

# Sustainability Appraisal (SA) for the Rutland Local Plan

SA Report to accompany the Preferred Options Consultation  
(Regulation 18)

November 2023

## Quality information

<b>Prepared by</b>	<b>Checked by</b>	<b>Verified by</b>	<b>Approved by</b>
EH Environmental Planner	NCB Technical Director	IM Associate Director	IM Associate Director
RP Senior Environmental Planner			

## Revision History

<b>Revision</b>	<b>Revision date</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Authorized</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>
V3.0	09/11/23	Consultation version	09/11/23	NCB	Technical Director

### Prepared for:

Rutland County Council

### Prepared by:

AECOM Limited  
Aldgate Tower  
2 Lemn Street  
London E1 8FA  
United Kingdom

T: +44 (0)20 7061 7000  
aecom.com

© 2023 AECOM Limited. All Rights Reserved.

This document has been prepared by AECOM Limited (“AECOM”) for sole use of our client (the “Client”) in accordance with generally accepted consultancy principles, the budget for fees and the terms of reference agreed between AECOM and the Client. Any information provided by third parties and referred to herein has not been checked or verified by AECOM, unless otherwise expressly stated in the document. No third party may rely upon this document without the prior and express written agreement of AECOM.

## Table of Contents

1.	Introduction .....	1
	Background .....	1
	Brief spatial overview of the county of Rutland .....	3
	What is the Rutland Local Plan seeking to achieve? .....	4
	Vision and Strategic Objectives for the Local Plan.....	4
	Current stage of plan making .....	6
2.	Sustainability appraisal for the Rutland Local Plan .....	7
	Sustainability appraisal explained .....	7
	This SA Report .....	7
	What is the scope of the SA?.....	8
	SA Scoping Report .....	8
	SA Framework.....	8
3.	Plan making and SA process to date .....	13
4.	Issues and Options (June 2022) .....	14
	Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation .....	14
	SA work to accompany Issues and Options.....	14
5.	Settlement assessment and site appraisals .....	16
	Settlement assessments.....	16
	Site assessments .....	17
6.	Development of growth strategy options .....	18
	Assessing growth strategy options through the SA.....	18
	Different scales of growth .....	18
	Different locations of growth.....	18
	Establishing growth strategy options.....	21
	Growth strategy options.....	23
	Other potential options.....	29
7.	Appraisal of growth strategy options .....	30
	Appraisal methodology .....	30
	Appraisal findings .....	30
8.	Policy approaches in the draft Local Plan .....	46
	Local Plan contents, aims and objectives.....	46
	Policies.....	46
	Spatial strategy.....	49

9.	Appraisal of the draft Local Plan policies .....	51
	Approach to the appraisal.....	51
	Biodiversity and geodiversity.....	51
	Landscape.....	56
	Historic environment.....	60
	Air, land, soil and water resources .....	64
	Climate change .....	69
	Communities, health and wellbeing.....	72
	Transportation .....	76
	Economic vitality.....	78
	Cumulative effects.....	80
10.	Next steps .....	83

**Technical Annex** (accompanying this document): SA Report Technical Annex  
to accompany the *Preferred Options Consultation* document

# Introduction

# 1. Introduction

## Background

- 1.1 AECOM has been commissioned to undertake an independent sustainability appraisal (SA) in support of Rutland County Council's emerging Local Plan.
- 1.2 Rutland County Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan to replace the existing planning policies in the Rutland Local Development Framework.<sup>1</sup> The new Local Plan, which will cover the period to 2040, will be the key planning policy document for the County and will guide decisions on the use and development of land.
- 1.3 This Interim SA Report accompanies the *Rutland Local Plan: Preferred Options Consultation* document for consultation.
- 1.4 Key information relating to the Local Plan is presented in **Table 1.1**.

**Table 1.1: Key facts relating to the Rutland Local Plan**

Name of Responsible Authority	Rutland County Council
Title of Plan	Rutland Local Plan
Subject	Development plan
Purpose	The Local Plan is a statutory planning document prepared by Rutland County Council. It is the key planning policy document for the County and will guide decisions on the use and development of land.
Timescale	2021 to 2041
Area covered by the plan	Rutland County ( <b>Figure 1.1</b> )
Summary of content	The Local Plan will set out the strategic vision, objectives and spatial strategy for the County, as well as the planning policies which will help to determine the future location, scale, type and design of new development in Rutland. Upon adoption, it will set out the Council's policies to address housing and employment needs and other associated economic, social, and environmental priorities. It seeks to ensure local development is built in accordance with the principles of sustainable development as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The Local Plan will also include site allocations to meet the vision and objectives of the Plan.
Plan contact point	Sharon Baker, Senior Planning Officer, Catmose, Oakham, Rutland LE15 6HP  Email address: <a href="mailto:localplan@rutland.gov.uk">localplan@rutland.gov.uk</a>  Telephone number: 01572 758306

<sup>1</sup> The current Local Development Framework comprises: Minerals Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPD (October 2010); the Core Strategy DPD (July 2011); and the Site Allocations and Policies DPD (October 2014)



Figure 1.1: Rutland County

## Brief spatial overview of the county of Rutland

- 1.5 The area of Rutland is approximately 382 km<sup>2</sup> and latest data indicates that in 2021 the population was 41,381<sup>2</sup>. This is projected to rise to 45,038 by 2036 and to 46,100 by 2041<sup>3</sup>. The density of population is low with 108 people per km<sup>2</sup>. Rutland is rural in character with a large proportion of land in agricultural use.
- 1.6 Rutland is home to two market towns – Oakham and Uppingham - of which Oakham is the larger with a population of approximately 11,227<sup>4</sup>. Oakham has a range of education, community, health and leisure facilities. It is also a centre for employment and shopping, including a twice-weekly market and a mix of independent and country wide retailers. Uppingham has a population of about 5001<sup>5</sup> with a more limited range of facilities, employment and shopping, and a weekly market.
- 1.7 Rutland also has 52 villages ranging in size from small hamlets with a few houses and no facilities to larger villages with facilities such as a school, a convenience store, a post office, general medical practice, employment opportunities, community and leisure facilities and bus links to the towns and neighbouring villages. The six largest villages account for around a quarter of Rutland's population.
- 1.8 Beyond Rutland's borders, Stamford lies just outside the county boundary to the east. It provides a range of community and leisure facilities, shopping, education, health services and acts as a service centre to some of the villages on the eastern side of Rutland. Stamford is tightly constrained by the county boundary and has limited space to grow. Corby lies approximately three miles south of Rutland and Melton Mowbray lies approximately five miles north-west.
- 1.9 In general terms, Rutland is recognised as having a high quality of life, with an attractive and high-quality environment, low levels of deprivation, unemployment and crime, high levels of life expectancy, health and educational attainment.
- 1.10 Nevertheless, it is not a universal picture of affluence and the attractive rural nature of the area gives rise to its own problems such as the high cost of housing and difficulties in access to services due to the dispersed pattern of settlement and lack of public transport.
- 1.11 Chapter 2 of the *Preferred Options Consultation* document presents out a more detailed spatial portrait of Rutland.

---

<sup>2</sup> Office for National Statistics (2023) Mid-2021 Estimates of the population for the UK, England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, Accessed: April 2023

<sup>3</sup> Office for National Statistics (2023) Population projections for local authorities: Table 2, Accessed: April 2023

<sup>4</sup> Office for National Statistics (2023) Population Estimates for 2020 Wards in England and Wales by Single Year of Age and Sex - Experimental Statistics, Accessed: April 2023

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

# What is the Rutland Local Plan seeking to achieve?

## Vision and Strategic Objectives for the Local Plan

- 1.12 The vision and objectives for the Local Plan were developed during initial stages of plan making.
- 1.13 The Local Plan seeks to establish a clear vision for the future of Rutland and sets out objectives for delivering that vision during the plan period. This provides the framework upon which the policies and proposals of the plan are built.
- 1.14 The **vision** for the Local Plan is as follows:

*By 2041, the Local Plan will have helped Rutland to make the most of its location, natural features and historic assets to become a leading example of a modern rural county.*

*The Local Plan will have supported the delivery of:*

- *changes that improve people's quality of life, address the impacts of climate change and the need to become carbon net zero*
- *a strong, competitive, and knowledge-based local economy that provides opportunity for indigenous and inward investment and where businesses and entrepreneurs flourish*
- *a range of high-quality housing that meet the county's minimum housing need and which meets the needs of all sections of the community, including affordable homes, space for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Show people and homes which meet specialist needs*
- *healthy, sustainable, mixed communities with easy access to services and facilities by cycling, walking, public transport as well as by private vehicle*
- *development and change which also respects Rutland's rural character and has enhanced the county's sense of community and its unique rural identity*
- *protection and preservation of heritage assets and natural environment*
- *appropriate infrastructure (particularly education, health, roads, and community facilities) to mitigate the impact of new development.*

*The market towns of Oakham and Uppingham will continue to thrive as vibrant destinations to shop, socialise and enjoy life – both for those who live locally and those who visit. They will continue to be the main focus for additional housing and employment growth, while their role as business locations, service and cultural centres for the county will have been enhanced.*

*Beyond the towns, some planned development will have occurred in the 21 Larger Villages. Small scale, local, development will also have been permitted in the smaller settlements ensuring that our rural communities remain vibrant.*

*The quintessential rural character of the countryside will have been protected and support given to rural diversification and adapting rural activities to meet the challenges of climate change, digitalisation and changing travel patterns.*

*The development needs of communities, businesses and visitors will have been enabled taking particular account of:*

- *climate change and the drive towards carbon net zero*
- *addressing health inequalities and improving the wellbeing of our communities*
- *addressing social and economic inequalities and promoting active travel routes*
- *the area's internationally recognised natural, built, and historic environment*
- *the provision of adequate supporting infrastructure.*

1.15 Implementing this vision, the Local Plan has the following **Strategic Objectives**:

Strategic Objective 1: Climate change

*Taking positive action to achieve net-zero and reduce our carbon footprint, whilst mitigating and adapting to reduce the impact of climate change and reduce the risk of harm to people, communities, the environment, and the economy.*

Strategic Objective 2: Delivering sustainable development

*Delivering development which meets today's needs in a way which ensures the needs of future generations are not compromised.*

Strategic Objective 3: Meeting housing needs

*Meeting Rutland's identified current and future diverse housing needs, including the affordability and adaptability of housing, through the provision of well-designed, energy efficient and low/zero carbon new homes.*

Strategic Objective 4: A prosperous and resilient local economy

*Supporting business investment and job creation in ways which are compatible with environmental considerations, food security, rural development and supporting visitor attractions to maintain a prosperous and resilient economy in Rutland.*

Strategic Objective 5: Supporting strong and vibrant communities

*Promoting health and wellbeing for people of all ages and reduce health inequalities.*

Strategic Objective 6: Creating safe, inclusive, and resilient communities

*Supporting all communities across the county to make them safe, inclusive, resilient to change with enhanced community cohesion.*

Strategic Objective 7: Promoting high standards of design

*Promoting high standard of design in all new development.*

Strategic Objective 8: Protect and enhance the built and natural environment

*To provide, protect and enhance Rutland's varied and high-quality built and natural environment.*

Strategic Objective 9: Make effective use of land and natural resources

*Encouraging the effective and prudent use of previously developed land and natural resources*

Strategic Objective 10: Ensure development is supported by essential infrastructure and services

*Ensuring development is supported by essential infrastructure and services.*

Strategic objective 11: Minerals

*Ensuring a steady and adequate supply of minerals to meet national, regional, and local needs whilst taking account of impacts on the environment and local communities.*

## Current stage of plan making

- 1.16 At the current stage of plan making, Rutland County Council are consulting on a draft Local Plan (*Rutland Local Plan - Preferred Options Consultation November 2023*). The document is an interim stage in developing the Local Plan and has been prepared under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (England) Regulations 2012).
- 1.17 This stage in the plan making process is the publication of a draft version of Rutland's Local Plan indicating the preferred options for growth, supported by evidence. It follows previous community engagement for the Local Plan undertaken through the Call for Sites (spring 2022) and Issues and Options consultation (summer 2022).
- 1.18 The *Preferred Options Consultation* document sets out a draft local plan vision and objectives and the strategic policies for Rutland. These include planning policies which set out: the Council's proposed development strategy; the ambition to achieve net zero whilst adapting to and mitigating effects of climate change; the pattern, scale, and quality of development to address identified needs in Rutland to 2041; provisions for a wide range of types of development; how the conservation and enhancement of the natural and built environment will be achieved.
- 1.19 The current consultation precedes the release of the submission version of the Local Plan for Regulation 19 consultation in 2024. Drawing on consultation responses received at the current stage of plan-making and evidence base studies undertaken to inform the Local Plan, this document will develop further the proposed policies for the Local Plan, including the preferred development strategy and allocations.

## 2. Sustainability appraisal for the Rutland Local Plan

### Sustainability appraisal explained

- 2.1 SA considers and communicates the likely significant effects of an emerging plan, and the reasonable alternatives considered during the plan making process, in terms of key sustainability issues. The aim of SA is to inform and influence the plan-making process with a view to avoiding or mitigating negative effects and maximising positive effects. Through this approach, the SA seeks to maximise the emerging Local Plan's contribution to sustainable development.
- 2.2 An SA is undertaken in line with the procedures prescribed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations). SA also widens the scope of the assessment from focusing generally on environmental issues to also explicitly include social and economic issues.
- 2.3 The SEA Regulations require that a report is published for consultation alongside the draft plan that 'identifies, describes and evaluates' the likely significant effects of implementing 'the plan, and reasonable alternatives'. The report must then be taken into account, alongside consultation responses, when finalising the plan.
- 2.4 The 'likely significant effects on the environment', are those defined in the SEA Regulations as 'including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors'. Reasonable alternatives to the plan need to take into consideration the objectives for the plan and its geographic scope. The choice of 'reasonable alternatives' is determined by means of a case-by-case assessment and a decision.<sup>6</sup>

### This SA Report

- 2.5 At this current stage of the plan-making process, RCC is consulting on the Preferred Options for the Local Plan under Regulation 18 of the Local Planning Regulations.
- 2.6 This SA Report is published with the intention of informing the consultation and subsequent preparation of the final draft ('proposed submission') version of the Local Plan.
- 2.7 This SA Report has therefore been produced with the intention of informing this stage in the Local Plan's preparation. Specifically, this report presents an appraisal of the preferred options for the Local Plan, and reasonable alternatives. This is for the benefit of those who might wish to make representations through the consultation and for the benefit of the plan-makers tasked with selecting preferred approaches for the Local Plan.
- 2.8 This SA Report has been structured into three parts, as follows:
  - **Part 1** provides an outline of plan making to date, in association with the parallel SA process.
  - **Part 2** assesses the policies presented in the *Preferred Options Consultation* document, with which this SA Report accompanies for consultation.
  - **Part 3** sets out the next steps for the Local Plan/SA process.

---

<sup>6</sup> Commission of the European Communities (2009) Report from the Commission to the Council, The European Parliament, The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the application and effectiveness of the Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment (Directive 2001/42/EC). (COMM 2009 469 final).

# What is the scope of the SA?

## SA Scoping Report

- 2.9 The SEA Regulations require that: “*When deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the report, the responsible authority shall consult the consultation bodies*”. In England, the consultation bodies are the Environment Agency, Historic England, and Natural England.<sup>7</sup> These authorities were consulted on the scope of the SA for the new Local Plan between March and April 2022.
- 2.10 The baseline information (including baseline data and context review) initially included in the SA Scoping Report provides the basis for the SA process and has been reviewed and updated in light of the responses received at scoping consultation. The responses (along with comments on how these have been considered and addressed through the SA process) will be presented in the SA Report which will accompany the Submission Draft Local Plan at Regulation 19 consultation in 2024.

## SA Framework

- 2.11 Drawing on the review of the sustainability context and baseline, the SA Scoping Report identified a range of sustainability issues that should be a particular focus of SA, ensuring it remains targeted on the most important issues. These issues were then translated into an SA ‘Framework’ of objectives and appraisal questions.
- 2.12 The SA Framework provides a way in which the sustainability effects of the Local Plan and alternatives can be identified and subsequently analysed based on a structured and consistent approach.
- 2.13 The SA Framework and the appraisal findings in this SA Report have been presented under eight SA Themes, reflecting the range of information being considered through the SA process. These are:
- Biodiversity and Geodiversity.
  - Landscape.
  - Historic Environment.
  - Air, Land, Soil and Water Resources.
  - Climate Change.
  - Communities, Health and Wellbeing.
  - Transportation; and
  - Economic Vitality.
- 2.14 The SA Framework is presented in **Table 2.1** below.

---

<sup>7</sup> In line with Article 6(3) of the SEA Directive, these consultation bodies were selected because “*by reason of their specific environmental responsibilities, [they] are likely to be concerned by the environmental effects of implementing plans and programme*”.

