

REDBOURN PARISH COUNCIL

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

2020 – 2038

CONSULTATION STATEMENT

MAY 2022

VOLUME 1: SUMMARY



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1. Summary

This document

- 1.1 This Consultation Statement has been produced to accompany the Redbourn Neighbourhood Plan. It sets out the process of consultation that has been undertaken in preparing the Neighbourhood Plan, and how this has informed the submission version.
- 1.2 The Consultation Statement is present across three separate volumes:
 - Volume 1 presents a summary of the consultation undertaken.
 - Volume 2 presents summary reports, feedback and material associated with consultation events between May 2011 and January 2018.
 - Volume 3 presents summary reports, feedback and material associated with consultation events between December 2020 and April 2022.
- 1.3 The document you are reading now comprises Volume 1 of the Consultation Statement.
- 1.4 Consideration has been given to all comments and responses made in the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.5 The consultation responses to the Regulation 14 version of the Neighbourhood Plan showed strong support to the policies and projects identified, ratifying the work undertaken before it, and showing a strong link back to the ideas, suggestions and concerns raised through earlier rounds of consultation.

Key stages and timeline of events

Parish Plan

- 1.6 Redbourn was formally designated for Neighbourhood Planning purposes in November 2013 but consultation on the Plan dates back to May 2011 when a meeting was first held to discuss the possibility of preparing a Parish Plan. Work on the Parish Plan progressed through to 2013, involving a series of consultation events and surveys, before deciding to proceed with the making of a Neighbourhood Plan in 2013. The consultation undertaken for the Parish Plan was carried forward into and informed the early stages of the Neighbourhood Plan-making process.

Initial Neighbourhood Plan activities

- 1.7 Between 2014 and 2016 a wide range of consultation events and workshops were undertaken, including an event focussed around a 'Lego' building activity to attract families and younger members of the community. A number of public meetings and drop-in events were also held, as well as sessions with landowners and developers.
- 1.8 It is important to note that when work originally commenced on the Neighbourhood Plan St Albans District Council was in the process of preparing a new Local Plan. This identified that, in Redbourn, land should be released from the Green Belt to accommodate new housing development. The Neighbourhood Plan was being prepared in the context of growth and was seeking to identify and allocate appropriate development sites. An assessment of sites put forward for consideration through the St Albans Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) was undertaken and the community asked for their views on the suitability of sites to be allocated.

1.9 In January 2018 a draft Neighbourhood Plan was prepared and formally consulted upon under the Regulation 14 consultation stage. The feedback from this indicated support for the draft policies in the Plan, including those around housing mix, small-scale employment developments, High Street vitality, cycle links and protection of the Leisure Centre. The Regulation 14 consultation included a set of preferred sites for allocation which responses indicated support for, though some individual comments made in response to the Plan suggested that people would rather that land was not released from the Green Belt for new housing.

1.10 The steps outlined above are presented in more detail in Volume 2 of the Consultation Statement.

Neighbourhood Plan re-launch and revision

1.11 After the Regulation 14 consultation work on the Neighbourhood Plan slowed as progress was intrinsically linked with the Local Plan.

1.12 The Local Plan was submitted for examination in March 2019 and, following receipt of a letter from the Inspector confirming that, in their view, St Albans District Council has not complied with the Duty to Cooperate, the Local Plan was withdrawn.

1.13 The ramifications of this were that sites allocated in the Regulation 14 version Neighbourhood Plan were on areas to be released from the Green Belt, but that without an adopted Local Plan to support that release, these sites could not be carried forward. Indeed, in terms of the Basic Conditions, the strategic development plan policies for consideration date back to the 1994 Local Plan.

1.14 The Parish Council took the view that with the withdrawal of the Local Plan it became even more important to have a Neighbourhood Plan in place, presenting up-to-date and locally specific policies for Redbourn to fill the policy vacuum at district level. It was agreed that work on the Neighbourhood Plan should recommence but that instead of allocating sites for growth (as the strategic evidence was not there to support this), that instead it should take a criteria based approach to new development, including the establishment of design principles to help shape and influence new development. This involved taking a step back from the draft formally consulted upon in January 2018 and revisiting the direction of the Plan.

