

Ripley Neighbourhood Plan

Consultation Statement

Introduction

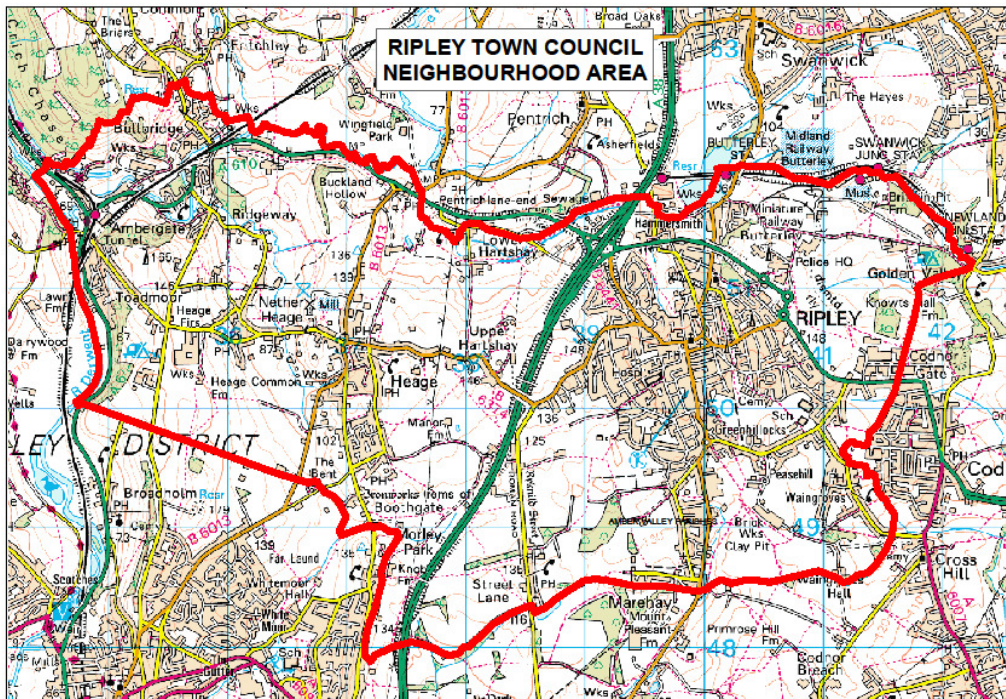
1.1 This Consultation Statement has been prepared to fulfil the legal obligations of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012. Section 15(2) of Part 5 of the Regulations sets out what a Consultation Statement should contain:

- (a) contains details of the persons and bodies who were consulted about the proposed neighbourhood development plan;*
- (b) explains how they were consulted;*
- (c) summarises the main issues and concerns raised by the persons consulted;*
- (d) describes how these issues and concerns have been considered and, where relevant, addressed in the proposed neighbourhood development plan.*

The purpose of this document

1. This document provides a record of the engagement that took place regarding the Ripley Neighbourhood Plan area and related Neighbourhood Planning body. The main methods used to publicise the engagement process are also documented, along with the main findings from the engagement.

2. A formal engagement period provided members of the public and other key stakeholders an opportunity to submit comment on the proposed neighbourhood plan area and proposed neighbourhood planning body for Ripley. The proposed neighbourhood planning body was Ripley Town Council and the proposed neighbourhood planning area is shown in Fig 1. below



Regulations and government guidance that applied:

Stage 1: defining the neighbourhood

First, local people had to decide how they intended to work together to undertake the production of the neighbourhood Plan. Ripley is “parished” therefore, the Town Council has led on the neighbourhood planning process.

The Town Council applied to the local planning authority to designate the neighbourhood as identified at Appendix 1 and Figure 1 above.

The planning authority checked that the suggested boundaries for different neighbourhoods made sense and fitted together, and undertook the appropriate notification process

Source [http://www.ambervalley.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/planning/community-planning/local-development-framework-\(ldf\)/ripley-neighbourhood-area-application.aspx](http://www.ambervalley.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/planning/community-planning/local-development-framework-(ldf)/ripley-neighbourhood-area-application.aspx)

Stage 2: preparing the plan

Local people were engaged in order to pull together and prioritise their early ideas, and start to draw up their plans. These people became the Ripley Neighbourhood Plan Group.

