



RETFORD TOWN CENTRE

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING GROUP



DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN CONSULTATION

Monday 24 July – Friday 8 September 2023

- **Your chance to comment if you live, own property, or run a business in the Town Centre Area.**
- **Help us to shape this 15-year strategy for your local area.**
- **Find out more about the process, proposals, and opportunities.**
- **View and comment online, or attend one of the upcoming events - more details included inside.**

OVERVIEW

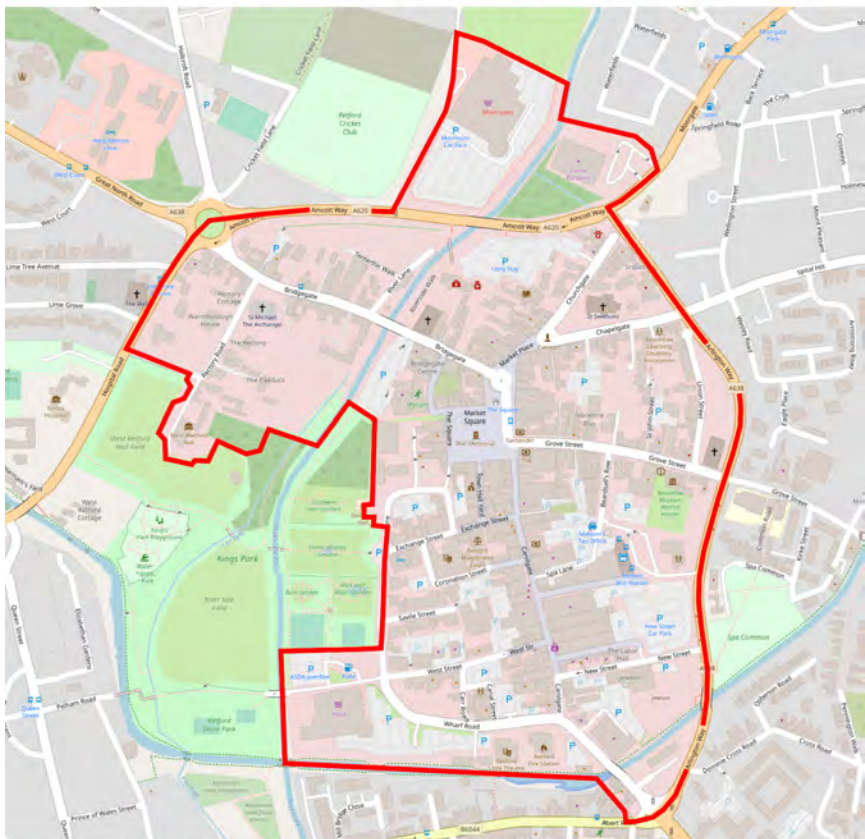
The Retford Town Centre Neighbourhood Plan is designed to provide a framework of planning policies for managing and enhancing the Town Centre over the coming 15 years.

The Plan addresses a broad range of themes, informing policies that seek to protect, enhance, and regenerate the Town Centre. The boundary of the area addressed by the Plan is detailed on the map below.

This guide provides a concise summary of each of the sections of the Plan, including page numbers to assist further reading and comment.

Details of where to view the Neighbourhood Plan, upcoming consultation events, and how to submit responses are detailed on the back page.

Retford Town Centre Neighbourhood Area



SECTIONS 1 TO 12

Sections 1 to 10: Context, Vision, and Objectives (Pages 6 to 14)

- Outlines the context for the Neighbourhood Plan, including the 8 objectives defined through initial community consultation.



Section 11: Protecting and Enhancing Heritage Assets (Pages 15 to 17)

- Whilst protecting and enhancing the historic character of the Town Centre the Plan will promote the development of key spaces and vacant or underutilised properties to a high standard to the benefit of business and residents.

Section 12: Achieving Well Designed Place (Pages 18 to 26)

- Development should respond to the historic context of the Town and contribute positively to the experience visitors, local businesses, and residents have of the Town Centre. Design should reflect the Design Codes guidance and be sustainable, providing measures to mitigate climate change (where possible), achieve visual coherence, and deliver opportunities for improvements.

SECTIONS 13 TO 15

Section 13: Significant Views (Pages 26 – 28)

- Views across public spaces, courtyards and alleyways, impressive historic buildings and structures, green areas and the Canal and River provide a range of key views which provide a dramatic backdrop for the day-to-day activity of the Town. Proposals are required to demonstrate how they will respond to, conserve, and enhance these significant views and protect the historic character of the Town Centre.

Section 14: Improving the Public Realm (Pages 28 to 32)

- The public realm is the space around buildings that is publicly accessible, with significant areas of the realm as the Market Square, Carolgate and Cannon Square. Evidence from the public consultation, Design Code and Ecology Study suggested improving these areas by adaptation measures (e.g., planting), providing amenity space, creating spaces for social activities to enhance the attractiveness of the Town Centre as a destination.



Section 15: Maintaining the Vitality and Vibrancy of the Town Centre (Pages 33 to 38)

- The Plan aims to support businesses to locate and grow in the Town Centre and to ensure that the fabric of the Town is both visually attractive and works for its businesses.
- The conversion of ground floor retail units to non-retail uses is supported only where the proposal increases the provision of services and facilities for the wider community. The execution of further public murals using a similar style will be welcomed and supported.

