

Examiner Letter



Penrith Town Council

Unit 1, Church House, 19-24 Friargate, Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 7XR
Tel: 01768 899 773 Email: office@penrithtowncouncil.gov.uk

24 August 2021

Dear Mr Slater

Penrith Neighbourhood Development Plan

Following receipt of your post hearing notes on the public examination of the Penrith Neighbourhood Development Plan, Penrith Town Council has been working on the issues raised and which are detailed with this letter.

1. Results of Community Consultations

Please find attached at **Appendix A** a document setting out the responses to the consultations.

2. Mapping

Revised mapping is attached as requested at **Appendix B**. We would print these as A3 documents within the NDP to enable them to be folded out. In order to get clarity I have had to split the mapping into a number of sectors. I can increase the number of maps should you feel that they should be bigger. The mapping now includes:

Red – Com2 sites as designated within Eden District Council's Local Plan.

Purple – Additional Policy 8 and 9 areas from the NDP including Beacon Hill

Blue – Com2 sites as designated within Eden District Council's Local Plan. The sites with a Reference Number are also included within our NDP.

3. Criteria

When deciding whether to designate areas under Policy 8 (Local Green Spaces) or Policy 9 (Sport, Leisure and Recreation) of the NDP, Councillors used local knowledge and visited the areas proposed for designation. In general those areas proposed under Policy 8 had been put forward by the public during our consultations or were well known by Councillors as informal areas used by residents for unstructured play, gathering together (especially during this last year for sitting outside and talking) and in some cases, the spaces are maintained and planted by residents and community groups with flowers or vegetables. One area has been used for hens.



They are areas that provide welcome and attractive green space within the town and are used for health and wellbeing. The Local Plan has allocated part of some of these areas as a COM2 site (eg PP66) without allocating the full enclosed area (owned by the Town Council) although it is unclear why.

Allotment sites are included within Policy 8 of our draft NDP although it could be argued that they could be included within Policy 9 (Sport, Leisure and Recreation). We included them within Policy 8 as Members felt that should there cease to be a requirement for allotments at any time in the future, they should be retained as local green space for the community.

Areas proposed under Policy 9 of the NDP include more formal sport, leisure and recreation facilities with play equipment etc including school playing fields which are also used outside school hours and term time by the local community. Members noted that within the Local Plan full areas had not been designated. For example part of the playing fields at both secondary schools (PS55 and PS62) had been omitted as had a number of holes at the golf course (PN19).

4. Beacon Hill

Representatives of Penrith Town Council held a virtual meeting with representatives of Lowther Estates on 4 March which was facilitated by officers of Eden District Council. Lowther Estates presented their suggested policy and the Town Council asked questions of the representatives and listened to their suggestions for the front part of the Beacon. There was concern that during this meeting the representatives of Lowther Estates stated that they saw no problem with incremental development along the front.

The Planning Committee considered and debated Lowther Estates draft policy at its meeting on 12 April. The Committee considered the public consultation responses carried out during the NDP process and from EDC's Masterplan consultation and made suggestions as to what they would consider acceptable for the front of the Beacon. The meeting resolved that the Town Council's Planning Consultant be asked to draft a potential policy incorporating the suggestions of the Planning Committee. The draft policy was considered and approved by the Planning Committee on 7 June 2021.

A meeting was held with representatives of the landowners on 19 July, again facilitated by officers of Eden District Council in order that the draft policy agreed by Town Councillors could be shared and comments received. At that meeting it was reiterated that the policy included suggestions that may be acceptable, subject to detailed planning proposals and that they were not a requirement that the landowner was required or obliged to provide.



An extra ordinary Council meeting was held on 27 July to consider the proposed policy for Beacon Hill Protected Landscape Feature being recommended by the Planning Committee, as well as the objections lodged by the representatives of the landowner who was also invited to attend but declined and submitted written representation.

Friends of Penrith Beacon attended to make a presentation and a written representation was submitted by Keep Penrith Special which was read out. Both groups supported Penrith Town Council's policy in principle although some slight word changes were suggested. The Town Council approved the policy for Beacon Hill with some of the changes proposed. The Town Council's agreed policy (**Appendix C1**), proposed policy submitted by Lowther Estates (**Appendix C2**) and objections from the representatives of the landowner (**Appendix C3**) are included with this letter as are the minutes of the Council Meeting (**Appendix C4**)

The Town Council took the following into consideration:

- a. Lowther Estates, in their proposed policy, suggested splitting the area in question by designating 33.06 ha as Local Green Space (outlined in black on their plan) and 9.59 ha as protected open space (outlined in red on their plan) on which they would wish to develop. The Town Council were reassured that at the hearing and in the post hearing note, you had accepted that the whole area shown in our documentation as PN14, was in close proximity to Penrith and, more importantly, was considered to be demonstrably special holding significance in terms of its landscape value, its use for community events, its recreational value and its ecological value. The decision to include the whole area within a proposed Beacon Hill policy was made as Councillors felt that splitting the area diluted the argument that it was demonstrably special and could lead to a weakening of the argument for the rest of the hill.
- b. The Town Council feels that the proposed policy accords with Policy EC4 of the Eden Local Plan and that the commercial aspirations of the landowner have not been frustrated. The landowners own the remainder of Beacon Hill amounting to approximately 83 ha which is less steeply wooded and on which they could, should they wish, submit an application for development. It is also felt that the Town Council's proposed policy would add value to any development on the rear that may be proposed by the landowners as a pleasant and peaceful place to walk or cycle whilst looking over to the Lake District fells.



5. Town Centre Improvements

The Town Council has been asked to clarify what sort of development would be expected to make contributions to town centre improvements set out in Policy 13 of the NDP, either by way of financial contributions or on-site delivery.

Other developments within the District have already made a community contribution through S106 monies to fund or improve play areas or have made contributions direct to the parish to fund initiatives and public realm improvements. This includes a relatively recent development of 56 houses. In line with this Penrith Town Council believes the following types of development should make a contribution that would be negotiated between the developer and the Town Council:

- a. New developments within an area should either provide a proper safe play area with equipment for primary age children or provide a contribution to allow play areas nearby to be improved or developed and a general contribution for public realm to maintain and improve the town centre and gateway sites for residents and visitors alike. The Town Council recognises that some developers would develop incrementally or split a site between developers to remain under a threshold so as to avoid providing such a contribution which the Town Council would wish to avoid.
- b. The renovation or development of town centre mixed use or commercial buildings.
- c. New commercial developments within industrial estates.

Such a policy ensures that:

- Children are able to play safely either on a new development or within existing areas close by on age appropriate good quality equipment that helps their health and wellbeing.
- Public realm within the town is maintained and improved ensuring that the town remains an attractive and safe place to live.
- Gateway sites are welcoming and improved for residents and visitors.
- Contributions would enable the Town Council to fund events and arts and culture again enhancing the facilities available within Penrith

Yours sincerely,



Councillor Scott Jackson
Chair of Planning Committee



Penrith Town Council Response to Post Hearing Note

1. Community Consultations

Planning Inspector Comment 'is there a document that sets out, in numerical terms, the answers given to each question in the surveys and the total number of responses'?

Initial consultation took place during March and April 2017. The introductory film reached just over 9,000 people and 362 responses were received. Not everyone responded to all the questions.

