

## Minutes of the Berwick-upon-Tweed Conservation Area Advisory Group Meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2018.

### In attendance:

<b>Margaret Shaw</b>	CARA, EWT (Chair)
<b>John Robertson</b>	CAAG HELM
<b>Bob Steward</b>	Museum and Archives
<b>Catherine Kent</b>	Civic Society
<b>Margaret Thomas</b>	St Boisil's Residents
<b>Ian McCaffery</b>	NCC Conservation Officer
<b>Judy Nicholson</b>	Palace and Ravensdowne Residents
<b>Ian Hay</b>	Greenses Residents Association
<b>Marion Mead</b>	Bridge Street Traders
<b>Julien Lake</b>	Berwick Community Trust
<b>Rosa Teira</b>	Visitor Historic England
<b>Martin Lowe</b>	Visitor Historic England
<b>Chris Burgess</b>	Former CAAG Chair
<b>David Thompson</b>	Visitor, Arthur and Thompson, Architects
<b>Elaine Patterson</b>	Visitor, Berwick Neighbourhood Plan
<b>Minute taker</b>	<b>Catherine Kent.</b>

### 1. **Apologies:** Julie Kennedy Berwick Community Trust

MS explained that, rather than taking its normal form, the meeting would consist mainly of two presentations: the proposed Tweedmouth Brewery site development and the Built Environment section of the Neighbourhood Plan.

### 2. **Proposals for Tweedmouth Brewery site**

The Community Trust is preparing a major Heritage Lottery bid for conversion of part of the site as a new base for Berwick annexe of Northumberland College, for completion in September 2019. JL introduced David Thompson, from the architects Arthur and Thompson, who gave a full presentation of the proposals in their current form, i.e. suitable for obtaining budget costs but not designed in detail.

TD first gave an overview of the site and its setting in the Tweedmouth conservation area and the wider town. It comprises three blocks on the N side of the Brewery complex, whose varied roofline features in long and local views. Its long-established use as a brewery on the edge of Tweedmouth's historic core gives the site particular importance; Kristian Pederson is providing desktop historical research.

The three buildings have been empty for some time. They retain some original windows but have been gutted internally, lost their dormers and re-roofed with concrete pantiles; the walls need considerable stone replacement and re-building of gables. Constraints include the limited volume, original low ceiling heights, lack of outside space, parking and accessibility.

The requirement for six classrooms and two breakout spaces, along with the necessary office and service spaces, implies a greater volume than the current buildings allow. Inserting a glass clerestory at eaves level would allow three levels of modern accommodation while retaining the external walls and massing of the original building. Pedestrianisation of Brewery Lane would help access.

MT reported that residents were worried about the lack of parking and the potential impact on the joinery business which uses the remainder of the brewery site. JL pointed out that the Trust is working closely with NCC over parking in Tweedmouth as a whole, with suggestions such as residents' parking scheme, and that alternative uses may need even more parking. The site is on a main bus route.

There was some discussion on how re-location to this site might benefit both the College and the wider area, linking the College more closely with the town and encouraging further regeneration.

Some detailed design aspects were questioned, such as the conflict between the use of glass and the needs of people with visual impairments, and the desirability of dormer windows given the need to exclude light and discourage seagulls. However, the response to the scheme as a whole was overwhelmingly positive and DT was praised for his full and clear presentation and willingness to consider points raised during the meeting.

DT left a memory stick of his presentation with the Chair for individual group members to have access.

### **3. Neighbourhood Plan**

Elaine Patterson, chair of the Built Environment section of the NP, outlined the process of producing the Plan which is in a 'sketchy draft' form at present, with different sections at different stages. The process is slow, as policies have to comply with regional and national policies as well as being locally relevant. The pre-submission draft will not be submitted for some months and is not expected to be agreed for at least two years. Eric Goodyear has done a great job as Chair, and the appointment of a replacement is to be discussed next week.

The final Plan will carry similar weight to previous NCC documents. NCC will not be able to ignore it.

EP handed out copies of the Built Environment section draft text (ATTACHED). It sets the scene for limited development, balancing social, environmental and economic needs. NCC has commented on a previous draft and returned it for amendments; Jo - Anne Garrick, an ex NCC employee and planning consultant, has managed negotiations between NCC and BE on the detail of these amendments, but NCC has not yet seen the revised text.