The community group working as the Neighbourhood Plan group established ground rules to follow to produce the draft plan to ensure that this early plan was:

- Generally in line with local and national planning policy framework
- In line with other legal frameworks
- Mindful that the local planning authority has indicated that the area needs to grow, so the neighbourhood plan cannot be used to block the building of new homes and businesses;
- Being used to influence the type, design, location and mix of new development
- Contributing to achieving sustainable development

The Ripley neighbourhood plan seeks to establish general planning policies for the development and use of land in a neighbourhood. The community was asked where new homes and offices should be built, and what they should look like, as well as their views on environmental issues and open spaces. The community was also consulted on the retail and leisure offer as this information would be taken into account by the Neighbourhood Planning group when articulating a vision for the community.

The neighbourhood plan aims to set a vision for the future taking into account the data gathered through community engagement and consultation.

Consultation methodology

The consultation aimed;

- To inform as many people as possible of the existence of the neighbourhood planning process
- To seek the views of people from different areas, and from diverse sectors of the community on the proposals being developed by the Neighbourhood Plan Group, to include the findings of the recent consultations carried out by the Town Council working as Ripley Reckoning

Activities:

- The intention to produce a Neighbourhood Plan and an invitation to contribute toward the process was widely publicised on local print media, on local radio and digital social networks including facebook and Twitter. See <https://www.facebook.com/RipleyReckoning>
- A survey of residents views was undertaken, and separate meetings held with schools, businesses and other stakeholders.
- Public meetings were held in each of the constituent settlements of the parish, at different stages of the planning process
- Agencies with a statutory or other significant interest in The Plan were invited to submit their comments in writing by email and letter, at appropriate stages of the planning process, according to the regulations

Engagement timescales

To comply with the regulations a 6 week consultation period was planned to begin once the Neighbourhood Area was accepted by Amber Valley Borough Council.

The engagement period for this process would have commenced on 23rd March 2013 with the first community drop-in day, however, heavy snowfall meant this event had to be cancelled.

The process commenced on 22nd April, 2013, with a week of face to face engagements with a variety of groups and a random sample of residents identified at Consultation Appendix 1 and culminated on the 27th April with the first of two community drop in days. This had originally been the second date for engagement meaning the process would have taken place within the usual six week engagement timetable. However as this was no longer possible, a second date for the next Community Drop in Day was set for the 8th June.

This engagement period was triggered by formal press notices, copies of which are available to view in Consultation Statement Appendix 2 (CSA2) , as well as the use of social media, Facebook and Twitter. In addition, notices were placed in the Ripley and Heanor Newsletter and on the Town Council website. Flyers were distributed through local shops and businesses and posters were placed both in Ripley and the surrounding villages. The local radio broadcast bulletins informing people of the place and times for the drop in. The website www.towns.org.uk/ripleyreckoning¹ carried daily updates regarding the events happening during the engagement week.

¹ The website was managed by Action for Market Towns and has since been decommissioned.

People and groups engaged

Teachers and pupils from St John's Church of England school

Lons Infant School

Mill Hill School

Parents and helpers at Sure Start Centre Ripley

Local Business people

Traders in Ripley town centre

Random groups of individuals from street research

Waingroves Community Association

Ripley residents association

Random groups of individuals from surrounding villages

Attendees at five open meetings in September 2013

Codnor PC

Amber Valley Borough Council

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust

Consultation methodology

Professional services

Ripley Reckoning, a group set up by Ripley Town Council, began to seek public support for a town Action Plan in 2012.

Rebecca Deans is employed as a marketing consultant and press officer by Ripley Town Council. Ms Deans is fully qualified and experienced in this role and has set up and managed Twitter and Facebook accounts on behalf of Ripley Reckoning, and subsequently for the Neighbourhood Plan steering group.

Ripley Town Council engaged the services of Action for Market Towns to progress their Neighbourhood Plan. AMT devised and largely ran the consultation process from the beginning of 2013 until July 2013.