4. What sizes of houses do you think are required			
1 Bedroom	21		
2 Bedroom	39		
3 Bedroom	47		
4 Bedroom +	18		

5. What styles of houses should there be			
Detached	22		
Semi-detached	42		
Terrace	32		
3 Storey Town House	17		
Smaller Bungalows	36		
Larger Bungalows	13		
Retirement Properties	20		
Flats	18		

6. Should properties be available as:			
Open Market	20		
Social Rented	34		
Private Rented	13		
Affordable	46		
Part rent / Part buy	29		
Starter Homes	31		
Self build	21		



7. Should new builds include green / environmental features such as			
PV / solar panel	43		
Rainwater harvesting	44		
Bird/Bat boxes	29		

8. Are green spaces important to you			
Yes	58		
No	1		

9. Which green spaces are important		
Fairhill playing field	28	
Musgrave Street, Folly Lane, Salkeld Rd and James St allotments	34	
Children's Play areas	41	
Coronation Gardens	25	
Wetheriggs Country Park	19	
Thaka Beck Nature Reserve	40	
Castle Park	58	
Other	17	

10. How could we improve communal green spaces		
Improved planting	33	
Play areas for children	35	
Outdoor gym equipment	30	
Community Orchards	23	

15. Do you think there is a parking problem in Penrith?		
Yes	63	
No	22	
Not Sure	4	

16. Is signage adequate for those in a vehicle or on foot / bike?		
Yes	32	
No	26	
Not Sure	16	

17. It has been suggested that some of Penrith should be pedestrianised, do you agree?		
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	Yes	54
	No	33
18.	Do we need to look at a one way system or ring road for Penrith	
	Yes	42
	No	26
	Don't Know	13

19.	Do we need improved cycle and walking routes round the town	
	Yes	43
	No	20

20	Is the appearance of the Town Centre	
	Good	27
	Neither good nor poor	24
	Poor	7

23	Are street furniture (benches, litter bins, bus shelters, planter boxes) and public toilets	
	Good	20
	Neither good nor poor	19
	Poor	13
	No opinion	3

25	Should we protect the character of the conservation area and listed buildings	
	Yes	47
	No	4
	Don't Know	3

Initial consultation reported to Neighbourhood Development Plan Group

5 Apr 17 https://www.penrithtowncouncil.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/170425_NPG_Notes-5-Apr-17.pdf

10 May 2017 https://www.penrithtowncouncil.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/170510_NPG_Notes-10May17.pdf

14 June https://www.penrithtowncouncil.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/170619_NPCG_Notes-14-June17.pdf



Minutes of Green Spaces Group 22 Jan 18

https://www.penrithtowncouncil.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/180122_NPCG_Green-Spaces-Meeting.pdf

Minutes 10 October 18 re Beacon https://www.penrithtowncouncil.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/190503_NDPG_Notes_10Oct18.pdf

Preferred Options Consultation 26 June – 31 July

<https://www.penrithtowncouncil.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/FULL-PTC-Consultation-Responses.pdf>

Records Numbers – 70 individual responses

The number of distinct comments on each objective / policy are as follows:

Objective 1 Sustainable Development	9
Objective 2 Housing	12
Objective 3 Greenspaces	54
Objective 4 Culture and Leisure	6
Objective 5 Wellbeing	8
Objective 6 Education	4
Objective 7 Town Centre Car Parking	6
Objective 8 Traffic Management	5
Objective 9 Penrith Town Centre	7

Full detailed responses can be found on line at

<https://www.penrithtowncouncil.co.uk/neighbourhood-plan/consultation/informal-consultation-on-draft-plan/>

Regulation 14 Consultation 4 February to 1 April 2019

The full consultation responses can be found on line at

<https://www.penrithtowncouncil.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan/consultation/regulation-14-consultation/> A total of 290 responses was received

248 Residents

32 Businesses

5 Groups/Organisations

5 Anonymous

A summary of the responses can be found at

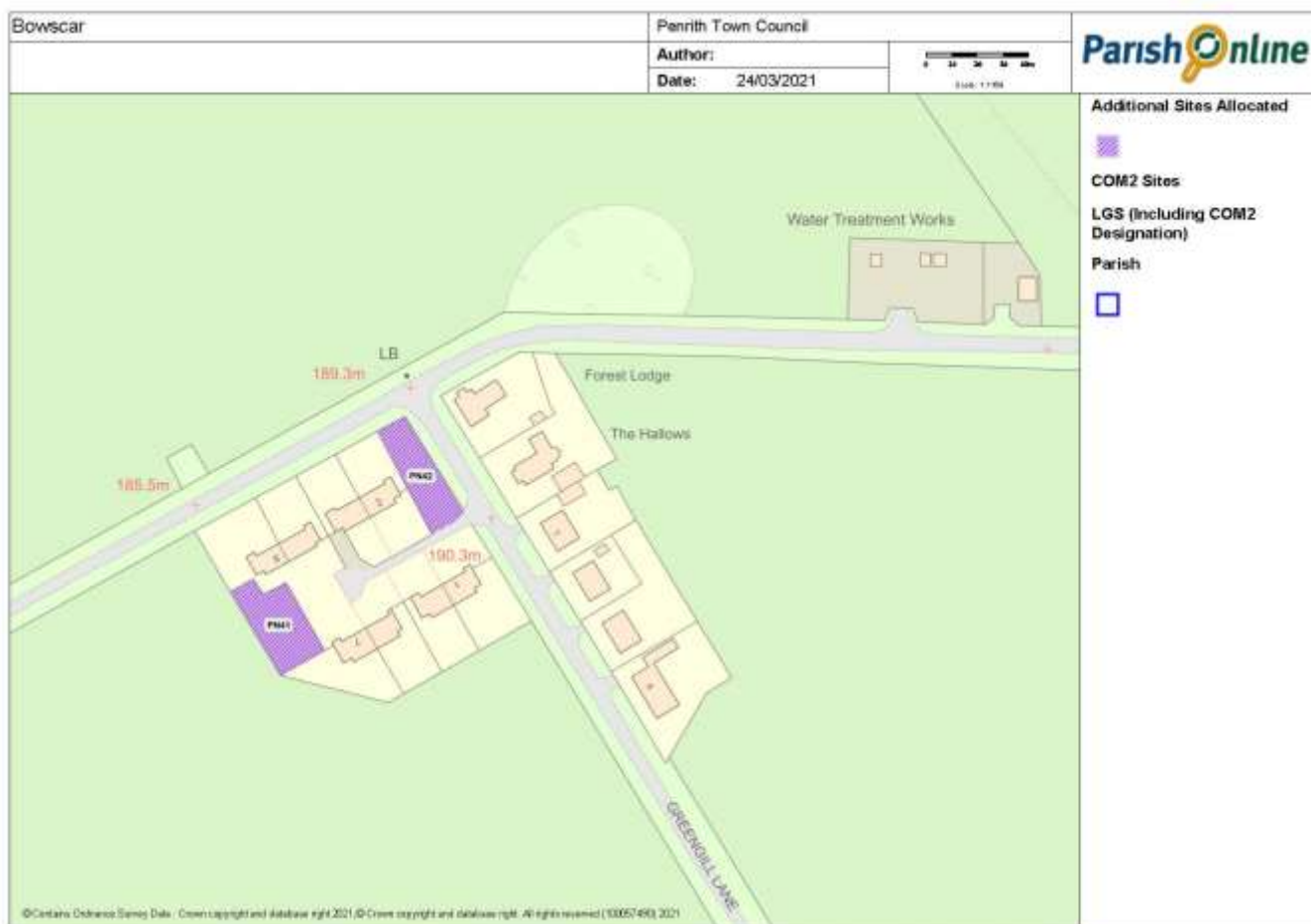
<https://www.penrithtowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Summary-of-Responses-to-Regulation-14-NP-Consultation.pdf>

