

The Ripon City Plan - Policies and Complementary Projects

In our columns over the last few months we have briefly outlined the contents of the emerging Ripon City Plan and our proposed policies for planning the development of the City over the next 15 years and we have also outlined how our approach fits with Harrogate Borough Council's emerging Local Plan for the whole of the District. So, we hope that you can now see how this fits together into a coherent strategic approach and how our proposed Neighbourhood Plan will help to make Ripon a better place for everyone.

Right back in our first article, we wrote that the purpose of our Neighbourhood Plan is to give the people of Ripon a greater say over the long-term changes needed in the City. As prescribed in the legislation, Neighbourhood Plans are primarily concerned with the future development of land, buildings and infrastructure. However, from what you told us during our consultations we recognised that a Neighbourhood Plan is not the whole solution and so when we published our preliminary draft Ripon City Plan we identified a list of complementary work. Complementary work is a phrase we have used for a series of projects and actions that we have identified that would help improve Ripon and complement what we are seeking to achieve with our policies.

It is envisaged that these projects will be led by individual organisations such as the City Council, the Civic Society or even the new proposed Ripon Community Interest Company working together in partnership with other organisation to attract the necessary investment to enable delivery. We recognise that, despite the current economic climate, there will be funding opportunities over the next 15 years and we will need to exploit these to help deliver our vision.

We believe that the implementation of environmental action plans for key areas and feasibility work leading to the delivery of a project to increase car parking capacity and / or the provision of park and ride facilities are essential projects that will help to strengthen the city centre.

In relation to our three regeneration areas at Ure Bank, Bondgate Green and the military estate we believe that all would benefit from the preparation of masterplans which will enable them to be developed over time but towards an overall vision. In particular we believe that a feasibility study should be carried out on the Ure Bank Maltings premises to establish how and for what purpose it could be brought back into use.

We recognise that transport was a key issue that many of you had concerns about and so we believe that there are a number of complementary projects to improve City connectivity. Firstly, we believe that working with North Yorkshire County Council consideration needs to be given to the existing traffic management arrangements to ensure that we are making the best of the infrastructure that we already have. Secondly, we need an approach to protect and improve footpaths around the city. Thirdly, we need to develop and adopt a strategy for investing in improving our cycle network which may include creating new routes. And finally, given the impact of the cuts which have been made in recent years, we believe that we must find a way to improve bus services around the city.

We see opportunities to improve the network of riverside paths and to protect the riverbank habitat. We also feel that there is an opportunity to look at engaging with the community to establish the heritage assets across the City. Finally, we also see opportunities to develop schemes

to improve the public realm and introduce more public art through delivering a series of projects at key locations and gateways.

With the policies and complementary projects we are proposing in the Ripon City Plan, we believe that we are presenting an opportunity for a better Ripon. An opportunity for developers to provide new homes and new business units in appropriate places; an opportunity to create an even better quality of life for residents, a thriving economy for businesses and an interesting place for visitors. This is an opportunity for Ripon to shape its future and in the coming weeks we will be publishing all of our work to date and inviting you to comment on our proposals.

If you require further information, or wish the Neighbourhood Plan, please contact: cityplan@riponcity.gov.uk or call (01765) 604097.