Rural Action Derbyshire have many years of experience in supporting local communities to produce local plans, and have been promoting and supporting Localism Rights since the Act was passed. RAD were engaged from August 2013 to the end of March 2014. RAD took over the support role for the Steering and working groups, and advised on the public engagement and consultation strategy. RAD provided the OCSI report that profiles the town plan area.

Local context

The local community is diverse, segmented by geography and role, as well as by age and occupation, because the parish includes the town of Ripley and the outlying villages of Heage, Ambergate Bull Bridge and Marehay, as well as distinct areas within the town, such as Waingroves.

People from different parts of the parished area are likely to view development proposals differently, therefore whilst the final proposals are the best fit in terms of the wishes of the population and the regulations, they are bound to be a compromise for some.

We might also expect a different perspective from traders and local businesses. In recognition of this consultation was targeted at different sections separately as well as through broadcast media and social networks.

Ripley Town Council began a consultation process in 2012 under the project heading Ripley Reckoning, RR sought to reinvigorate Ripley through a Town Centre Action Plan; by the time a decision had been made to make a Neighbourhood Plan Ripley Reckoning had set up various consultations and promotions.

Preliminary consultations and publicity

Face to face meetings were arranged in Ripley Town, in different venues and on different days of the week. A tea time session was run for town traders, and a random sample of individuals were interviewed using a standard questionnaire on the main shopping streets. Facebook and Twitter accounts were publicised in the local press, and the Neighbourhood Plan was featured on Amber Sound local radio on several occasions.

The steering group set up working groups to cover; Housing, Transport, Open Spaces and Community Services. Each group carried out research and consultation in their topic area, in addition to the AMT led research.

Key issues consulted on:

- [The Ripley Gateway project / Nottingham Road development](#)
- [The proposed A610 Ripley Codnor bypass/ link road](#)
- [Alternative sites for the Ripley Gateway project \(Hansons Brickworks\)](#)
- [Traffic congestion at Waingroves Rd](#)
- [The Town Centre and retail services](#)
- [Proposed Housing sites in the Neighbourhood Plan](#)
- [The value of the open spaces and parks.](#)

Preliminary Consultation Summary

Date	Event	Venue	Attendee type	Number attending or reached	ref
08. 01 13	Drop in	All Saints Church, Ripley	General public		CS1
23.03.13	Open event	(cancelled)			
22 -25 .04.13	Lons Infant School	Lons Infant School	Teachers & pupils	Not known	
22 -25 .04.13	St John's Cof E school	St John's School	Teachers & pupils	Not known	
22 -25 .04.13	Mill Hill School	Mill Hill School	Teachers & pupils	Not Known	
27.04.13	Open event	Ripley library	General public	156	CSxls 1
25.05.13	Footfall count	Wellington St	General public		
08.06.13	Open Day event	Ripley Library	General Public		
10.06.13	Traders meeting		Traders	25	

Social media				
From March 2013	Facebook (Ripley Reckoning)	Facebook online	'likes' Visits	677 likes 900 – 2000 per week
	Twitter feed	Twitter online	Followers	748
	Radio broadcast	Amber Sound	listeners	20,000 +

Data from these consultations are reproduced in full in the appended documents:

CS xls 1 'Summary of questionnaire responses'

'CS app All responses'

CS xls 2 'contact list all respondents'

Preliminary consultation period April – June 2013

1. This consultation aimed to gather views for the community on their town, seeking answers to questions on :

- What doesn't exist in Ripley that should?
- What needs to be changed about Ripley?
- What's really good about Ripley?
- What's not so good about Ripley?
- What opportunities are there in Ripley for improvement?

The responses were recorded and collated to inform the following consultations and to help develop a vision for Ripley: they summarised below.

2. A paper questionnaire was distributed and administered at open meetings. It aimed to measure satisfaction on number of issues, the questions are at

156 respondees were recorded in CSxls1, questionnaire responses

Summary of comments received during the consultation week in Ripley.

Groups and individuals consulted:

Teachers and pupils from:

- St John's C of E School
- Lons Infant School
- Mill Hill School

Parents and helpers at Sure Start Centre Ripley

Local business people

Traders in Ripley T.C.

