



Ruddington Action Group
c/o Mike Ader (Chairman)
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For the attention of Richard Mapletoft

Ruddington Action Group objection to the allocation of 410 new homes on Green Belt land in Ruddington

Dear Mr Mapletoft

This representation sets out Ruddington Action Group's (RAG) objection to Rushcliffe Borough Council's plans to allocate land for 410 new homes on Green Belt land in Ruddington up to 2028 in the Rushcliffe Local Plan Part 2: Land and Planning Policies. RAG was re-formed by local residents in response to the first planning application to build 250 houses on Asher Lane. With the village facing unprecedented pressure for new development, the purpose of RAG is to ensure appropriate and sustainable development in the village, by working in partnership with residents, businesses and other established local groups and agencies to ensure that Ruddington remains a great place to live.

The proposed total of 410 new homes in Ruddington represents a significant increase to, and does not reflect the spirit of, what is set out as 'a minimum of 250 homes' allocated in Policy 3 – Spatial Strategy of Part 1 of the Local Plan, the Core Strategy, and it is considered that even a return to the 250 figure set out in the Core Strategy is going to have significant adverse impacts on the village and risks damaging Ruddington's reputation as an attractive place to live and work.

In order to give RAG's objection some context, it is important to understand the significant levels of housing development that have already been undertaken in the village in recent years and which add weight to our concerns that an additional 410 dwellings over the plan period are not sustainable.

The 2011 Census confirms that, at that time, there were a total of 3,146 dwellings in the village (see Appendix 1). Since this time, Rushcliffe Borough Council has granted planning permission for almost 200 properties in the village, a figure which reaches 200 if a small number of conversions to residential dwellings is included (see Appendix 2).

What also needs to be considered are the additional houses the borough council anticipates being built on brownfield land in the village up to 2031, as identified in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). The latest published 2016 SHLAA identifies two sites in Ruddington suitable for the delivery of additional housing: the Artex Blue Hawk site (118 houses during the period 2026-2031), and land at Brookside Road (39 houses during the period 2021-2026). (Further sites identified in

the SHLAA have already been granted planning permission and are detailed in Appendix 2.)

Therefore, in total, Ruddington is already experiencing considerable growth and this is set to continue throughout and slightly beyond the plan period, such that, between 2011 and 2031, the number of houses in the village will increase by 767, or by 24.4% over and above the number of dwellings identified by the 2011 Census.

RAG's objection to the allocation of 410 houses in Part 2 of the Local Plan is informed by the adverse impact that recent levels of development in the village have already had, particularly with respect to increased levels of traffic in the centre of the village. Given the size of the village as it already is, the allocation of further sites on its periphery for housing, wherever they are and including those identified by the borough council as preferred sites for allocation, are going to be sufficiently distant from the centre of the village so as to increase car use, particularly into and out of the centre of the village where the greatest congestion already exists. It is worth remembering that the centre of the village is part of the Conservation Area.

RAG considers that the borough council's 'Housing Options Interim Sustainability Appraisal Report', which assesses the likely impact of various options for increased housing numbers in the village (250, 310, 375, 500 and 565 dwellings) against a number of sustainability objectives, has ignored the constraints of traffic on the village's road layout when assessing the transport impacts of additional housing. The report simply refers to the regular bus services which the village benefits from and whilst this is not being questioned and provides benefits for people commuting to and from Nottingham, the report fails to fully consider all transport impacts that would result from further housing in the village. In particular, the assessment fails to recognise the impacts of additional car use which is inevitable as housing sites move further and further away from the key village amenities. It is therefore questioned whether future planning applications for significant levels of housing on the edge of the village are going to meet the policy test in the National Planning Policy Framework which allows for development to be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.

Increased levels of traffic are already causing congestion in the village due to the tight road structure, including the key Kirk Lane/High Street junction. Shoppers are already experiencing difficulty parking in the village and it is not uncommon to see the north side of Kirk Lane (again, part of the Conservation Area) full of parked cars due to High Street and Church Street already being full of parked cars. Shopkeepers in the village are also raising concerns about how the village has changed in recent years in this respect and are already stating that increased congestion in the village is affecting their businesses.

