



THANK YOU!

Huge thanks to all of you who helped shape the Neighbourhood Plan by giving your views. The final version has been submitted to Rushcliffe Borough Council. The Plan and supporting documents are online at: <http://www.east-leake.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan>. Printed copies can be read at the Parish Office.

This leaflet reports on the public consultation in Autumn 2014 and summarises resulting changes to the Plan. 77% of response slips from residents indicated support for the Plan overall, with support for individual policies ranging from 72% to 93%, so it is clear that the Plan is responding to local opinion. Very many of your comments were expressing praise and thanks for the work undertaken and we hope here to answer your outstanding questions and concerns.

YOUR QUESTIONS

Q. What is the Neighbourhood Plan?

A. A set of 20 planning policies specific to East Leake that will be used by Rushcliffe Borough Council to determine future planning applications. The policies will shape development of East Leake in the future and will have the weight of planning law. The plan was produced by a team of Parish Councillors and residents, supported by Rushcliffe Borough Council and Planning Aid England.

Q. Why are so many housing developments happening already?

A. Before December 2014 Rushcliffe had no approved Local Plan, and couldn't demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing land, so under national planning policy any housing applications were very likely to be approved. Unlike most of the other larger villages in Rushcliffe, East Leake is not in the designated "green belt" around Nottingham, which gives legal protection against development.

Q. Why does the Neighbourhood Plan not set a maximum number of houses to be built?

A. The plan must conform with Rushcliffe's Local Plan, which allocates a minimum of 400 homes to East Leake. It is not allowed to set a maximum figure because of government policy.

Q. So why bother having a Neighbourhood Plan? Will anyone take any notice?

A. The plan goes as far as it can to influence the positioning of any further housing - to keep the village as compact as possible, maintain the views of rural ring of hills and fields around East Leake and prevent us joining up with other villages. It contains policies that will improve the quality of developments and the mixture of sizes and types of housing built and encourage a thriving village centre. Legally Rushcliffe must ensure that future developments are in line with the policies.

"Seems like common sense to me."

Q. Our schools, health centre, roads, storm drains, sewerage and so on can't cope with the people we have already – how can they handle more?

A. We hear and share your concerns about this. Policy H1 puts on as much pressure as we can to ensure that “infrastructure” elements like this are developed at the right time for any more housing that is given planning permission after the Plan is adopted. The legal constraint is that developers can't be asked to bear an unreasonable cost.

You can see in the Plan documentation that the project team has been working with various infrastructure providers to ensure that they are considering the needs of East Leake in time for development that has already been approved.

- The Education Authority is actively planning for the extra primary school places needed. (There is enough room at East Leake Academy for now.)
- We are in discussion with the local medical practice, the NHS, and Clinical Commissioning Group about the Health Centre.
- We are working with Severn Trent and the Environment Agency about sewage and flooding.
- We have had considerable correspondence with transport providers also.

“The village seems to be exploding in size with no obvious improvements to infrastructure.”

Q. Is East Leake going to become a town rather than a village?

A. The Plan doesn't make any changes in this respect and there is no automatic change based on population size. The Parish Council has no intention of changing the status into a town. Many of the policies promote the “village feel” that most residents value.

RESULTS OF THE CONSULTATION

Providing the right homes for local people

Since the consultation the project has done more work to address your concerns that the housing developments are not providing the right mix of houses for sale. You feel strongly that too many large expensive houses are being built here, with not enough smaller cheaper homes for families, and no provision being made for older people.

A consultant has looked at the 2011 census data and projections of population and households, and concluded that 71% of the future requirement is for one and two bedroom properties, and 29% for 3 bedroom and larger houses. There is strong evidence that by far the largest growth is needed in housing for older people, including downsizing



flats, bungalows, housing with care and support. Policy H3 has thus been strengthened to provide a more appropriate mix of homes for sale in any future developments.

Aside from homes that will come onto the open market, we have been discussing with Rushcliffe what the government calls “affordable housing” – i.e. social housing for rent and part rent/part purchase. 85% of respondents to the consultation supported draft policy H4 which would have given priority to people with a local connection when social housing is allocated. Regrettably, however, it has not been possible at this time to deviate from Rushcliffe's housing allocations policy, which gives priority to people across the whole of Rushcliffe, based on need. So draft policy H4 has been removed from the Plan. If the village wishes it can be pursued when the Plan is reviewed every 4-5 years, or in the future when Rushcliffe consults again on its allocations policy.

Aircraft Noise

As a community we are in two minds about this! Some of you have said that you are used to it and don't find it a problem but it is a negative factor about East Leake for many. Policy H5 reduces the impact of aircraft noise in new homes, and most people (73%) support this. Some of you say that measures are needed to protect existing residents as well, and this is something that the community can continue to press for, but it is outside the scope of a Neighbourhood Plan. Your comments have been passed on to East Midlands Airport.

Good Design and Eco Friendly buildings

A few residents mentioned the importance of solar panels, heat insulation, energy efficiency, renewable energy etc and a paragraph has been added about this, to help promote this aspect of good design in policy H6 alongside the other design standards and considerations.

“Older people wishing to downsize would prefer bungalows – where are new ones being built?”