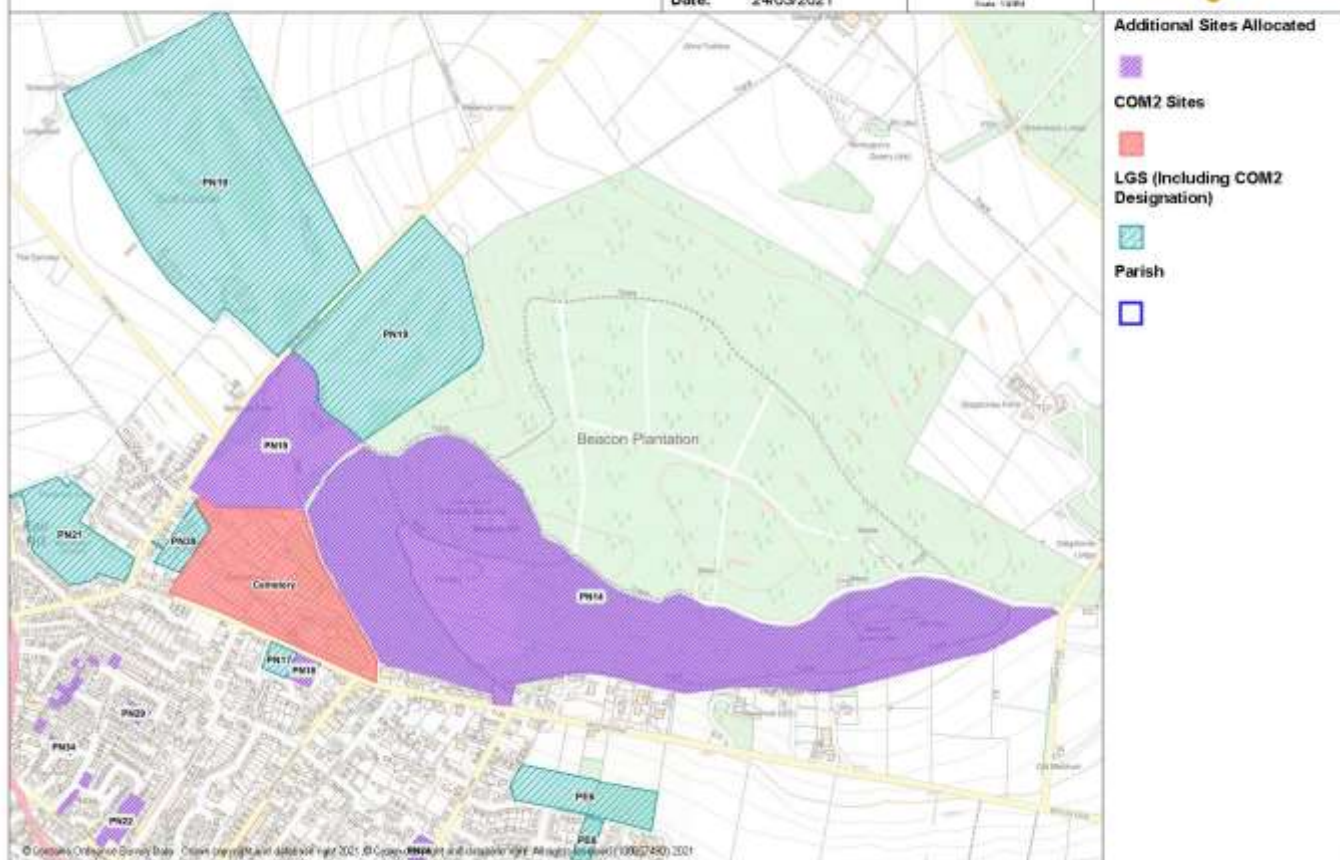


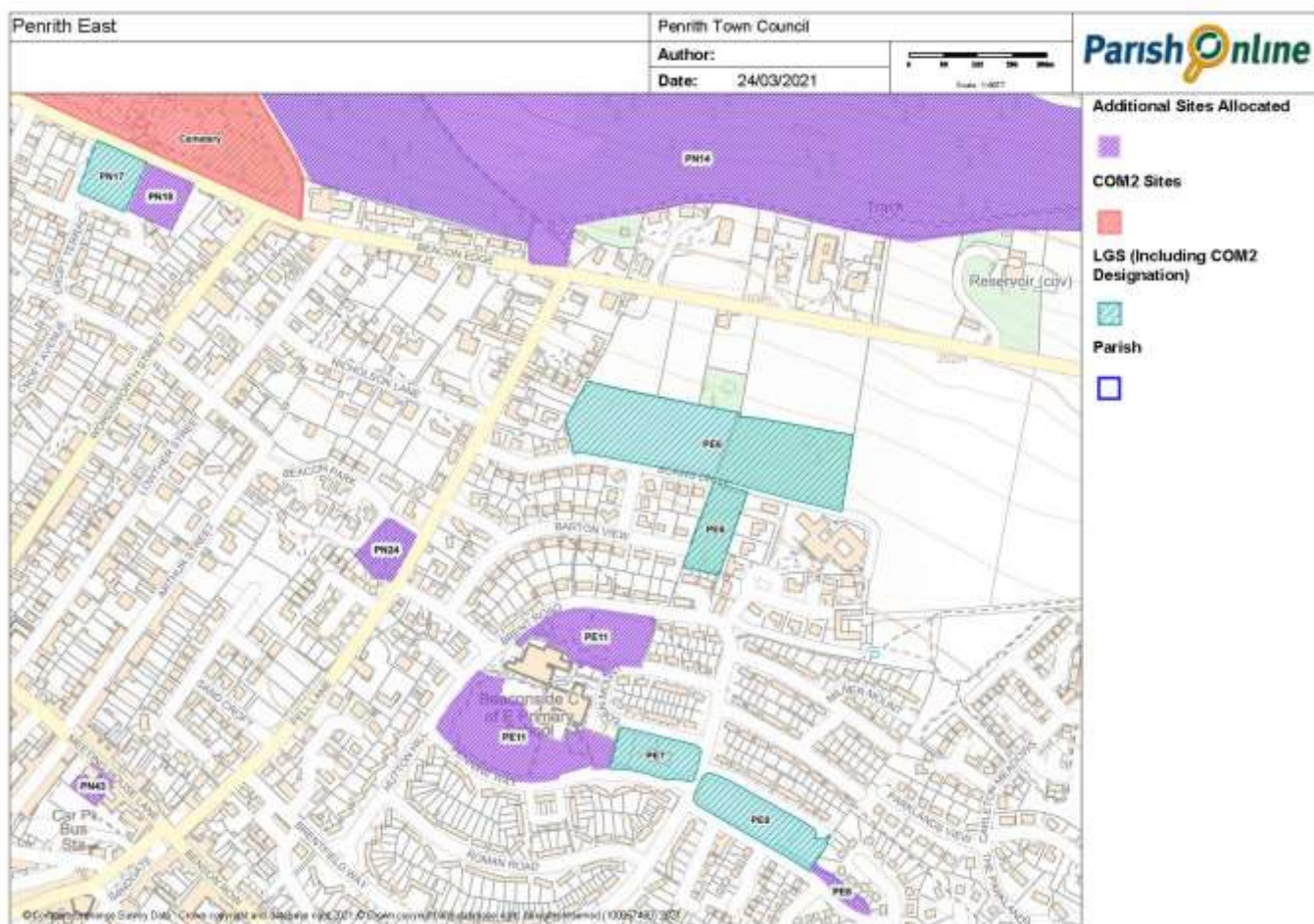
Appendix B

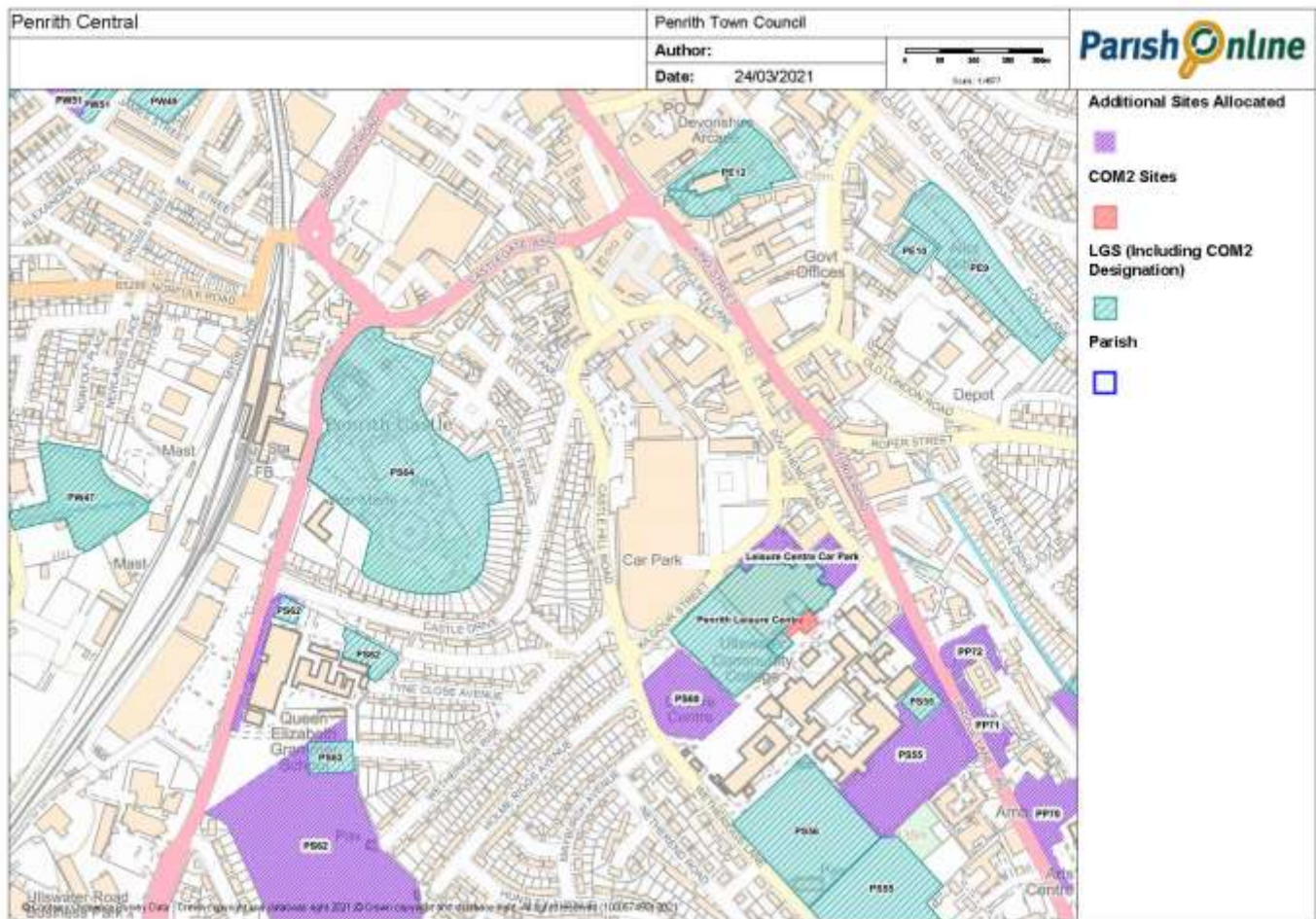
Revised Mapping

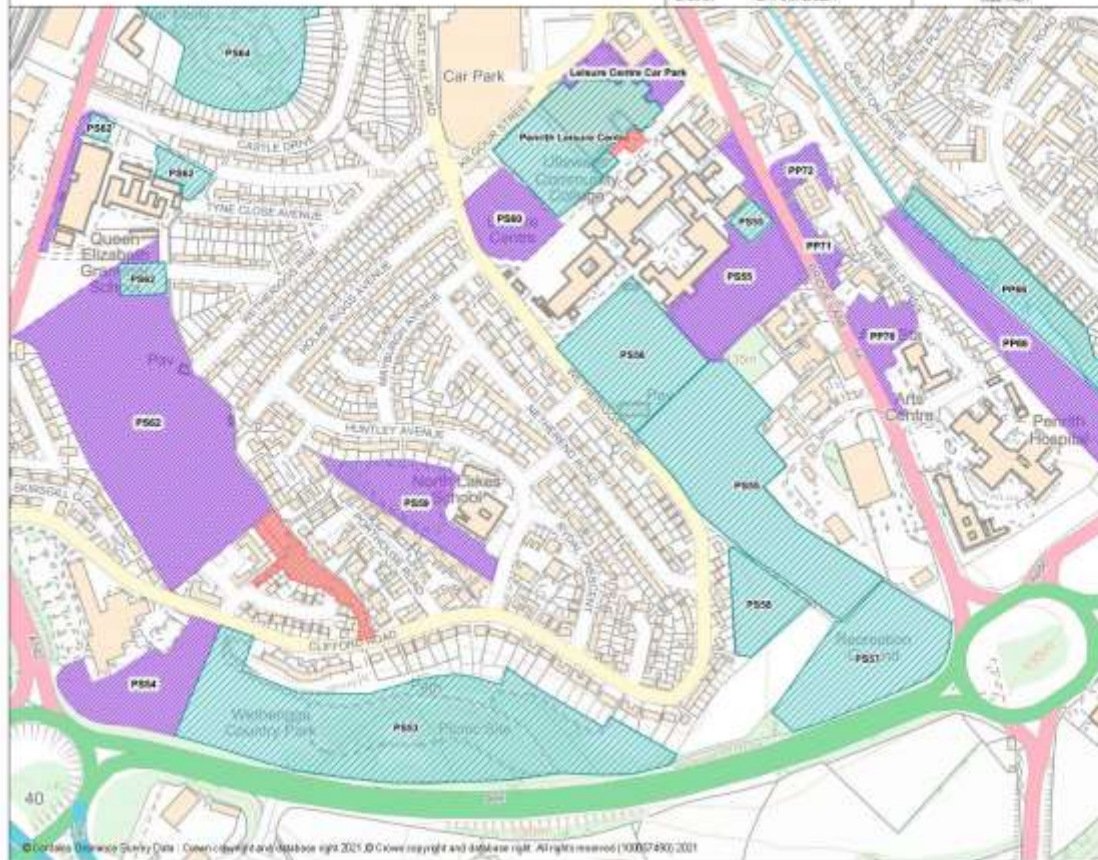
1. Penrith Overview
2. Bowscar
3. Penrith North – Anchor Farm
4. Penrith North
5. Penrith East
6. Penrith West
7. Penrith Central
8. Penrith Central South
9. Penrith Leisure Centre
10. Penrith Pategill and Carleton
11. Frenchfield Sports Pitches and Penrith Football Club