1.15 Work on the Neighbourhood Plan was re-launched with a consultation event in December 2020. This explained the change in focus of the Plan and asked whether the foundations of the Plan, i.e.: the vision and objectives remained relevant, and or whether other matters should be included for consideration. The feedback ratified the vision and objectives, and thus the focus of policies in the Plan.

1.16 This was followed up with a workshop, by invitation, focussed on the High Street, to review and explore ideas for policies and projects to help strengthen the High Street, its retail and visitor offer. Following this, and further development of policies, the Plan was shared with St Albans District Council for comment. Feedback was fed into the Plan in parallel with the SEA/ HRA Screening process prior to the revised Regulation 14 consultation on the updated Neighbourhood Plan commencing in December 2021.

1.17 The revised Regulation 14 consultation was initially due to run for a period of eight weeks given that it straddled the Christmas and New Year period. However, this was extended until the end of April 2022 as a number of the Statutory Consultees had not responded within the original consultation period.

1.18 Feedback to the revised Regulation 14 consultation showed strong support for the policies in the Plan, including proposed Local Green Space designations. Individual comments made by respondents, including those from the Statutory Consultees, have been reviewed and changes made as appropriate to the Neighbourhood Plan.

1.19 The steps outlined above are presented in more detail in Volume 3 of the Consultation Statement.

Material

1.20 Volume 2 and 3 of the Consultation Statement include copies of all consultation material prepared at all stages of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan, and which has included regular updates in Parish newsletters.

1.21 Extensive use has also been made of social media to keep people informed of progress and raise awareness of the Plan. A selection of screenshots from Redbourn social media accounts is presented across the following pages.

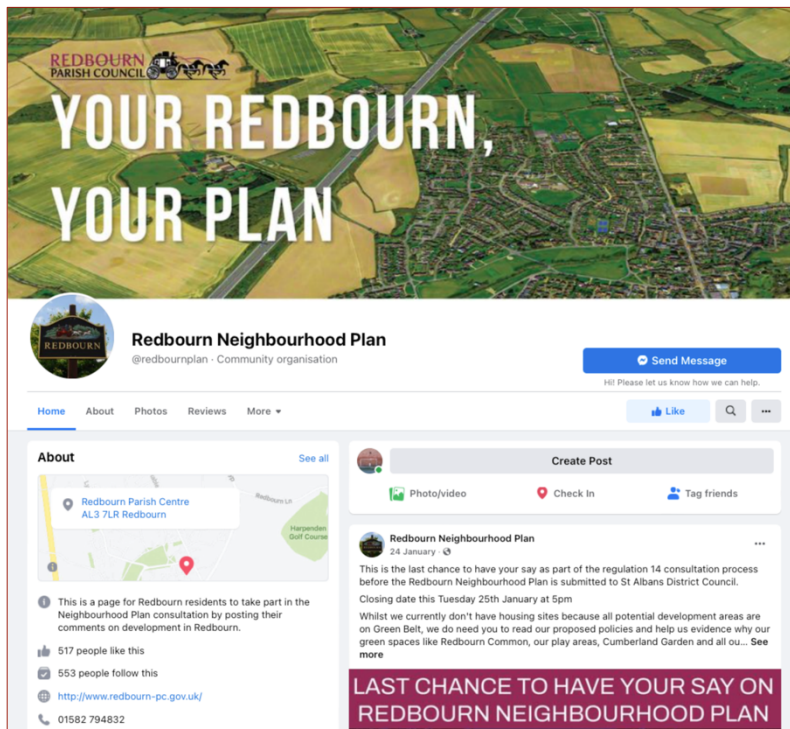


Figure 1: The Redbourn Neighbourhood Plan page on Facebook, which provided regular updates on the Plan, including details of consultation events. The screenshot above shows how the page appeared during the Regulation 14 consultation in January 2021

