



Torworth and Ranskill Parish Boundary Community Governance Review

Proposals for the future

**Bassetlaw District Council would like to know your
final views on potential changes on the Parish
Council boundary between Torworth and Ranskill in
the area of the A638**

April 2022

Introduction

Bassetlaw District Council is required to keep under review governance arrangements relating to Parish Councils/Parish Meetings. This includes the parish boundaries, number of Parish Councils, merging Parishes etc. The District Council has been asked by a number of Parish Councils to look at local issues. We do this through a process known as a 'Community Governance Review'.

Why are we consulting you?

We recently sought views of about the future of the Parish Council boundary between Ranskill and Torworth in the area of the A638. We are required to provide a further round of consultation now that initial feedback has been received.

Why is a review being considered?

Last year Torworth Parish Council approached the District Council with the following request

Torworth Parish Council ask that the boundary between Torworth and Ranskill is reviewed and the new development of housing be included within Torworth's Boundary (currently in Ranskill) the new development is currently classed as Ranskill but lays within the village of Torworth, which not only isolates that section of the community but also lends future opportunities for other developers to further develop and coalesce the two villages further which neither village wants.

As it currently stands it will be very likely that the new development will rely on the use of Torworth's facilities, such as the playing field and park but precepts would go towards Ranskill. Realigning the boundary would address this issue and in return provide cohesion with the community, as it stands the village will need to absorb the burden.

The following plan illustrates the area in question. The purple line is the existing Parish Council boundary. The Field View development (outlined in red) is just north of the boundary line placing it in the Ranskill Parish Council area.



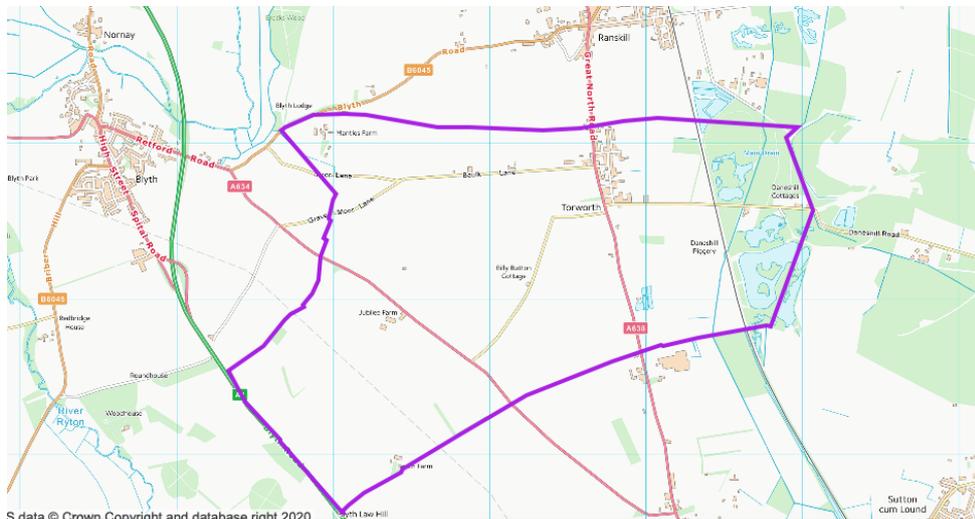
Initial Consultation Feedback

Bassetlaw District Council determined that it would give consideration to the request submitted by Torworth Parish Council. The process for this is through a 'Community Governance Review'. The District is required to seek initial views on the proposals. The following observations were received:

