

The Minutes of the Berwick-upon-Tweed Conservation Area Advisory Group Meeting on 30th June 2011.

In attendance:

Annette Reeves	NCC Conservation Officer (North)
Peter Watts	The Greenses Residents' Association (Chair)
Tim Kirton	Regeneration Team (North)
Margaret Thomas	St Boisil's Resident's Association
Alison Cowe	Berwick Civic Society
Peter Rutherford	NCC Development Management Manager (North)
Cllr John Taylor	Chair of North Area Planning Committee
John Robertson	West End Resident's Association

An architect presentation preceded formal business regarding a housing scheme layout and concept designs for the former Coalyard site, Tweedmouth. CAAG comments have been formulated and submitted to the planning case officer as part of the Development Management process.

1. Apologies:

Chris Burgess (NCC and Chair); Cllr Bowlas (Town Council); Philip Miller (Building Study Group); Dorothy Slater (Spittal Improvement Trust); Margaret Shaw (CARA).

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 27th May and matters arising.

The minutes were agreed subject to the following amendment.
“During discussion and Q&A session on the Spittal, Tweedmouth Masterplan Study consultation, AC expressed concern that the high density option had been preferred without sufficient rationale or real evidence based justification”.

Matters arising;

- i) AC reported that remedial works to the plaque/signage lettering on the Leaping Salmon would be undertaken by 22nd July. AR had confirmed the signage works were 'de-minimus'.
- ii) The Vice Chair (MS) letter sent in April (as agreed at the March meeting) to the Regeneration North Area Manager appeared not to have received an acknowledgement or formal response. CAAG were extremely disappointed at the lack of response, particularly as PW was able to report the Community Development Trust had received a lengthy response from NCC regarding the Trust's letter/concerns on similar issues in relation to the Berwick's Future/Berwick Project work. TK offered to chase up the response.

3. **Regeneration Strategy – Protecting and enhancing the heritage asset (Update on THI and Area Partnership Schemes).**

THI - AR progressing Year 2 Action Plan and anticipated programme of work for the critical buildings. Tenders are currently being sought for one of the critical buildings following approval of the schedule of works. AR had recent meetings with several building owners and their appointed architects/agents in West Street and Marygate and hopeful that applications will be forthcoming concerning building repairs and shopfront enhancements. Most of these recent enquiries have elements of vacant commercial floorspace and so the THI can assist with fabric repairs and improving the retail/commercial offer as part of the wider heritage led regeneration scheme.

Area Partnership Schemes – Bridge Street; repairs imminent for 2 grant approved schemes; new applicants coming forward and AR met with appointed architect/agent to progress works of repair and improvements to 2 additional listed buildings. Grant applications expected.

Castlegate; 1 application about to go to contract and repair/shopfront improvements recently submitted to AR for pre-grant application checks on 2 buildings. AR is continuing to pursue other enquiries and contact with building owners.

Public Realm (Maltings and Bridge Street car parks), development management design team meetings are being held to progress detailed designs to application/consultation stage. AR and design consultants Southern Green had met with the Bridge Street Traders and Preservation Trust/YHA (Granary) separately following their written concerns regarding the Bridge Street 'concept' scheme. The discussion was useful and the consultants had taken on board all comments/concerns at this stage. The consultants are producing a full programme and timetable across an 18 months period that will include a full public consultation event; seeking of statutory consents and Grant Funder approval.

AR also reported that following completion of the Year 1 Area Partnership Schemes English Heritage had written to AR (as the Project Officer) to convey their extreme concern at the failure of NCC to undertake the following 3 conditions of grant.

- i) Failure to submit the last quarterly return/annual report on time (delayed but being addressed)
- ii) Failure to submit Conservation Area's at Risk information in time
- iii) Failure to backfill AR's former conservation officer post; which appeared to be the greater area of concern.

Moreover, this could directly affect future year's funding. As Project Officer to the three combined schemes (that made up the Berwick Historic Area Improvement Scheme), AR could not provide all the answers to EH's concerns and would be liaising with senior colleagues/Managers at NCC but was extremely disappointed to be in receipt of the only EH communication on an otherwise extremely successful Year 1 launch.

The CAAG also wanted to convey their disappointment and concern that this could affect EH's contribution to Year 2 Funding for the Berwick Historic Area Improvement Scheme.

4. **Berwick Listed Building Surveys.**

- **Cemetery Chapels, Lodge and Surrounding Wall**, North Road, Berwick had been received from EH and these structures had been rejected for statutory listing due to their lack of intactness, changes to the relationships between buildings (undermining 'group value') and for not being of high enough architectural standard. Reference made to their suitability of being placed on a 'Local List'.

5. **Design Guides – draft leaflets (AC).**

AC tidying up documents (editorial/putting in right context as largely extracted from Character Appraisals etc) and was sourcing suitable illustrations/images. AC had not received any additional comments on the drafts circulated.

AC will send to AR for final checking before seeking publication and printing of leaflets with CB. PW thanked AC/AR for their collaborative work on the design guidance.

6. **Berwick's Future (update on progress of project groups).**

- **Barracks Group** – project group meeting scheduled for July, brief out to tender.
- **Public Realm Group** – technical sub group concentrating on detailed designs for the public realm components of the THI and Bridge Street Area Partnership Schemes.
- **Movement Group** – looking to implement Golden Square bus shelter improvements (XXXXXXXXXX) TK can confirm that bus shelters will include 'real time' information and that CAAG will be consulted when detailed scheme has been finalised. Cllr Taylor had not forgotten to call a meeting between Highways and PR/AR to ensure Partnership Scheme and 106 monies could be used to maximum effect and would be organising this in the near future.

7. CAAG website (CB).

AC now bought website CAAGberwick.org and will liaise with CB to get this transferred.

9. Current Planning Applications.

- Pre-app presentation, Coalyard site, Tweedmouth (presentation at start of meeting; CAAG comments to be sent to Planning Case Officer)
- Appeal decisions; 11, Mill Strand (appeal dismissed) due to adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the 'Old Village Core' sub area of the conservation area and affect on residential amenity. AR to circulate appeal decision.
- 11, Bankhill (appeal dismissed) regarding the wholesale replacement of traditional timber windows in an unlisted building within the conservation (with double glazed Upvc). Article 4 Direction consistently applied and proving to be successful. AR to circulate appeal decision.

10. Any Other Business.

- i) AC – weekly list now back on the Internet and is accessible.
- ii) AC – at recent consultation evening (EAAAP/Tweedmouth, Spittal Masterplan) it was noted that a hotel developer was looking to locate a new hotel facility in Berwick. The Civic Society wants to express growing concern about the King's Arms.
- iii) AC – Article 4 Direction covers windows *and* doors and the Civic Society are concerned about the growing number of replacement doors in the Palace Green area that is having a noticeable cumulative effect. How can this be addressed? AR advised in the first instance to report this to Planning Enforcement to investigate.
- iv) AC – Pier Road Maltings; Civic Society still concerned with the apparent lack of drawings covering all the work that is taking place at the site. AR/PR confirmed that the case officer and enforcement officer had investigated recent concerns, this was a 'work in progress' and the implementation/monitoring of conditions was ongoing. Any recent material amendments/listed building applications or SAMs should have their own application files. The Planning Case Officer should be able to confirm all the applications received and duly processed.

11. Date of Next Meeting.

28th July 2011. 9.15 a.m. start with a presentation/update on the Berwick Project at 11.00 a.m.