This therefore also brings into question the statement in the 'Housing Options Interim Sustainability Appraisal Report' regarding the 'social' sustainability appraisal objective. The report first states that, based on the allocation of only a further 310 dwellings:

"Additional development focussed on a settlement which already has a wide range of facilities and services (library, retail, leisure centre, etc)."

First off, there is a glaring inaccuracy in this statement insofar as Ruddington does not even have a leisure centre.

The statement then goes on to say that:

“These facilities and services would be supported by this increase in population, and would help improve vitality of town centre.”

Similarly, when assessing the social impact of a further 500 or 565 dwellings in the village, the appraisal states:

“Impact as described under the 25% growth option but more pronounced. Major positive due to more significant increase in population.”

The report is therefore stating that any increase in housing numbers in the village is going to have a positive impact on the vitality of the village centre, with that positive impact increasing as the number of additional houses increases. This is an incredibly simplistic conclusion to draw and does not reflect the reality of the village as experienced as a result of recent significant levels of house building and as confirmed by both shoppers and shopkeepers. If increased housing did improve the vitality of the village centre, then surely there would not be four vacant shops in the village at the present time, all of which were occupied five years ago and all of which have been vacant for significant periods of time (at least a year). If anything, any further increase in housing numbers in the village is only going to exacerbate this issue and the borough council's assessment of increased housing having a positive social impact is therefore at the very least questioned and is most probably generalised, uninformed and inaccurate.

As already highlighted, the centre of the village is within Ruddington Conservation Area which extends to cover the historic heart of the village. The Conservation Area was subject to an appraisal by the borough council in 2009 and the appraisal includes a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats). Amongst the weaknesses identified in the analysis were the following:

- The infrastructure is at capacity;
- Lack of car parking;
- The amount of cars and HGV's using village as a cut through.

Amongst the threats identified were the following:

- Threat of building on the green belt and of the village being swallowed up by the Nottingham suburbs;
- Further development with no possibility of increasing facilities within the village centre and an increase in traffic problems.

Since this analysis was undertaken, Ruddington has been subject to significant growth which has only highlighted the weaknesses of the village's infrastructure and the problems brought about by increasing levels of traffic. These issues are only going to increase if land is allocated for further housing.

In the 'Housing Options Interim Sustainability Appraisal Report', the heritage impacts of further housing allocations appear to be limited to the proximity of potential allocations to the Conservation Area or any Listed Buildings, rather than considering other impacts that additional housing would have on these heritage assets. Increased traffic is

already having a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and is likely at least in part responsible for businesses in the village closing and not being replaced, which in itself has a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. It is considered that additional allocations of land for housing would only exacerbate these problems, contrary to the requirements of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The National Planning Policy Framework requires local planning authorities to “set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment” and “should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance”. The continuing increase in Ruddington’s size provides no assurances that these national planning policy tests are going to be met.

Whilst the borough council’s requirement to provide sufficient land for housing is acknowledged, RAG does not consider that the inability of house builders to deliver housing on the key strategic sites in the borough should lead existing settlements being burdened by unsustainable levels of housing which threaten their vibrancy and attractiveness. In providing sufficient land for housing, local planning authorities should not allow themselves to be held to ransom by house builders intent on banking as much land as they possibly can but instead should recognise the unique characteristics of different towns and villages such as Ruddington and protect them accordingly. The National Planning Policy Framework seeks to achieve sustainable development but acknowledges that to be sustainable, development should be carried out in a way which does not mean worse lives for future generations. This is the threat that Ruddington and its residents, both present and future, faces as a result of the borough council’s plans and Part 2 of the Local Plan should be revisited and amended accordingly to prevent this from happening.

RAG respectfully asks that the above representation be given your full consideration.