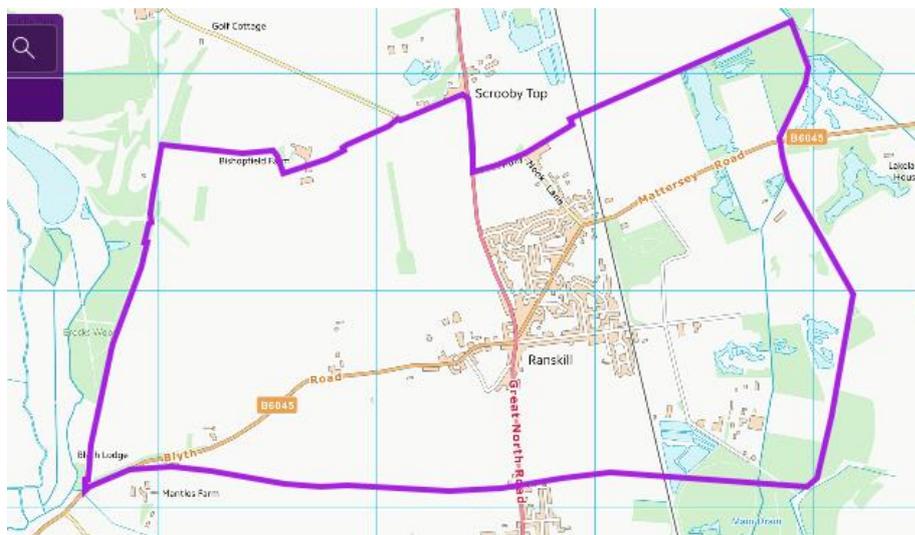
Torworth Parish Council

Torworth Parish Council put forward the request for a boundary review between Torworth and Ranskill, in view of the granted planning application and subsequent housing development for 19/01653/FUL Erect 20 Dwellings (A Mix of 3, 4, and 5 Bedroomed Properties) with associated parking and access and the provision of communal open space Land South of Ranskill Churchyard Great North Road Ranskill Retford Nottinghamshire.

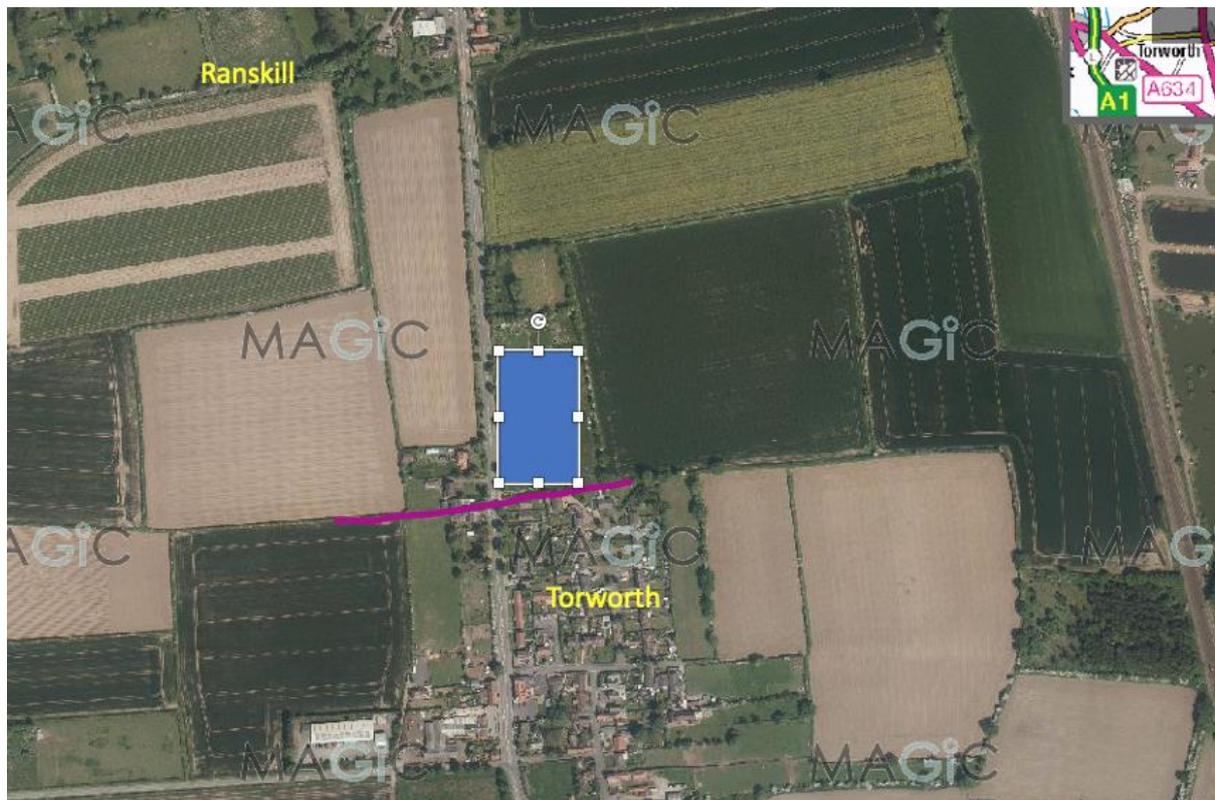
Picture a, shows the Torworth Boundary as determined on the Bassetlaw District Council website:



Picture B, shows the Ranskill Boundary as determined on the Bassetlaw District Council website:



Picture C, shows a purple line boundary between the 2 villages and the siting of the new development in blue:



At the point of determining the planning application The Draft Local plan (Jan 2020) policy ST2 stated that planning applications which resulted in coalescence would not be supported.