Additional Sites Allocated

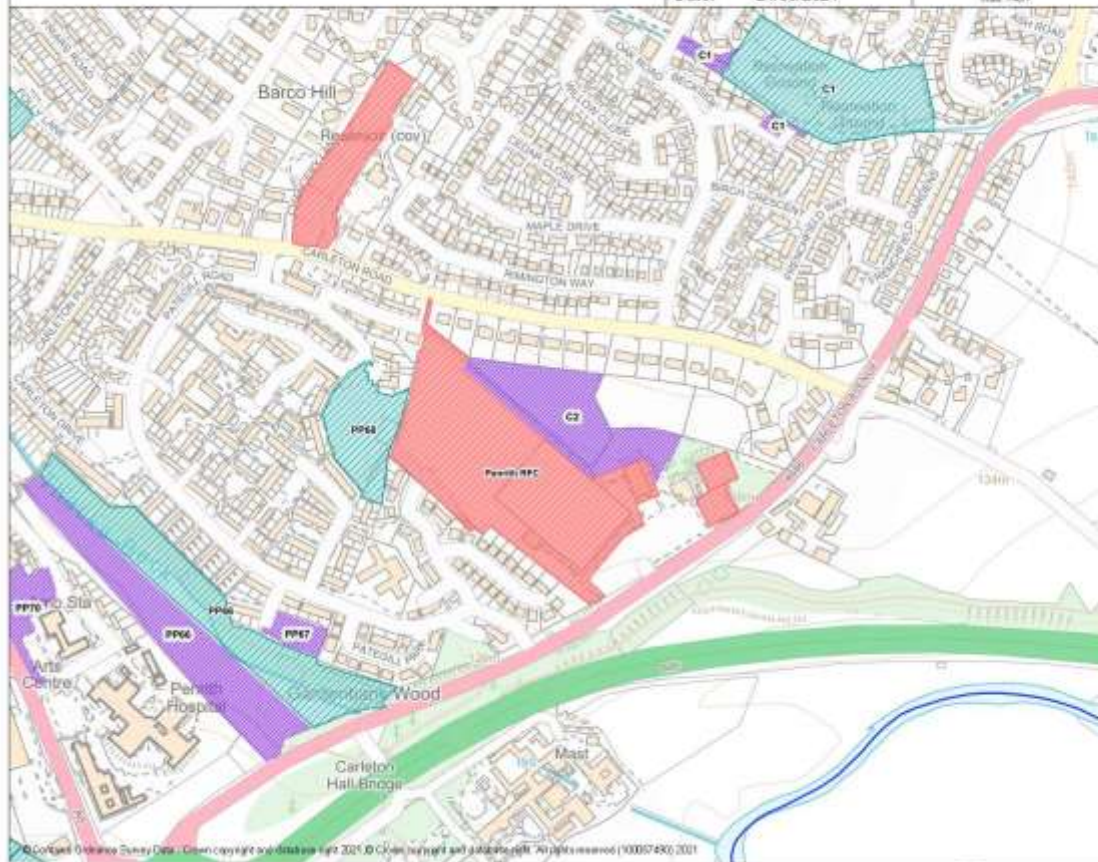
COM2 Sites

LGS (Including COM2 Designation)

