

Lanchester Parish Council



Neighbourhood Plan Working Group

Lynwood House
Wednesday 8 February 2017
7.00pm

Present Councillor Mike Wardle (Chair), Councillor Paul Jackson, Councillor Ossie Johnson, Chris Phillips, Michael Horsley, Brian Naylor, Steve Bailey, Elaine Hogg, Mike Gladstone, Jill Gladstone, David Friesner, Stuart Carter, Shaun Hanson,

1. **Welcome**

Councillor Mike Wardle welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillor Keith Harrison, Terry Coult and Fiona Green.

3. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

4. **Notes from the last meeting**

The notes from the meeting held on 6 December were received.

5. **Topic Papers** **Development of Policies** **Local List**

The sub groups each gave an update on the topic papers / policy development.

Housing / Design of New Development

The sub group presented their information. (attached A)

The group discussed settlement edge, housing quantities etc. The edge of settlement development needs to be managed through an appropriately worded policy to address concerns of scale, design, type, impact, etc.

Historic Environment

The sub group presented their information. (attached B)

The group discussed the difference between; non-designated Heritage Assets, designated Heritage Assets, Historic Environment Register and Local Lists.

The group discussed a 'Local List' and whether we could generate a local List from the results of the heritage Audit which has been well evidenced. The gazetteer of Assets identified in the Heritage Audit needs to be condensed and identified on a map. Assets that are listed or scheduled need not appear in a local list. A 'List of Local Interest' seemed a good name. It was agreed that the mapping exercise was important.

Steve Bailey agreed to undertake the work on condensing the Heritage Audit.

The policies for the Historic Environment may sit in other topic areas or apply across all topic areas.

Business & Employment and Transport & Travel

David Friesner gave an update. A map notation to reflect business & employment issues is required. The topic paper will be available shortly. It was agreed that the topic paper be circulated to the working group.

Green Spaces

The sub group presented a summary of their topic paper. (attached C)

There is a large volume of information to process. The topic paper will be available shortly. It was agreed that the topic paper be circulated to the working group.

It was agreed that a session should be arranged with the whole group to consider the edge of settlement and mapping of information and that Shaun Hanson should facilitate this session. It is hoped that this will create joined up thinking and connectivity between the topic areas.

It will be necessary to have large scale maps of both the Parish and village and a quantity of acetates to overlay information.

It was noted that the Government white paper on housing has now been published. However it is too early to know how this may affect/influence the County Durham Plan Preferred Options Paper.

6. Heritage Audit

The Heritage Audit event will take place on Saturday 18 March between

2pm – 4pm at Lynwood House. Richard Cowen (CPRE) and John Gall (local resident) will speak. The Heritage audit report, gazetteer and photographs will be available as well as information on progress with the Neighbourhood Plan.

7. Next Steps

- Work is undertaken to identify the most significant assets from the Heritage Audit for inclusion in a List of Local Interest
- The Topic Paper for 'Business & Employment' and 'Transport & Travel' be circulated to the working group
- The Topic Paper for 'Green Spaces' be circulated to the working group
- A session is arranged to progress mapping and edge of settlement
- A quantity of maps and acetates is sourced
- A list of invitees for the Heritage Audit event is circulated for comment

8. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the group will be at Lynwood House on Tuesday 7 March at 6.00pm

Meeting ends 9.00pm

Sub group: Elaine Hogg, Mike Wardle, Mike Gladstone, Jill Gladstone, Michael Horsley, Brian Masterman

Objective

“To meet the housing needs of the parish in order to contribute to a strong and flourishing community, whilst protecting the essential qualities and attributes of the area”.

1. Description of Housing in the Parish

- Within the Parish, Lanchester is the principle settlement where housing is concentrated around the historic core of the village in the valley of the Smallhope Burn.
- Outside the historic core and making up the greatest share of housing are a number of housing estates. The greatest expansion of estate housing was in the 1960's but estates of 25 or more houses have been added from the 1950's onwards
- As the principle settlement Lanchester is also the main service centre and the best connected with the rest of the Parish and the main towns and villages outside the Parish.
- Outside Lanchester, housing in the Parish comprises mainly scattered farmsteads with clusters of just a few houses at Ornsby Hill, Hollinside, Newbiggen, Hurbuck and Malton.

2. Census Information 2011

- The 2011 census for Lanchester Parish had 1891 households
- A predominance of family housing
 - Detached 28%
 - Semi-detached 49%
 - Terraced 20%
 - Apartments 3%
- mostly privately owned (82%)
- Little rented accommodation (17%)
- House Prices are on a par with the rest of Durham except for detached houses, which are more expensive.