D. Unless otherwise promoted through Neighbourhood Plans or Part E of this policy applies, additional development in the Small Rural Settlements over the plan period will be supported provided all the criteria below are satisfactorily met, and the proposal is consistent with other policies in this Plan:

1. the proposal should not increase the number of dwellings in the Parish by over 20%. Proposals will be considered in combination with other housing development granted planning permission since 1 April 2018 (see Rural Growth Monitoring) to ensure 20% growth is not exceeded;
2. The site is located within an existing settlement boundary in a Neighbourhood Plan;
3. A single proposal should not exceed 10 dwellings, unless it can be demonstrated that it will provide a community benefit, including affordable housing or open space provision;
4. The location and size of the proposal does not conflict with the existing character and built form of that part of the settlement and it can demonstrate how it responds positively to the development principles as identified by Policy ST32 and relevant characterisation studies as part of a made Neighbourhood Plan;
5. It would not lead to the **coalescence** with any neighbouring settlement(s);
6. A proposal for non-minerals development in Minerals Safeguarding Areas meets the requirements set out in the Nottinghamshire Minerals Local Plan.

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The current ST2 in the latest iteration of the policy states that planning applications will only be supported if 'the scheme maintains the physical separation between the developments'

2. Proposals for residential development in an eligible Large or Small Rural Settlement will be supported where:
- a) it does not exceed the housing requirement in the eligible settlement identified in Part 1, individually or cumulatively with planning permissions (granted since 1 April 2018) as identified within the Bassetlaw Rural Monitoring Framework or through site allocations in this Local Plan and/or respective made neighbourhood plans.
 - b) the site is located within a development boundary, where appropriate;
 - c) the scheme does not significantly harm the character and built form in that part of the settlement;
 - d) it does not significantly harm the openness and distinctiveness of the surrounding countryside, where appropriate;
 - e) the scheme maintains the physical separation between settlements;
 - f) it prioritises the re-use of previously developed land where possible and avoids the use of the most versatile agricultural land;
 - g) it positively responds to the design principles as identified in Policy ST35, and any relevant characterisation studies informing a made neighbourhood plan:

*As demonstrated within Picture C the development **has** resulted in a join of boundaries Ranskill to Torworth.*

At the point of planning consultation both Ranskill Parish Council and Torworth Parish Council objected to the planning application for reasons of the perceived merging of the 2 villages, as did a significant number of residents within their own objections. As the boundaries have been joined, any further development in the land between the new development and the village of Ranskill itself, would easily be argued as infill.

The Parish Council in putting forward the boundary review hope to protect the 2 village identities , which we now feel has been compromised.

As demonstrated in picture C, the development is some distance away from the village of Ranskill itself and we believe that the new residents are more likely to use the Play facilities in Torworth and the community events held and funded by Torworth Parish Council which are held in the playing field. Both Parish Councils respectively manage their own Playing Fields and events.

The proximity to Ranskill's Playing field and Torworth's playing field is demonstrated in picture D

Picture D



Picture E shows the boundary line in purple and the area of land maintained by the Parish Council in Pink – As shown Torworth Parish Council has included a section of housing/land which is within Ranskill.

The following facilities and activities are maintained and funded by Torworth Parish Council:

*Grass/verge Cuts
Litter picks
Village inspections
Bench repairs and maintenance
Village Events*

These activities/facilities are all funded by precept payments that the residents of Torworth pay for through Council tax payments.

Picture E



Torworth Parish is deemed as an unsustainable settlement, but unfortunately the footprint of the village has been perceivably increased.

As it currently stands it will be very likely that the new development will rely on the use of Torworth's facilities, such as the playing field and park, and activities such as grass cuts, litter picks, bus shelter salting and village events but precepts would go towards Ranskill.

Realigning the boundary would address this issue and in return provide cohesion with the community, as it stands the village of Torworth will and currently does absorb the burden.

We are also aware from current residents, that the boundary as it stands causes postal issues, and residents have requested to have their postal addresses changed from Ranskill to Torworth to address this.

New residents will also be able to vote in Torworth Local elections on matters that affect them most.

We firmly believe that realigning the boundary to include both the current housing on the edge of the boundary line within Ranskill and the new development both into Torworth would provide cohesion with the community, as it stands the village will need to absorb the burdens detailed which is likely to result in animosity.