EP went through each section of the draft.

EP pointed out that comments can be made by anyone at any time. MS will coordinate a response from CAAG members, who were also encouraged to send a response from the group they represent.

#### **4. HELM**

JR will continue to forward webinars to members, but may have to stand down as HELM Champion because of his new work commitments.

Chris Burgess, former Chair of CAAG to give consideration to taking on the role of HELM Champion. If appropriate JR will liaise with Chris.

#### **5. Treasurers report**

MM said that there is nothing new to report since last meeting. Balance remains at £340.15.

It was noted, with great appreciation, that the Community Trust is prepared to let the group continue to have free access to the meeting room on a monthly basis but CAAG will continue to give an annual donation if they are in a position to do so.

MS commented that if we wish to hold a symposium this year then it will be necessary to start looking for sponsorship soon

#### **6. Current Planning Applications**

a) 18/00058/FUL Change of use from public house to residential dwelling. IM concerned about the proposed new plastic windows at the Queen's Head, in the Tweedmouth conservation area.

b) 17/04263/PA Change of use from office to café. Not in the conservation area. Prior approval but not a planning application.

b) CAAG members are invited to visit the Lion's House on the Quay Walls at the end of the February meeting, to see the impact of proposals in Listed Building application currently being registered.

#### **7. Any other business**

a) CAAG's response to the AECOM parking report has been circulated to Cllr Glen Sanderson, Portfolio Holder for the Environment and Local Services at NCC and to David Laux, Head of Technical Services and to all CAAG members.

MS is attending a stakeholders' meeting on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> Feb. **At the conclusion of the meeting MS was told that a summary of the meeting would be made available to all attendees. MS has today, 2/2/18, emailed the Chair requesting this precis asap. When this arrives MS will circulate with any additional comments as appropriate. MS again emailed the Chair on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> Feb as still no response. As yet no reply.**

b) CAAG members have seen proposals for 'no cycling' notices on the Walls, but with no indication of where the idea originated. IM will enquire with NCC, and ML will do the same with HE

**Response from ML** *"I have asked a few people about stopping cycling around the ramparts. We understand that this originated from a number of complaints by*

*members of the public and incidentally there is already a traffic regulation order that prohibits cycling along the majority of the circuit. The signs themselves will be on lamp posts etc and not in the ground so wouldn't require scheduled monument consent to put up and consequently we are happy to leave their siting up to the Council in liaison with their conservation advisor, which will be Ian McCaffrey. However, this is not your concern I believe: rather it is the desire to encourage access which is the issue. Alex Thompson is the highways officer leading on this for the Council and I understand he has special responsibility for cycling within the Council. I presume he will be the best person to contact and express any concerns and thoughts."*

**Response from IM** *"The meeting with Alex Thompson went ahead on Friday. We walked around the relevant locations for about 90 minutes discussing possible sites for no cycling signs. The locations would be a mix of existing lamp columns (some historic, some not) and railings giving access to ramparts. Alex was making efforts to avoid new posts that might trigger a need for SMC. The catalyst seems to be representations from the public and safety concerns from English Heritage.*

*Overall there will be opportunities to remove some redundant signage and replace some existing with new. I can share details with you if you would like that. "*

c) MT had heard that some of the contents of the Cowes Building may be on sale for film props. She will make further enquiries, and MS will ask for information from Cameron Robertson and IM.

It was pointed out by JR that many of the artefacts are in the ownership of the Cowe family and of course they can do as they wish with them.

d) The Historic England representatives hope to attend one or two CAAG meetings a year but will be on the circulation list for all minutes and agendas.

### **8.Date of Next Meeting**

Thursday 22 February, 9:30 at the WEB Building

### **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS.**

March 29<sup>th</sup>, April 26<sup>th</sup>, May 31<sup>st</sup>, June 28<sup>th</sup>, July 26<sup>th</sup>, Aug 30<sup>th</sup> Sept 27<sup>th</sup>, Oct 25<sup>th</sup>, Nov 29<sup>th</sup>, Dec 20<sup>th</sup>.