Parish

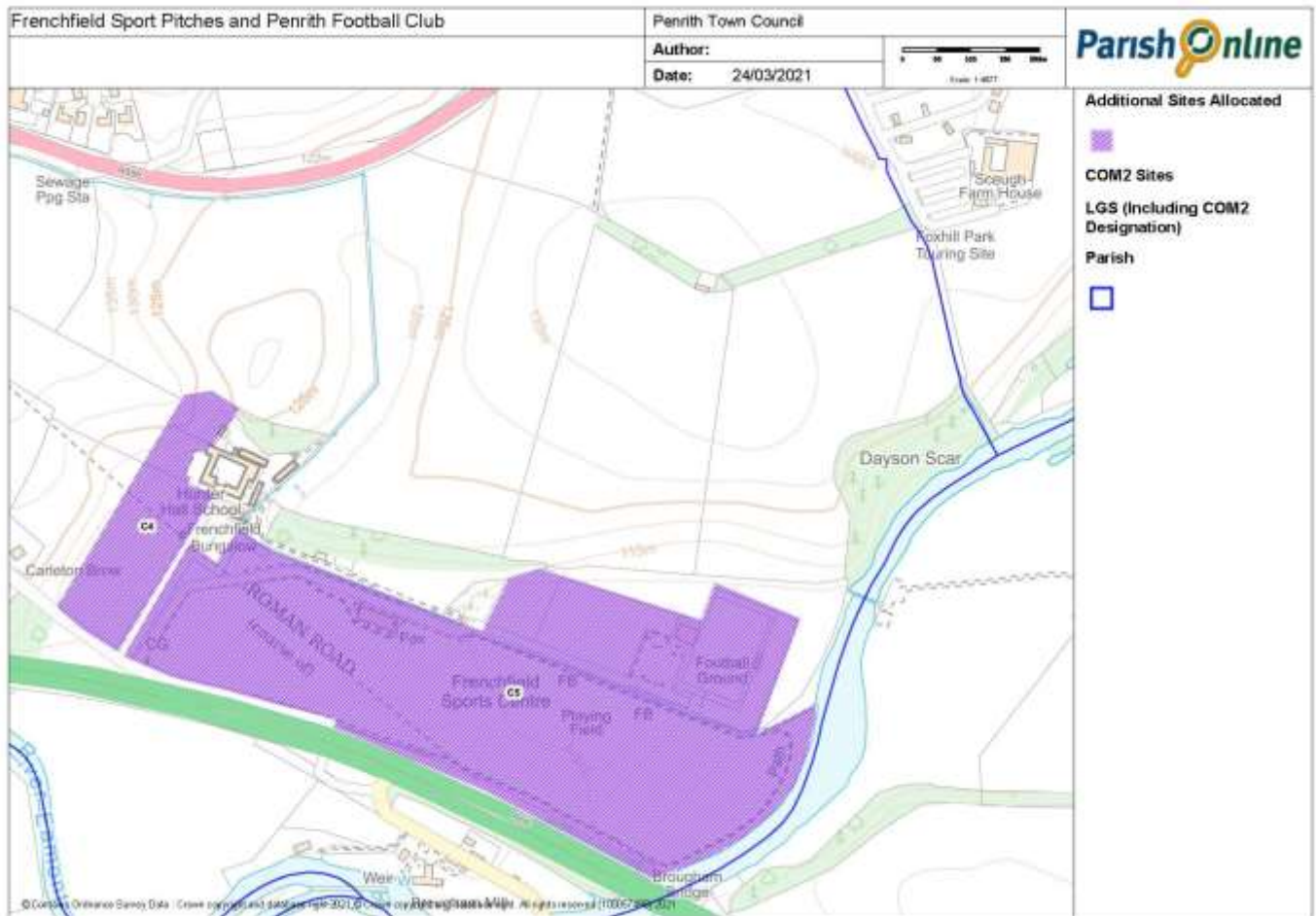






Additional Sites Allocated

- COM2 Sites
- LGS (Including COM2 Designation)
- Parish



POLICY - Beacon Hill Protected Landscape Feature

Beacon Hill is a valued and prominent local landmark forming an elevated, wooded backdrop to the north-east of Penrith. The area **identified on the Policies Map as PN14 (attached)** will be a protected landscape feature and any new development will only be permitted when it clearly demonstrates that it conserves and enhances the existing landscape, character and function of this important woodland area.

Proposals for development within the area identified on the Policy Map should conserve and enhance the recreational value (including the extent of public access), biodiversity value, heritage and cultural value, woodland character, important views (to and from the Beacon) and contribution of the area to a wider landscape character and sense of place.

The following types of development in principle may, subject to detailed proposals, be considered to be compatible with these aims:

1. the construction of narrow well screened permeable footpaths, including a permeable path suitable for disabled access to the top of the Beacon from the south eastern end of the site adjacent to the Roundthorn Hotel;
2. the erection of interpretation boards to provide information for walkers and other users;
3. the erection of a suitable open sided structure suitably screened that could be used as a forest school area by local schools and community groups;
4. the development of a forest art or sculpture trail;
5. the construction of narrow well screened permeable tracks suitable for cycling that are separate from footpaths; and
6. the construction of a small suitably screened off road parking area at the southern end of the site

Development proposals that would provide accommodation for overnight stays (e.g. chalets, pods or camping) will not be permitted.

Necessary forestry operations involved in the maintenance and management of the woodland will be supported.

Background Justification

1. Beacon Hill makes an important contribution to the character of Penrith and the surrounding area. It is an iconic and most valued feature of the local landscape providing an elevated, attractive, distinctive and wooded backdrop to the north-east of Penrith and provides important recreational and wellbeing opportunities for local residents and visitors.

2. Beacon Hill is an unspoilt green space and wildlife area, plainly visible from both short and long-distance views from the northern and southern approaches to the town from the M6 and A6, the eastern approach along the A66 and from many feature locations within the town itself, such as the Railway Station and Castle Park. Rising some 286m (937 feet) above sea level to the north of the town, Beacon Hill provides an unmissable wooded backdrop with a special place in local people's affections.
3. Beacon Hill is also home to Beacon Tower, a Grade 1 listed monument built in 1719, on a spot where beacons have been lit in times of war and emergency since the time of Henry VIII. From here there are open views north and south across the Eden Valley and westwards to the Lake District National Park and UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The PNDP seeks to protect the landscape, character and function of the area of Beacon Hill identified on the Policies Map from development which would have an adverse impact on its intrinsic beauty. Currently used by local residents, and those from further away, for informal recreation, the access to the area is limited to one permissive path. The Town Council would like to pursue, with the agreement of the landowners, wider public access and better facilities for informal recreation such as walking, cycling, dog walking, and jogging. In addition, the Town Council would seek to work in partnership with the landowners to assist with applications to appropriate funding bodies to develop this area for the benefit of the community.

Relevant District Planning Policies

Eden Local Plan 2014-2032

ENV1 Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Environment, Biodiversity and Geodiversity

ENV2 Protection and Enhancement of Landscape and Trees

ENV4 Green Infrastructure Networks

Penrith Town Council Strategic Priorities

Health and Wellbeing, Growth, Community Engagement

DRAFT PENRITH NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Draft Policy – Beacon Hill

Area NP14 (Beacon Hill) will be designated as a Protected Open Space, by virtue of being:

1. In reasonably close proximity to Penrith town;
2. Demonstrably special to Penrith and holding a particular local significance because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity and richness of its wildlife.

This land is located outside the settlement boundary of Penrith. The management of development within NP14 (Beacon Hill) should be consistent with "A Vision for Eden's Rural Areas" as described by chapter 3.18 of the Eden District Local Plan. The land is suitable for small scale tourism development, as defined by Eden District Local Plan Policy EC4 (tourism accommodation and facilities). This land is not suitable for permanent residential accommodation.

Description of land....TBC

Relevant District Planning Policies

ENV1 Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Environment, Biodiversity and Geodiversity

ENV2 Protection and Enhancements of Landscapes and Trees

ENV4 Green Infrastructure Networks

EC4 Tourism Accommodation and Facilities

Penrith Town Council Strategic Priorities:

Health and Wellbeing.