In rebuttal to the comments made in Ranskill Parish Councils Community Governance response we would like to clarify that:

- *The cubs, scouts, brownies & guides are based in SCROOBY, and not Ranskill as stated. Ranskill is the ward that these groups support. The ward being Mattersey, Scrooby, Ranskill and Torworth.*
- *Ranskill does not have a made Neighbourhood Plan, and it therefore offers little weight in any planning decisions made. In fact of the matter, limited progression has occurred since first designating the neighbourhood in 2016.*

The Pre-Submission Draft Ranskill Neighbourhood Plan was published for consultation on 1 December 2021 (see below for full details).

Stage	Date
Neighbourhood Area Designated	07 March 2016
Pre-Submission Draft Plan Published	1 December 2021
Draft Plan Submitted	
Examiner's Report Approved	
Referendum	

- *Ranskill village shop and Post Office, park, pub, fish and chip shop are all privately owned. The alignment of the boundary, and therefore precept would only contribute towards the activities listed above such as Grass cuts, litter picks etc which Torworth currently pay for.*
- *2 member of Torworth Parish Council attended Ranskill Parish councils meeting on March the 10th. Chair Willis informed them of the Boundary proposal in person. An email was also sent on June 28th to inform Ranskill Parish Council that Torworth would be suggesting the boundary review as part of this consultation. It is therefore Torworth Parish Councils opinion that Ranskill's Parish Council statement:*
- *As previously mentioned Torworth Parish Council are of the firm belief that residents and indeed the Parish Council wish to protect each villages identities and would not support a parish council merger.*

RANSKILL PARISH COUNCIL Initial Response

Following receipt of the notice from BDC of a boundary review request made by Torworth Parish Council a discussion was held by Ranskill Parish Council at our November meeting. It was concluded that Ranskill Parish Council would object to the proposed changes on a number of grounds.

In the application from TPC it is stated that future residents of the Rose & Co development would be more likely to use Torworth's facilities. This is patently untrue as Torworth has no village facilities, with the exception of a small play park.

The total lack of local, village facilities is one of the main contributing factors to Torworth being classed as an unsustainable settlement by Bassetlaw District Council.

In reality the new residents will make use of the wider facilities available in Ranskill including the village shop and Post Office, park, pub, fish and chip shop and church.

The new Rose & Co development comprises mostly sizable dwellings likely to attract families whose children will attend Ranskill Primary School. This will also lead to them participating in the extracurricular activities offered by the school and in the wider community including cubs, scouts, brownies & guides, all of which are also based in Ranskill.

This will lead to new residents feeling more part of a community, rather than being isolated as TPC suggest.

There is also the impact on the existing properties on the opposite side of Great North Road that are currently part of Ranskill.

The suggestions that altering the current boundary would protect against potential further development between the two villages is dubious at best. The conjoining of two separate rural communities by new development is already against planning policy and this will be further reinforced by the new BDC Local Plan.

The new Ranskill Neighbourhood Plan will also reflect that no further development should take place within the village, which would include the land in between St Barnabas Church and the cemetery. It is worth noting that these sites were firmly rejected as potential development sites by residents as part of the Neighbourhood Plan process.

The boundary has been in place between our 2 villages for at least 200 years and this relatively minor development in the history of Ranskill and Torworth does not merit changing it, not least on such spurious arguments.

Should it be felt that a change is required, and we firmly do not believe this to be the case, we would propose that a simpler alternative would be to merge the two Parish Councils to create a new joint body that would receive the precept from both villages, thus removing the need for any boundary change.

Further response from Ranskill Parish Council

We have not amended our original response. We do however have the following additional notes which we would wish to be included in the process: -

Neighbourhood Plan: *Torworth claim that limited progression has been made in the Ranskill NP. This statement is untrue, we have just carried out a regulation 14 consultation and about to issue our draft submission to Bassetlaw. Whereas according to the BDC website the progression of the Torworth NP has stopped entirely.*

Boundary: *Ranskill strongly believes that the parish boundary has been in existence for centuries and there is no valid reason to change, the development should remain in Ranskill.*

Facilities: *There are virtually no facilities in Torworth, the assertion that Torworth would have to cut grass, repair benches, carry out maintenance etc is the general duty of a PC and would have to be carried out regardless of inclusion or otherwise of the Rose development. The reverse view is put forward from Ranskill in that we have larger facilities to maintain.*

Planning Application: Both villages objected to the application for the same reason, we believed that infill development would not be supported by BDC. This proved not to be the case and BDC Planning approved the application. Nevertheless the fact is that approval was given, knowing the development was within the Parish boundary of Ranskill. This should not change the postal address is irrelevant.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

The Council appreciates that this is the first of two periods of consultation and that at this time other proposals are likely to come forward. At this stage Nottinghamshire County Council would like to acknowledge our interest in the review but we do not wish to make comments at this time. The Council reserves the right to respond during the second consultation stage, after the final draft recommendations have been published. We can then consider these in conjunction with submissions and comments made by local communities during the first phase of consultation. We will therefore consider whether a formal response providing comment and response is required at that time.