**Table 2.1: SA Framework for the SA of the Rutland Local Plan**

<b>SA objective</b>	<b>Appraisal questions... Will the option / proposal help to:</b>
<b>SA Theme: Biodiversity and Geodiversity</b>	
1. Support the integrity of internationally, nationally, and locally designated sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Protect the integrity of the internationally and nationally designated sites within and within proximity to Rutland?</li> <li>b) Manage pressures on locally designated sites for biodiversity and geodiversity in Rutland?</li> </ul>
2. Protect and enhance habitats and species in Rutland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Protect and enhance priority habitats, and the habitat of priority species?</li> <li>b) Protect key species during the construction and operational phases of new development areas?</li> <li>c) Protect and enhance ecological networks?</li> <li>d) Achieve a net gain in biodiversity?</li> <li>e) Increase the resilience of Rutland's biodiversity to the potential effects of climate change?</li> </ul>
3. Enhance understanding of biodiversity and geodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Support access to, interpretation and understanding of biodiversity and geodiversity?</li> <li>b) Encourage opportunities for engagement with Rutland's biodiversity and geodiversity resource?</li> </ul>
<b>SA Theme: Landscape</b>	
4. Protect and enhance the character and quality of Rutland's landscapes, townscapes and villagescapes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Support the distinctive qualities of the NCAs and LCAs within and surrounding Rutland?</li> <li>b) Protect and enhance key landscape, townscape and villagescape features which contribute to local distinctiveness?</li> <li>c) Protect locally important viewpoints contributing to sense of place and visual amenity?</li> <li>d) Improve understanding of Rutland's distinctive landscape, townscape and villagescape resources?</li> </ul>
5. Contribute to tranquillity and the quality of dark skies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Ensure that new infrastructure provision does not adversely impact on the quality of Rutland's dark skies?</li> <li>b) Minimise the impact on and seek to improve areas of tranquillity?</li> </ul>
<b>SA Theme: Historic Environment</b>	
6. Conserve and enhance Rutland's historic environment, including designated and non-designated heritage assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Conserve and enhance the significance of buildings and structures of architectural or historic interest, both designated and non-designated, and their setting?</li> <li>b) Conserve and enhance the special interest, character and appearance of conservation areas and their settings?</li> <li>c) Conserve and enhance the special interest, character and appearance of registered parks and gardens, and their settings?</li> <li>d) Protect and where possible, enhance the wider historic environment, including historic landscapes?</li> </ul>
7. Conserve and enhance Rutland's archaeological resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Conserve and enhance archaeological resource, including features listed on the Leicestershire and Rutland HER?</li> </ul>
8. Promote opportunities for enhancing the understanding of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic evolution and character of the environment?</li> </ul>

<b>SA objective</b>	<b>Appraisal questions... Will the option / proposal help to:</b>
Rutland's distinct historic environment	b) Ensure that, where possible, development contributes to improved public understanding of assets and their settings?

---

**SA Theme: Air, Land, Soil and Water Resources**

9. Deliver improvements in air quality in Rutland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Reduce emissions of pollutants from transport?</li> <li>b) Promote the use of low emission vehicles?</li> <li>c) Promote enhancements in sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling and public transport?</li> <li>d) Promote enhancements to green infrastructure networks to facilitate increased absorption and dissipation of pollutants?</li> </ul>
10. Ensure the efficient and effective use of land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Avoid the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land?</li> <li>b) Support a brownfield first approach to new development opportunities?</li> <li>c) Support the remediation of contaminated land?</li> <li>d) Protect the integrity of mineral resources?</li> <li>e) Encourage recycling of materials and minimise consumption of resources during construction, operation, and maintenance of new infrastructure?</li> </ul>
11. Manage Rutland's water resources in a sustainable manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Support improvements to water quality consistent with the aims of the Water Environment regulations?</li> <li>b) Ensure that appropriate drainage infrastructure is available to serve new development areas?</li> <li>c) Reduce pressures on wastewater treatment works and the capacity of the existing networks?</li> <li>d) Help to minimise diffuse surface water pollution?</li> <li>e) Protect surface water and groundwater resources?</li> <li>f) Minimise water consumption?</li> </ul>

---

**SA Theme: Climate Change**

12. Reduce the contribution to climate change made by activities within Rutland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Promote the use of sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling and public transport?</li> <li>b) Increase the number of new developments meeting or exceeding sustainable design criteria?</li> <li>c) Generate energy from low or zero carbon sources?</li> <li>d) Reduce energy consumption from non-renewable resources?</li> </ul>
13. Support Rutland's resilience to the potential effects of climate change, including flooding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Ensure that inappropriate development does not take place in areas at higher risk of flooding, taking into account the likely future effects of climate change?</li> <li>b) Improve and extend green infrastructure networks to support adaptation to the potential effects of climate change?</li> <li>c) Sustainably manage water run-off, reducing surface water runoff?</li> <li>d) Ensure the potential risks associated with climate change are considered through new development areas?</li> </ul>

---

**SA Theme: Communities, Health and Wellbeing**

14. Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing	a) Support the timely delivery of an appropriate mix of housing types and tenures?
---	--

<b>SA objective</b>	<b>Appraisal questions... Will the option / proposal help to:</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b) Ensure delivery of high-quality, affordable and specialist housing that meets the needs of all Rutland's residents?</li> <li>c) Provide quality and flexible homes that meet people's needs?</li> <li>d) Promote the use of sustainable building techniques, including use of sustainable building materials in construction?</li> <li>e) Provide housing in sustainable locations that allow easy access to a range of local services and facilities?</li> </ul>
15. Delivery of infrastructure to meet the foreseeable needs of the varied communities of Rutland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Meet the needs of a growing population?</li> <li>b) Meet the needs of those living in rural areas?</li> <li>c) Address the needs of all age groups and communities in Rutland (including residents with protected characteristics)?</li> <li>d) Maintain or enhance the quality of life of all residents?</li> </ul>
16. Support the quality of neighbourhoods as a place to live	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Help remove barriers to activities and reduce social isolation?</li> <li>b) Enhance community infrastructure?</li> <li>c) Support the energy efficiency of new and existing development, including in reducing fuel poverty?</li> </ul>
17. Improve the health and well-being of Rutland's residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Reduce the impacts of pollution on health?</li> <li>b) Reduce health inequalities?</li> <li>c) Enhance the provision of, and access to, open spaces and green and blue infrastructure provision in Rutland?</li> <li>d) Improve access to the countryside for recreation?</li> <li>e) Encourage healthy lifestyles and active travel modes, including walking and cycling?</li> </ul>
<b>SA Theme: Transportation</b>	
18. Promote sustainable transport use, encourage accessibility, and reduce the need to travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Support the key objectives within the local transport plan and encourage more sustainable transport options?</li> <li>b) Improve access to and quality of sustainable transport modes for all communities to encourage modal shift?</li> <li>c) Promote improved local connectivity and pedestrian and cyclist movement?</li> <li>d) Reduce the number of journeys made and the need to travel?</li> <li>e) Improve accessibility to services, facilities, and amenities?</li> <li>f) Reduce the impact on residents and the built environment from the road network?</li> </ul>
<b>SA Theme: Economic Vitality</b>	
19. Support sustainable economic development in Rutland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Meet local employment land requirements?</li> <li>b) Support traditional and emerging sectors of Rutland's economy?</li> <li>c) Improve internet connectivity to support the digital economy and facilitate flexible working practices?</li> <li>d) Enhance the vitality of Rutland's local centres?</li> <li>e) Support rural diversification?</li> <li>f) Improve accessibility to employment opportunities?</li> <li>g) Enhance training and educational opportunities?</li> </ul>

## **Part 1: What has plan making/ SA involved up to this point?**

## 3. Plan making and SA process to date

- 3.1 The aim of Part 1 of this SA Report is to explain the SA work undertaken to date (and subsequent to scoping).
- 3.2 The new Local Plan has been in development since early 2022, and has been informed by the SA process. A key element of the SA process to date has been the appraisal of 'reasonable alternatives' for the Local Plan. This is a central requirement of the SEA Regulations.
- 3.3 The SEA Regulations are not prescriptive as to what constitutes a reasonable alternative, stating only that the SA Report should present an appraisal of the '*plan and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan*'.
- 3.4 A main focus of reasonable alternatives development and assessment has been with respect to the policy approaches that can be taken by the Local Plan, the Local Plan's spatial strategy and the allocation of land in Rutland.
- 3.5 The following chapters therefore describe how the SA process to date has informed the Local Plan, including in terms of the development of its planning policies, the preferred spatial strategy for the county and potential allocations for development.
- 3.6 Specifically, they present an overview of the following:
  - **SA work to support Issues and Options:** An appraisal of a series of high-level approaches and alternatives for the Local Plan
  - **SA site assessment:** An assessment of the sites available for allocation through the Local Plan
  - **SA settlement assessment:** An assessment of the sustainability of Rutland's towns and villages
  - **Assessment of growth scenario options:** An assessment of different growth strategies for the county.

## 4. Issues and Options (June 2022)

### Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation

- 4.1 In June 2022, consultation was undertaken on an Issues and Options document for the Local Plan.<sup>8</sup> The Issues and Options document was the key output of the initial stage in developing the new Local Plan and was prepared under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (England) Regulations 2012.
- 4.2 The aim of the public consultation was to gain stakeholders' views on a range of planning issues and potential options for the future development of the county. These included relating to the following twelve issues:
- Issue 1: Tackling the climate crisis.
  - Issue 2: Determining the appropriate level and location of growth.
  - Issue 3: Meeting identified current and future housing needs.
  - Issue 4: Enabling a prosperous and resilient economy, linked to levels of housing growth.
  - Issue 5: Supporting vibrant town centres and a network of local centres to serve local retail and service needs.
  - Issue 6: Enabling safer and stronger communities, supported with viable and accessible community and cultural facilities.
  - Issue 7: Promoting sustainable and active modes of travel.
  - Issue 8: Ensuring new development is well designed to encourage active and healthy lifestyles and address health inequalities.
  - Issue 9: Conserving and enhancing Rutland's historic assets.
  - Issue 10: Protecting and enhancing the county's biodiversity, wildlife habitats, green and blue infrastructure, and open spaces.
  - Issue 11: Addressing minerals and waste requirements alongside environmental considerations; and
  - Issue 12: Ensuring development is supported by essential infrastructure and services.

### SA work to accompany Issues and Options

- 4.3 To support the Issues and Options stage, an Interim SA Report<sup>9</sup> was produced voluntarily with the intention of informing this stage of preparation of the new Local Plan. Specifically, the Interim SA Report presented an appraisal of a series of high-level approaches and alternatives (hereafter referred to as "options") which were evaluated as part of plan development. This was for the benefit of plan-makers tasked with selecting preferred options for the Local Plan and for consideration alongside the representations received during the consultation.
- 4.4 The sets of options considered through the SA were as follows:
- Options for reducing energy use and carbon emissions in new buildings.
  - Options for low carbon energy and renewable energy proposals.
  - Options for housing mix.
  - Options for affordable housing.
  - Options for self and custom build.

<sup>8</sup> Rutland County Council (June 2022 - September 2022) [Issues and Options Consultation](#)

<sup>9</sup> AECOM on behalf of Rutland County Council (October 2022) SA for the Rutland Local Plan, Interim SA Report: Options Appraisal Report

- Options for older persons' housing.
  - Options for economic development.
  - Options for employment sites within Rutland.
  - Options for Rutland's rural economy.
  - Options for the visitor economy.
  - Options for health and wellbeing.
  - Possible policy approach for the protection of historical assets.
  - Options for biodiversity.
  - Options for open spaces.
  - Options for the protection of green and blue infrastructure.
  - Options for managing the impact of mineral development.
  - Options for identifying sites for waste management.
  - Options for managing the impact of waste development.
- 4.5 Each option was considered against the SEA framework of objectives and assessment questions developed at scoping (**Table 2.1**).
- 4.6 Presenting the appraisal of these options, the following information was presented in the Interim SA Report:
- A description of the options appraised;
  - An overview of the likely significant positive and negative effects of each option; and
  - A ranking of the sustainability performance of each option relating to each SEA theme to highlight their relative sustainability merits.
- 4.7 The Interim SA Report can be accessed at the following location:
- <https://www.rutland.gov.uk/issuesandoptions>

## 5. Settlement assessment and site appraisals

### Settlement assessments

- 5.1 To inform the consideration of where development could be delivered in Rutland through the Local Plan, an assessment of the key settlements in Rutland which will likely be the focus for new development during the plan period was undertaken through the SA process. This was undertaken with a view to understanding the relative sustainability merits of taking forward development in different settlements in the county.
- 5.2 A total of 26 settlements in Rutland were considered through the settlement assessment process. The selection of the settlements has been informed by the settlement hierarchy within the Adopted Local Plan, and includes the main town, small town, local service centres, and smaller service villages. The settlements are listed below:
- Oakham (with Barleythorpe)
  - Cottesmore
  - Greetham
  - Uppingham
  - Market Overton
  - Langham
  - Edith Weston
  - Whissendine
  - Empingham
  - Exton
  - Ketton (with Aldgate and Geeston)
  - North Luffenham
  - Great Casterton
  - South Luffenham
  - Tinwell
  - Barrowden
  - Ryhall
  - Morcott
  - Glaston
  - Essendine
  - Wing
  - Caldecott
  - Manton
  - Lyddington
  - Belton-in-Rutland; and
  - Braunston-in-Rutland
- 5.3 The Settlement Assessment is presented in the Technical Annex accompanying this SA Report (*SA Report Technical Annex to accompany the Preferred Options Consultation document*). The assessment details the key sustainability considerations associated with each settlement. Findings are presented in three sections, specifically:
- Settlement overview: provides a summary of the settlement in terms of its placement within the settlement hierarchy in the Adopted Local Plan, population change between 2011 and 2021, and location within Rutland.
  - Natural environment: provides a summary of the natural environment designations / features within and immediately surrounding the settlement (within an approximate 500m distance from the settlement edge).
  - Built environment (including transportation): provides a summary of the built environment designations / features within the settlement.
- 5.4 The assessment findings for each settlement are accompanied by a series of four figures which show the location of the designations / features within and within proximity to the settlement (as described within the assessment text) and a ranking of the settlements' relative sustainability performance.

## Site assessments

- 5.5 To support the consideration of which sites to potentially allocate through the Local Plan, various site assessments have been undertaken through the Local Plan process.
- 5.6 As a first stage in identifying the sites to be allocated in the Local Plan, developers, landowners, town and parish councils, and other interested parties were invited to submit sites for potential inclusion in plan through a “Call for Sites” process. This was undertaken in 2022.
- 5.7 Subsequent to the Call for Sites, 165 sites have been considered for the Local Plan through the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) process undertaken to support the development of the Local Plan. These sites have been assessed for their suitability, availability and deliverability to support the choice of housing and employment allocations taken forward through the Local Plan.
- 5.8 In addition, a separate appraisal of each of the sites available within Rutland – as documented in the SHELAA - has been undertaken through the SA process. This is with the aim of informing the proposed allocation of sites through the Local Plan.
- 5.9 As part of the SA, the constraints and opportunities associated with each site were identified using a set of criteria which were developed specifically for the SA process. Based on these criteria, a ‘red/amber/green’ rating was then applied to each site for each criterion to provide an indication of site constraints and opportunities and the relative sustainability merits of the different sites.
- 5.10 The findings of the appraisal of the sites undertaken through the SA process, accompanied by an explanation of the approach and criteria utilised for the appraisal, is presented in the Technical Annex accompanying this SA Report (*SA Report Technical Annex to accompany the Preferred Options Consultation document*).

## 6. Development of growth strategy options

### Assessing growth strategy options through the SA

- 6.1 This chapter explains how the strategic context for the Local Plan and evidence base has been drawn on to establish reasonable alternatives for appraisal and then consultation at this Regulation 18 stage. These comprise growth strategy options for the county. Ultimately, the aim of this chapter is to present ‘an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with’, in accordance with the SEA Regulations.<sup>10</sup> **Chapter 7** subsequently presents an appraisal of the growth strategy options.
- 6.2 A key component of the Local Plan will be to present an overall spatial strategy for the county during the 20 year plan period from 2021 to 2041.
- 6.3 To support the development of the Local Plan spatial strategy, the SA process has considered a range of growth strategy options. This is with a view to understanding the relative sustainability merits of different potential spatial strategies for the Local Plan.
- 6.4 These growth strategy options have been developed based on strategic variables associated with the following two components:
- different scales of growth; and
  - different locations of growth.
- 6.5 A discussion of these strategic variables is set out below.

### Different scales of growth

- 6.6 In terms of housing numbers, there are three main number of variables which can be applied for the purposes of the appraisal of the growth strategy options. These are as follows:
- **123 homes per annum:** The current national standard method figure for housing need in Rutland is 123 homes per annum.<sup>11</sup> This equates to 2,460 homes over the plan period 2021 to 2041. The figure is based on household growth of 93 per annum and an uplift for affordability of 32%.
  - **160 homes per annum:** This reflects current delivery levels in Rutland during the initial part of the plan period since 2021. This equates to 3,200 homes over the current 2006 2026 plan period.
  - **210 homes per annum:** In theory higher housing numbers could be delivered in Rutland through the Local Plan to support economic growth in the county. A potential 210 homes per annum equates to 4,200 homes over the plan period of 2021 – 2041.
- 6.7 In light of this range of housing numbers, considering options with different levels of housing growth in the county will help highlight the sustainability implications of higher and lower growth options in relation to environmental and socio-economic factors.

### Different locations of growth

- 6.8 A further key variable is the location of growth in Rutland. In terms of alternative spatial strategies, Rutland County Council has been keen to explore different distributions of development across the county. In particular, the Council has sought to explore different

<sup>10</sup> Schedule 2 (8) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004:

<sup>11</sup> The National Planning Policy Framework expects strategic policy-making authorities to follow the ‘standard method’ for assessing local housing need. The standard method uses a formula to identify the minimum number of homes expected to be planned for, in a way which addresses projected household growth and historic under-supply. The standard method identifies a minimum annual housing need figure. It does not produce a housing requirement figure.

distributions between the main settlements in the county, comprising the two market towns, Oakham and Uppingham, the larger villages, and other locations in Rutland.

- 6.9 In this respect the strategic variables associated with potential locations for development through the Local Plan are as follows:

## Oakham

- 6.10 Oakham is the largest settlement in Rutland and provides a range of job opportunities, higher order services and facilities for the surrounding rural area, holds a market twice a week and has good public transport linkages with good access by rail and bus to the surrounding higher settlements.
- 6.11 Oakham has recently experienced (and is currently experiencing) a significant level of growth.

## Uppingham

- 6.12 Uppingham is the second largest settlement in the county in terms of population. It provides a range of convenience shopping, education, community and health facilities catering for the local area, a weekly market, job opportunities and more limited public transport linkages.
- 6.13 The emerging Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan (which has been submitted to RCC) has taken forward in the region of 513 dwellings in the town. These numbers have been accepted by RCC and therefore no alternative variables have been considered for Uppingham.

## Quarry Farm

- 6.14 Quarry Farm comprises the western part of the wider proposed Stamford North development within Rutland. It comprises the remnants of the former brickworks, clay and stone quarry pits and mature and scrub woodland and grasslands. 650 homes could be taken forward in the plan period within Rutland; the whole development, including the part in South Kesteven District could deliver just under 2,000 homes.