Shops

89% supported policy B1, about encouraging and clustering shops in the village centre. There were comments that we already have enough of certain sorts of shops – note that policy B1(a) does limit additional takeaway food outlets. You also stated the types of shops you would like to see and this has been added into the supporting text. Several people commented that there is no room in the village centre for development and this view is noted, but policy V1 does help to ensure that if any land is redeveloped it will be for the purposes prioritised for this part of the village.

Employment

Policy B2 was strongly supported (91%). It provides support for small and start-up businesses and those working from home. We have moved into the housing section the paragraphs which welcome in principle the creation of appropriate employment opportunities alongside housing.

Policy B3 supports, as the only large employment site in the village, the British Gypsum site on Gotham Rd, encouraging economic development here. It controls development of heavy industry elsewhere, discouraging heavy traffic through the village centre. It aligns with Rushcliffe's policy 4 in the Local Plan which specifically encourages development at British Gypsum as a centre of excellence. 72% supported policy B3, but some expressed concern that further development of the Gypsum site could cause problems to nearby residents. Note that B3 includes additional measures to protect the amenity of local residents from any expansion at the Gypsum site.

Transport

The three transport policies were strongly supported by residents but there were a number of concerns expressed about traffic issues - particularly speeding, pedestrian crossings, parking, and the bus services. Text has been added about maintaining new foot and cycle paths but very little can be done in the Neighbourhood



Plan about the other matters as the Plan is only about planning applications.

The Parish Council is working on improving and expanding the car parks and is working with the relevant agencies on crossings, yellow lines etc. Volunteers in the Speed Watch group are working with the police to address speeding. If you can help, contact Speed Watch via the Parish Office.

Nottinghamshire County Council's response to the consultation suggested changes to text about bus stops and community transport. They said that they are prioritising the local bus budget to support weekday journeys and they do not have sufficient funds for improved evening services.

Environment

Policy E1 protects the green ridges around the village, designates areas that are important for separating East Leake from Costock, Gotham and West Leake, and emphasises the importance of the railway line as a village boundary. This policy gained the highest level of support of all, with 93% in favour. Landowners whose land is included in the "areas important for separation" expressed concerns, and the text has been amended to say



that the maps will be reviewed every 4-5 years to allow for changing circumstances. It is noted that reasonable extension of existing farms and houses in these areas is to be expected.

Policies E2 and E3 were also widely supported (92% and 87% respectively). Between them these policies protect wildlife and preserve valued green spaces. Some changes have been made to strengthen these sections as a result of comments by residents, wildlife agencies and others. There were several comments expressing concern about the upkeep of green spaces in housing estates. Policy E3 does address this in new developments but the Neighbourhood Plan can't influence it in existing estates. Residents with concerns should continue to raise this with those responsible – if

you don't know who to contact, take it via the Parish Council who will assist.

Leisure Facilities

Policy L1 is about developing the Gotham Road play area into a large, modern, challenging provision, and protecting our playing fields. In new developments it requests open play space and small amounts of play equipment for younger children. L1 was widely supported (88%). Your suggestions for different sorts of play equipment, seating etc have been passed on to the playground working party and we look forward to seeing this work progress with lottery funding and developer contributions. A few people took the opportunity to express concerns about the skatepark – repairs are currently being undertaken on behalf of the Parish Council.

Policy L2 protects allotments, and was supported by 87%, without attracting many comments.

The Conservation Area

Section 7 now includes the map of the Conservation Area which legally protects the historic centre of the village. The Conservation Area and its Management Plan are due for review soon – if you are interested in helping with this work please get in touch via the Parish Office.



The Village Centre (Policies V1 and V2)

These policies received 89% and 88% support. The greatest area of comment was suggestions for the development of the t-junction, including part-time traffic lights, a roundabout etc. Policy V2 encourages a future scheme to deal with traffic

and pedestrian needs in this area, and your suggestions will be revisited when this happens.

Other Subjects

Please be assured that all your comments were carefully considered, but many fell outside the scope of the plan. We were able to pass some on to the relevant agencies. Other local issues are being dealt with by the Community Plan Group, who are keen to hear from anyone willing to volunteer to help – whether to keep the village tidy by litter picking, take part in Neighbourhood Watch to liaise with the police and keep the village safe, or to help provide facilities and activities for teenagers.

Some people are finding the lack of street lights at night very difficult. This can be changed on a street by street basis where residents wish it – you should contact your County Councillor for details of how to take this forward.

"Well done on presenting a comprehensive and well considered plan to help develop the village in a sensitive and pragmatic way whilst aiming to preserve and encourage the rural character".

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The plan has been submitted to Rushcliffe Borough Council which is responsible for taking it forward from here. They will publicise it for a period of at least 6 weeks for comments, and appoint an independent examiner who will examine the Plan to ensure it satisfies all the relevant legal requirements. The examiner will also consider any representations that have been made, may hold a public enquiry, and hopefully will then recommend that the Plan can proceed to referendum with or without modifications.

When will the Referendum take place?

This is up to Rushcliffe Borough Council, but the project team is hoping that this will happen in June. At the referendum, as residents of East Leake, you will have the chance to vote for or against the Plan. If more than 50% of those who vote are in favour, the Plan is then "made" and becomes part of planning law.

*Published by the East Leake Neighbourhood Plan Project Team,
a working group of East Leake Parish Council.
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