3. Consultation Feedback

- Support affordable homes
- Smaller homes rather than larger family homes (69% smaller, 52% larger)
- Support retirement housing but not flats/apartments
- Almost equal support for homes to buy or rent (to buy 61% to rent 54%)
- Support for a village boundary

4. Main Issues for Lanchester Village

- Developer interest in building large housing estates
- Aging population
- Demand for housing outside the Durham Green Belt
- Lack of building land inside village development limit

- Topography, narrow valley bottom with steep valley sides
- Outcome of the new Durham Plan, any housing allocation for Lanchester?
- Managing development at the village edge

5. What do we want policies to do?

- Prevent expansion outside the village edge ?
- Allow development outside the village edge but control it ,
- Designate sites suitable for housing?
- Indicate sites unsuitable for housing eg setting of Longovicium, valued open spaces
- Set guidelines to get the best new development possible

Four options to direct any new development have been provided for discussion by Shaun Hanson in his Housing Topic Paper

Option 1: A Standalone Policy with no accompanying Settlement Boundary

Option 2: Identify Specific Sites for Housing Development

Option 3: Prohibit New Housing Outside the Development Limit/Settlement Edge

Option:4: Permit Some Development outside the Settlement Edge determined by criteria

The Conclusions of the Sub Group

Option 1: A Standalone Policy with no accompanying Settlement Boundary

- The subgroup considered that because of the strong support for a settlement boundary by the community, to have no boundary would not be acceptable.
- We propose that there should be a boundary but that its name should be changed from the current “Development Limit” to “Settlement Edge” to avoid any negative connotation attached to the word “limit”. The line would mark the built edge of Lanchester village at the start of the Neighbourhood Plan Period.
- **This option is discounted and we should have a defined settlement boundary or edge**

Option 2: Identify Specific Sites for Housing Development

- The sub group considered that this option would require extensive and probably heated debate about which sites would be suitable for new development.
- The identification of sites would positively encourage the development of all the sites and at the same time would not stop developer interest in other sites.
- **This option is discounted**

Option 3: Prohibit New Housing Outside the Development Limit/Settlement Edge

- This option is considered to be incompatible with Government Policy in the National Planning Policy Framework and is unlikely to pass government scrutiny.
- There is public support for some growth and the only place it could be located is now outside the current development limit. Opportunities for new development inside the limit are few and not significant.
- **This option is discounted**

Option 4: Permit Some Development outside the Settlement Edge determined by criteria

- This option would allow some development on the village edge with guidelines to control it.

- This option offers a sensitive solution for edge of settlement development, offers flexibility and can incorporate safeguards to prevent inappropriate development.
- **This option is the preferred option**

POLICIES

1. Policies Required to Manage Edge of Settlement Development

We would need policies to

1. Direct housing away from the most sensitive areas – this would require areas of sensitivity to be identified and justified
2. Provide guidelines that would integrate new development into the landscape and layout of the village and provide an acceptable new settlement edge – this would require reference to the VDS to develop specific guidelines for edge of settlement development.

2. The Amount and Scale of New Development

1. How can we achieve modest expansion and avoid over –development?

- There is concern that Lanchester could expand on a scale that could alter its character and harm its enclosed setting in the landscape. The consultation feedback clearly favoured modest expansion at a rate of 6-12 houses per year.
- We would therefore wish to limit the scale of growth commensurate with the size and character of the village and in line with the current growth pattern.

The sub group therefore considered that we need policies to

1. Limit the number of houses built over the plan period
2. Limit the number of houses built on individual sites ie sites no bigger than 50 houses?
3. Avoid a concentration of development at the beginning of the plan period.

We decided that we need expert advice to frame policies to control the amount of growth and its delivery throughout the plan period.

3. The Type of New Housing

1. How can we ensure a vibrant community?

The sub group decided that a mix of housing to provide for all ages, family size, tenure etc was the best way to ensure that we have a balanced community.

The sub group therefore considered we need policies to

- Provide a variety of house types

4. Design Guidelines for new Development

The sub group has not discussed this topic in detail yet but we intend to draw policies from the Village Design Statement.

We need to establish how the Village Design Statement can be incorporated into the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Historic Environment Topic Paper prepared by Jules Brown of the North of England Civic Trust identifies the following six issues that need to be considered when preparing the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan.