Random groups of individuals from street research

Ripley Residents Association

Random groups of individual from surrounding villages

Comments received are appended at:

CS app 2 consultation transcripts

Summarised as follows:

Shoppers / business people / traders

The full transcript of all the comments are in the appendices to this Statement.

Summary

- Many comments refer to services and infrastructure, often expressing concern that these will lag behind housing developments.
- Housing is a common theme in this group of respondents, references are made to the need for appropriate numbers of smaller homes and social housing.
- The Gateway development (proposed in the draft Amber Valley Local Plan) is mentioned and opinion is divided over its suitability, with some welcoming the supermarket proposal and others opposing, while the housing proposal similarly divide views.
- The Bypass also gets mentioned and is also divisive, some people point out that traffic congestion may increase as the result of many of the housing proposals
- Employment issues are raised by several people – although there are no specific proposals.
- The greenbelt is mentioned by several people – all of whom oppose building upon it.

St John's C of E School – pupils, administration staff and teachers

The full transcript of all the comments are in the appendices to this Statement.

Summary

This group of young people and their teachers expressed concern over;

- Facilities for children and teenagers, and the Greenway in terms of its facilities,
- Cycling routes are also mentioned, but a large number of comments concern litter, dog mess and generally criticise the untidiness of the town.
- Shops and the lack of them are another prominent topic.
- The library is approved of in several comments.
- Housing is addressed by several comments, generally people say that more housing is good for Ripley, but more of it should be affordable

Mill Hill School, administrative staff and teachers

Summary

- There are many comments about the poor state of the market
- Some people express concern about the proposed Gateway development while others say that it might provide much needed employment.
- The character and nature of the town is mentioned several times – with a feeling that more could be made of its heritage.

- Some people want more say – through better relations with the police and Ripley Town Council.
- Nuisance behaviour is cited by several respondents.
- Shops and leisure pursuits are quite a common theme – generally people want better shops, and like the leisure centre.

Lons Primary School

Summary

These responses are divided between (presumably) teachers and children

- Adult comments concern the poor employment prospects for young people
- The generally deprived town centre
- Adult education – possibly rather inadequate
- Lack of cinema and restaurants

While the children concentrate on their activities;

- including guides, brownies and beavers, that are appreciated, and dog poo and litter on the Greenway that is not.
- Shops and retail facilities are commonly mentioned and are considered poor.
- There are no comments on housing
- The proposed Gateway development is cited as good for jobs
- The proposed bypass, parking and traffic issues get rare mentions.

Ripley Sure Start / Residents on the street in Ripley and surrounding villages / Residents Association

Summary

- Many comments on the need for affordable housing for young people
- Some people call for action on employment and job opportunities including apprenticeships in traditional industries, and promoting tourism
- There are references to anti-social behaviour, and teenage pregnancies
- No building on the greenbelt

Notes from meeting between Ripley Reckoning Group and Ripley Business People held at The Angel, Ripley on 10th June 2013

Here reproduced in full

Parking

It was pointed out that parking in our town centres had been on the national news.

Suggestion of 2 hours free parking – maybe similar to Heanor with voucher scheme paid for by businesses (Parking Payback Scheme).

Obtain revenue receipts for car parks – especially Town Hall – as free parking for a short period of time to encourage people into Town Centre - could be funded by RTC?

Could revenue costs for car parking be put onto business rates (?)

Free parking for visitors after 4pm? (NB this is enabled by AVBC permit if shopper is a resident.)

Try paying for car parking after period of time spent- upfront costs of barriers could be an obstacle.

The parking restrictions for Oxford Street need to be clarified and made more easy to understand for both pedestrians and motorists.

It was pointed out that both Broxtowe and Erewash are offering an hour's free parking.

Signage

Would sign-age boards of shops index and whereabouts be useful?

Putting signs up to remind people to be proud of their town or highlighting Ripley Reckoning or regeneration initiatives were mooted.

One of the key problems seems to be that people don't know where things are. A sign at every car park saying 'you are here' and pointing out where and what the shops are would be great.