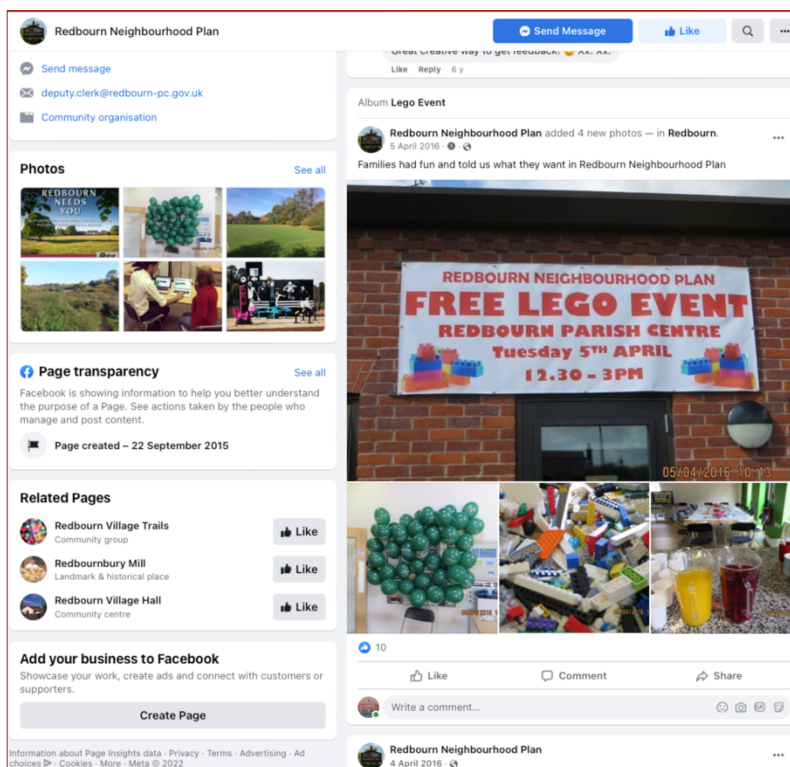


Figure 2: Posts on the Redbourn Facebook page, providing updates, April 2016

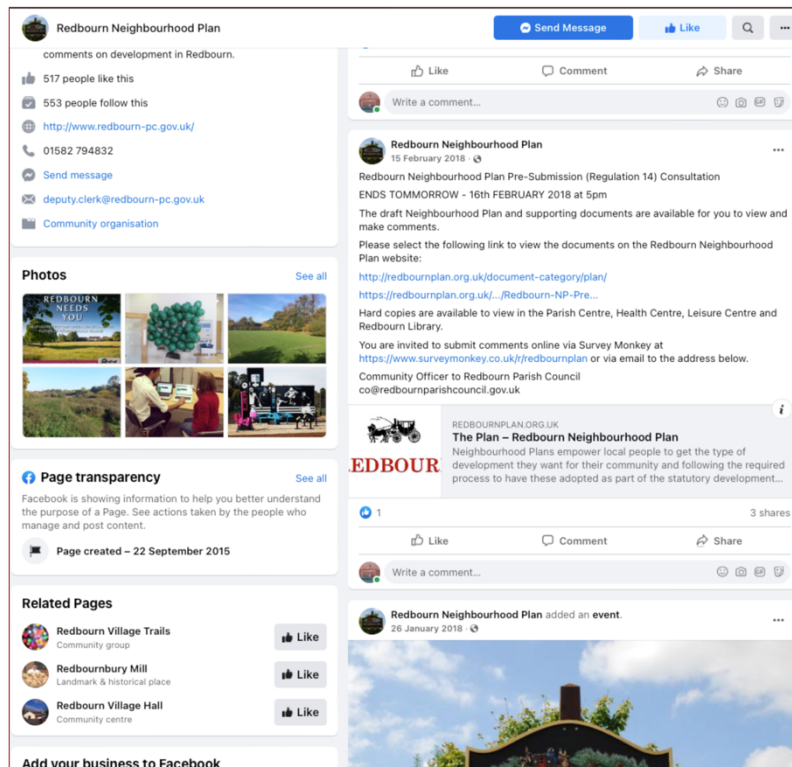


Figure 3: Posts on the Redbourn Facebook