

Falmouth Neighbourhood Plan

Neighbourhood Workshop

for Strategic group and other working group representatives

Facilitated by Tim Kellett 1st March 2016 at the Town Hall chamber.

Attended by:

Henrietta Boex, Matthew Williams, Candy Atherton, George Gillow, Bill Radmore, Grenville Chappel, Oliver Lane, David Yelland, Tom Ebdon, Jo Widdicombe, Angela Beale, Tim Kellett

Apologies:

Mike Jenks, Steve Besford-Foster, MJ Long, Richard Thomas, David Hosken, Michelle Brunton, Dominic O'Neill

Purpose

The purpose of this meeting was to ensure working group members shared a reasonable consensus in their view of the location and scale of recognisable neighbourhoods in Falmouth and the local facilities that existed to support them. This workshop was part of the strategic group's work plan.

It was also to provide material that could be used to develop future aspects of the neighbourhood plan such as community consultation, engagement with stakeholders, landowners or developers, and negotiations with adjoining parish councils.

A short presentation was given by Tim Kellett on the nature of neighbourhoods, what helps them become sustainable, the importance of a focal point, a neighbourhood centre, their scale and the impacts of connectivity and walking distances.

Workshop 1

This involved participants working in 3 smaller groups to identify boundaries of Falmouth neighbourhoods they believed to have a distinct character or sense of community, and to identify what local facilities existed within the boundaries. The results were presented to the whole group and any important observations noted.

The results are illustrated on the Workshop 1 Plan.

Observations and suggestions

- While there were some differences noted in boundaries or sometimes sub divisions there was a strong consistency in the neighbourhoods or communities recognised.

- The Town Centre provides excellent facilities and choice of shops but is not within walking distance of the majority of the town. The development is one-sided owing to the coastal location
- The topography and steep gradients also have a major impact on connectivity and walkability in the town.
- The upper historic area of the town, with its regular Victorian street blocks, was gradually changing in character due to the preponderance of student housing. However it had a very strong distinctive character.
- It was particularly evident that Boslowick provided a good local centre in terms of shops it lacked a good community centre.
- Swanpool, Goldenbank and the surrounding area was particularly lacking any local facilities. It had no sense of centre and was made up of a number of housing estates.
- Lambs Lane area had few remaining shops and a huge green space that seemed underused and included a severely deteriorating artificial pitch. It was noted that the pitch was on made up land.
- Pubs had traditionally provided some local facilities but were closing down in the outskirts of the town
- Old Hill and the Beacon had two different characters and had few local shops. The beacon Open space did not act a good connection between adjacent housing areas.
- The dracaena centre served a very wide area as a local community centre but was a long walk from many areas.

Workshop 2

This involved participants reviewing the same map of Falmouth but with all the sites identified that were under consideration or could be changed in the future in some way. These included sites outside the neighbourhood plan boundary but clearly would have a huge impact on existing Falmouth communities. The groups then took their earlier observations and looked for any opportunities for these sites to improve local facilities or improve the sense of neighbourhoods rather than just providing housing sites or estates.

The output of three smaller groups was recorded on sketch plans and presented and brought together on the single workshop 2 plan. Again very similar conclusions were reached.

Suggestions

- The sites on the northern boundary from Union Road to Falmouth Road should not be considered in isolation but had a great opportunity to strengthen the existing neighbourhood around Lambs Lane sharing a new local centre and improved park in the centre. This would require a street link over the railway.
- These should not be developed as separate sites, but all could be integrated and connected to create a mixed use community. There is potential for higher density and integrated student developments particularly at the Vospers end.
- The pitch could be removed if the sports hub is developed at the school and the area used to create a better public park.

- A framework plan could be developed for this area with engagement from key stakeholders e.g. School, Church Commissioners, Penryn TC, Network Rail, Lambs Lane residents, West Country Land, Sainsbury's, Vospers etc
- The Union corner housing risked being left out of local neighbourhoods unless a better access and connections could be made and possibly local facilities e.g. shop.
- The potential sports hub around the school was a vital facility to develop next to these neighbourhoods.
- The sites around Kergilliack Farm should provide a local centre which can also be accessed by the Conway Road area residents. The enhancement of the Football club site could provide further local facilities.
- The sites adjacent to Menehay Farm could provide local facilities on Bickland water road at the junction with Mongleath Road
- It is vital that the nature of Bickland Water Road changes through design and lower speed limit to become safer and more pedestrian friendly. This needs to become a street to properly allow new housing areas to integrate with existing communities.
- It was noted that Ships and Castles leisure centre was not in a very accessible location for most of the population. If its future was under consideration then the Tregenver School and playing field could offer a more accessible central site.
- The Swanpool / Goldenbank estates had great need of some local facilities and it may be possible to identify a site for a local shop or mixed use building. It was suggested [not confirmed] that the open green central area may have been unsuitable for development because of ground conditions.