## Larger Villages

- 6.15 The county's Larger Villages are defined by Spatial Strategy for new development Background Paper as those which may have a number of key local services such as a shop, public house, community centre, school and/or recreation and leisure spaces. The study also established that villages with more than 150 homes and a population of more than 300 people can potentially sustain a local shop or public house and a community centre and recreation spaces and are also included in the category.
- 6.16 The settlements classified by the background paper as Larger Villages are as follows:

**Table 6.1: Settlements classified as Larger Villages by the updated Sustainability of Settlements Study**

Larger Villages		
Barrowden	Exton	Market Overton
Belton	Great Casterton	Morcott
Braunston	Greetham	North Luffenham
Cottesmore	Ketton	Ryhall
Edith Weston	Langham	South Luffenham
Empingham	Lyddington	Whissendine
Essendine	Manton	Wing

## Smaller villages

- 6.17 The county's Smaller Villages (**Table 6.2**) are defined by the background paper. Smaller villages as those smaller settlements with fewer than 150 dwellings and less than a population of 300.
- 6.18 In the Smaller Villages without Planned Limits of Development, there is the chance that a range of small windfall and infill sites will come forward (assuming policy allows).

**Table 6.2: Settlements classified as Smaller Villages by the updated Sustainability of Settlements Study**

Smaller Villages		
Ashwell	Glaston	Stretton
Ayston	Hambleton	Teigh
Barrow	Little Casterton	Thistleton
Belmesthorpe	Lyndon	Thorpe by Water
Bisbrooke	Pickworth	Tickencote
Brooke	Pilton	Tinwell
Burley	Preston	Tixover
Caldecott	Ridlington	Wardley
Clipsham	Seaton	Whitwell
Egleton	Stoke Dry	

## Brownfield sites

- 6.19 There are a number of previously development brownfield sites<sup>12</sup> suitable, available and achievable for development in the county.

## Woolfox

- 6.20 The owners of the former Woolfox Airfield and surrounding agricultural land have come forward with proposals for a new Garden Town at the site, which is situated between the villages of Stretton and Clipsham close to the A1. The scale of proposals is however larger than required to meet the need set out above. It is considered that any proposal for this scale of development should be considered as part of meeting future sub-regional housing and employment needs. This site is not therefore considered to be a reasonable alternative for the plan being developed at this time.

## St George's Barracks

- 6.21 In November 2016, the MoD declared that the St George's Barrack site would be surplus to operational requirements by 2020/21 in light of its Defence Estate Optimisation Programme. The site is expected to be vacated in 2026 and at the time will become a previously developed site adjacent to a Larger Village. At this stage there is insufficient information to allocate the site for a specific form of reuse or redevelopment, however the Local Plan will need to include

<sup>12</sup> The NPPF defined previously development land as: Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill, where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures; land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape.

some measures to manage the delivery of potential development and ensure the best possible outcome for the site, taking account of its brownfield land status.

- 6.22 St George's Barracks may potentially come forward at a future date. It is not however appropriate to consider at the current time due to questions over what will be proposed and how and when it may be delivered. As such a proposal for the site would come forward as a separate Local Plan development plan document (DPD) which will be subject to the SA process. As a result this site is not included within the options appraisal

## Establishing growth strategy options

- 6.23 As discussed in the previous chapter, to support the consideration of which sites to potentially allocate through the Local Plan, various site assessments have been undertaken through the Local Plan process. This includes the SHLAA, Employment Land Availability Assessment and the SA site assessment. The outcomes of these assessments have helped inform an understanding of the sites which are appropriate to consider further as allocations through the Local Plan.
- 6.24 In relation to the strategic variables set out above, there are a number of different approaches that can be taken to develop the growth scenarios. These comprise:
1. **Growth scenario components which are 'constants':** these are the components of the growth strategy options which would be similar across all the options.
  2. **Growth scenario components which are 'variables':** these comprise the components which can vary across the options.
- 6.25 In the context of the growth strategy options, the following components can be considered components and variables.

## Constants

- 6.26 The following components can be considered 'constants' for the purposes of the assessment of the growth strategy options.
- **Completions: 193 homes**  
There were 193 homes completed in Rutland between April 2021 and 31st March 2023.
  - **Commitments: 1,165 homes**  
RCC had given planning permission for 1,165 homes as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.
  - **Uppingham: 513 homes**  
RCC have set a minimum housing requirement for Uppingham of 316 dwellings. The emerging Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan has taken forward in the region of 513 dwellings in the town.
  - **Quarry Farm: 650 homes**  
Quarry Farm will be taken forward as part of the wider Stamford North proposals (650 homes). The Rutland county boundary with Lincolnshire is close to the town of Stamford in South Kesteven, making land within the county here an appropriate location for the future growth of the town of Stamford. An urban extension to the north of Stamford requires some land located in Rutland in order to achieve a comprehensive and sustainable development.
  - **Oakham: 229 homes (excluding existing commitments)**  
Given the role of Oakham as the main town of Rutland, with range of job opportunities, higher order services for the surrounding rural area and good public transport links, it is appropriate to deliver some growth in the town. The SHLAA and other assessments have indicated that three sites are the most suitable, available and achievable for housing. These are:
    - Tim Norton Motors (19 homes)

- Land off Brooke Road (140 homes)
- Land at Stamford Road (66 homes)

The total capacity of these sites is 229 homes.

- **Brownfield sites outside of Oakham: 116 homes**

Current and emerging national planning policy has a strong brownfield first approach. In common with many rural authorities, there are a relative lack of brownfield sites in Rutland. As such, the brownfield sites in Rutland which have been assessed as available and suitable can be included in each of the options as a constant.

The sites are:

- Officers mess, Edith Weston (90 homes)
- Easson Garage, Cottesmore (8 homes)
- Main Street, Empingham (6 homes)
- Land South West of Belmesthorpe Lane, Ryhall (12 homes)

The total capacity of these sites is 116 homes.

## Variables

6.27 The following components can be considered as 'variables' for the purposes of the growth strategy options.

- **Oakham**

Whilst Oakham has recently experienced (and is currently experiencing) a significant level of growth, there is scope to consider options which deliver higher levels of housing delivery in the town. In this context two additional larger sites in the town are available for housing, as follows:

- Land West of Ashwell Road, Oakham (264 homes)
- Further land south of Brooke Road, Oakham (200 homes)

The total capacity of these sites is 464 homes.

- **Growth on smaller sized sites in Larger Villages**

As identified through the SHLAA process, there are in the region of six smaller sized sites (up to 20 dwellings) suitable, available and achievable for development around the designated Larger Villages.

- Land at Main Street, Cottesmore (8 homes)
- Land East of Stamford Rd, Exton (15 homes)
- Land at The Workshops, Exton (15 homes)
- St Mary's Rd, Paddock, Manton (10 homes)
- Land at Main Street, Market Overton (20 homes)
- Land South of Glebe Road, North Luffenham (10 homes)

The total capacity of these sites is 78 homes.

- **Growth on medium sized sites in Larger Villages**

As identified through the SHLAA process, there are six medium sized sites (20-100 dwellings) suitable, available and achievable for development around the designated Larger Villages. These are as follows:

- Land North of Mill Lane, Cottesmore (90 homes)
- Land North of Pennine Drive, Edith Weston (84 homes)
- Whitwell Rd South, Empingham (40 homes)

- Land at Manor Farm Lane, Essendine (50 homes)
- Land South of Oakham Rd, Greetham (28 homes)
- Land between Meadow Lane and Belmesthorpe Road, Ryhall (80 homes)

The total capacity of these sites is 372 homes.

- **Potential new settlement**

There is the potential for the Local Plan to take forward a new settlement to deliver a significant number of homes through the Local Plan. In this respect an option can be considered which would deliver a new settlement for up to 1,000 homes and 6ha employment land during the plan period.

## Growth strategy options

6.28 An overview of the growth strategy options considered through the SA process is presented in **Table 6.3**. A more detailed breakdown of the spatial distribution of housing represented by each option, including in relation to key locations in Rutland, is presented in **Table 6.4** and subsequently mapped in **Figures 6.1 to 6.5**. These options reflect existing and likely land availability in the county, as reflected by the outcomes of ongoing evidence base studies being undertaken to inform the Local Plan.

**Table 6.3 Growth options considered as reasonable alternatives**

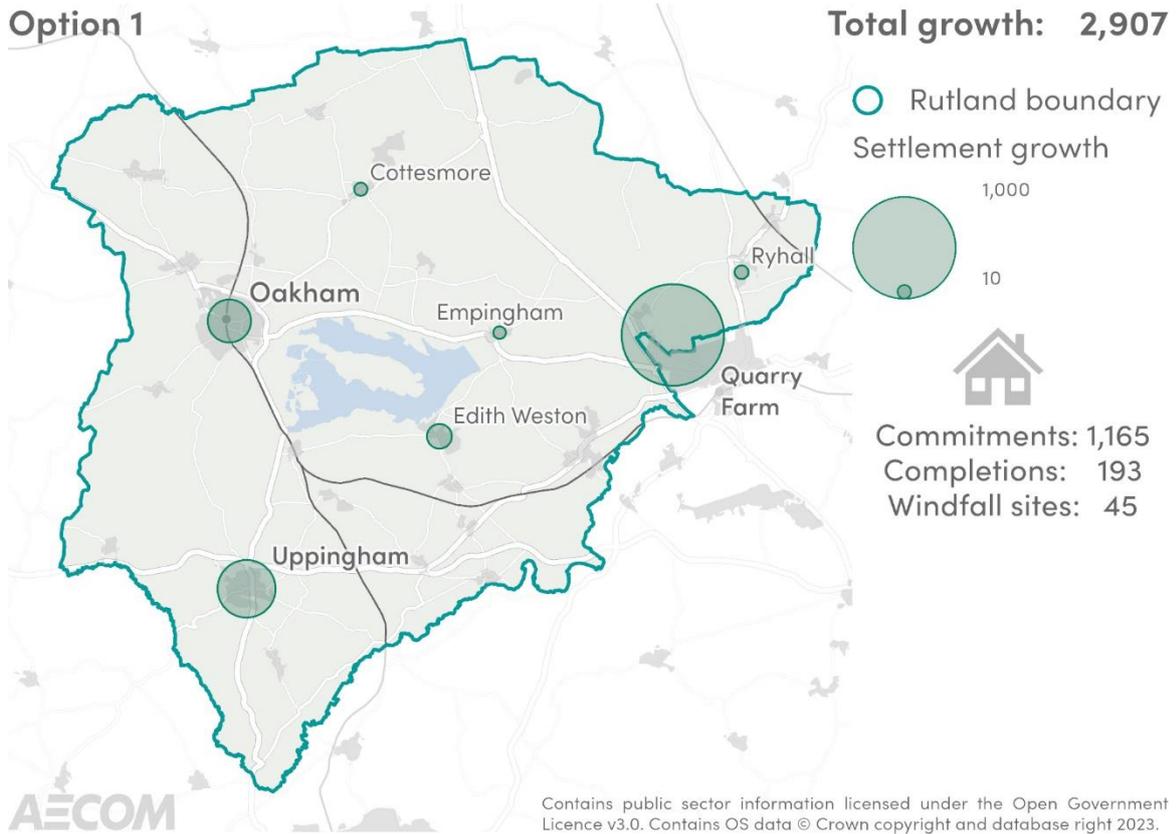
Growth strategy option	Rationale
<b>Option 1:</b> Oakham, Uppingham NP allocations, Quarry Farm and brownfield sites	This option would deliver <b>2,907 dwellings</b> over the plan period. It is based only the 'constants' outlined above and is indicative of a <b>minimum level of growth</b> in Rutland.
<b>Option 2:</b> Oakham, Uppingham NP, Quarry Farm, brownfield sites and small greenfield sites in larger villages	This option would deliver <b>2,985 dwellings</b> over the plan period. In conjunction with the assessment of Option 3, it will consider the principle of taking forward <b>smaller</b> vs. larger sites in the larger villages.
<b>Option 3:</b> Oakham, Uppingham NP, Quarry Farm, brownfield sites and medium greenfield sites in larger villages	This option would deliver <b>3,279 dwellings</b> over the plan period. In conjunction with the assessment of Option 2, it will consider the principle of taking forward <b>larger</b> vs. smaller sites in the larger villages.
<b>Option 4:</b> Additional sites in Oakham, Uppingham NP, Quarry Farm, brownfield sites, small greenfield sites in larger villages and medium greenfield sites in larger villages	This option would deliver <b>3,821 dwellings</b> over the plan period. It seeks to deliver additional growth by delivering the sites in both the <b>smaller and larger</b> villages in Rutland, whilst also delivering <b>additional homes in Oakham</b> (recognising the broad sustainability of Oakham as the county's largest settlement).
<b>Option 5:</b> Oakham, Uppingham NP, Quarry Farm, brownfield sites, small greenfield sites in larger villages and a new settlement	This option would deliver <b>3,985 dwellings</b> over the plan period. It is in essence the same as Option 2, but with the addition of a <b>new settlement</b> . This is with a view to meeting higher housing numbers.

**Table 6.4 Growth strategy options: breakdown of numbers in each location**

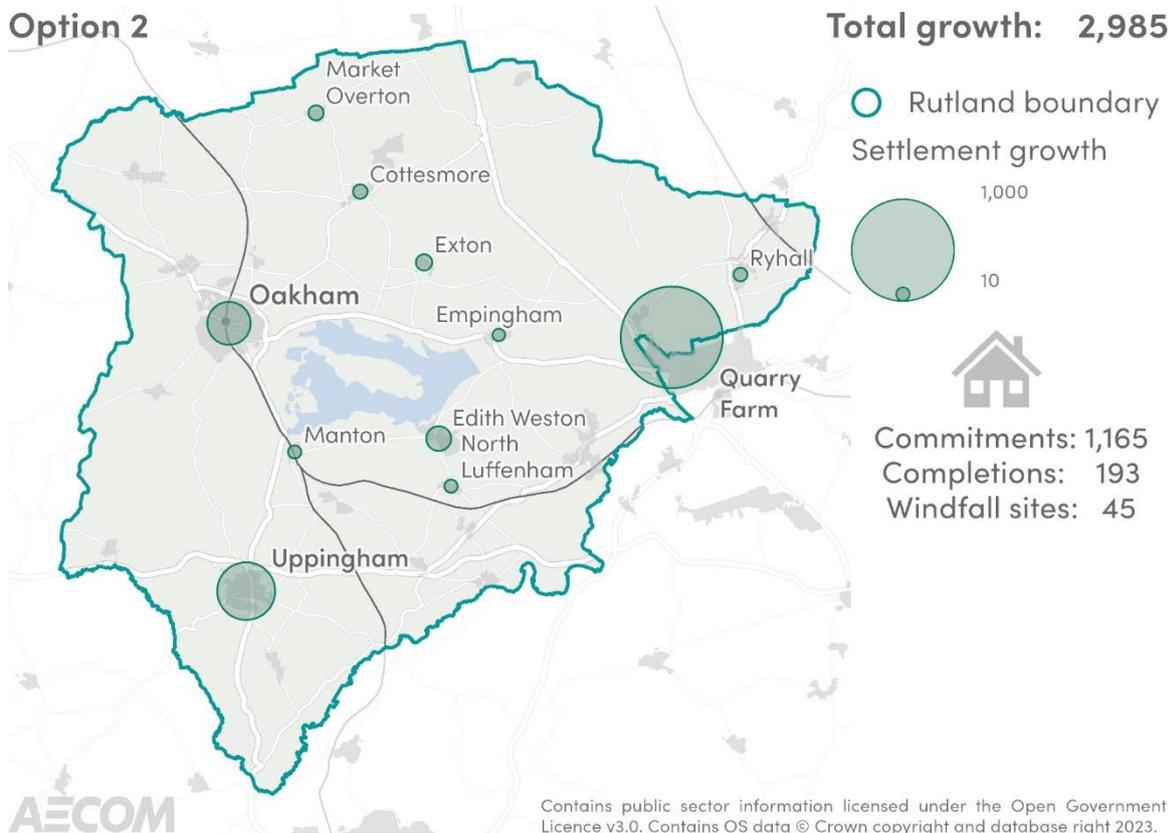
	Option 1: Oakham, Uppingham NP, Quarry Farm and brownfield sites	Option 2: Oakham, Uppingham NP, Quarry Farm, brownfield sites and small greenfield sites in larger villages	Option 3: Oakham, Uppingham NP, Quarry Farm, brownfield sites and medium greenfield sites in larger villages	Option 4: Additional sites in Oakham, Uppingham NP, Quarry Farm, brownfield sites, small greenfield sites in larger villages and medium greenfield sites in larger villages	Option 5: Oakham, Uppingham NP, Quarry Farm, brownfield sites, small greenfield sites in villages and medium greenfield sites in larger villages plus a new settlement
<b>Commitments, completions and windfall</b>					
Commitments	1,165	1,165	1,165	1,165	1,165
Completions	193	193	193	193	193
Windfall sites	45	45	45	45	45
<b>Choices</b>					
<b>Oakham</b>					
Tim Norton Motors, Oakham	19	19	19	19	19
Land off Brooke Road, Oakham	140	140	140	140	140
Land at Stamford Road, Oakham	66	66	66	66	66
Land West of Ashwell Road, Oakham	0	0	0	264	0
Further land south of Brooke Road, Oakham	0	0	0	200	0
<b>Uppingham</b>					
Uppingham NP allocations	513	513	513	513	513
<b>Quarry Farm</b>					
Quarry Farm	650	650	650	650	650
<b>Brownfield sites</b>					
Officers mess, Edith Weston	90	90	90	90	90
Easson Garage, Cottesmore	8	8	8	8	8
Main Street, Empingham	6	6	6	6	6