page, providing updates, February 2018

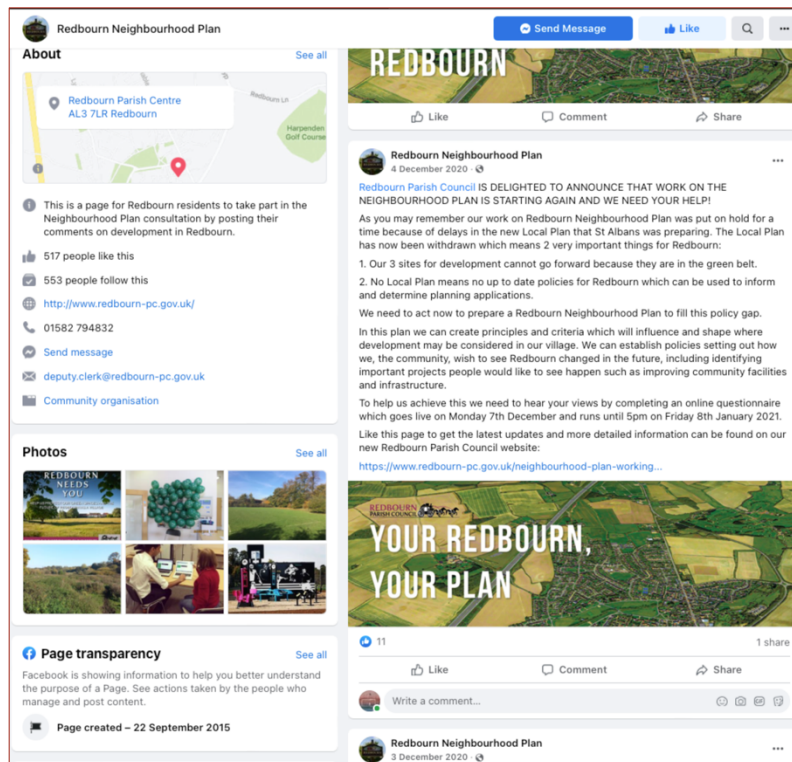


Figure 4: Updates on the Redbourn Facebook page announcing the 're-launch' of work on the Neighbourhood Plan, December 2020