We also need to work together so we know what the total offer is for Ripley as well as each shop's offer. For example U-Duit used to send people to Wilko's for curtain tape, but they're not sure now who sells it. I tried to buy freshly ground coffee from an independent Ripley shop but the Deli no longer sells it and neither does the Butcher's Shop.

Dave Maurice suggested there should be a sign when you come into Ripley such as 'your local radio station is Amber Sound 102.7 FM'.

The market/marketplace

Move market traders into Oxford Street or have different events/festivals on the market place, maybe once a month. Car boot stalls on the Market Place maybe a possibility. Would stall holders be better at running the market similar to Heanor, as they now have 22 stalls on the market, which is making a difference to the footfall in the town.

Oxford Street

Peter Clay suggested that Oxford Street could be covered over, creating an indoor shopping area.

Developments in Heanor

AVBC are working with Heanor Group to improve the High Street image and RTC have had meeting with Simon Jackson about improving Ripley's image.

Mix of shops

There are too many charity shops in Ripley and we need to attract more brand names into the Town Centre.

High rents and rates in Ripley are putting off investors in the Town – Could AVBC contact Landlords with a proposal of lowering rents for a short period of time to encourage start ups.

Branding

The logos of 'Love Heanor' or 'Be part of Belper' appears to have made a difference. What about Ripley?

Appearance – the small things

Litter/weeds etc. in Town Centre not creating the right impression for visitors.

The Greenway used to be an eyesore, but the Town Council put in bins and the Community Payback Scheme now litter pick in the area. It's a different place. It's positive what a little bit of

investment and time can do. We also need to create a better sense of community.

Support from RTC

RTC will enable Traders in the future – maybe to lobby AVBC on rates etc. or DCC on highway matters or similar. The Town Council will help traders and businesses as they know who to speak to and when.

It was suggested to resurrect the Ripley Chamber of Trade or similar to have dialogue with Ripley Town Council as previously. Needs to meet between July – September before next year's budgets are set to enable funding to be made available for projects. Also to have a list of achievable items to take forward with a positive manner.

There needs to be dialogue with the necessary Departments to obtain funding from Government or EU authorities for development in the Town Centre or for Brownfield sites.

Heritage

Groups discussed making more of the heritage of the area and promoting Ripley as a tourist destination. It would make people stay in the town.

We need to take advantage of the Ripley Heritage Action Group to promote the Heritage trails. The short terms aims of this organisation are to identify heritage points of interest – medium term, World Heritage Status- long term which could be a large benefit to Ripley's tourist trade.

High rents in Ripley

Could we lobby AVBC and ask them to write to all landlords asking them to have a scheme with reduced rents initially to help businesses start up. Perhaps RTC could contribute an amount. Perhaps free for first six months or a stepped rent that goes up as businesses start to thrive. It could encourage new businesses to grow in the town, and help everyone.

Younger people and footfall

It was noted that the decline of footfall traffic in Ripley, which might be to do with the internet and people shopping on line, but we need to make Ripley a vibrant and attractive place for people to visit.

Also there appears to be a lack of young people 18 – 25 age group shopping in the Town. RTC hope to set up a youth council which may help the situation. It could help if more people used the Ripley Reckoning facebook page and we had better communication links via e-mail or similar. (www.facebook.com/Ripleyreckoning and www.twitter.com/ripleyreckoning)

Bring back the barrelhaul!

Community events like this give Ripley the edge. If the traders and publicans could organise this, Ripley Town Council could enable this.

Bring back Ripley Carnival

This is currently being explored by the new mayor, Alwyn Bridge.

Next meeting

It was agreed to hold a further meeting on 8th July at The Angel, Ripley 5 for 5.30pm with a view to setting up a proper committee to take things forward. Thanks were expressed to Mr Peter Clay for his kind hospitality.

Stage 2 consultations

The second round of consultations began in September 2013, and focussed on the housing sites and numbers proposed in the draft plan at that stage

Stalls with maps explaining the sites and housing numbers were held in Ripley and in outreach locations in the villages.

People attending were invited to fill in a standard short questionnaire, that asked if they agreed or disagreed to the housing proposals, and had a free response section for comments.

Including late entries 39 agreed to the proposals and 7 disagreed.