	Option 1: Oakham, Uppingham NP, Quarry Farm and brownfield sites	Option 2: Oakham, Uppingham NP, Quarry Farm, brownfield sites and small greenfield sites in larger villages	Option 3: Oakham, Uppingham NP, Quarry Farm, brownfield sites and medium greenfield sites in larger villages	Option 4: Additional sites in Oakham, Uppingham NP, Quarry Farm, brownfield sites, small greenfield sites in larger villages and medium greenfield sites in larger villages	Option 5: Oakham, Uppingham NP, Quarry Farm, brownfield sites, small greenfield sites in villages and medium greenfield sites in larger villages plus a new settlement
Land South West of Belmesthorpe Lane, Ryhall	12	12	12	12	12
<b>Small greenfield sites in larger villages</b>					
Land at Main Street, Cottesmore	0	8	0	8	8
Land East of Stamford Rd, Exton	0	15	0	15	15
Land at The Workshops, Exton	0	15	0	15	15
St Mary's Rd, Paddock, Manton	0	10	0	10	10
Land at Main Street, Market Overton	0	20	0	20	20
Land South of Glebe Road, North Luffenham	0	10	0	10	10
<b>Medium sized greenfield sites in larger villages</b>					
Land North of Mill Lane, Cottesmore	0	0	90	90	0
Land North of Pennine Drive, Edith Weston	0	0	84	84	0
Whitwell Rd South, Empingham	0	0	40	40	0
Land at Manor Farm Lane, Essendine	0	0	50	50	0
Land South of Oakham Rd, Greetham	0	0	28	28	0
Land between Meadow Lane and Belmesthorpe Road, Ryhall	0	0	80	80	0
<b>Other large sites</b>					
New settlement	0	0	0	0	1,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,907</b>	<b>2,985</b>	<b>3,279</b>	<b>3,821</b>	<b>3,985</b>

	<b>Option 1: Oakham, Uppingham NP, Quarry Farm and brownfield sites</b>	<b>Option 2: Oakham, Uppingham NP, Quarry Farm, brownfield sites and small greenfield sites in larger villages</b>	<b>Option 3: Oakham, Uppingham NP, Quarry Farm, brownfield sites and medium greenfield sites in larger villages</b>	<b>Option 4: Additional sites in Oakham, Uppingham NP, Quarry Farm, brownfield sites, small greenfield sites in larger villages and medium greenfield sites in larger villages</b>	<b>Option 5: Oakham, Uppingham NP, Quarry Farm, brownfield sites, small greenfield sites in villages and medium greenfield sites in larger villages plus a new settlement</b>
<b>Local Housing Needs (current standard method 2022)</b>	<b>2460</b>	<b>2460</b>	<b>2460</b>	<b>2460</b>	<b>2460</b>
<b>Percent of need met through option</b>	<b>118.17%</b>	<b>121.34%</b>	<b>133.29%</b>	<b>155.33%</b>	<b>161.99%</b>
<b>Delivery at current rates (since March 2021)</b>	<b>3200</b>	<b>3200</b>	<b>3200</b>	<b>3200</b>	<b>3200</b>
<b>Percent of need met through option</b>	<b>90.84%</b>	<b>93.28%</b>	<b>102.47%</b>	<b>119.41%</b>	<b>124.53%</b>
<b>Economic growth scenario</b>	<b>4200</b>	<b>4200</b>	<b>4200</b>	<b>4200</b>	<b>4200</b>
<b>Percent of scenario met through option</b>	<b>69.21%</b>	<b>71.07%</b>	<b>78.07%</b>	<b>90.98%</b>	<b>94.88%</b>

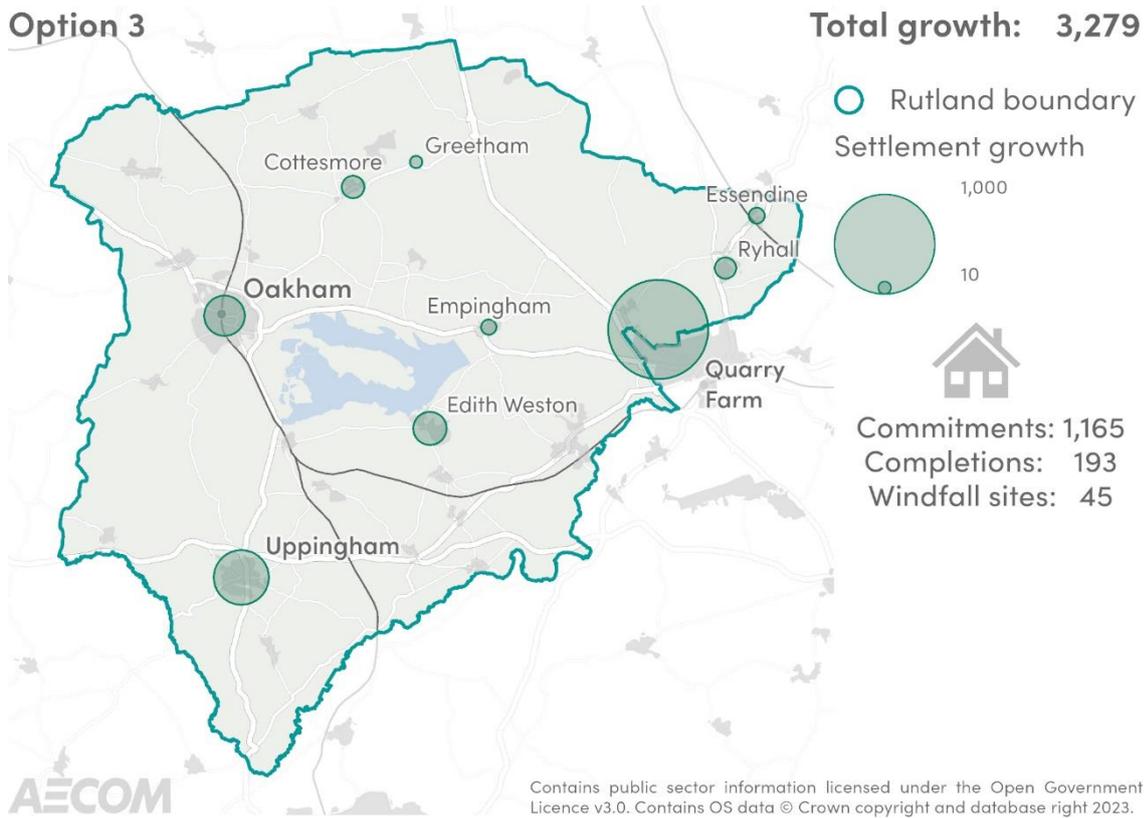


**Figure 6.1: Spatial representation of Option 1, Oakham, Uppingham NP, Quarry Farm and brownfield sites**



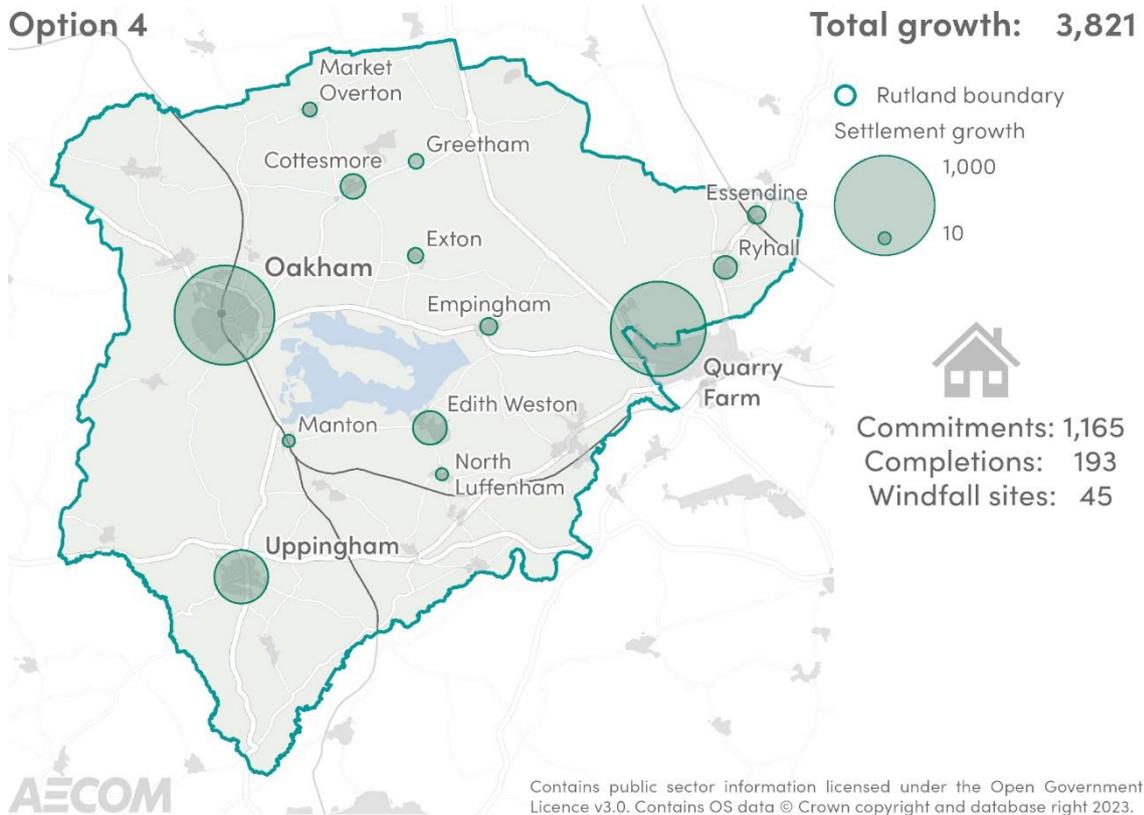
**Figure 6.2: Spatial representation of Option 2, Oakham, Uppingham NP, Quarry Farm, brownfield sites and small greenfield sites in larger villages**

**Option 3**

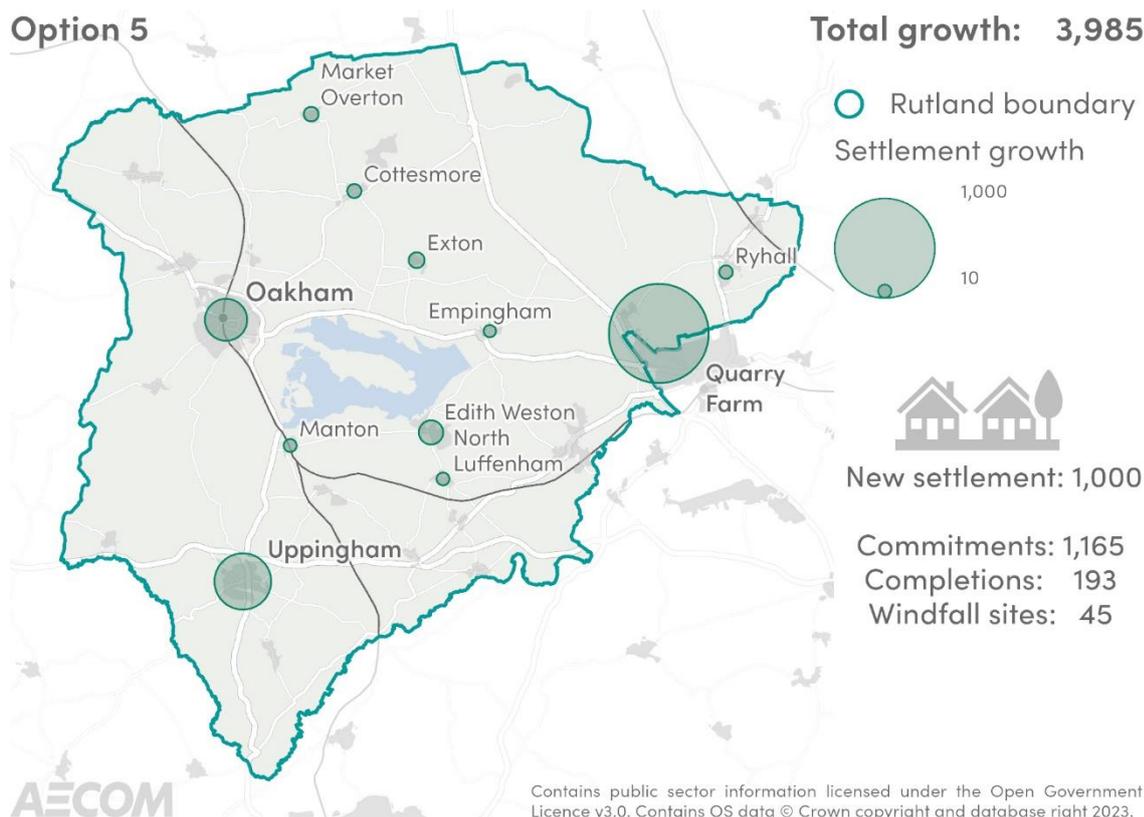


**Figure 6.3: Spatial representation of Option 3, Oakham, Uppingham NP, Quarry Farm, brownfield sites and medium greenfield sites in larger villages**

**Option 4**



**Figure 6.4: Spatial representation of Option 4, Additional sites in Oakham, Uppingham NP, Quarry Farm, brownfield sites, small greenfield sites in larger villages and medium greenfield sites in larger villages**



**Figure 6.5: Spatial representation of Option 5, Oakham, Uppingham NP, Quarry Farm, brownfield sites, small greenfield sites in villages and medium greenfield sites in larger villages plus a new settlement**

*Note: The figures above do not denote recent completions or commitments in Oakham, Rutland or the larger villages*

## Other potential options

- 6.29 It should be noted that there are, in theory, numerous other growth strategy alternatives comprising different combinations of location and site options that could be considered through the SA process. However, it is important that the alternatives considered are suitably distinct in order to allow a meaningful appraisal to be carried out. In this respect the appraisal of the identified options above has enabled the relative sustainability merits of key variables with regards to the Local Plan's spatial strategy to be effectively explored.
- 6.30 A further element to note is that the SA Report is a vehicle for consultation. Its central purpose is to provide stakeholders (including the general public) with an understanding of the relative merits of different approaches.<sup>13</sup> As such, whilst there is an almost limitless number of combinations of location and site options which could be appraised, there is a need to ensure that the assessment of reasonable alternatives remains accessible, coherent and understandable. This is particularly important given the need to simplify the plan making process to ensure it is accessible to all.
- 6.31 Taking the above into account, the options identified above for the current SA are viewed to provide an appropriate vehicle for robustly appraising the key variables that can be considered with regards to the Local Plan's spatial strategy.

<sup>13</sup> Regulation 13 of the SEA Regulations

# 7. Appraisal of growth strategy options

## Appraisal methodology

- 7.1 The growth strategy options presented in **Table 6.3** and **Table 6.4** and **Figures 6.1 to 6.5** above have been appraised. For each of the options, the assessment identifies / evaluates 'likely significant effects' on the baseline, drawing on the SA themes/objectives identified through scoping as a methodological framework (see **Table 2.1**).
- 7.2 Every effort is made to predict effects accurately; however, this is inherently challenging given the high-level nature of the policy approaches under consideration. The ability to predict effects accurately is also limited by understanding of the baseline (now and in the future under a 'no plan' scenario). In light of this, there is a need to make considerable assumptions regarding how scenarios will be implemented 'on the ground' and what the effect on particular receptors will be. Where there is a need to rely on assumptions in order to reach a conclusion on a likely effect, this is made explicit in the appraisal text.
- 7.3 Where it is not possible to predict likely significant effects on the basis of reasonable assumptions, efforts are made to comment on the relative merits of the alternatives in more general terms and to indicate a rank of preference. This is helpful, as it enables a distinction to be made between the alternatives even where it is not possible to distinguish between them in terms of 'significant effects'.
- 7.4 Finally, it is important to note that effects are predicted taking into account the criteria presented within Regulations (Schedules 1 and 2). For example, account is taken of the duration, frequency and reversibility of effects. Cumulative effects are also considered (i.e. the effects of the plan in combination with other planned or on-going activities).

## Appraisal findings

- 7.5 **Tables 7.1 to 7.9** below set out the appraisal findings under each SA theme.
- 7.6 Within each table the performance of alternatives is categorised in terms of 'significant effects' and also ranked in order of likely sustainability performance in relation to the SA theme.

### Biodiversity and Geodiversity

- 7.7 **Table 7.1** below sets out the appraisal findings concerning the Biodiversity and Geodiversity SA theme.

**Table 7.1 Appraisal findings; Biodiversity and Geodiversity SA theme**

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
Rank	1	2	3	4	5
Likely significant effects?	Uncertain	Uncertain	Yes – negative	Yes – negative	Yes - negative

#### Discussion

Rutland Water, an internationally designated Special Protection Area (SPA) / Ramsar site and nationally designated Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), is located approximately 1km to the east of Oakham. In addition, there are several other SSSIs across the county, including: Empingham Marshy Meadows; Greetham Meadows; Clipsham Old Quarry and Pickworth Great Wood; and Ketton Quarries. Whilst there are no National Nature Reserves (NNRs) within the county, Cribbs Meadow NNR is located just north of Rutland, in South Kesteven. There are also several Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) located in Rutland, as well as a variety of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitats, containing habitats and species listed in the annexes of both the European Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and the European Birds Directive (79/409/EEC).

Five of the sites proposed through the options are within 1km of Rutland Water SPA / Ramsar site. These are:

- St Mary's Road, Paddock, Manton (c.360m away, **Options 2 and 4**)

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
----------	----------	----------	----------	----------

- Officer's Mess, Edith Weston (c.420m away, all options)
- Land at Stamford Road, Oakham (c.440m away, all options)
- Land North of Pennine Drive, Edith Weston (c.530m away, **Options 3 and 4**)
- Whitwell Road South, Empingham (c.650m away, **Options 3 and 4**)

In this respect, whilst all options contain sites in proximity to Rutland Water SPA / Ramsar site, **Option 1** arguably has the potential to lead to more limited impacts, as only two of the five sites highlighted would be taken forward through the option.

Notably, the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) for the Local Plan, published in 2020, highlights that *"interest features of Rutland Water SPA / Ramsar may be exposed and sensitive to environmental changes associated with the Local Plan, principally in relation to the cumulative effects of visitor pressure, water quality and air quality affecting the site itself"*. However, appropriate assessment concluded that the earlier iteration of the Local Plan will have no adverse effects on the integrity of the site.

