamh McDonald – MC member
- Maureen Clyne – MC member
- Richard Lumley – MC member
- John Million – MC member
- Ian Peart
- Jo-Anne Garrick - Planner

### Apologies:

- Kelli Turner – MC member
- Anthony Robson

## Minutes

### 1. Finance

Next grant from Locality is available, so bid placed. Have included licence cost for GIS software (at charity rate) – approx. £700. Total bid = £8,000 (maximum total is £18,000 and we already had £10,000 last year).

Have also applied for additional specific Locality packages, such as Design Codes (provided by ACOM) and Housing Needs Assessment.

### 2. GIS Software

Ian has agreed terms with software supplier. Will contract for three named users, which should be enough.

Ian has confirmed we can share our data with Durham, by agreement, so they can read it.

### 3. Neighbourhood Plan

Housing Needs Assessment normally needs around 3 months. This information will be useful for future reference, including by Durham, even if we do not include a detailed housing section.

Design Codes can take up to 6 months. Christine will talk to Dave Chapman from Locality. MC discussed whether it is worth delaying the plan to include Design Codes, and whether the Consett Area has distinctive building design anyway. Jo-Anne suggested we consider focussing on specific

areas with distinctive characteristics, such as the 7 conservation areas and the centre of Consett town. Jo Anne can share good examples of other plans that have included Design Codes.

The MC reviewed the latest draft plan (dated 7 June 2024), as follows:

### Structure

MC happy with overall structure of the document.

Jo-Anne noted that text highlighted in green is awaiting Durham to provide. Text in Yellow needs MC attention.

### Early engagements

Jo-Anne suggested we need a background paper for each section, setting out the methodology followed. MC has already nominated owners for each section, so they can complete these. Later we will add all the details of all the sites identified as green space, heritage, etc.

We will need to list all engagements (time, date, etc.) for future reference.

### Section 1

MC agreed to set period of plan to end in 2040 (section 1.13).

### Section 2

Niamh volunteered to provide history of the area and other information for sections 2.1, 2.7 and 2.10.

### Section 3

MC agreed that 'circular economy' is jargon that should be replaced by more intuitive language about environmental impact. The specific point about drainage and pollution can be merged into this.

MC agreed to incorporate the key points raised by the youth consultation, reflecting the needs of young people into the objectives (e.g., housing, leisure facilities, employment opportunities).

### Section 4

"Bridgehill" is one word (section 4.7).

MC discussed settlement boundaries. There were a range of opinions expressed at the last Forum meeting in Delves Lane, both for restricting and encouraging settlement in different areas. Jo-Anne suggested that we wait for Housing Needs Analysis before making final decisions on settlement boundaries.

### Section 5

Section 5.2: Business consultation is closed but input not yet processed.

Section 5.5: MC agreed that locally specific policies have not been supported by consultation to date, agreed that policies in the Country Durham Plan should suffice.

Section 5.7: Add Moorside, Blackhill and Delves.

Section 5.8: Need to confirm if Morrisons retail park is part of town centre, or separate.

Section 5.9: MC agreed that the need for a hotel for visitors to Consett area should be included.

## Section 6

No comments

## Section 7

Jo-Anne suggested we add the non-designated heritage inside conservation areas to the policies for those areas, then have a catch-all policy for all remaining non-designated heritage.

## Section 8

MC confirmed that the consultation to date has highlighted the need to ensure that people can get easy transport access to facilities in the Consett area, and also that good transport connections to the wider region are essential if young people are to be able to continue living here whilst working elsewhere.

## Annex 1

MC confirmed that there is no list of community actions to date, but that assumption is we will populate this with things that are outside the remit for the main plan, particularly any items raised in the main consultation.

### **4. Date of Next Meeting**

The next MC meeting will be at 7pm on Tuesday 18 June, on Zoom.

The only agenda item at this meeting will be preparation for the full Forum meeting on 23 June.