Supporting tourism

MAP A POLICIES MAP

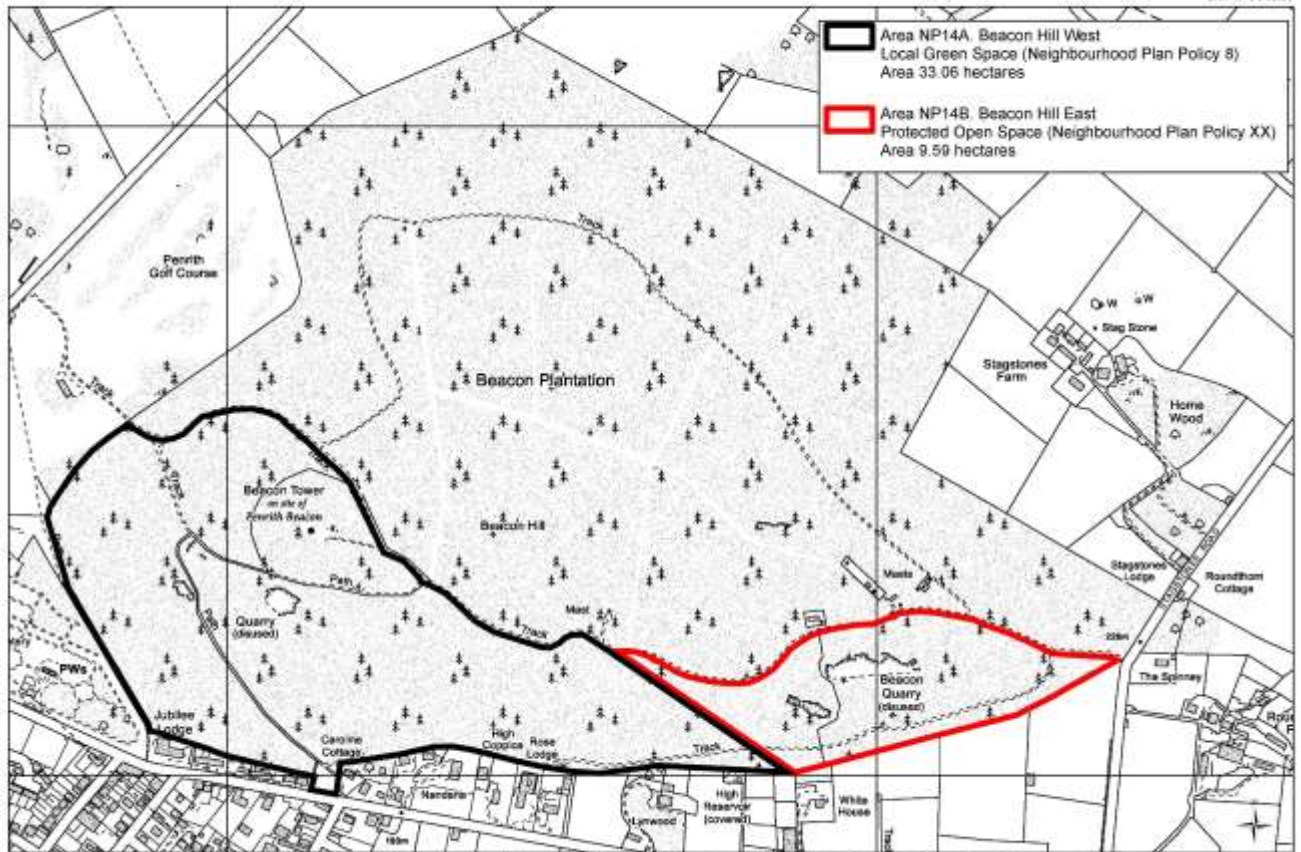
NP14 is given a different colour

The Policy 8 sites should be called "Local Green Space" rather than "Protected Green Space"

Version 1

16th Feb 2021

Penrith Beacon



Scale 1:5,000 Date: 15/03/2021 Crown Copyright 2015. All rights reserved. License number 010056982 Document Path: L:\ArcView\David Biles\Beacon\Beacon Designation.mxd

Representation from Lowther Estate Trust and Lonsdale Settled Estates

I represent the landowners of Beacon Hill – Lowther Estate Trust and Lonsdale Settled Estate. The landowners object to the draft policy “Beacon Hill Protected Landscape Feature”, for the following reasons.

1. Paragraph 10 of the Examiner’s Post Hearing Notes (10th February 2021) states: *“During the hearing I offered a possible alternative solution, that rather than stretching the definition of LGS in order to secure the protection of the wooded slopes of Beacon Hill, which the community clearly aspired to, one possible option would be to look as to whether a separate policy could achieve both the aspirations of the Town Council - to protect the forest area so close to the town from inappropriate development yet which would not frustrate the legitimate commercial aspirations of the landowner.”* This draft policy will frustrate the aspirations of the landowner to undertake small scale tourist development (further to Policy EC4 of the Eden District Local Plan) anywhere at Beacon Hill.
2. Policy items 1 to 6 are all community aspirations. An aspiration of the landowner for small scale tourist development limited to a minority part of Beacon Hill is specifically prohibited.
3. It is a “Local Green Space” policy by another name.
4. Measuring 41 hectares, it is an extensive tract of land and a blanket designation of open countryside.
5. It is more restrictive than draft NP Local Green Space policy 8. It includes the test of “conserve and enhance”, which is more commonly found in heritage policies. For example, Eden District LP policy ENV10 states *“The Council will require all proposals for development to conserve and where appropriate, enhance the significance of Eden’s heritage assets and their setting.”* This restriction is not appropriate for Beacon Hill, which lies in open countryside and outside a Conservation Area.
6. The draft NP policy 8 states *“Development of the designated Local Green Spaces must be consistent with national planning policy for Green Belts.”* NPPF Green Belt policy allows certain types of development (“not inappropriate”), set out in NPPF paragraphs 145 and 146. However, draft policy “Beacon Hill Protected Landscape Feature” will prohibit development otherwise acceptable in Green Belt. The proposed restriction is not appropriate for a site that is not National Park, AONB, Green Belt or Local Green Space.
7. It is unnecessarily prescriptive and ill-defined, referring to “narrow”, “small” “open sided”, “suitably screened”, “southern end of the site” etc. I suggest just mention paths and a car park.
8. Given the draft policy fails to recognise the commercial aspirations of the landowner, the policy is incompatible with the draft policy’s aspiration to improve public access and to “work in partnership with the landowners”. In other words, the community aspirations listed at 1 to 6 are unlikely to be delivered.

9. The draft policy does not list the relevant Eden District Local Plan policies to which it relates.

Instead, the draft policy for Beacon Hill written by the landowner and circulated to Penrith Town Council on 15th March 2021 should be the basis for a jointly agreed policy. It retains the majority (33.06 hectares) of Beacon Hill as Local Green Space, as originally intended by the draft Neighbourhood Plan. The minority part (9.59 hectares) would be suitable for development as defined by Local Plan policy EC4, which is the current situation. That draft policy is mentioned in paragraph 1.16 and copied at appendix 1 of the PTC agenda (27th July 2021). The agenda does not explain if and why the landowners draft policy has been entirely rejected by the Town Council. None of its elements have been taken forward into the Town Council's later alternative policy copied at agenda appendices 2 and 3.

Paragraph 12 of the Examiner's Post Hearing Notes (10th February 2021) states *"if it is impossible to reach a jointly agreed position, then I need to be advised and I will continue with the examination of this issue, based on the respective positions as set out already and make appropriate recommendations."* Does the Town Council still believe it is possible to reach an agreed policy? If not, then I suggest both parties inform the Examiner as soon as possible.

Andrew Murphy
Stansgate Planning



Unit 1, Church House, 19-24 Friargate, Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 7XR
Tel: 01768 899 773 Email: office@penrithtowncouncil.gov.uk

DRAFT Minutes of the meeting of

PENRITH TOWN COUNCIL

Held on **Tuesday 27 July 2021**, at 6.00 pm, at Penrith Methodist Church.

PRESENT

Cllr. Bowen	Pategill Ward	Cllr. Jackson	North Ward
Cllr. M. Clark	South Ward	Cllr. Kenyon	North Ward
Cllr. S. Clarke	Carleton Ward	Cllr. Lawson	Carleton Ward
Cllr. Davies	West Ward	Cllr. C. Shepherd	East Ward
Cllr. Donald	North Ward	Cllr. M. Shepherd	North Ward
Cllr. Hawkins	East Ward		

Acting Town Clerk
Deputy Town Clerk

The Town Council resolved from 20 May 2019, until the next relevant Annual Meeting of the Council, that having met the conditions of eligibility as defined in the Localism Act 2011 and SI 965 The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012, to adopt the General Power of Competence.

**DRAFT MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF THE
FULL COUNCIL
27 July 2021**

PTC21/47 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Knaggs, Snell, Fallows.

Councillor Burgin had given his apologies at the previous meeting of Council.

**PTC21/48 Declarations of Interest and Requests for
Dispensations**

Members were asked to disclose their interests in matters to be discussed whether disclosable pecuniary or other registrable interest, and to decide requests for dispensations:

Councillor Donald declared that he was a member of the Penrith Refugee Network.

Councillor M. Clark declared that she was a member for Eden District Council South Ward.