In terms of nationally designated biodiversity sites, five sites proposed by the options are within 1km of an SSSI. These are:

- Quarry Farm (c.130m from Great Casterton Road Banks, all options)
- St Mary's Road, Paddock, Manton (c.360m from Rutland Water, **Options 2 and 4**)
- Officer's Mess, Edith Weston (c.420m from Rutland Water, all options)
- Land at Stamford Road, Oakham (c.440m from Rutland Water, all options)

SSSI Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) are a GIS tool / dataset which map zones around each SSSI according to the sensitivities of the features for which it is notified. They specify the types of development that have the potential to have adverse impacts at a given location. Natural England is a statutory consultee on development proposals that might impact on SSSIs. Uppingham, along with eight of the Larger Villages within Rutland, do not overlap with SSSI IRZs for the types of development likely to be taken forward through the Local Plan (i.e. residential, rural residential and rural non-residential). However, the eastern half of Oakham and the whole of Edith Weston and Empingham (Larger Villages) overlap with SSSI IRZs for one or more of these development types. In this context, options which seek to deliver higher levels growth in these three settlements (i.e. **Option 4** for Oakham and **Options 3 and 4** for Edith Weston and Empingham) could potentially impact upon the integrity of these nationally designated sites for biodiversity. Comparatively, options which seek to deliver lower levels of growth in these settlements (i.e. **Options 1 and 2**) are less likely to meet or exceed the SSSI IRZ development thresholds.

Land West of Ashwell Road, Oakham (**Option 4**) contains deciduous woodland (9.2% cover), as does Quarry Farm (8.7% cover, all options).

It is also noted that two sites (that make up the different options) overlap a Local Wildlife Site, which are:

- Quarry Farm (51.7% overlap, all options)
- Land West of Ashwell Road, Oakham (1.1% overlap, **Option 4**)

## Conclusion

In conclusion, options which deliver a **higher quantum of growth** have additional potential to have impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity. This is reflected through the ranking of the options, with **significant negative effects** considered more likely under **Options 3, 4 and 5** in the short and medium term. However, it is recognised that all options have the potential to lead to adverse effects under this SA theme. Whilst in practice this will depend to an extent on the location, layout and nature of development, in principle, higher levels of development have potential to result in greater direct effects, such as from land take, disturbance or the loss of key features of ecological value. There is also an increased likelihood of indirect effects, such as from a reduction of ecological connectivity, and changes in land use patterns. It is also important to recognise that the requirement to deliver at least 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG) on sites embedded by the Environment Act 2021 will help mitigate potential negative effects and facilitate enhancements to ecological networks. It also has the potential to deliver net positive effects for biodiversity in the longer term, depending on the sensitivity of the site, the habitats and species present, and success in application of BNG. In addition, larger developments can also offer opportunities to deliver landscape-scale biodiversity enhancement measures such as habitat creation and enhancements in ecological connections and networks. As such, **Options 3 and 4**, which would deliver medium-scale sites in larger villages, and **Option 5**, which would deliver a new settlement, provide significant opportunities in this regard.

## Landscape

7.8 **Table 7.2** below sets out the appraisal findings concerning the Landscape SA theme.

**Table 7.2 Appraisal findings; Landscape SA theme**

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
<b>Rank</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Likely significant effects?</b>	<b>Yes – negative</b>				

### Discussion

The county is not within, nor within the setting of, a National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), nor does it contain Green Belt land (albeit this is not a landscape designation). However, there are contrasts across the county, with distinct characteristics, sensitivities and features (including important viewpoints) across the various potential locations for growth.

Rutland's most recent Landscape Sensitivity Assessment<sup>14</sup>, which was completed in 2023, updates previous studies and assesses the sensitivity of land around 26 settlements in total, including the main towns of Oakham and Uppingham and 24 villages. In the absence of specified sites, study parcels have been identified within an outer 'buffer zone' extending a distance of 150m from the inner study boundary drawn around the main built-up area of each settlement, unless land immediately beyond presents a clear and discreet parcel relating to a well-defined landscape feature (tree belt, watercourse etc), the settlement edge or neighbouring study parcel.

The results of the study, in terms of sensitivity to housing development, for the two main towns are as follows:

- **Oakham** (highest growth under **Option 4**) – of the 19 study parcels around this town, nine have a high sensitivity, four have a high / medium sensitivity, four have a medium sensitivity, and two have a medium / low sensitivity.
- **Uppingham** (equal growth across all options) – of the 11 study parcels around this town, three have a high sensitivity, two have a high / medium sensitivity, and six have a medium sensitivity.

Whilst growth is the same across all options in Uppingham, **Option 4** is more likely to lead to significant adverse effects on landscape character in Oakham, particular given 47.4% of study parcels around the town have a high sensitivity. However, it is noted that the use of high-quality and sensitive design could help mitigate adverse effects on landscape character to some degree.

The results of the study, in terms of sensitivity to housing development, for the villages considered through the options are as follows:

- **Cottesmore** (highest growth under **Options 3 and 4**) – of the eight study parcels around this village, three (or 37.5%) have a high / medium sensitivity, three (or 37.5%) have a medium sensitivity, and two (or 25%) have a medium / low sensitivity.
- **Edith Weston** (highest growth under **Options 3 and 4**) – of the eight study parcels around this village, three (or 37.5%) have a high sensitivity, two (or 25%) have a high / medium sensitivity, and three (or 37.5%) have a medium sensitivity.
- **Empingham** (highest growth under **Options 3 and 4**) – of the six study parcels around this village, one (or 16.7%) has a high sensitivity, three (or 50%) have a high / medium sensitivity, and two (or 33.3%) have a medium sensitivity.
- **Essendine** (highest growth under **Options 3 and 4**) – of the three study parcels around this village, two (or 66.7%) have a medium sensitivity and one (or 33.3%) has a medium / low sensitivity.
- **Exton** (highest growth under **Options 2, 4 and 5**) – of the six study parcels around this village, two (or 33.3) have a high sensitivity, three (or 50%) have a high / medium sensitivity, and one (or 12.7%) has a medium sensitivity.
- **Greetham** (highest growth under **Options 3 and 4**) – of the seven study parcels around this village, two (or 28.6%) have a high / medium sensitivity, one (or 14.3%) has a medium sensitivity, and four (or 57.1%) have a medium / low sensitivity.
- **Manton** (highest growth under **Options 2, 4 and 5**) – of the five study parcels around this village, one (or 20%) has a high sensitivity, two (or 40%) have a high / medium sensitivity, and two (or 40%) have a medium sensitivity.
- **Market Overton** (highest growth under **Options 2, 4 and 5**) – of the seven study parcels around this village, three (or 42.85%) have a high sensitivity, three (or 42.85%) have a high / medium sensitivity, and one (or 14.3%) has a medium / low sensitivity.
- **North Luffenham** (highest growth under **Options 2, 4 and 5**) – of the six study parcels around this village, one (or 16.7%) has a high sensitivity, two (or 33.3%) have a high / medium sensitivity, and three (or 50%) have a medium sensitivity.

<sup>14</sup> Rutland County Council (2010 & 2017): 'Landscape evidence', [online], available to access via [this link](#)

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
----------	----------	----------	----------	----------

- **Ryhall** (highest growth under **Options 3 and 4**) – of the five study parcels around this village, two (or 40%) have a high sensitivity, one (or 20%) has a high / medium sensitivity, one (or 20%) has a medium sensitivity, and one (or 20%) has a medium / low sensitivity.

Of the larger villages, Market Overton is the most sensitive to housing development, with 85.7% of study parcels having either a high or high / medium sensitivity. This is followed by Exton, where 83.3% of study parcels having either a high or high / medium sensitivity. In this respect, **Options 2, 4 and 5**, which deliver a higher level of growth in these two villages, have the potential to result in adverse effects on local landscape and villagescape character in these villages. Conversely, none of the study parcels in Essendine have a high or high / medium sensitivity, whilst only 28.6% of study parcels in Greetham have a high or high / medium sensitivity. In this respect, **Options 3 and 4**, which deliver a higher level of growth in these two villages, are less likely to adversely affect local landscape and villagescape character in these villages. The remaining larger villages have varying levels of study parcels with a high or high / medium sensitivity, ranging from 66.7% for Empingham to 37.5% for Cottesmore.

**Conclusion**

Overall, higher growth options (**Options 3 and 4**) have increased potential to lead to **significant negative effects** on the character and quality of Rutland’s landscapes through directing a significantly higher quantum of growth to settlements which have a high / medium sensitivity to housing development. It is also recognised that these options, by directing growth to medium sized greenfield sites in larger villages (as opposed to **Options 1 and 2** which direct growth to small greenfield sites), have the potential to lead to increased direct impacts on landscape character. In addition, the delivery of larger sites may lead to development which is less in keeping with existing villagescape character associated with the historic evolution of a settlement.

Although delivering a potential new settlement (**Option 5**) could limit growth around existing settlements, development of this scale in one location has the potential to negatively contribute to the special qualities of the LCA(s) at the relevant locations, and lead to **significant negative effects** locally. However, it is noted that this is dependent on the design and layout of the site.

Finally, options which deliver low to medium growth (**Options 1 and 2**) across existing settlements are less likely to adversely affect the character of local landscapes and villagescapes. Whilst **significant negative effects** may still arise on landscape character from the options, this is reflected in the ranking of options.

## Historic Environment

7.9 **Table 7.3** below sets out the appraisal findings concerning the Historic Environment SA theme.

**Table 7.3 Appraisal findings; Historic Environment SA theme**

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
<b>Rank</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Likely significant effects?</b>	<b>Yes – negative</b>				

### Discussion

Rutland has a rich historic environment; it contains numerous nationally designated listed structures (mostly Grade II listed) and locally important conservation areas are present in most settlements. In addition, there are scheduled monuments within the settlements of Oakham, Edith Weston, Empingham, Great Casterton, and Greetham. There are also two Grade II listed registered parks and gardens in Rutland, namely: Burley on the Hill (located approximately 750m to the east of Oakham at its nearest point) and Exton Park (directly to the west of the A1 trunk road).

Whilst the significance of the effects from each option on features of cultural, built and archaeological heritage assets depends on the location, scale and nature of development (in particular, the detailed design of development including layout, height etc.), it can be considered that a higher level of housing development within a settlement generally increases the likelihood (and potential magnitude) of negative effects on heritage assets locally. This is linked to an increased likelihood of direct and indirect impacts on the fabric and setting of specific features and areas of historic environment interest in or near the settlement.

Three sites proposed by the options are within 250m of a Grade I listed building. These are:

- Land South of Glebe Road, North Luffenham (c.160m from Church of St John The Baptist, **Options 2, 4 and 5**)
- Main Street, Empingham (c.210m from Church of St Peter, all options)
- Officer's Mess, Edith Weston (c.240m from Church of St Mary, all options)

In this respect, whilst all options have the potential to lead to impacts on these sites, **Options 2, 4 and 5** have the potential for additional impacts. Notably, these three sites are all within the larger villages.

In addition, seven sites proposed by the options are within 250m of a Grade II\* listed building. These are:

- Tim Norton Motors, Oakham (c.30m from Hayne House, all options)
- Land at Manor Farm Lane, Essendine (c.40m from Church of St Mary, **Options 3 and 4**)
- Land South of Glebe Road, North Luffenham (c.80m from Bede House Farmhouse, **Options 2, 4 and 5**)
- St Mary's Road, Paddock, Manton (c.190m from Church of St Mary, **Options 2, 4 and 5**)
- Easson Garage, Cottesmore (c.190m from Church of St Nicholas, all options)
- Main Street, Empingham (c.240m from Old Prebendal House, all options)
- Land at Main Street, Cottesmore (c.240m from Church of St Nicholas, **Options 2, 4 and 5**)

As with the above, whilst all options have the potential for impacts, **Options 2, 3, 4 and 5** have potential for additional impacts. Notably, six of these seven sites are within the larger villages.

In terms of Grade II listed buildings, over half (12 out of 23) of the sites that make up the different options are within 250m of one.

Whilst nine sites proposed by the options are within 500m of a scheduled monument, only one site – Lane at Manor Farm Lane, Essendine (**Options 3 and 4**) – is adjacent to a scheduled monument, which is 'Essendine Castle moated site'. In this respect, these options have additional potential to disturb nearby designated archaeological remains.

Four sites proposed by the options are within 1km of a registered park and garden; however, only two are within 500m of one – these are Land at The Workshops, Exton (40m from Exton Park, **Options 2, 4 and 5**).

Finally, seven sites proposed by the options fall within, or lie adjacent to, a conservation area. These are:

- Easson Garage, Cottesmore (falls within Cottesmore Conservation Area, all options)
- Main Street, Empingham (falls within Empingham Conservation Area, all options)
- Land at Main Street, Cottesmore (2% overlap with Cottesmore Conservation Area, **Options 2, 4 and 5**)
- Land South of Glebe Road, North Luffenham (adjacent to North Luffenham Conservation Area, **Options 2, 4 and 5**)
- Land at the Workshops, Exton (adjacent to Exton Conservation Area, **Options 2, 4 and 5**)
- Land North of Mill Lane, Cottesmore (adjacent to Cottesmore Conservation Area, **Options 3 and 4**)
- Land at Stamford Road, Oakham (adjacent to Oakham Conservation Area, all options)

Again, whilst all options are constrained by conservation areas, **Options 2, 3, 4 and 5** are arguably slightly more constrained. Notably, five of these seven sites are within the Larger Villages.

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
----------	----------	----------	----------	----------

As reflected above, Oakham has a rich historic environment resource, with a large number of listed buildings (including five Grade I) and two scheduled monuments, which are largely covered by Oakham Conservation Area, in the centre of Oakham. In this respect, **Option 4**, which delivers a higher level of growth in the town, has increased potential to impact on the fabric and setting of the historic environment in this location.

Also reflected above, the Larger Villages have a rich historic environment resource and a distinctive historic character. In this respect, **Options 3 and 4**, which deliver a higher level of growth in the larger villages of Cottesmore, Edith Weston, Empingham, Essendine, Greetham, and Ryhall, have increased potential to impact on the fabric and setting of the historic environment of these villages. It is also recognised that **Options 3 and 4**, by directing growth to medium sized greenfield sites in larger villages (as opposed to **Options 1 and 2** which direct growth to small greenfield sites), have the potential to lead to increased direct impacts on the historic environment in the larger villages, including features and areas of heritage interest. In addition, the delivery of larger sites may lead to development which is less in keeping with the historic evolution of a settlement.

By concentrating growth at the potential new settlement, **Option 5** may help ensure that new housing is located away from the most significantly constrained areas in terms of heritage (i.e. away from the existing settlements). However, this depends on location, and a new settlement could potentially be situated in an area of historic environment sensitivity. It also does not eliminate the potential for impacts on below-ground archaeological assets at the chosen location, or potential impacts on the setting of heritage assets in nearby settlements.

### Conclusion

Overall, **Option 5** ranks highest, although **uncertainty** is noted due to the aforementioned points. **Options 1 and 2**, which rank second and third respectively due to the more moderate level of growth they deliver, are also associated with **uncertainty** as effects on the historic environment are largely dependent on the design and layout of development, which is unknown at this stage. Finally, **Options 3 and 4** rank fourth and fifth respectively, and are predicted most likely to lead to **significant negative effects** as they direct the highest level of growth to Oakham and the larger villages, which are particularly constrained by designated heritage assets. However, all options have the potential to lead to **significant negative effects** without appropriate avoidance, mitigation and enhancement measures. This depends on the location, scale and nature of development.

## Air, Land, Soil and Water Resources

7.10 **Table 7.4** below sets out the appraisal findings concerning the Air, Land, Soil and Water Resources SA theme.

**Table 7.4 Appraisal findings; Air, Land, Soil and Water Resources SA theme**

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
<b>Rank</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Likely significant effects?</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Uncertain</b>	<b>Yes – negative</b>	<b>Yes – negative</b>

### Discussion

#### Air

Air quality in Rutland is generally good. Monitoring for nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) occurs at 11 sites across the county; the results of which are included in the annual Air Quality Annual Status Reports (ASRs), the most recent of which was produced in 2019.<sup>15</sup> According to the 2019 ASR, there are no AQMAs in the county. Therefore, there is no formal requirement to develop an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP). However, Rutland County Council have encouraged and supported measures to mitigate emissions. This includes (but is not limited to) policy guidance; transport planning; public information campaigns; car lift / share schemes; and the installation of electric vehicle (EV) charging points at certain locations (including offices in Oakham).

It is reasonable to assume that the level of air pollution generated from specific site allocations will correspond to the scale of development, as there are likely to be more private cars on the road under the higher growth options, especially given the relatively rural nature of Rutland. Therefore, **Option 1** is likely to lead to the lowest generation of air pollution, and **Option 5** the highest. With regards to Option 5, it also recognised that the location of a potential new settlement may not currently not connected via comprehensive public transport networks, which would potentially necessitate the use of the private car.

#### Previously developed land

Given the location of a potential new settlement under **Option 5** is not determined, it is uncertain whether the delivery of a significant new settlement has the potential to take place on brownfield or greenfield land.

**Options 1, 2, 3 and 4**, given the limited availability of brownfield land in Oakham, Uppingham and the larger villages, are less likely to support the efficient use of land. This is due to the options having less potential to deliver a significant proportion of development on brownfield land (and, conversely, more on greenfield land). They perform less favourably in this respect.

#### Mineral resources

The following 15 sites proposed through the options overlap, either fully or partially, with a Mineral Safeguarding Area (MSA):

- Land South West of Belmesthorpe Lane, Ryhall (fully, all options)
- Land South of Glebe Road, North Luffenham (partially, **Options 2, 4 and 5**)
- Main Street, Empingham (fully, all options)
- Land at Manor Farm Lane, Essendine (fully, **Options 3 and 4**)
- Quarry Farm (fully, all options)
- Whitewell Road South, Empingham (partially, **Options 3 and 4**)
- Land South of Oakham Road, Greetham (fully, **Options 3 and 4**)
- Land at the Workshops, Exton (fully, **Options 2, 4 and 5**)
- Land North of Mill Lane, Cottesmore (partially, **Options 3 and 4**)
- Land North of Pennine Drive, Edith Weston (fully, **Options 3 and 4**)
- Land at Main Street, Market Overton (fully, **Options 2, 4 and 5**)
- Land at Main Street, Cottesmore (partially, **Options 2, 4 and 5**)
- Officer's Mess, Edith Weston (partially, all options)
- Land between Meadow Lane and Belmesthorpe Road, Ryhall (fully, **Options 3 and 4**)

In this respect, the majority of the sites that make up the different options overlap, either fully or partially, with a MSA (only eight of the 23 sites do not overall with an MSA). Nevertheless, it is recognised that the sites that comprise **Option 1** do not overlap with any MSAs, and this option performs most favourably in this respect.