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR G. BOWERS

Wishes to await the feedback from the further round of consultation.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR T. TAYLOR

As Divisional Councillor, I seek to serve both communities equally, so my comments here are offered without prejudice in response to your enquiry. In my view, the Fields View Gardens development presents a similar dislocation of homes and residents from the main settlement area of the parish in which they are (technically) sited. The new houses are clearly attached to the outer edge of the settlement of Torworth. I note also that the new postal addresses are Torworth, as is that of High Gables (across the road from site) which appears to sit across the parish boundary and The Lodge, which sits immediately opposite the entrance to Fields View Gardens.

There are clearly some inconsistencies which could be addressed by moving the parish boundary now; but either decision will leave one community feeling unheard. I don't believe the determination should be based on CIL receipts, precepts or perceptions of financial gain or loss. The real tragedy here is that a particular housing development has made this proposal necessary and is causing such schism between neighbouring parishes.

FIELD VIEW GARDEN RESIDENTS

Resident 1

"Further to your letter regarding the above we can confirm we would be happy for the development to be formally classed as being in the Torworth area rather than Ranskill".

Resident 2

"We first noticed a problem when reading the mountain of paperwork provided (via our solicitor) by the developer, Rose & Co. On some documents it was ' Field View Gardens, Ranskill ' but others referred to 'Field View Gardens, Torworth. Rose & Co said that they had been given Ranskill by Bassetlaw D. C. Then, when visiting the building site, we were confused by the village signs. Driving along the Great North Road from the traffic lights in Ranskill, we passed signs welcoming us to Torworth before reaching the site, while being welcomed to Ranskill soon after exiting the development on the return journey..... Having taken so much trouble to change our address, insisting on Ranskill not Torworth, we will feel very aggrieved if it is altered to Torworth, and we have to go through the whole process again.

We are new to the area and during the last 6 weeks we have used the shop and the pub in Ranskill (and been welcomed by the owners), whereas, unless we have missed something,

Torworth has no facilities that we will use.

We would much prefer to keep Field View Gardens in Ranskill and to reposition the village signs on the actual boundary, but we can see that, assuming Royal Mail will not alter their stance, the easiest solution to the problem is to move the parish boundary to incorporate the development within the Torworth Parish. At least then we would have the same 'official' and 'postal' address.

Resident 3

With reference to the consultation, we are ambivalent about which parish precept we fall under, which are likely to be similar, unless you can advise otherwise.

Logically we feel part of Torworth, and this is the address we provide to organisations.

If changing to Torworth parish would make any tangible difference to the village we would support it, and would appreciate information on what difference this would make.

Nearby Resident

The Parish Boundary should be respected now.

The Parish Boundary should have been respected in the past when the Field View Gardens development was going through planning. This issue should have been given more weight and the development refused on the grounds of a Ranskill development being an outlier away from the settlement area of Ranskill.

Unfortunately, I can see a time in the not too distant future when it will be continuous new developments both side of the historic North Road from Retford to Bawtry and the individual character of the historic hamlets and villages along the road will be eroded. Chasing Council Tax income over protecting the agricultural land.

What could a change mean?

If the District Council did propose a change to the Parish Council boundary it would only be around the boundary line of the new development as no proposals have been received for other parts of the boundary line.

Postal Address – Although the Field View properties are currently in Ranskill the Royal Mail Postcode finder indicates Torworth as part of the address. Postal addresses are not actually an indication of geographical location. The postal address for Royal Mail would not change either way This can however cause confusion for the local residents and others. Moving the properties into Torworth would address this anomaly.

Village Signs –The Village signs for Torworth and Ranskill are not located where the actual parish boundary is. This can cause some confusion. It would be recommended to the Parish and County Councils that these are changed at some point.

What would a change mean to my Council Tax? The Field View Gardens are currently within the Ranskill Parish. An additional amount of Council Tax (known as a precept) is charged by the Parish Council. If the properties move into Torworth the properties would be subject to their precept instead. Precepts are a matter for each Parish and can change in the future. An example of the precepts for 2022/23 (based on 2 adult residents) are

	RANSKILL	TORWORTH
BAND D	£41.57	£168.87

What happens next?

Bassetlaw District Council is inviting final comments on this matter. It will consider these at its meeting 23rd June 2022 and decide whether a change should be made to the boundary.

The closing date for all responses is **Friday, 27th May 2022.**

Contact

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