

31 July 2015: NPSG Meeting With Nick Cahill - Notes (by JB)

10 am at Hayle Community Centre

Present:

John Bennett, Brian Capper, Dave Raymer, Vanessa Luckwell, Paul Pellegrinetti, Lucy Frears, Dave Slatter and Nick Cahill (Cornwall Council).

1.	Nick Cahill is part of the Historic Environment Strategy Management Team at Cornwall Council reporting to Rachel Weiss.	
2.	Nick was briefed on our progress so far and our need for guidance on how best to protect the historic environment in Hayle. We asked for information on what work Cornwall Council (CC) was doing and what materials are available to assist us. We noted that the policies in the WHS Management Document were general and may not have the power that specific NP policies would give.	
3.	Nick advised that he was working on a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the WHS and this would be more focussed on the specific Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of each site. It would be a material consideration in planning applications and would be incorporated by inference in the Cornwall Local Plan (CLP).	
4.	<p>The NPPF emphasises a ‘presumption in favour of sustainable developmentⁱ’ and states (extracts):</p> <p><i>12. Proposed development that accords with an up-to-date Local Plan should be approved, and proposed development that conflicts should be refused unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. It is highly desirable that local planning authorities should have an up-to-date plan in place.</i></p> <p><i>16. The application of the presumption will have implications for how communities engage in neighbourhood planning. Critically, it will mean that neighbourhoods should:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>develop plans that support the strategic development needs set out in Local Plans, including policies for housing and economic development;</i> • <i>plan positively to support local development, shaping and directing development in their area that is outside the strategic elements of the Local Plan</i> <p>Providing the NP allocates sufficient areas for housing and jobs, areas can be protected for recreation and community enjoyment. It is worth referring to the Core Planning Principles in paragraph 17 of the NPPF which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it</i> <p>Nick noted that even if certain areas are protected, the NPPF allows these to be over-ridden in some cases, e.g. NPPF 55.</p>	
5.	In discussing the need for Character Areas Nick suggested that we have an Open Spaces Policy.	

	<p>The NPPF states in §58:</p> <p><i>Local and neighbourhood plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area. Such policies should be based on stated objectives for the future of the area and an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics.</i></p> <p><i>Planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;</i> • <i>establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;</i> • <i>optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses (including incorporation of green and other public space as part of developments) and support local facilities and transport networks;</i> • <i>respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation;</i> • <i>create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion; and</i> • <i>are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.</i> 	
6.	<p>Nick advised that Conservation Areas (CA) should take care of themselves since they are a statutory designation. The Hayle CA does not have any Article 4 directives (specific constraints or requirements) which limit its benefit somewhat. We could establish a Local Development Order with local lists and a design guide could be referred to but completed later.</p>	
7.	<p>In creating Character Areas Nick advised that we could have a Built Environment Policy such as: use of traditional materials.</p>	
8.	<p>Nick noted that the NPPF can allow protection of local styles but that design codes should not be prescriptive. NPPF §59 says:</p> <p><i>Local planning authorities should consider using design codes where they could help deliver high quality outcomes. However, design policies should avoid unnecessary prescription or detail and should concentrate on guiding the overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout, materials and access of new development in relation to neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally.</i></p>	
9.	<p>We could do our own landscape assessment and Nick recommended the Landscape Assessment Toolkit (which is still being updated – feedback requested). The Roseland NP used the toolkit successfully and they are willing to help others. The contact is Jon Smith: jon@jonsmithassociates.net. Cath Statham at CC is responsible for the toolkit.</p>	
10.	<p>If we draw a line around an historic area, such as parts of the green fields to the south of Penpol School, we cannot mandate no development but we can require historic and environmental assessments.</p>	

11.	Nick supported our Q75 in the aims and objectives questionnaire: Proposals that impact heritage assets, or their setting, shall only be accepted where the heritage has been assessed and understood using methods of best practice (we would expect to see a methodology such as the ICOMOS Heritage Impact Assessment Guidance and EH guidance on Setting “History in Review”) and where local people have been proportionately involved in the assessment process. He offered to assist us in writing the wording of the policy. This policy would be used in appropriate Character Areas.	
12.	In discussing the WHS, Nick suggested focussing on heritage rather than the WHS or its setting	
13.	In discussing Character and Heritage Areas Nick felt that there was no need for both – with possible complications and overlapping. Define the Character Areas such that they capture appropriate heritage features.	
14.	In discussing the successor to PLP policy TV2 (open space around villages) we questioned whether Riviere Farm should have been in the WHS or CA. Nick felt it had been omitted in error since it was very relevant to the operation of the Cornish Copper Co. His view was that a line could be drawn around the farm and the first set of fields to the north. He also felt that the view from Copperhouse Pool towards Phillack was a very important view and should be protected.	
15.	Further guidance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don’t be concerned about the Conservation Area • Consider the St Ives policy about no building in gardens • Consider requiring ICOMOS (or equivalent) assessments over a much wider area since it encompasses the impact on the setting of the WHS and heritage assets. This is not too onerous since it scales to lower requirements for smaller developments – but does require the issue to be addressed. 	
16.	In summing up, Nick reiterated the necessity of having character areas, as Roseland had done successfully for their adopted NP.	
17.	Next steps: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We will contact Roseland to hear their experience and suggestions. 2. Steering Group members should give thought to where Character Areas should be drawn and why. This does not need to be rigorous, just thoughts at this stage. We will compare notes at the next SG meeting. 	JB ALL

ⁱ International and national bodies have set out broad principles of sustainable development. Resolution 42/187 of the United Nations General Assembly defined sustainable development as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The UK Sustainable Development Strategy *Securing the Future* set out five ‘guiding principles’ of sustainable development: living within the planet’s environmental limits; ensuring a strong, healthy and just society; achieving a sustainable economy; promoting good governance; and using sound science responsibly.