Development taken forward through **Option 5** may or may not lead to the sterilisation of minerals resources, depending on location (although it should be noted that this could be mitigated against if the economic mineral extraction area were safeguarded from development through a masterplan).

#### Agricultural land

<sup>15</sup> Rutland County Council (2019): '2019 Air Quality ASR', [online] available to access via [this link](#)

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
----------	----------	----------	----------	----------

The key considerations in terms of supporting the efficient use of land in the county are the need to avoid unnecessary loss of the highest quality 'best and most versatile' (BMV) agricultural land. In relation to this, the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) classifies land into six grades (plus 'non-agricultural' and 'urban'), where Grades 1 to 3a are recognised as being BMV land and Grades 3b to 5 are of poorer quality. Not all locations in Rutland have had recent detailed ALC undertaken; due to this, there is a reliance on less detailed pre-1988 national classifications for agricultural land. Under this older classification, subdivision of Grade 3 agricultural land into 3a (BMV land) and 3b (poorer quality land) is not available.

Notably, none of the sites (that make up the different options) overlap with Grade 1 agricultural land. In addition, only four sites overlap, partially, with Grade 2 agricultural land. These are:

- Land off Brooke Road, Oakham (1% overlap, all options)
- Land South of Brooke Road (29% overlap, **Option 4**)
- Land West of Ashwell Road, Oakham (22% overlap, **Option 4**)
- Land between Meadow Lane and Belmesthorpe Road, Ryhall (19% overlap, **Options 3 and 4**)

The majority of the sites also overlap, either fully or partially, with Grade 3 agricultural land. The exception to this is Tim Norton Motors, Oakham (all options) and Land off Brooke Road, Oakham (all options).

In light of the above, **Options 3 and 4** have the greatest potential to lead to the loss of BMV land (i.e. Grade 2 and 3a land) in the vicinity of Oakham (**Option 4**) and Ryhall (**Options 3 and 4**). These options also deliver the highest level of growth across the larger villages, and would therefore likely result in the greatest loss of agricultural land, both BMV and poorer quality.

Land around Uppingham is underlain by a mixture of Grade 3a and Grade 3b land, with some areas of Grade 2 land. Therefore, as Uppingham is a constant across all options, they all have the potential to lead to the loss of BMV land (i.e. Grade 2 and 3a land) in the vicinity of the town.

The proposed location for the potential new settlement of (**Option 5**) is uncertain. Given the scale of likely development, and the quality of agricultural land in much of the county, the delivery of a new settlement has the potential to productive agricultural land.

#### Waste

Waste generation is an inevitable consequence of development, including both waste generated by construction and waste generated during occupation. The management of waste, including the minimisation of waste generation in the first instance and the encouragement of the re-use, recycling and recovery of waste materials, would all be undertaken on a site-by-site basis. It is therefore considered that individual development is unlikely to have a significant negative impact on waste generation. In this context, it is reasonable to assume that the level of waste generated will correspond to the scale of development. Therefore, **Option 1** is likely to lead to the lowest generation of waste, whilst **Option 5** is likely to lead to the highest generation of waste. However, it is recognised that larger schemes can present an opportunity to incorporate innovative waste management practices and technologies. Therefore, it is noted that **Option 5** has the most potential to support sustainable waste management within a potential new settlement.

#### Water resources

Rutland is within the supply area of Anglian Water and is located in an area of high water stress. It will be important to consider the New Local Plan's effects on water resources. In this respect, it is considered that higher growth options (**Options 3, 4 and 5**) will place a greater demand upon the already stressed supply, whilst lower growth options (**Options 1 and 2**) will represent less of an additional burden. However, it is anticipated that the Water Resources Management Plans (WRMPs) prepared by water supply companies will address long-term water supply issues associated with growth. There may also be potential for the development of a potential new settlement (**Option 5**) to provide opportunities for innovative design techniques to support the efficient use of water resources.

Whilst eight of the sites proposed by the options are within 250m of a statutory main river, the southern boundary of Land at Stamford Road (all options) lies adjacent to a river, as does the southwestern boundary of Land South West of Belmesthorpe Lane, Ryhall (all options). In this respect, all of the options have the potential to pollute nearby rivers from the runoff of source point pollution from new development.

It is also noted that nine of the 23 sites proposed through the options overlap a Source Protection Zone (SPZ) – this includes zones 2 and 3. In addition, all of the sites fully overlap a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ).

#### Conclusion

Overall, options which deliver a **higher quantum of growth** are more likely to have an increased effect on air, land, soil and water resources. This is reflected through the ranking of the options, with **uncertainty** noted under **Option 3**, and **significant negative effects** considered likely under **Options 4 and 5** as these options deliver the highest quantum of growth.

## Climate Change

7.11 **Table 7.5** below sets out the appraisal findings concerning the Climate Change SA theme.

**Table 7.5 Appraisal findings; Climate Change SA theme**

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
<b>Rank</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Likely significant effects?</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes – negative</b>

### Discussion

#### Climate change mitigation

Road transport is a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in Rutland. High car dependency and the rural nature of the much of the county, as well as issues relating to public transport provision, mean that car ownership within Rutland is higher than the regional average. Only 10.3% of households in Rutland do not have access to a car or van, compared to 23.5% nationally (Census 2021). Due to this, all options have the potential to lead to increases in greenhouse gas emissions from transport given that they all propose development. In addition, none are likely to give rise to significant improvements in sustainable transport choices that would offset the increase in car-based trips.

However, delivering growth in the larger towns of Oakham (highest under **Option 4**) and Uppingham (all options) is likely to better support the use of sustainable transport modes, given residents have good access to local services and facilities in these towns.

The county is served by a rural bus network, a public rights of way (PRoW) network, and there is a substantial joint cycleway / footway network. In this respect, given they form nodes to local transport networks, directing growth to Oakham and Uppingham would help to encourage a modal shift and reduce reliance on the private vehicle, helping to minimise an increase in emissions.

Additionally, it is noted that Oakham has the only railway station in the county, which provides direct links to the east coast main line, Stansted Airport, Birmingham, and a limited twice daily service to London St Pancras. Increased development at Oakham under **Option 4** is therefore likely to lead to positive effects by locating more people in walking / cycling distance to the railway station, providing sustainable access to employment, services and facilities outside of the county.

**Option 4** – alongside **Option 3** – also directs a high level of growth to the larger villages. Whilst these villages have a reduced range of services and facilities on offer when compared to Oakham and Uppingham, they still have some services and facilities, and all of the larger villages that make up to the options are less than 400m from the nearest bus stop. Whilst many residents will likely opt to travel by car to access wider services and facilities at the larger settlements, where bus services are good, residents will likely utilise them.

The delivery of a potential new settlement through **Option 5** would potentially, in the longer term, be of critical mass to deliver significant new infrastructure to reduce the need to travel, and also, potentially, new sustainable transport networks. However, this depends on location, and a location away from services, facilities and amenities, and not currently connected to high quality public transports will have negative effects in this regard through and stimulating an increase in greenhouse gas emissions from transport. It is noted though that any large-scale development proposal will be required to produce a highway and transport assessment to detail how existing infrastructure and services can cater for the proposed development, or where they do not, will be required to put in place mitigation measures.<sup>16</sup>

In terms of the other contributors to greenhouse gas emissions, the sustainability performance of development partially depends on energy efficiency during operation. This could include the inclusion of elements such as energy efficient design (i.e. positioning development to maximise solar gain) and the provision of renewable energy on-site. Whilst it is considered that this can only be assessed on a site-by-site basis, it is noted that there are generally more opportunities to integrate low carbon and renewable energy into large-scale developments. For example, large-scale photovoltaic systems can be combined with community heating schemes to support renewable energy and increased energy efficiency. In this respect the delivery of a potential new settlement through **Option 5** could lead to additional opportunities.

#### Climate change adaptation

The Rutland Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) Update (2020) highlights that fluvial flood risk is of limited spatial extent within the county and that the majority of the higher risk flood zones (2 and 3) are located in rural areas away from the existing built-up areas.<sup>17</sup>

Nevertheless, there are a number of areas where the flood map shows properties at risk and these include parts of Oakham. A number of small watercourses flow through Oakham and close to the town; however, high flood risk areas are relatively limited, located in a small area to the east of the main settlement. It is therefore predicted that directing growth to Oakham (highest under **Option 4**) and Uppingham (all options) would result

<sup>16</sup> Rutland County Council (2018): 'Moving Rutland Forward – Rutland's Fourth Local Transport Plan', [online] available to access via [this link](#)

<sup>17</sup> Rutland County Council (2020): 'Rutland SFRA Update', [online] available to access via [this link](#)

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
----------	----------	----------	----------	----------

in a residual neutral effect as, in accordance with the provisions of the NPPF (2019) and national policy, new development should be avoided in the highest flood risk areas and suitable mitigation implemented where necessary.

Several of the larger villages are identified as having areas at high risk of fluvial flooding. Whilst several of the sites that make up the different options overlap with Flood Zone 2 / 3 to a small degree (<5% overlap), Land East of Stamford Road, Exton (**Options 2, 4 and 5**) has a 17% overlap with Flood Zone 2 / 3, whilst Land between Meadow Lane and Belmesthorpe Road, Ryhall (**Options 3 and 4**) has a 21% overlap with Flood Zone 2. Therefore, these options – particularly **Options 3 and 4** as the site in Ryhall delivers more homes – reduce opportunities to avoid the highest flood risk areas, with potential to lead to increased pressures on the floodplain. However, as discussed above, it is considered that appropriate mitigation measures will be implemented in accordance with national planning policy and the SFRA (2009).

Any impact of a new settlement (**Option 5**) in terms of reducing the risk and impact of fluvial flooding depends on the proposed location such a settlement.

The county is generally at low risk with regard to surface water flooding as identified in the SFRA (2020). In this context, options that deliver growth in those limited areas which are at risk of surface water flooding are not anticipated to lead to significant effects given risk would be reduced through the 'exception test'<sup>18</sup> and higher-level policy requirements. To this effect, the use of good design principles (i.e. the siting and design of development) will likely mitigate against adverse effects.

All options present an opportunity to support adaptation to the potential effects of climate change through providing improvements to green infrastructure networks. It is considered that the delivery of large-scale development at a potential new settlement (**Option 5**) will likely be able to provide for a higher level of publicly accessible green infrastructure provision than development at existing settlements. Taking forward this site would also though also result in the large-scale loss of greenfield land in the countryside, with implications for climate change adaptation.

### Conclusion

Overall, due to the contribution of new development proposed through the options in the context of wider regional, national and global impacts on climate change, no significant effects are anticipated. Options have been **ranked in terms of their quantum of growth**, with the increased number of new homes predicted to lead to increased adverse effects.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Under the exception test, the developer needs to show that the sustainability benefits of the development to the community outweigh the flood risk.

<sup>19</sup> Committee on Climate Change (2017): 'UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017', [online] available to access via [this link](#)

## Communities, Health and Wellbeing

7.12 **Table 7.6** below sets out the appraisal findings concerning the Communities, Health and Wellbeing SA theme.

**Table 7.6 Appraisal findings; Communities, Health and Wellbeing SA theme**

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
<b>Rank</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Likely significant effects?</b>	<b>Yes – positive</b>	<b>Yes – positive</b>	<b>Yes – positive</b>	<b>Yes – positive</b>	<b>Yes – mixed</b>

### Discussion

Each option will deliver a significant number of new homes (including a mix of types, sizes and tenures, with a proportion of affordable housing) to meet existing and future housing needs, with the potential for **significant positive effects**. As the number of homes being delivered increases, the significance of the positive effect also increases. Overall, through delivering the highest quantum of growth, **Option 5** has the greatest potential to deliver a broader range of housing types and tenures in the county (assuming that Local Plan policies on affordable housing are fully delivered). However, it is recognised that this could be undermined if a new settlement is located in a rural, isolated location and not necessarily well-situated in terms of access to services, facilities and amenities, employment opportunities, and key locations for socialising.

It is considered that directing higher levels of growth to the main towns of Oakham (highest growth through **Option 4**) and Uppingham (all options) will likely deliver a mix of housing to meet local needs in these settlements. Notably, positive effects are anticipated through the delivery of affordable housing in the two locations with the broadest range of services, facilities and amenities, employment opportunities and public transport networks in the county.

Increased development in the Larger Villages through **Options 3 and 4** will also help provide an increased variety of housing for a wider range of social groups, including younger people and those with particular needs. This has the potential to increase community vitality and will contribute towards meeting localised housing needs in these settlements.

Conversely, **Option 5**, which delivers 37% of growth at the potential new settlement, could lead to residual negative effects on the Larger Villages as an appropriate mix of housing may not be delivered in the settlements where the need exists most. This has the potential to impact on the community vitality of these settlements.

Rutland has low levels of deprivation and based on 2019 data, ranks 303 out of 326 local authorities regarding overall Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), where 1 is the most deprived. Despite this ranking, pockets of deprivation still exist within the county – but these are masked by wider prosperity. In line with other rural areas, Rutland fares less favourably regarding the ‘Barriers to Housing and Services’ domain, ranking 160 out of 326 local authorities.

Focusing growth at Oakham (highest growth through **Option 4**) and Uppingham (all options) would therefore lead to positive effects in terms of contributing towards lower levels of deprivation relating to this category, through ensuring residents have suitable access to services and facilities. This is because these settlements are the largest settlements in the county and are therefore the locations with the broadest range of services and facilities and public transport networks. It is, however, also recognised that increased growth at the Larger Villages (**Options 3 and 4**) might support local amenities and increase community vitality in these locations, and therefore positive effects are noted in this respect.

Depending on existing pressures on services and facilities, **Options 3 and 4** though have the potential to place increasing demands on existing amenities that will affect the quality of services used by existing residents. On the other hand, due to the requirements for developers to support infrastructure and services, for example through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 agreements / payments, there is potential for new development to support the provision of new and enhanced facilities and services, as well as transport links. This will support accessibility to services and amenities in existing settlements.

The potential new settlement (**Option 5**) may be disconnected from existing settlements and the services and facilities they provide. Growth in an inaccessible location would not support the vitality of existing settlements, including relating to the viability of local services and facilities, and not deliver growth in areas with the largest need. This will adversely affect the quality of life of residents.

In terms of accessibility to educational facilities, seven sites proposed by the options are not within 750m (or walking distance) of either a primary or secondary school. These are:

- St Mary’s Road, Paddock, Manton (3.8km from nearest school, **Options 2, 4 and 5**)
- Land at Manor Farm Lane, Essendine (2.4km from nearest school, **Options 3 and 4**)
- Land at Main Street, Market Overton (2.3km from nearest school, **Options 2, 4 and 5**)
- Land South of Oakham Road, Greetham (1.2km from nearest school, **Options 3 and 4**)
- Land North of Pennine Drive, Edith Weston (c. 1km from nearest school, **Options 3 and 4**)
- Whitwell Road South, Empingham (c.900m from nearest school, **Options 3 and 4**)

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
----------	----------	----------	----------	----------

In this respect, **Options 3, 4 and 5**, as well as **Option 2** to a lesser degree, are all likely to result in the reliance of the private car to access schools, unless bus routes to these schools exist from these settlements. Notably, these sites are all within the Larger Villages.

Only one site – Land North of Pennine Drive, Edith Weston (**Options 3 and 4**), is over 500m from the nearest Important Open Space.

### Conclusion

Overall, **Option 4** is likely to bring the broadest range of benefits for this SA theme given that it would deliver the second highest quantum of growth (after Option 5), focused at the main towns and Larger Villages, where access to services, facilities and amenities, employment opportunities and public transport networks are most favourable. This option has the most potential to deliver a broader range of housing types and tenures in the settlements where it is most needed; support accessibility; and deliver new community infrastructure. Whilst **Option 5** delivers the highest quantum of growth, it is ranked last and predicted to lead to **mixed significant effects** due to the potential for a new settlement to undermine the viability of existing settlements. The remaining options are ranked in terms of their quantum of growth.

## Transportation

7.13 **Table 7.7** below sets out the appraisal findings concerning the Transportation SA theme.

**Table 7.7 Appraisal findings; Transportation SA theme**

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
<b>Rank</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Likely significant effects?</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Uncertain</b>

### Discussion

High car dependency and the rural nature of the much of the county, as well as issues relating to public transport provision, mean that car ownership within Rutland is higher than the regional average; only 10.3% of households in Rutland do not have access to a car or van, compared to 23.5% nationally (Census 2021). Due to this, all of the options have the potential to lead to increases in traffic and congestion given that they all propose development. In addition, none are likely to give rise to significant improvements in sustainable transport choices that would offset the increase in car-based trips.

However, delivering growth in the larger towns of Oakham (highest under **Option 4**) and Uppingham (all options) is likely to better support the use of sustainable transport modes, given residents have good access to local services and facilities in these towns.

In terms of sustainable transport networks, the county is served by a rural bus network, a public rights of way (PRoW) network, and there is a substantial joint cycleway / footway network. Oakham has the only railway station in the county, which provides direct links to the east coast main line, Stansted Airport, Birmingham, and a limited twice daily service to London St Pancras, and also the best linked by bus. Increased development at Oakham under **Option 4** is therefore likely to lead to positive effects by locating more people in good proximity to public transport networks, including the rail and bus network. This will promote accessibility by sustainable transport modes.

**Option 4** – alongside **Option 3** – also directs a high level of growth to the Larger Villages. Whilst these settlements have a more limited range of services and facilities on offer compared to Oakham and Uppingham, they still have some services and facilities, and all of the Larger Villages where sites are proposed by the options are accessible by bus. Whilst many residents of these settlements will likely opt to travel by car to access services and facilities, where bus services are good, residents will likely utilise them.

