

Neighbourhood Plan

Steering Group Meeting

Thursday 26th March 2015

Present

Andrew Thomson
Peter Aston
Steve Foster
Peter Minshull
Glyn Roberts
Brian Hogan

Guests

Jackie MacArthur

1. Apologies

Bob Edwards, Tim McCloud, Laura Tilston, Jenny Unsworth and David Watson

2. Joe Mattin of Bower Mattin Partnership Ltd

The architectural group made a presentation on a number of themes

I. Fairground Site

The practice was originally involved in providing proposals some years ago for the Super Surgery which didn't go ahead because of the demise of the PCT

However, they came up with some new ideas for the site which are very much at the early stage which includes an anchor store possibly occupied by Lidl, with car parking and other units sited beneath the store on lower levels. The proposals could include up to 12 further retail units leisure and the library

II. Banks Place Farm

The land owners have approached Mattin Bower with a view to the land being developed. There may be a proposal coming forward for 250 houses located just above Tommy's Brook. The scheme could include a linear park by the river leading to the Biddulph Valley Walkway

III. Broadhurst Lane

Mentioned a possible development of 40 house near to Dane Mill House

The general view of the NP team was that such proposals ought to take a wider view of their impact on the Town as a whole and should not be treated in isolation

3. Marketing

JMc summarised the response to the marketing brief which was distributed to 9 organisations in the area and the Chamber of Commerce.

The response was poor and only two companies actually replied to the brief. One was a fully costed proposal supplied by TMC and the other was an expression of interest with a rate per hour, but this company appeared to have only one employee and couldn't provide the full marketing service.

Roles and responsibilities on how this relationship will work to be produced including audit trails and feedback to the Town Council and Steering Group

4. Vision and Objectives

AT had produced a vision and objective profile for the NP which led to the following comments:-

Would like to see something added to the word sustainability
Vision doesn't mention housing, health, education and well-being and increasing job opportunities.

AT will redraft the vision and objectives, BH to circulate to vision for comments

5. Feedback from Groups

Transport

Asked Paul Griffiths of CEC to provide traffic modelling for the area
Requested modelling work using the Link Road Saturn traffic model to test 3 issues that have been raised by the group.

The 3 issues are as follows:-

Extend the Link Road to the A34 Newcastle Road.
CEC have already modelled this scenario, request to send through this modelling. Additionally to model the scenario where signing and traffic calming is put on Newcastle Road itself to encourage through traffic to use this extension and the Link Road – what level of traffic transfer could reasonably be expected?

Extend the Link Road to the A54 Buxton Road

Test the option for a link north of Eaton to north of the Colleymill Bridge – this is the shortest distance between the A536 and the A54 and avoids bridging the canal and the

river. . Of greatest interest with this scenario is how much traffic would be removed from Mountbatten Way (which would greatly help in delivering the Congleton Public Realm Strategy) and off the A54 on the east side of the town centre (in particular Brook Street, Willow Street etc. which are heavily congested particularly at peak times).

Sensitivity testing to identify levels of modal transfer to sustainable modes

The vision for transport in the NP is for congestion in 2030 (end of the plan period) to be no worse than 2010 levels (the nominal start of the CEBC Local Plan and hence the Congleton NP plan period). Given the level of development, both housing and employment, allocated to Congleton in the plan period we need to have evidence to demonstrate what level of modal transfer is needed to achieve this. Thus what is the current percentage of trips by sustainable modes in Congleton?

Need to know what level of sustainable transport exists now and what is required to get us to nil detriment

Look at the CEC preferred route for the Link Road particularly the appendix which suggest that West Street could become one way

Sustainability

Currently working through the 9 objectives the team has produced, one by one. Also need to take account of the 3 Tests under the NPPF for green spaces – look at Malpas Plan

AT will circulate a template for all teams to use for producing objectives and policies

Economic Development

Making good progress, but, still have the outstanding problem of all the new employment land being outside the Town boundary. Will be looking at finalising the vision and objectives at the next meeting

There is some concern relating to job numbers which CEC has drawn from the LEP's as planning inspectors are questioning the voracity of this source and whether it can be relied upon as evidence in the NP

Town Centre and Heritage

The group is fortunate in that it can build upon the Town Plan. Town Strategy and Public Realm Strategy which have helped form the vision and objectives

The team is continuing to review and refine the objectives and collate the evidence

Housing

AM has collated all the housing permissions and completions in Congleton which doesn't reconcile with CEC figures on housing numbers. In addition to this, is the problem of additional sites coming forward.

Concern was expressed on the effect on Congleton if the Link Road didn't happen but, the housing was built

The team have a vision and some objectives and are using policies in some cases to derive the objectives

6. Questionnaire

It was agreed to get on with the production of the questionnaire, which is to be fairly simple in the first instance followed by a more detailed questionnaire some weeks later

7. Constitution and Protocol

The constitution and protocol was approved and will be presented at the next NPSG for signing

8. Timetable

There has been some slippage in the timetable particularly in the area of communication as the Steering group wrestled with sorting out a supplier for the marketing needs

Mapping is also a key issue as we have few skills in this area and may need to buy in this resource to produce suitable maps for the various groups

It was also noted that planning inspectors are attaching greater weight to emerging local plans

9. Date of next meeting

9am 30th April 2015