Yours sincerely

Ruddington Action Group

Appendix 1 – 2011 Census data for Ruddington (number of households)

www.ukcensusdata.com/ruddington-e05006508#sthash.gyxoErSL.m3jnWqXg.dpbs

UK CENSUS DATA

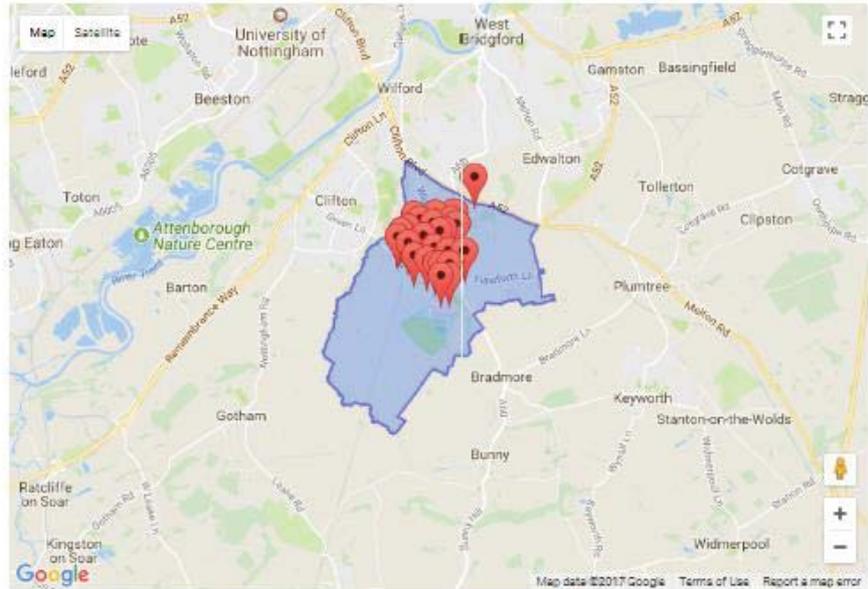
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Ruddington

Drill down further:

Census Output Areas within Ruddington

- [Ruddington E00144730](#)
- [Ruddington E00144731](#)
- [Ruddington E00144732](#)
- [Ruddington E00144733](#)
- [Ruddington E00144734](#)
- [Ruddington E00144735](#)
- [Ruddington E00144736](#)
- [Ruddington E00144737](#)
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- [Ruddington E00144749](#)
- [Ruddington E00144750](#)
- [Ruddington E00144751](#)
- [Ruddington E00144752](#)
- [Ruddington E00173581](#)
- [Ruddington E00173582](#)
- [Ruddington E00173583](#)



Key Stats

All Residents:	7,216
Number of households:	3,146
Average household size:	2.30
Residents in households:	7,095
Residents in communal living:	121
Area (hectares):	1,155
Population density (people per hectare):	6.20

Appendix 2 – Housing permissions granted in Ruddington since 2011

Application number	Location	Proposal
10/02008/COU	Kempson Street	Office to dwelling conversion
10/02026/REM	6 Paget Crescent	5 new dwellings
11/00396/REM	Ashworth Avenue	14 new dwellings
11/01365/FUL	Elms Close	4 new dwellings
12/01199/FUL	Pasture Lane	102 new dwellings
12/00399/FUL	Asher Lane	1 new dwelling
13/01072/PAJ	Spinney Hill, Landmere Lane	Office to dwelling conversion
13/01374/FUL	Chapel Street/Shaw Street	5 new dwellings
13/01819/OUT	Woodhouse Gardens	14 new dwellings
13/02327/FUL	Grange Farm	1 new dwelling
14/00970/PAMB	2 Tall Trees Farm	1 new dwelling
14/01812/FUL	15 Parkyns Street	5 new dwellings
15/00637/FUL	60 Barleylands	1 new dwelling
15/01793/FUL	Brookside Road	28 new dwellings
16/00070/FUL	11 Charles Street	2 new dwellings
16/00137/FUL	15 Wilford Crescent	4 new dwellings
16/01719/FUL	6 Trent Avenue	1 new dwelling
16/02224/FUL	8A St Mary's Crescent	3 new dwellings
17/00697/OUT	1 Clifton Road	1 new dwelling in rear garden of existing
17/01214/FUL	70 Wilford Road	Demolish 1 and erect 2 new dwellings (net gain of 1)
17/01366/FUL	38 Loughborough Road	Convert stable into 1 separate dwelling
17/01690/FUL	35-39 Easthorpe Street	Demolish 3 and build 7 new dwellings (net gain of 4)
Total		200