SECTIONS 16 TO 18

Section 16: Protecting and Enhancing Biodiversity (Pages 39 to 46)

- An important focus of the Plan is to encourage a more coherent landscape planting and management regime. This 'Greening of the Town' will increase the number of trees, planting, and green spaces. Development proposals which would have significant negative ecological impacts will not generally be supported and should achieve a net biodiversity gain that is measurable. Development proposals should also incorporate appropriate Sustainable Drainage Systems.



Section 17: Improving the Canal and River Corridors (Page 47)

- There are sites within the Plan area along the River and Canal which over time may be redeveloped, and this development should assist in the delivery of an uninterrupted and attractive pedestrian and cycle corridor through the Town. This has a range of benefits including enhancing the Town as a place to spend leisure time as well as to shop.

Section 18: Significant Green Areas (Pages 48 to 50)

- Significant Green Areas are not intended to be a bar to development but to provide more information about the variety of the townscape and to identify the pockets of green spaces that are valued by the community. Development may take place within them, but this should minimise its impact on these green areas and demonstrate an understanding of the value of these Significant Green Areas to the wider setting of the Conservation Area.

SECTIONS 19 TO 21

Section 19: Getting Around the Town Centre (Pages 51 to 56)

- Improving active travel reduces car usage, improves health and well-being, and represents sustainable development. The topography of the Town Centre is relatively flat and compact making it an ideal place to encourage more cycling and walking. The absence of a north- south link away from Carolgate is the single most significant obstacle to increasing cycling usage in the area.

Section 20: Housing in the Town Centre (Pages 57 to 63)

- Flats of 1 or 2 bed dominate the Town Centre and this need not necessarily be an issue as it complements the wider Retford built up area with more 3 bed plus houses. Recent applications in the Town Centre have included very small flats with limited natural light. This will not create healthy living spaces and dwellings should conform to the minimum national space standards. Proposals for accommodation for older people, particularly sheltered accommodation with limited support, would meet a local housing need and is supported.



Section 21: Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Technologies (Pages 63 to 64)

- The government identifies the planning system as having a significant role to play in tackling climate change. Energy used to heat and cool homes needs to be reduced as well as shifting to net zero carbon sources. The design and layout of new development can significantly affect the energy efficiency of buildings. The Plan supports low carbon motorised transport, including increased provision of charging points, and appropriate solar powered methods of street lighting and signage illumination.

SECTIONS 22 TO 23



Section 22: Reducing the Risk of Flooding (Pages 65 to 66)

- Over 50% of the Plan area is currently identified in Flood Zone 2 or 3. BDC will require applicants to undertake site specific flood risk assessments for all development in Flood Zones 2 and 3. Sustainable drainage systems are supported, including increasing the amount of permeable surface. These can be specifically designed (e.g., rain gardens and geopaving), or increased shrubs, trees, and grassed areas to provide ways to capture water to soakaway.

Section 23: Regeneration and Site Allocations (Pages 67 to 78)

- Addresses three potential development sites, considering their context and constraints, in order to define policies to guide their future regeneration. The sites are: Ebsworth Hall (Policy 13a), Land between Amcott Way, Bridgegate and River Lane (Policy 13b), and Goodwin Hall and the former Registry Office Buildings (Policy 13c).

Supporting Documents

The Neighbourhood Plan is also supported by the following evidence base documents, all available to view or download from the website:

- Design Guide (AECOM, 2022)
- Ecology Assessment (EMEC Ecology, 2022)
- Ecology Study Report (N. Wraith, 2022)
- Housing Needs Assessment (AECOM, 2022)
- Masterplan (AECOM, 2022)
- Site Assessment (AECOM, 2022)
- Vision for Retford (RTCNPG, 2023)

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

When

Consultation on the Pre-Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan runs from **Monday 24 July until Friday 8 September 2023**.

Who

We are keen to involve all Retford Town Centre residents, businesses, and organisations - this will be **your** Plan.

Why

The aim of the consultation is to allow the first full draft of the Neighbourhood Plan to be inspected, discussed, and for any comments to be logged. Any comments received will be used by the Planning Group to assist them in refining the Plan ahead of submission to the District Council for independent examination.

How

The Neighbourhood Plan and all associated evidence base documents can be viewed online at:

www.retfordbusinessforum.org.uk/rtcnpg/neighbourhood-plan

www.bassetlaw.gov.uk/retfordtowncentrenp

All documents will also be available for inspection at **three public events**, including opportunities for discussion with representatives from the Planning Group and the District Council's Neighbourhood Planning Team. All events are to be hosted in **The Council Chamber, Retford Town Hall, DN22 6DB**, as follows:

- **Thursday 27 July 2023**, between 9 AM and 12 PM.
- **Wednesday 16 August**, between 12 PM and 3 PM.
- **Wednesday 30 August**, between 4 PM and 7 PM.

Comments on the Neighbourhood Plan should be made in writing, and can be returned via email (as per below) or using the consultation response form available from the website. Forms will also be available in hard copy at the three listed events.

Further information

For any queries about this consultation, or the Retford Town Centre Neighbourhood Plan in general, please contact:

Rick Brand, Chair of Retford Town Centre Neighbourhood Planning Group

Email: chair@retfordbusinessforum.org.uk