The delivery of a potential new settlement through **Option 5** would potentially, in the longer term, be of critical mass to deliver significant new infrastructure to reduce the need to travel, or new sustainable transport links, with the potential for positive effects. However, a new settlement has the potential to be delivered in an unsustainable location away from key services, facilities and amenities, or not currently be connected to high quality public transports. To this effect, it is noted that any large-scale development proposal will be required to produce a highway and transport assessment to detail how existing infrastructure and services can cater for the proposed development, or where they do not, will be required to put in place mitigation measures.<sup>20</sup>

Overall, **Option 4**, which delivers a higher level of growth in Oakham, which is the settlement with the broadest range of services and facilities and public transport links, ranks most favourably in relation to this SA theme. Given uncertainties, **Option 5** is ranked least favourably in relation to sustainable transport.

<sup>20</sup> Rutland County Council (2018): 'Moving Rutland Forward – Rutland's Fourth Local Transport Plan', [online] available to access via [this link](#)

## Economic Vitality

7.14 **Table 7.8** below sets out the appraisal findings concerning the Economic Vitality SA theme.

**Table 7.8 Appraisal findings; Economic Vitality SA theme**

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
<b>Rank</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Likely significant effects?</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes – positive</b>	<b>Yes – positive</b>	<b>Yes – mixed</b>

### Discussion

Unemployment in Rutland is low; only 1.9% of people aged 16 years and over are economically active and unemployed, compared to 3.5% nationally (Census 2021). In addition, 37.9% of people aged 16 years and over hold a Level 4 qualification or above, compared to 33.9% nationally (Census 2021). In terms of occupation, 18.2% of people aged 16 years and over in employment are managers, directors and senior officials, compared to 12.9% nationally (Census 2021). In this respect, Rutland has a highly skilled workforce, which is reflected by the percentage of the population in managerial occupations. It will be important that future growth supports this workforce.

According to the Rutland Employment Needs & Economic Development Evidence<sup>21</sup>, the largest employment sectors in Rutland are education (12.2%); public administration and defence (12%); and wholesale and retail (11.6%). Rutland has particular strengths in comparison to the region and nationally in the mining and quarrying sector, public administration & defence, agriculture and hospitality (1,900 jobs) sectors.

public sector generates 31% of all jobs in Rutland. However, this is driven by high levels of employment in the education sector, which will include employment in Rutland's several large privately owned schools. Rutland also retains a strong local manufacturing sector. In terms of service sectors, professional, scientific and technical, followed by business administration and support services, have the strongest roles.

In light of the above, increased growth across the settlement hierarchy should support the economic vitality of settlements; helping ensure residents have suitable access to local employment, services and facilities, and that the service offer expands positively. Oakham is the main service centre for Rutland and offers diverse retail and shopping opportunities. **Option 4**, which delivers a higher level of growth in Oakham, will therefore perform positively in terms of promoting the sustainable growth of this main centre and directing growth to the location with the best accessibility to employment opportunities (both within and outside of the county).

**Options 3 and 4** deliver a higher level of growth at the Larger Villages. Directing higher levels of growth to these settlements is likely lead to positive effects in relation to this SA theme through supporting local amenities, and increasing economic vitality and viability in these locations. Due to the role of the Larger Villages as centres for the rural economy, the options also have the potential to support localised economies, including through supporting diversification. It is also recognised that the Larger Villages where allocations would be taken forward through the options are all relatively well located in terms of access to the main transport routes.

Increased growth in the main town of Oakham (**Option 4**) and the larger villages (**Options 3 and 4**) has the potential to support the vitality of local centres and retailing to a greater degree. This has the potential to support the visitor economy through protecting and enhancing key selling points in the county, such as independent shops and restaurants.<sup>22</sup> In this context, the delivery of **Option 5**, which directs a large proportion of growth to a potential new settlement, would likely limit investment in these locations. This could limit the offer available in these settlements, impacting negatively on the local economy.

The delivery of a potential new settlement through **Option 5** presents the opportunity to deliver significant areas of new employment land as part of mixed-use development. In this respect the delivery of a mixed-use large-scale development through the potential new settlement (**Option 5**) is likely to support economic growth through the delivery of suitable business premises. However, the delivery of a potential new settlement is considered less likely to enhance the vitality and viability of existing towns and local centres, given its relatively isolated location.

In terms of the specific sites taken forward by the options, three of the sites are located over 7.5km from the nearest safeguarded employment site. These are:

- Land South of Oakham Road, Greetham (7.8km from Lands End Way, Oakham, **Options 3 and 4**)
- Land South West of Belmesthorpe Lane, Ryhall (7.9km from Pit Lane, Ketton, all options)
- Land at Manor Farm Lane, Essendine (9.8km from Pit Lane, Ketton, **Options 3 and 4**)

In addition, a further ten sites are over 5km from the nearest safeguarded employment site; nine of these 10 sites are located in the larger villages. In this respect, **Options 3 and 4**, and to a lesser degree **Options 1 and 2**, have the potential require a degree of reliance on the private car to access existing employment opportunities.

<sup>21</sup> Icen Projects Limited on behalf of Rutland County Council (August 2023): 'Rutland Employment Needs & Economic Development Evidence, [online] available to access via [this link](#)

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
----------	----------	----------	----------	----------

Overall, **Options 3 and 4** perform most favourably, with **significant positive effects** predicted; **Option 4** is ranked first as it delivers a higher level of growth, including at the main town of Oakham. It also delivers 91% of growth in relation to the Economic Growth Scenario. Whilst **Option 5** delivers in excess of the full level of growth suggested by the Economic Growth Scenario, the option ranks third, with **mixed significant effects** anticipated. This is given growth through a new settlement will do less to benefit the economic vitality and viability of existing settlements in Rutland. **Options 1 and 2**, by delivering a more moderate level of growth, perform less favourably, with **Option 1** – which only delivers 69.2% of growth in relation to the Economic Growth Scenario – ranking least favourably.

## **Part 2: What are the SA findings at this stage?**

# 8. Appraisal of the policy approaches in the latest version of the Local Plan

## Purpose of Part 2 of this SA Report

8.1 This chapter presents appraisal findings and recommendations in relation to the *Preferred Options Consultation* version of the Local Plan.

## Local Plan contents, aims and objectives

8.2 The draft Local Plan's vision outlines that:

*"By 2041, the Local Plan will have helped Rutland to make the most of its locations, natural features and historic assets to become a leading example of a modern rural county".*

8.3 To help implement the vision, the draft Local Plan then sets out eleven strategic objectives, as follows:

- Strategic objective 1: Climate change
- Strategic objective 2: Delivering sustainable development
- Strategic objective 3: Meeting housing needs
- Strategic objective 4: A prosperous and resilient local economy
- Strategic objective 5: Supporting strong and vibrant communities
- Strategic objective 6: Creating safe, inclusive, and resilient communities
- Strategic objective 7: Promoting high standards of design
- Strategic objective 8: Protect and enhance the built and natural environment
- Strategic objective 9: Make effective use of land and natural resources
- Strategic objective 10: Ensure development is supported by essential infrastructure and services
- Strategic objective 11: Minerals

8.4 These are described in more detail in **Chapter 1**.

## Policies

8.5 To implement the vision and strategic objectives, the draft Local Plan presents a range of policies which will set the framework for development in Rutland over the period to 2041.

8.6 The policies, which are grouped under eight themes, are set out in **Table 8.1** below.

**Table 8.1 Policies presented in the *Preferred Options Consultation* document**

<b>Policy Reference</b>	<b>Policy Name</b>
<b>Climate change</b>	
CC1	Supporting a circular economy
CC2	Design principles for energy efficient buildings
CC3	Resilient and Flexible Design
CC4	Net Zero Carbon (Operational)
CC5	Embodied Carbon
CC6	Water Efficiency and Sustainable Water Management
CC7	Reducing Energy Consumption in Existing Buildings
CC8	Renewable Energy
CC9	Protecting Renewable Energy Infrastructure
CC10	Wider Energy Infrastructure
CC11	Carbon Sinks
CC12	Carbon Sequestration
CC13	Sustainable Travel
CC14	Flood Risk
<b>Spatial strategy</b>	
SS1	Spatial Strategy for New Development
SS2	Requirements for Planning Applications
SS3	Development within Planned Limits of Development
SS4	Infill and Rounding Off Development in Smaller Villages and Hamlets
SS5	St. George's Barracks Opportunity Area
SS6	Use of Military Bases and Prisons for Operational or Other Purposes
SS7	Re-Use of Redundant Military Bases and Prisons
SS8	Residential Development in the Open Countryside
SS9	Non-Residential Development in the Countryside
SS10	Conversion of Buildings Outside PLDs
SS11	New Agricultural Buildings
<b>Housing</b>	
H1	Sites Proposed for Residential Development
H2	Cross-Boundary Development Opportunity – Stamford North
H3	Housing Density
H4	Meeting all Housing Needs
H5	Accessibility Standards
H6	Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding
H7	Affordable Housing
H8	Rural Exception Housing
H9	First Homes Exception Sites
H10	Meeting the Needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

<b>Policy Reference</b>	<b>Policy Name</b>
<b>Economy</b>	
E1	Strategic Employment Land Allocations
E2	Employment Development on Unallocated Sites
E3	Protecting Existing Employment Land and Premises
E4	Rural Economy
E5	Sustainable Farm Diversification
E6	Employment and Skills
E7	Fibre to the Premises (FTTP)
E8	Local Visitor Economy
E9	Caravans, Camping, Lodges, Log Cabins, Chalets and similar forms of Self-Serviced Holiday Accommodation
E10	Town Centres and Retailing
E11	Primary Shopping Areas
E12	Sites for Retail Development
E13	Retail in the Neighbourhood Centres and Larger Villages
<b>Sustainable communities</b>	
SC1	Landscape Character
SC2	Place Shaping Principles
SC3	Promoting Good Quality Design
SC4	Pollution Control
SC5	Designing Safer and Healthier Communities
SC6	Community Facilities
SC7	Creation of New Open Space
<b>Environment</b>	
EN1	Protection of Sites, Habitats and Species
EN2	Local Nature Recovery Strategy
EN3	Biodiversity Net Gain
EN4	Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows
EN5	Ancient Woodland and Veteran Trees
EN6	Protecting Agricultural Land
EN7	Green and Blue Infrastructure Network
EN8	Important Open Space and Frontages
EN9	Local Green Spaces
EN10	Rutland Water area
EN11	Eyebrook Reservoir Area
EN12	The Historic and Cultural Environment
EN13	Protecting Heritage Assets
<b>Minerals and waste</b>	
MIN1	Spatial Strategy for Minerals Development
MIN2	Mineral Provision

Policy Reference	Policy Name
MIN3	Safeguarding Rutland's Mineral Resources
MIN4	Development Criteria for Mineral Extraction
MIN5	Site-Specific Allocations for the Extraction of Building Stone
MIN6	Safeguarding of Minerals Development
MIN7	Borrow Pits
MIN8	Development Criteria for other forms of Minerals Development
MIN9	Restoration and Aftercare
WST1	Capacity Requirements and Spatial Strategy for Waste Development
WST2	Waste-Related Development
WST3	Sites for Waste Management
<b>Infrastructure and delivery</b>	
INF1	Infrastructure and Connectivity
INF2	Securing Sustainable Transport
INF3	Walking and Cycling

8.7 These policies have been appraised in detail under the respective SA themes in **Chapter 9**.

## Spatial strategy

8.8 **Table 8.2** below highlights the preferred sites that are proposed for residential development over the plan period, as set out in Policy H1 (Sites proposed for residential development) of the draft Local Plan.

8.9 As highlighted in Policy H2 (Cross-boundary development opportunity – Stamford North), Part of Stamford North (Quarry Farm) is allocated for development as part of a larger development opportunity extending eastwards known as Stamford North. The majority of this development site is allocated in South Kesteven District.

8.10 In addition to the below, the emerging Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan (which is currently undergoing independent examination) has allocated in the region of 513 dwellings in the town. RCC have set a minimum target of 316 dwellings in the town.

**Table 8.2 Preferred sites proposed for residential development**

Site	Number of dwellings	Brownfield or greenfield
<b>Oakham Total</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>Mix</b>
Tim Norton Motors	19	Brownfield
Land South of Brooke Road	140	Greenfield
Land South of Stamford Road	66	Greenfield
<b>Uppingham Total</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>N/A*</b>
<b>Larger Villages Total</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>Mix</b>
Officer's Mess, Edith Weston	90	Brownfield
Easson Garage, Cottesmore	8	Brownfield
Main Street, Empingham	6	Brownfield
Land South West of Belmesthorpe Lane, Ryhall	12	Brownfield
Land at Main Street, Cottesmore	8	Greenfield

Site	Number of dwellings	Brownfield or greenfield
Land East of Stamford Road, Exton	15	Greenfield
Land at the Workshops, Exton	15	Brownfield
Land off Cemetery Road, Manton	10	Brownfield
Land at Main Street, Market Overton	20	Greenfield
<b>Stamford Total</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>Greenfield</b>
Part of Stamford North (Quarry Farm)	650	Greenfield
<b>Total Supply</b>	<b>1,375</b>	<b>Mix</b>

8.11 In addition to the above, three sites are proposed for allocated for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation, as follows:

- The Paddocks Site at Langham
- Stocken Hall Road, Stretton
- Seaton Road, Uppingham

8.12 A further site, comprising three areas of the Five Counties Extension, Greetham, has been proposed for an allocation for Travelling Showpeoples accommodation.

8.13 In terms of strategic employment land allocations, eight sites have been allocated, as set out below.

**Table 8.3 Preferred sites proposed as strategic employment land allocations**

Site	Size	Use
Car Park 3 Rutland Showground, Oakham	3.0 ha	High quality office and employment
Uppingham Gate, Uppingham	6.8 ha	Range of employment uses
Land North East of Pit Lane, North of Forest Park Industrial Estate, Ketton	3.7 ha	Light industrial and warehousing
Land North East of Pit Lane- East of Chater Business Estate, Ketton	4.3 ha	Employment Industrial
Burley Appliances Ltd, Oakham	1.0 ha	Industrial
Land at Pit Lane Ketton	0.9 ha	Light industrial
Land at Home Farm, Tickencote	19.4 ha	Suitable for B8
Land off Glaston Rd, Morcott	1.8 ha	Employment light industrial and small-scale logistics

# 9. Appraisal of the draft Local Plan policies

## Approach to the appraisal

- 9.1 The appraisal of the policies in the *Preferred Options Consultation* document has been presented through the eight SA Themes. In undertaking the appraisal, the policies were reviewed to determine which are likely to have a positive or negative environmental effect under each SA Theme.
- 9.2 Where a causal link between policies and SA Themes is established, significant effects are identified through the judgement of the consultants with reference to the evidence base (i.e. the scoping information). The appraisal uses the criteria in Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations, that is:
- the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;
  - the cumulative nature of the effects;
  - the transboundary nature of the effects;
  - the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents);
  - the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);
  - the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to-
    - special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;
    - exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or
    - intensive land-use; and
    - the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.
- 9.3 Where likely significant effects have been identified, these are described in summary tables for each SA Theme.
- 9.4 Every effort is made to predict effects accurately; however, this is inherently challenging given the strategic nature of the Rutland Local Plan. The ability to predict effects accurately is also affected by the limitations of the baseline data. Because of the uncertainties involved, there is a need to exercise caution when identifying and evaluating significant effects and ensure assumptions are explained in full. In many instances it is not possible to predict significant effects, but it is possible to comment on merits (or otherwise) in more general terms.
- 9.5 For each SA theme, the appraisal has been presented two-fold.
- Commentary on the proposed Local Plan spatial strategy, including preferred and reserve sites for allocation; and
  - Commentary on the *Preferred Options Consultation* document as a whole.

## Biodiversity and geodiversity

### Commentary on proposed Local Plan spatial strategy

#### Commentary on preferred sites for allocation

- 9.6 Rutland Water, an internationally designated Special Protection Area (SPA) / Ramsar site and nationally designated Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), is in the centre of the county, approximately 550m east of the eastern settlement edge of Oakham. In addition, there are 18

other SSSIs located either fully or partially within the county. Whilst there are no National Nature Reserves (NNRs) within the county, Cribbs Meadow NNR is located approximately 200m north of Rutland, in South Kesteven. There are also 359 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) located in Rutland, as well as a variety of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitats, containing habitats and species listed in the annexes of both the European Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and the European Birds Directive (79/409/EEC).

9.7 In light of the above, three of the preferred housing sites are within 1km of Rutland Water SPA / Ramsar site. In order of proximity, these are:

- **Land off Cemetery Road, Manton** (360m away)
- **Officer's Mess, Edith Weston** (420m away)
- **Land at Stamford Road, Oakham** (440m away)

9.8 Due to their proximity, these three sites have a greater potential to adversely impact the Rutland Water SPA / Ramsar site.

9.9 It is noted that the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) for the earlier iteration of the Local Plan, published in 2020, highlights that *"interest features of Rutland Water SPA / Ramsar may be exposed and sensitive to environmental changes associated with the Local Plan, principally in relation to the cumulative effects of visitor pressure, water quality and air quality affecting the site itself"*. However, appropriate assessment concluded that the earlier iteration of the Local Plan will have no adverse effects on the integrity of the site.

9.10 In terms of nationally designated biodiversity sites, in addition to the three sites highlighted above which are within 1km of Rutland Water SSSI, the following sites are within 1km of a SSSI:

- **Part of Stamford North (Quarry Farm)** is 130m from Great Casterton Road Banks SSSI
- **Land North East of Pit Lane, East of Chater Business Estate, Ketton** (employment site) is 122m from Ketton Quarries SSSI
- **Land North East of Pit Lane, North of Forest Park Industrial Estate, Ketton** (employment site) is 148m from Ketton Quarries SSSI
- **Land at Pit Lane, Ketton** (employment site) is 264m from Ketton Quarries
- **Areas 1, 2 and 3 of Five Counties Extension, Greetham** (GT&TS site) is 503m from Greetham Meadows SSSI.
- **Land at Home Farm, Tickencote** (employment site) is 707m from Bloody Oaks Quarry

9.11 Due to their proximity, these six preferred sites have increased potential to adversely impact these SSSIs. Therefore, without appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures, these sites have the potential to lead to adverse effects on the integrity and special features of the SSSI.

