



Developing a Neighbourhood Plan

Open Meeting 21st October 2015

Introduction

- Coxhoe is under the threat of development
- Durham County Council has approved every planning application that has come forward
- Coxhoe Parish Council has objected to most applications
- Neighbourhood Plan work commenced
- We **need** community help

Current Planning Position

Site	No. Houses	Parish View	DCC Decision
Potteries	31	Objected	Approved
Station Road	50	Objected	Approved
Parkhill	190	Objected	Approved no infrastructure
Phase 3 The Limes	55	Requested infrastructure contributions	Approved, £70,000 school contribution
Old School House	8	Objected	Approved
Bogma Farm	162	Objected	Approval likely although some infrastructure contribution likely
Total	486	SO FAR !!!	

Current Planning Position

- That's not the end of it
- Other identified 'SHLAA' sites in Coxhoe
- DCC conducting a 2015 'SHLAA' exercise with developers now
- Approval of the Parkhill development most worrying & precedent set
- Potential for 300 homes between Bowburn Services and Turisdale. 'Intergra 61'





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Parkhill refused



- In **October 2014** application for 190 houses refused
- At that time Draft County Durham Plan given significant weight in planning decisions as Inspectors report into 'Examination in Public' was awaited
- DCC Planners considered proposal was an inappropriate **unsustainable** residential development in the countryside, would result in the coalescence of Parkhill and Coxhoe and would affect local nature conservation contrary to local and national planning policy.
- In other words the two villages would blend together. This application was only for 190 houses. The previous owners of this land were seeking to build 600 houses!



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Rejection of County Plan



- In **February 2015** Inspector issues report on Examination in Public (EIP)
- Inspector criticises Draft County Durham Plan and says housing should not take place in Green Belt around Durham City and should take place elsewhere and Coxhoe is a good place
- Inspector takes the view that Coxhoe and Parkhill are one settlement on the basis of one representation at the EIP – that of Hallams, the Parkhill developers!
- This changes everything



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Parkhill decision reversed



- In **June 2015** Parkhill Development resubmitted
- On **14 September** DCC Planning Committee reconsidered
- Planners argued that the application should be approved under Paragraph 14 of National Planning Guidance
- Planners argued that the City of Durham Local Plan is out of date and Draft County Durham Plan can't be taken into account as a result of the Planning Inspector's Report
- Planners advised the Planning Inspector considered Coxhoe and Parkhill are actually one settlement and the coalescence argument couldn't be used .

National Planning Policy

14. At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a **presumption in favour of sustainable development**, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking.

For **plan-making** this means that:

- local planning authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area;
- Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs, with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change, unless:
 - any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or
 - specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.⁹

For **decision-taking** this means:¹⁰

- approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and
- where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or
 - specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.⁹



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Parkhill approved



- DCC Planners changed their minds and now consider the proposals to be sustainable when they felt it was **NOT** sustainable before
- DCC Planners changed their minds and now consider that there are now benefits which outweigh the harm when those benefits existed previously and
- DCC Member Councillors (Not our Local County Members who strongly objected) are minded to grant planning permission
- Coxhoe Parish Council asked the Secretary of State to take decision away from DCC but they refused to do so
- Planning Permission Granted
- **On 21st September the Inspectors EIP is quashed by the High Court**



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What does this mean?



- At the moment if any planning applications come along they will be considered under the same tests and probably approved
- As a result of an application for Judicial Review Durham County Council have to have another go at their County Durham Plan
- Redo – consultation and another Examination in Public
- What can we do? We need to make sure they know loud and clear what the people of Coxhoe think!



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Coxhoe Parish Council Position?



- CPC are a consultee and have no planning powers
- CPC are powerless in respect of current planning decisions, however....
- CPC do have the power (not a duty) to develop a **Neighbourhood Plan** within our parish boundaries and have already done the basics
- In **February 2015** CPC made an application to DCC for Designation of a neighbourhood Plan covering the whole of the Parish
- In April 2015 DCC approved the Designation



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What is a Neighbourhood Plan



Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area. They are able to choose where they want new homes, shops and offices to be built, have their say on what those new buildings should look like and what infrastructure should be provided, and grant planning permission for the new buildings they want to see go ahead. Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community where the ambition of the neighbourhood is aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area.

Local communities can choose to:

- set planning policies through a neighbourhood plan that is used in determining planning applications.
- grant planning permission through Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders for specific development which complies with the order.



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Its not straight forward



- **Neighbourhood Plans have to:**
 - Comply with Local Planning policy
 - Comply with national planning policy
 - Comply with European standards and requirements
- **Neighbourhood Plans therefore cannot simply block development**
- There is a complex process to go through which requires a lot of work and consultants and this is expensive
- There's an examination in public and at the end of the day there is a referendum



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What can you do?



- **Above all the community need to be involved and engaged and this means the community helping out**
- **The Parish Council are committed to progressing a Neighbourhood Plan but without public engagement and help it is doubtful whether it can be achieved**
- **There will be more consultation exercises and public meetings**
- **We can't do this alone**
- **What can you bring to the table?**
- **What do you think? Questions.....**