Councillor Lawson declared during the meeting that he was a member of the Friends of Penrith Beacon.

PTC21/49 Public Participation

a) Public Representations

Members were asked whether they were content to suspend the Council Standing Orders and allow Mr Dawson representing the Friends of Penrith Beacon to speak during Agenda item 6.

RESOLVED THAT:

The Standing Orders be suspended, and Mr Dawson be permitted to speak for a period of up to three minutes as part of Agenda Item 6, Beacon Hill.

The Deputy Town Clerk read out the following question received by Keep Penrith Special.

'Keep Penrith Special's campaign team strongly supports Penrith Town Council's creation of a policy to protect Beacon Hill from development.

While supporting the policy in principle, we have some suggestions for wording changes that we consider would make the policy more robust and we have detailed these in a separate letter to the council.

We are deeply concerned that the policy is proposed to cover only a section of Beacon Hill, not the greater area to the north whose terrain would be more

suitable for development. We have concerns that any development here would be the thin end of the wedge for development spilling out into the surrounding fields, and crucially into those on the Eden Valley side as was once marked out on the Masterplan. Development here would mean the loss of nearly everything this policy is trying to protect: the cultural and iconic significance, the views to and from the Beacon, flora and fauna, woodland character, and so on.

On that basis, we ask the Town Council if they would consider going further and find ways to protect the *entirety* of Beacon Hill. Otherwise, this policy merely protects the wellbeing of the local community and even that is not a certainty being dependent on the goodwill of the landowners.'

Councillor Jackson responded as follows:

'I would like to thank Keep Penrith Special for their question.

Throughout the Neighbourhood Plan process and consultations, Penrith Town Council has given great consideration to the Beacon as it was obvious it held a very special place in the affections of the residents of Penrith and the surrounding area. The size of the whole area was always of concern as Local Green Space has to meet the criteria for designation as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework which states that it should not be an extensive tract of land. The Town Council agreed that the area for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Development Plan should be the 'front' of the Beacon away from the commercial forestry although there was always concern about the size at 45 ha.

At this point the Independent Examiner has accepted that the area included by the Town Council is demonstrably special although he has expressed concern about the size of the area. This is why he asked the Town Council to explore the development of a policy specifically for the area without frustrating the commercial aspirations of the landowner. The examiner would not accept extending the area beyond that already identified'.

PTC21/50 EXCLUDED ITEM: Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960

Members were informed that there were no items on the agenda that should be considered without the presence of the press and public, pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act, 1960.

NEW BUSINESS

PTC21/51 Motion from Councillor Jackson supporting 'Together with Refugees'.

Members were asked to consider a motion from Councillor Jackson requesting that the Council signs up to being a member of the Together with Refugees Campaign and that the Council writes to the MP Neil Hudson to request that the rewriting of the Immigration Bill does not discriminate against refugees.

Cllr Lawson joined the meeting at 18:17.

Cllr Hawkins joined the meeting at 18:20.

RESOLVED THAT:

- i. The Council signs up to be a member of the Together with Refugees Campaign.
- ii. The Council sends a letter to Neil Hudson MP to request that the rewriting of the Immigration Bill does not discriminate against refugees and ensures that refugees are treated fairly.

PTC21/52 Beacon Hill

Members were asked to consider and approve a policy specific to Beacon Hill for inclusion within the Neighbourhood Development Plan as recommended by the Town Council's Planning Committee.

Members received a presentation from a representative of Friends of Penrith Beacon.

The Deputy Town Clerk read out a statement from Keep Penrith Special.

RESOLVED THAT:

- i. The policy for Beacon Hill be approved with some minor modifications for inclusion within the Neighbourhood Development Plan (attached to these minutes as an appendix).
- ii. The policy be forwarded to the Independent Examiner for inclusion in the Penrith Neighbourhood Development Plan as a new policy.

PTC21/53 NEXT MEETING

Members noted that the next meeting of Council would be held on 27 September 2021 at 6.00pm with the venue to be determined.

CHAIR:

DATE:

**FOR INFORMATION FOR ALL
MEMBERS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL**

POLICY - Beacon Hill Protected Landscape Feature

Beacon Hill is a valued and prominent local landmark forming an elevated, wooded backdrop to the north-east of Penrith. The area **identified on the Policies Map as PN14 (attached)** will be a protected landscape feature and any new development will only be permitted when it clearly demonstrates that it conserves and enhances the existing landscape, character and function of this important woodland area.

Proposals for development within the area identified on the Policy Map should conserve and enhance the recreational value (including the extent of public access), biodiversity value, heritage and cultural value, woodland character, important views (to and from the Beacon) and contribution of the area to a wider landscape character and sense of place.

The following types of development in principle may, subject to detailed proposals, be considered to be compatible with these aims:

1. the construction of narrow well screened permeable footpaths, including a permeable path suitable for disabled access to the top of the Beacon from the south eastern end of the site adjacent to the Roundthorn Hotel;
2. the erection of interpretation boards to provide information for walkers and other users;
3. the erection of a suitable open sided structure suitably screened that could be used as a forest school area by local schools and community groups;
4. the development of a forest art or sculpture trail;
5. the construction of narrow well screened permeable tracks suitable for cycling that are separate from footpaths; and
6. the construction of a small suitably screened off road parking area at the southern end of the site

Development proposals that would provide accommodation for overnight stays (e.g. chalets, pods or camping) will not be permitted.

Necessary forestry operations involved in the maintenance and management of the woodland will be supported.

Background Justification

1. Beacon Hill makes an important contribution to the character of Penrith and the surrounding area. It is an iconic and most valued feature of the local landscape providing an elevated, attractive, distinctive and wooded backdrop to the north-east of Penrith and provides important recreational and wellbeing opportunities for local residents and visitors.
2. Beacon Hill is an unspoilt green space and wildlife area, plainly visible from both short and long-distance views from the northern and southern approaches to the town from the M6 and A6, the eastern approach along the A66 and from many feature locations within the town itself, such as the Railway Station and Castle Park. Rising some 286m (937 feet) above sea level to the north of the town, Beacon Hill provides an unmissable wooded backdrop with a special place in local people's affections.
3. Beacon Hill is also home to Beacon Tower, a Grade 1 listed monument built in 1719, on a spot where beacons have been lit in times of war and emergency since the time of Henry VIII. From here there are open views north and south across the Eden Valley and westwards to the Lake District National Park and UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The PNDP seeks to protect the landscape, character and function of the area of Beacon Hill identified on the Policies Map from development which would have an adverse impact on its intrinsic beauty. Currently used by local residents, and those from further away, for informal recreation, the access to the area is limited to one permissive path. The Town Council would like to pursue, with the agreement of the landowners, wider public access and better facilities for informal recreation such as walking, cycling, dog walking, and jogging. In addition, the Town Council would seek to work in partnership with the landowners to assist with applications to appropriate funding bodies to develop this area for the benefit of the community.

Relevant District Planning Policies

Eden Local Plan 2014-2032

ENV1 Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Environment, Biodiversity and Geodiversity

ENV2 Protection and Enhancement of Landscape and Trees

ENV4 Green Infrastructure Networks

Penrith Town Council Strategic Priorities

Health and Wellbeing, Growth, Community Engagement