

Draft Local Plan Consultation

Firstly, thank you to all those people that have commented on the Draft Ripon City Plan so far, your comments have been logged and shortly we will start the process of assessing any changes that may need to be made.

If you haven't yet had the opportunity to comment then all is not lost. We have extended the consultation deadline until Friday 23rd December. One of the main reasons that the consultation has been extended is to enable the Draft Ripon City Plan to be considered in the context of the emerging Local Plan for the Harrogate District and consequently we decided to align our deadlines.

On Friday 11th November, Harrogate Borough Council published on its website the emerging Harrogate District Local Plan and began a 6-week consultation. This plan sets out a district-wide approach to planning policies and identifies how land is used, determining what will be built where.

Extending to some 490 pages, the City Plan Team has not yet had the opportunity to thoroughly analyse the emerging Local Plan proposals and the differences with the Draft Ripon City Plan. This will take place in the coming days in order to prepare a response to the consultation for consideration by the City Plan Committee and the City Council.

Even from just an initial glance it is clear that there is a different approach to planning for the future of Ripon in some key policy areas. However, the entire basis for Neighbourhood Plans, like the Ripon City Plan, is to give the community a greater say in shaping the future of the places in which they live. Therefore we will be responding to the consultation and lobbying for change in some key policy areas and also continuing to progress the production of the Ripon City Plan's alternative approaches.

The first fundamental difference is our approach to allocating land for housing. In the Ripon City Plan we have clearly stated our position in relation to the provision of 1,500 new homes over the period to 2030 being provided on brownfield land. With the developments already given planning permission but not yet started, the barracks site (potential for around 1,000) and our approach to regeneration areas and encouraging housing on smaller windfall brownfield sites, we are confident that our approach will deliver the new homes needed for the City.

The emerging Local Plan takes a different approach by identifying a smaller part of the MOD's estate (potential for around 736 new homes) and proposing greenfield sites to provide 20 new homes at Springfield Close and 430 new homes at West Lane.

The issues faced last week by residents of Magdalen's Road, reminded us all of the issues of unstable land that parts of the City face. The emerging Local Plan proposes a continuation of the current policy that Harrogate Borough Council has adopted in relation to this issue. However, planning applications are still being submitted for new homes on sites that are within the zone identified as being more at risk from gypsum dissolution. Accordingly, and to avoid future issues for homeowners in the City, we have been in discussions with British Geological Survey and the draft City Plan Proposes a more rigorous policy based upon the most recent advice.

The emerging Local Plan policy on the protection and enhancement of existing employment areas fails to include locations within the city which we have identified in the City Plan because they play

an important role including, the Phoenix Business Centre site, the Highfield Business Park site and Ure Bank.

Whilst there are some differences, there are also some aspects where there is agreement about the approach. The allocation, for example, of Claro Barracks as a mixed use site is welcomed and particularly the suggestion that this may include affordable homes, starter homes and self build plots together with associated uses to include schools and childcare facilities , green infrastructure, open spaces for recreation and sport including allotments and play areas, community facilities and small shops.

Our work continues to look at how the emerging Local Plan addresses Ripon's need and aligns with your views. Meanwhile the opportunity still remains to tell us what you think about the Ripon City Plan by visiting www.riponcityplan.com/draftplanconsultation/

For more information about the emerging Harrogate District Local Plan to go:

<http://consult.harrogate.gov.uk/portal/>

Or, there are draft Local Plan exhibition events taking place including one at Ripon Town Hall on Wednesday 23 November, from 2 - 7pm. City Plan Team members will also be on hand to answer any queries.