1. Increasing identification and understanding
2. Managing risk from neglect, poor condition or redundancy
3. Managing risk from inappropriate works and designs
4. Managing risk from development and change of use
5. Managing risk from public investment
6. Enhancing or better revealing significance, and maximising benefits

In his paper he presented three options in each area to help guide our thinking towards the development of policies. The group assigned to consider these options met and have made the following suggestions. Further discussion with the full Neighbourhood Plan team will be necessary to finalise the approach.

1 Increasing identification and understanding

Option 1

1.1 Prepare a local list of non-designated heritage assets with individual statements of significance to add weight to their consideration in the planning system (NPPF para 135).

It seems that the term Local List has a very specific meaning and should be prepared through a prescribed process and presented in a specified format. At this stage Durham County Council (DCC) do not have a process or format agreed for Local Lists. The preparation of a list would be a considerable amount of work and might be rejected at a later date by DCC as non-compliant. We already have the Heritage Audit Gazetteer and it was felt that this could be used as a proxy for a "Local List". We probably need to confirm with DCC that this approach would be acceptable. The BIRDHAM Neighbourhood Plan could a valuable guide to how to approach this issue.

Option 2

1.2 Require applicants to demonstrate they have used 'Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment' (Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning 2, Historic England, 2015)

It was agreed that a policy should be written to this effect.

Option 3

1.3 Require applicants to set out the sources of information used when describing the significance of the heritage assets or settings affected by proposals (NPPF para 128).

Again it was agreed that a policy should be written to this effect and should make reference to the Gazetteer as a source that must be considered.

2 Managing risk from neglect, poor condition or redundancy

Option 1

2.1 Prepare and keep up to date a local register of heritage at risk for all heritage asset types including landscapes and views, and use it to direct development by looking more favourably on proposals which tackle heritage at risk (NPPF para 133, 134, 140).

We understand that Historic England produce each year an “at risk” register of listed assets. The production and subsequent annual maintenance of a local “at risk” register of all heritage asset types would be a formidable task and in some instances a duplication of the work done by Historic England. The group felt that this option should be rejected.

Option 2

2.2 Prepare development briefs for a small number of at-risk assets in conjunction with owners, and promote them as development opportunities including where necessary through enabling development (the latter possibly bringing development which would otherwise have not obtained consent) (NPPF para 140).

The group were concerned that this option could put the Neighbourhood Plan in team in a very difficult position. Not only by suggesting to owners that their assets could be developed, but also by implying to the wider community that they were promoting developing of the assets. It was felt that this option should be rejected.

Option 3

2.3 Include a policy to promote the issue of heritage at risk to encourage applicants to consider it in preparing proposals, and to foster local action (NPPF para 126; Local Plan policy).

Of the three options this was the only one the group felt should be considered.

3 Managing risk from inappropriate works and designs

Option 1

3.1 Require applicants to demonstrate in detail how proposals affecting heritage assets or their setting will use materials and construction methods to seek high quality and mitigate harm (NPPF paras 59 and 132)

This option would allow developers to make claims that their proposals would mitigate harm. It would then be up to the planner officer to agree or challenge these assertions. As Option 3.2 puts the onus on the developer to meet pre-determined criteria it was felt this Option 3.1 should be rejected.

Option 2

3.2 Publish detailed design guidance for buildings and landscapes specific to the parish, such as adaptation of traditional farm buildings, field boundaries, shopfronts, traditional window and door details, etc, and an associated policy to require applicants to demonstrate their use in proposals (NPPF paras 59 and 132

As mentioned above, it was felt that this was the better option and large sections of the VDS could be “cut and pasted” into the policies. This would also give new updated status to the content of the VDS which has been considered to be out of date by some parties. Elements of the Locality Map could also be a ready source of material.

Option 3

3.3 Specify a range of materials (including species for landscapes) which would be expected in different situations and for different assets (NPPF paras 59 and 132).

Agreed that this option should be included, but perhaps included within the design guidance associated with Option 3.2

4 Managing risk from development and change of use

Option 1

4.1 Prepare a historic environment sensitivity map which identifies locations where heritage assets and their setting (including views) would be more sensitive or less sensitive to new development, and an accompanying criteria-based policy with issues to be addressed where locations are affected (NPPF paras 126, 129, 152, 157

We recommend that this option is pursued. Using the views listed in the Gazetteer could enable various areas to be identified as “highly sensitive” e.g the view of Paste Egg Bank from a number of points in the village. More specifically areas around the Roman Fort and All Saints Parish Church should be highlighted. It is felt that this approach around the village could help with the issue of how to control development around the current village development limit. Again the BIRDHAM Neighbourhood Plan could be a useful source.

Option 2

4.2 Identify key locations of development pressure or historic environment opportunity, analyse the impacts development would have, and prepare a policy to address the impacts, covering location, amount and design.