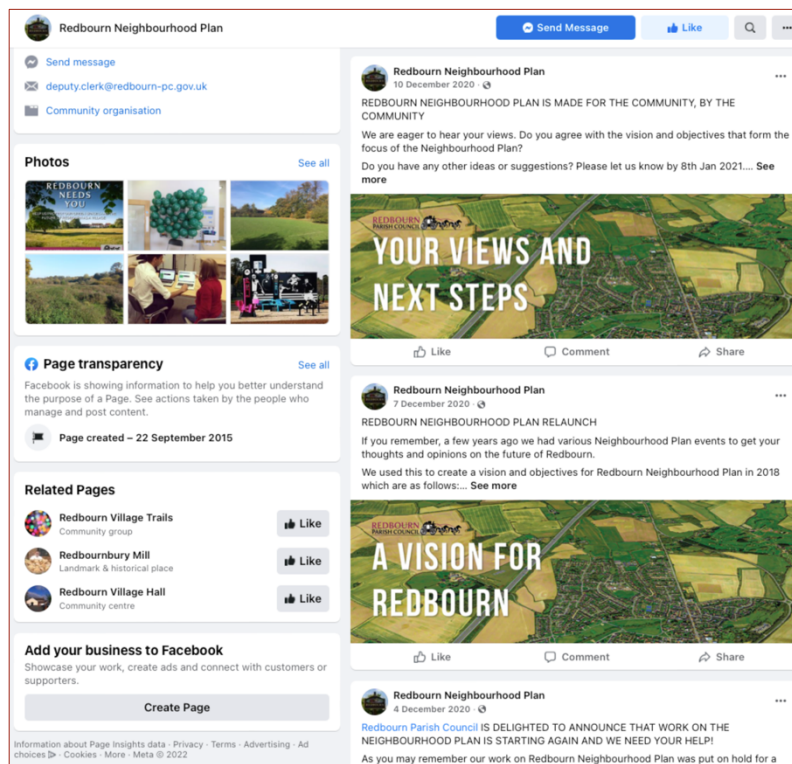


Figure 5: Posts on the Redbourn Facebook page, providing updates, December 2020

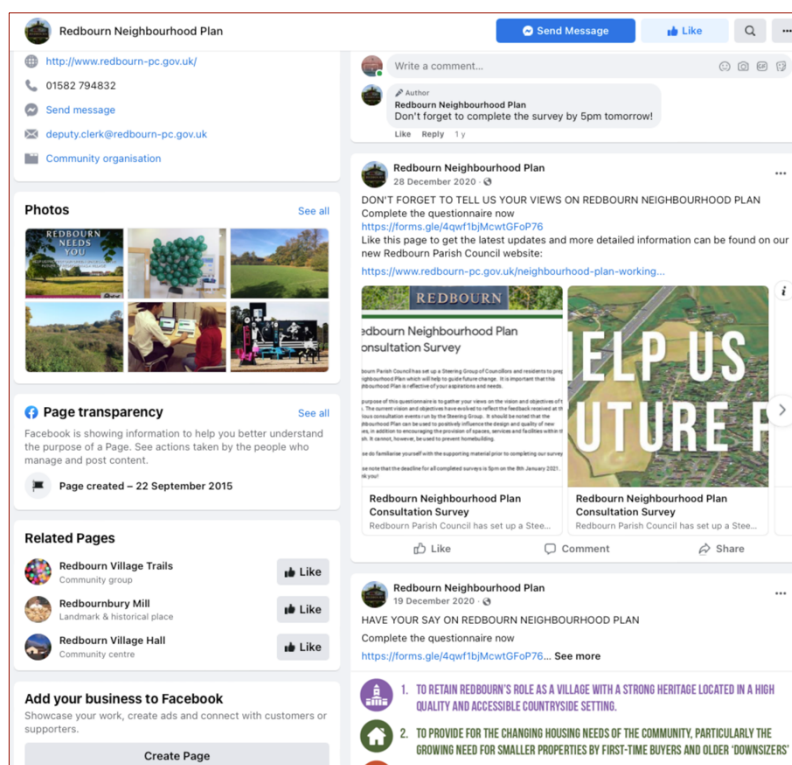


Figure 6: Posts on the Redbourn Facebook page, providing updates, December 2020

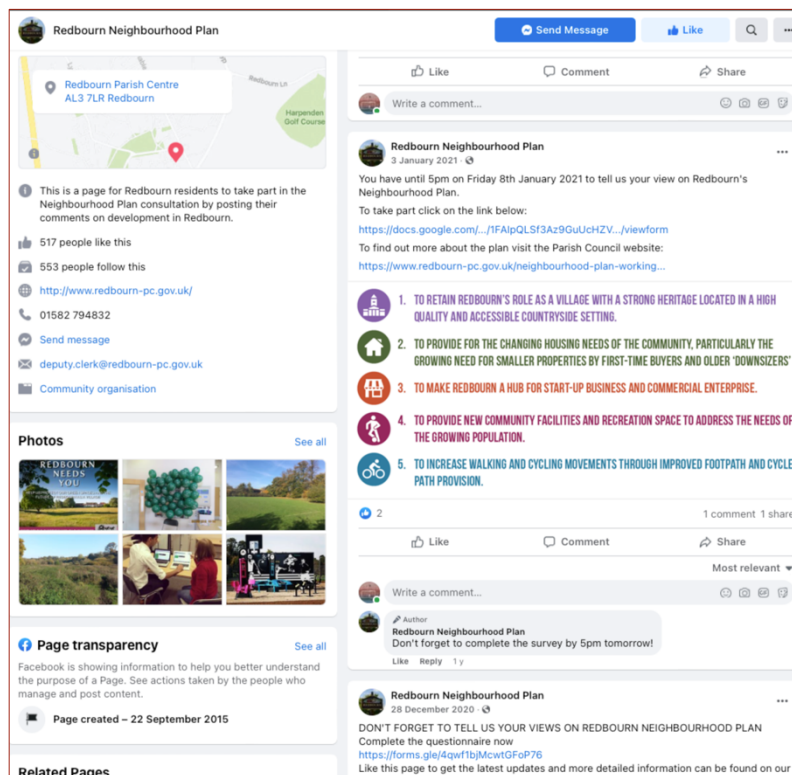


Figure 7: Posts on the Redbourn Facebook page, providing updates, January 2021



Figure 8: The Redbourn Parish Instagram account provided regular updates on progress of the Plan, and was used to advertise consultation events. The screenshot here is for the Regulation 14 consultation in December 2021.