The responses are appended at:

CS xls 3 September consultation responses

Summary

The overwhelming opinion of those who responded in writing was to favour the housing proposals in each area. However there is a significant minority that oppose the scale of housing development proposed. The housing target lies outside the scope of this neighbourhood plan, but the comments are noted.

Formal consultation on the Draft Ripley Neighbourhood Development Plan submitted to Amber Valley Borough Council on February 4th 2014, the consultation closed on April 21st 2014.

Following submission of the Draft Plan to Amber Valley Borough Council on Feb 4th 2014

In accordance with Para 14 of the Localism Act 2012/ Neighbourhood Plans, Ripley Town Council publicised the draft plan throughout the town on posters, sent a press release to the local paper, announced the event on facebook and twitter, and emailed all those on the contact lists accumulated through the project.

Representations were invited to be made at the local library and the Town Hall and by email to Ripley Town Council at clerktoripleytc@btconnect.com by 21st April 2014.

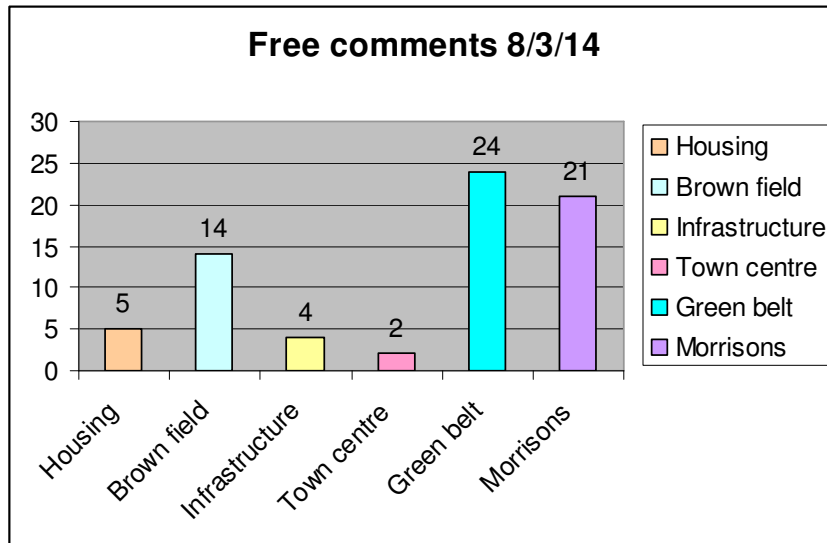
A consultation day was held at Ripley Coop on March 8th 2014.

63 responses were recorded to the questions;

- **Do you agree with the proposals as presented in the draft plan? (Yes / No)**
- **Do you have any other comments to make? (Free response space)**

The responses are summarised in the chart below.

The most common responses express concern over building on the green belt, and oppose the idea of Morrisons supermarket as part of the Gateway project.



Nine more responses were recorded at **Heage Village Hall** on **11th March**, three mention the green belt all approve The Plan

Another public consultation event was held at the **Town Hall** on **March 12th**, only 12 responses were recorded, five of these were against building on the green belt, all approved The Plan in general

Full transcripts are appended at:

CSxIs 4 Feb – April 2014 comment s

Organisations that responded to The Draft Plan Consultation

Derbyshire County Council (Planning)

Natural England

Amber Valley Borough Council.
Cllr S Bradford [leader of the council]

English Heritage

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust

Amber Valley Borough council
Planning & Regeneration report to the full council

Comments from individuals by email

Alfreton Town Council

Freda Raphael

Codnor Parish Council

Clive Sturgess

Swanick Parish Council

Janice Byron

Derbyshire Police and Crime Commission

Margaret Hogben

Highways Agency

P Gibbons

Environment Agency

Sylvia Mason

These documents are appended in the folder: Written consultation responses 2014

The Ripley Neighbourhood Plan Group shared and discussed the issues raised in all these comments, and approved changes to the draft plan at their meeting on 24th June 2014

See appended document; **Minutes June 24th 2014 Steering Group**

CONCLUSION

7.1 This Consultation Statement and the supporting consultation reports are considered to comply with Section 15(2) of part 5 of the 2012 Neighbourhood Planning Regulations.