We feel this option needs further consideration. It does have the potential to give too much guidance to developers as to the issues they have to address in order to get approval. If some areas were not included it could also lead to unwanted development where the developer could argue that the location had not been identified and so was suitable to development.

Option 3

4.3 Prepare a policy with a series of historic environment issues which would need to be addressed on any site, and apply them as development comes forward (NPPF 129). .

It was agreed that a policy should be written to this effect.

5 Managing risk from public investment

Option 1

5.1 Set out broad priority topics for attention to protect and enhance the contribution to Lanchester's heritage made by public infrastructure; topics might include green spaces, traffic movement, flood management, etc (NPPF paras 126, 137; Local Plan policy).

It was agreed that a policy should be written to this effect.

Option 2

5.2 Identify specific priority assets for attention to protect and enhance the contribution they make to Lanchester's heritage; example might include the village green, Lanchester Valley Walk, Front Street public realm, Smallhope Burn, tree-lined approach roads, etc (NPPF paras 126, 137; Local Plan policy).

Jules indicated that policies written along the lines suggested in this option could have less impact than the Option 1 approach. The group felt that this option should not be progressed.

Option 3

5.3 Prepare a policy with a series of historic environment issues which could be applied to public investment and promote it to public authorities and utilities (NPPF 126; Local Plan policy).

It was felt that this approach was very similar to that suggested in Option 1 and seems to be covered under the NPPF para 126. This option therefore would be duplicating the objective of Option 1 and should not be progressed. **Some**

Neighbourhood Plans that have been adopted have policies relating to this point and could be a valuable source of help when we write our policies.

6 Enhancing or better revealing significance, and maximising benefits

Option 1

6.1 Identify the top enhancement themes to act as policy drivers, eg. enhancing historic landscapes, making more of the Roman fort, improving the village centre's appearance (NPPF paras 126, 137; Local Plan policy)

In this section it was felt that only this option should be progressed.

Option 2

6.2 Prepare a list of opportunity assets where more could be made of their heritage value, linking each site's ambition back to a social, economic or environmental goal (NPPF paras 126, 137; Local Plan policy)

Concern was expressed that by specifically identifying assets where the team felt more could be made of the asset through development, it could be seen to be encouraging development in the vicinity of the asset. Omitting an asset from the list could also lead to developments being promoted in inappropriate areas and justified on the grounds that the area had not been specifically identified.

Option 3

6.3 Set out a series of aspirations which should be used to help determine applications for consent: where a proposal help to deliver these ambitions, it should be looked on more favourably.

Jules' comment identifying the potential risk of adding kudos to unwelcome proposals meant that the group felt unable to promote this approach.

1.5 Green Spaces and the Rural Environment Objective

“To protect and enhance the attractive rural setting of Lanchester, the open green spaces within it and the quality of the wider countryside”

4.0 Green Space and Rural Environment Issues to be addressed in policy

The above evidence highlights a number of risks and opportunities pertaining to the green spaces and rural environment:

- The requirement for new development to not detract from the nature and character of the village and parish
- Where development is allowed it should complement and if possible enhance those valued characteristics which make up the nature and character of the village and parish
- The retention and enhancement of valued community views
- The protection and enhancement of the biodiversity resource of the parish including priority and protected species and habitats
- The protection and enhancement of the historical resource of the parish including protected sites and those sites identified as having a community value
- The effect of major new infrastructure and extraction projects such as wind turbines and opencast mining
- The management of flood risk
- Managing new tourism initiatives
- The extension of industry within the parish
- The development of farm buildings including farm diversification and the conversion of existing buildings
- The retention and enhancement of valued open space community assets such as village greens, play and sports pitches and allotments

The following issues will therefore have to be addressed within the Lanchester Neighbourhood Plan either with specific policies or through a combination of all-inclusive policies which accord with both national and local policy and the community’s wishes. The issues are:

1. managing risk to the designated green spaces and habitats of the village from development and change of use,
2. managing risk to the non-designated green spaces and habitats of the village from development and change of use,
3. managing risk to the landscape and habitats of the wider parish from development and change of use,
4. Managing the retention and restoration of valued community views within the parish
5. Managing appropriate diversification within the rural industries, including farm and farm business opportunities whilst maintaining the nature and quality of the parish landscape
6. Managing major infrastructure projects without detracting from the essential character of the parish landscape and without loss of biodiversity

Options for how to address these issues are given below. The options are not stand-alone choices but can be combined with each other to achieve the Green Spaces and Rural Environment objective (see 1.5) and to advise NP policy.