Figure 9: Regulation 14 consultation advertising on the Redbourn Parish Instagram account, December 2021



Figure 10: Regulation 14 consultation advertising on the Redbourn Parish Instagram account, January 2022



Figure 11: Regulation 14 consultation advertising on the Redbourn Parish Instagram account, January 2022

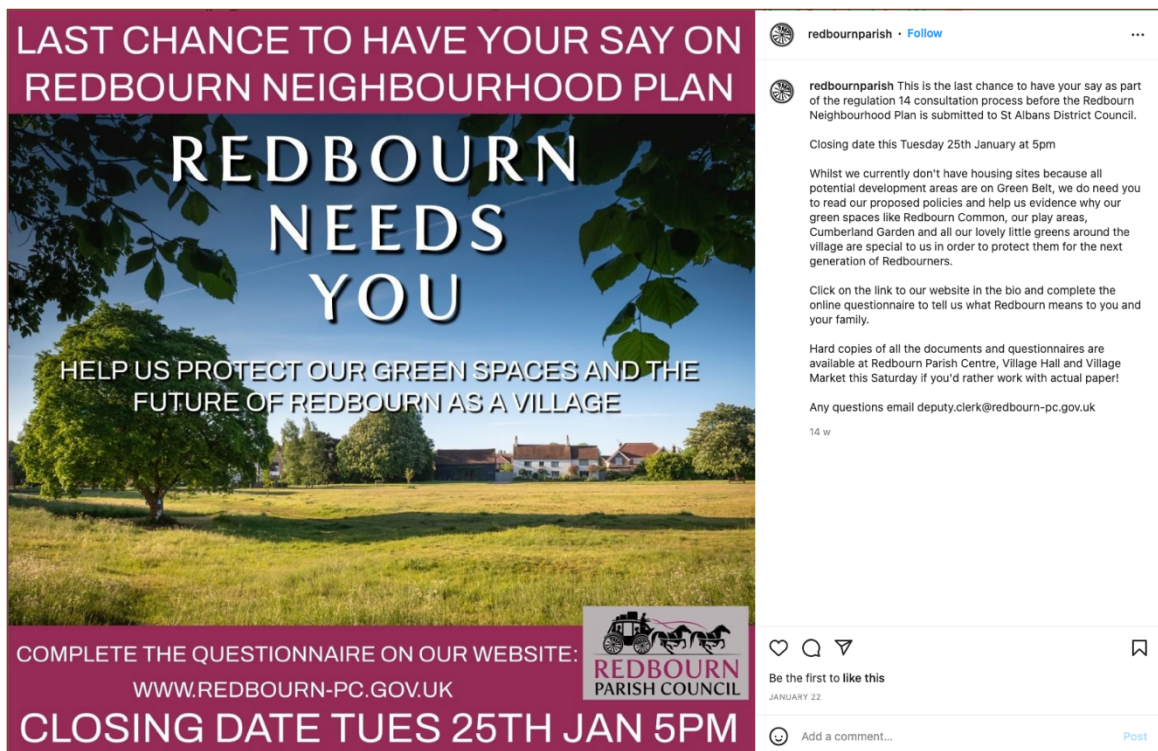


Figure 12: Regulation 14 consultation advertising on the Redbourn Parish Instagram account, January 2022

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