9.12 SSSI Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) are a GIS tool / dataset which map zones around each SSSI according to the sensitivities of the features for which it is notified. They specify the types of development that have the potential to have adverse impacts at a given location. Natural England is a statutory consultee on development proposals that might impact on SSSIs.

9.13 The following two preferred sites fall within SSSI IRZs for development of 50 units or more and any residential developments outside of the existing settlement / urban area with a total net gain in residential units:

- **Officer's Mess, Edith Weston** (90 homes on brownfield land)
- **Land South of Stamford Road, Oakham** (66 homes on greenfield land)

9.14 The following site falls within an SSSI IRZ for development of 50 units or more and any residential development of 50 or more houses outside of the existing settlement / urban area:

- **Land South of Brooke Road, Oakham** (140 homes on greenfield land)

- 9.15 Due to this, development at this site may require further consultation with Natural England as planning progresses. However, it is noted that the smaller (<50 homes), brownfield sites are potentially less likely to lead to further consultation compared to the larger (>50 homes), greenfield sites.
- 9.16 Notably, 51.7% of **Part of Stamford North (Quarry Farm)** covers a candidate LWS. Whilst it is recognised that this part of the LWS could be retained and incorporated within green infrastructure provision and wider biodiversity enhancements, it is unclear at this stage whether this is possible, especially given over half of the site – which will deliver 650 homes – covers the LWS. In addition, 4.9% of **Stocken Hall Road, Stretton** (GT&TS site) covers an LWS. As this is a much smaller proportion of the site, it is likely that this part of the LWS could be retained.
- 9.17 Only five of the preferred sites either contain or lie adjacent to / nearby a BAP Priority Habitat. These are:
- **Part of Stamford North (Quarry Farm)** (8.7% of the site contains deciduous woodland)
  - **Land at Stamford Road, Oakham** (adjacent to deciduous woodland)
  - **Main Street, Empingham** (11m from traditional orchard)
  - **Stocken Hall Road, Stretton** (GT&TS site) (4.4% of the site contains deciduous woodland)
  - **Land at Home Farm** (employment site) (0.1% of the site contains deciduous woodland)
- 9.18 Development at these three sites will likely need to retain and enhance habitats on site / adjacent / nearby and may require mitigation (such as buffer zones) to minimise the potential for adverse impacts on them.
- 9.19 Overall, some of the preferred housing sites have the potential to lead to significant negative effects on biodiversity and geodiversity; however, **uncertainty** is noted at this stage. This is because effects will depend to an extent on the design and layout of development, and the implementation of biodiversity enhancement measures. Nevertheless, it is noted that larger, greenfield sites have the potential to result in increased direct effects, such as from land take, disturbance or the loss of key features of ecological value. There is also an increased likelihood of indirect effects, such as from a reduction of ecological connectivity, and changes in land use patterns.
- 9.20 It is important to recognise that the requirement to deliver at least 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG) on sites, embedded by the Environment Act 2021, will help mitigate potential significant negative effects and facilitate enhancements to ecological networks. It also has the potential to deliver net positive effects for biodiversity in the longer term, depending on the sensitivity of the site; the habitats and species present; the extent to which existing habitats are lost; and success in application of BNG. Larger developments can also offer opportunities to deliver landscape-scale biodiversity enhancement measures such as habitat creation and enhancements in ecological connections and networks.

### Commentary on reserve sites

- 9.21 Two of the reserve sites are within 1km of Rutland Water SPA / Ramsar site. In order of proximity, these are:
- **Land North of Pennine Drive, Edith Weston** (530m away)
  - **Whitwell Road South, Empingham** (650m away)
- 9.22 Due to their proximity, these two reserve sites have the potential to adversely impact the Rutland Water SPA / Ramsar site. The same is noted with regards to the outcome of the HRA (see **paragraph 8.3.4** above).

- 9.23 In terms of nationally designated biodiversity sites, whilst none of the reserve sites are within 1km of an SSSI, the following two sites fall within SSSI IRZs for development of 50 units or more and any residential development of 10 or more houses outside existing settlements/urban areas:
- **Land North of Pennine Drive, Edith Weston** (84 homes on greenfield land)
  - **Whitwell Road South, Empingham** (40 homes on greenfield land)
- 9.24 The following reserve site falls within SSSI IRZs for development of 50 units or more and any residential development of 50 or more houses outside of the existing settlement / urban area:
- **Land West of Ashwell Road, Oakham** (286 homes on greenfield land)
- 9.25 Due to this, development at these sites may require further consultation with Natural England as planning progresses. However, it is noted that the smaller (<50 homes) sites are less likely to lead to further consultation compared to the larger (>50 homes) sites.
- 9.26 Notably, 1.1% of **Land West of Ashwell Road, Oakham** covers an LWS. Whilst it is recognised that this part of the LWS could be retained, especially given it is only a small part, it is unclear at this stage whether this is possible.
- 9.27 Only three of the reserve sites either contain or lie adjacent to / nearby a BAP Priority Habitat. These are:
- **Land West of Ashwell Road, Oakham** (9.2% of the site contains deciduous woodland)
  - **Land at Manor Farm Lane, Essendine** (adjacent to deciduous woodland)
  - **Land North of Mill Lane, Cottesmore** (13m from deciduous woodland)
- 9.28 Development at these three sites will likely need to retain and enhance habitats on site / adjacent / nearby and may require mitigation (such as buffer zones) to minimise the potential for adverse impacts on them.
- 9.29 Overall, some of the reserve sites have the potential to lead to significant negative effects on biodiversity and geodiversity; however, **uncertainty** is noted at this stage. This is because effects will depend to an extent on the design and layout of development. Nevertheless, it is noted that larger, greenfield sites have the potential to result in greater direct effects, such as from land take, disturbance or the loss of key features of ecological value. There is also an increased likelihood of indirect effects, such as from a reduction of ecological connectivity, and changes in land use patterns. The same is noted with regard to BNG.

## Commentary on the latest draft Local Plan as a whole

- 9.30 As noted above, the county contains the Rutland Water SPA / Ramsar site and SSSI and 18 other SSSIs. There are also 359 of LWSs located in Rutland, as well as a variety of BAP Priority Habitats. Whilst no significant negative effects on biodiversity assets from the spatial strategy can be readily identified, there will be a need for potential effects on biodiversity, linked to the site allocations, to be avoided and mitigated. In this context, the draft Local Plan sets out provisions which will a) help limit potential effects from new development on features and areas of biodiversity interest in the county; and b) support enhancements.
- 9.31 For example, Policy EN1 (Protection of Sites, Habitats and Species) outlines that development resulting in a significant harm to biodiversity, including designated sites and other important habitat, will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. The policy supports the mitigation hierarchy: avoid, minimise, compensate. In exceptional circumstances where detrimental impacts of development cannot be avoided (e.g. by locating development at an alternative site), Policy EN1 stipulates that the necessary compensatory measures will need to be secured by the developers. The provisions of this policy should therefore positively contribute to protecting the integrity and quality of the county's ecological and geological assets.

- 9.32 With a focus on Rutland Water SPA / Ramsar site and SSSI, Policy EN10 (Rutland Water Area) recognises the importance of this internationally designated site, outlining that development in the Rutland Water area should be carefully designed and located to ensure that it respects the nature conservation features of the site and does not have an adverse impact on its wildlife interests. Policy EN10 outlines that new development will be limited to small-scale recreation, sport and tourist uses within five defined recreation areas only. In all cases, the proposals must demonstrate (amongst other considerations) that the special nature conservation interests of the site are protected. Hence, this policy provides a range of provisions which will help protect habitats, species and the nature conservation role of the Rutland Water area.
- 9.33 With a focus on Eyebrook Reservoir SSSI and RIGS, Policy EN11 (Eyebrook Reservoir Area) recognises the importance of this nationally designated site, outlining that new development will be limited to small-scale recreation, sport and tourist uses within the Eyebrook Reservoir Area. This is providing these uses are not detrimental to the special nature conservation interests of the site. As with the above policy, Policy EN11 performs well by helping to ensure the protection of the Eyebrook Reservoir area from inappropriate development.
- 9.34 More broadly, Policy EN4 (Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows) seeks to protect important trees, woodlands and hedgerows across the county. It favours the retention and enhancement of existing trees, woodland and hedgerows over the planting of new trees. This is important given that mature trees often hold significant ecological value for local ecosystems. In support of this, Policy EN5 (Ancient Woodland and Veteran Trees) seeks to protect ancient woodlands and ancient and veteran trees. Hence, the draft Local Plan performs well in recognising the importance of such trees.
- 9.35 In terms of ecological connectivity, Policy EN2 (Local Nature Recovery Strategy) requires development proposals to demonstrate that a positive contribution will be made to the regional Nature Recovery Network (NRN) and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), as required under the Environment Act 2021. In addition, Policy EN7 (Green and Blue Infrastructure Network) requires new development to integrate existing and new green and blue infrastructure (GBI) into the scheme design from the outset. Importantly, Policy EN7 outlines that the design and layout of new GBI will need to deliver BNG and supports ecosystem services. Strengthening this, Policy SC2 (Place Shaping Principles) outlines (amongst other considerations) that development proposals must have regard to biodiversity and ecological networks within the wider landscape.
- 9.36 With a focus on BNG, Policy EN3 (Biodiversity Net Gain) outlines that development will only be permitted where a BNG of at least 15% is demonstrated and secured in perpetuity (for at least 30 years). This will be quantified using the latest DEFRA metric or agreed equivalent. By exceeding the 10% requirement as set out in the Environment Act 2021, this policy performs well and provides a degree of future proofing.
- 9.37 The policy for Stamford North, Policy H2 (Cross-boundary development opportunity – Stamford North) also includes specific requirements to mitigate against potential harm to biodiversity and wildlife in the area, 15% biodiversity net gain on site, and a need to include translocation of notable species where appropriate.
- 9.38 Finally, Policy H10 (Meeting the Needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople) outlines that (amongst other considerations) proposals for sites for Gypsy and Traveller and / or Travelling Showpeople must minimise the impact on sites / areas of nature conservation value, including the internationally designated nature conservation site of Rutland Water. In this respect, the draft Local Plan considers implications for biodiversity assets throughout its policy framework, and not just within the most relevant policy.
- 9.39 Overall, the draft Local Plan performs well under this SA theme by providing appropriate protection to designated sites and habitats and species through its policy framework, whilst also supporting ecological connectivity through GBI improvements. Whilst the spatial strategy locates some growth near designated sites, habitats and species, the policy framework should serve to mitigate any adverse effects that might arise as a result of development. In light of this, **no significant effects** are predicted.

# Landscape

## Commentary on proposed Local Plan spatial strategy

### Commentary on preferred sites for allocation

- 9.40 Rutland is not within, nor within the setting of, a National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), nor does it contain Green Belt land (albeit this is not a landscape designation). Nevertheless, the county has distinct landscape characteristics, sensitivities and features (including important viewpoints) across the areas covered by the preferred sites.
- 9.41 Rutland's most recent Landscape Sensitivity Assessment<sup>23</sup>, which was completed in 2023, updates previous studies and assesses the sensitivity of land around 26 settlements in total, including the main towns of Oakham and Uppingham and 24 villages. In the absence of specified sites, study parcels have been identified within an outer 'buffer zone' extending a distance of 150m from the inner study boundary drawn around the main built-up area of each settlement. This is unless land immediately beyond presents a clear and discreet parcel relating to a well-defined landscape feature (e.g. tree belt, watercourse etc), the settlement edge or neighbouring study parcel.
- 9.42 The results of the study, in terms of sensitivity to housing and employment development, for the two main towns are as follows:
- **Oakham** – of the 19 study parcels around this town, nine have a high sensitivity, four have a high / medium sensitivity, four have a medium sensitivity, and two have a medium / low sensitivity.
  - **Uppingham** – of the 11 study parcels around this town, three have a high sensitivity, two have a high / medium sensitivity, and six have a medium sensitivity.
- 9.43 The preferred sites deliver 16.4% of homes in Oakham and 23% in Uppingham. Hence, there is potential for the preferred sites to lead to adverse impacts on landscape and townscape character in Oakham (where 68.4% of study parcels have a high or high / medium sensitivity) and Uppingham (where 45.5% of study parcels have a high or high / medium sensitivity). However, the use of high-quality and sensitive design could help mitigate adverse impacts on landscape character to some degree.
- 9.44 With regards to the employment sites, three of the eight sites are in Oakham and one is in Uppingham. Hence, there is potential for the employment sites to lead to adverse impacts on landscape and townscape character in Oakham and Uppingham. In addition, one of the GT&TS sites is in Uppingham; however, this site is brownfield and therefore less likely to adversely impact landscape character in Uppingham.
- 9.45 The results of the study, in terms of sensitivity to housing development, for the eight larger villages that comprise the preferred sites, are as follows:
- **Cottesmore** – of the eight study parcels around this village, three have a high / medium sensitivity, three have a medium sensitivity, and two have a medium / low sensitivity.
  - **Edith Weston** – of the eight study parcels around this village, three have a high sensitivity, two have a high / medium sensitivity, and three have a medium sensitivity.
  - **Empingham** – of the six study parcels around this village, one has a high sensitivity, three have a high / medium sensitivity, and two have a medium sensitivity.
  - **Exton** – of the six study parcels around this village, two have a high sensitivity, three have a high / medium sensitivity, and one has a medium sensitivity.
  - **Manton** – of the five study parcels around this village, one has a high sensitivity, two have a high / medium sensitivity, and two have a medium sensitivity.

<sup>23</sup> Rutland County Council (2010 & 2017): 'Landscape evidence', [online], available to access via [this link](#)

- **Market Overton** – of the seven study parcels around this village, three have a high sensitivity, three have a high / medium sensitivity, and one has a medium / low sensitivity.
  - **North Luffenham** – of the six study parcels around this village, one has a high sensitivity, two have a high / medium sensitivity, and three have a medium sensitivity.
  - **Ryhall** – of the five study parcels around this village, two have a high sensitivity, one has a high / medium sensitivity, one has a medium sensitivity, and one has a medium / low sensitivity.
- 9.46 Of the eight larger villages, Market Overton is the most sensitive to housing development, with 85.7% of study parcels having either a high or high / medium sensitivity. This is followed by Exton, where 83.3% of study parcels have either a high or high / medium sensitivity. In this respect, the preferred sites have the potential to result in adverse effects on local landscape and villagescape character in these villages. The remaining larger villages have varying levels of study parcels with a high or high / medium sensitivity, ranging from 66.7% for Empingham to 37.5% for Cottesmore.
- 9.47 With regards to the employment sites, three of the eight sites are in Ketton; of the eight study parcels around this village, three have a high sensitivity, two have a high / medium sensitivity, one has a medium sensitivity, and two have a medium / low sensitivity.
- 9.48 Notably, just under half of the preferred sites (six out of 13) are brownfield, and in this respect the preferred sites perform well, particularly as brownfield sites are limited across Rutland, which is very rural in nature. However, it is noted that the largest two preferred sites – **Part of Stamford North (Quarry Farm)** (650 homes) and **Land South of Brooke Road** (140 homes) – are greenfield. However the sites are located in areas less sensitive for landscape.
- 9.49 With regards to the employment sites, six out of eight sites are greenfield, and in this respect the preferred sites do not perform so well. Nevertheless, it is recognised that brownfield sites are limited across Rutland. With regards to the GT&TS sites, one is greenfield and the other is brownfield, and therefore these sites performs variably.
- 9.50 Overall, some of the preferred sites have the potential to adversely impact the character and quality of Rutland's landscapes by directing growth to settlements which have a high or high / medium sensitivity to housing development. It is also recognised that two of the preferred sites, by directing growth to relatively large greenfield sites on the edge of Stamford and Oakham, have the potential to lead to increased direct impacts on landscape character. The delivery of large sites may lead to development which is less in keeping with existing townscape character associated with the historic evolution of a settlement. Hence, **significant negative effects** have the potential to arise at this stage. However, it is recognised that by directing almost half of growth to brownfield sites, the spatial strategy performs favourably.

### Commentary on reserve sites

- 9.51 With regards to the results of Rutland's most recent Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (see **paragraphs 9.41 and 9.42** above), and with a focus on the main towns, the reserve sites deliver 43.5% of homes in Oakham. These homes are all delivered at **Land West of Ashwell Road, Oakham**, which is a large, greenfield site. In this respect, development at this location is likely to lead to significant negative effects on landscape and townscape character in this part of Oakham (where 68.4% of study parcels have a high or high / medium sensitivity). However, the use of high-quality and sensitive design could help mitigate adverse impacts on landscape character to some degree.
- 9.52 The results of the study, in terms of sensitivity to housing development, for the six larger villages that comprise the reserve sites, are as follows:
- **Cottesmore** – of the eight study parcels around this village, three have a high / medium sensitivity, three have a medium sensitivity, and two have a medium / low sensitivity.
  - **Edith Weston** – of the eight study parcels around this village, three have a high sensitivity, two have a high / medium sensitivity, and three have a medium sensitivity.

- **Empingham** – of the six study parcels around this village, one has a high sensitivity, three have a high / medium sensitivity, and two have a medium sensitivity.
- **Essendine** – of the three study parcels around this village, two have a medium sensitivity and one has a medium / low sensitivity.
- **Greetham** – of the seven study parcels around this village, two have a high / medium sensitivity, one has a medium sensitivity, and four have a medium / low sensitivity.
- **Ryhall** – of the five study parcels around this village, two have a high sensitivity, one has a high / medium sensitivity, one has a medium sensitivity, and one has a medium / low sensitivity.

- 9.53 Of the six larger villages, Empingham is the most sensitive to housing development, with 66.7% of study parcels having either a high or high / medium sensitivity, followed by Edith Weston at 62.5%. Hence, the reserve sites have the potential to result in adverse impacts on local landscape and villagescape character in these villages. Conversely, none of the study parcels in Essendine have a high or high / medium sensitivity, whilst only 28.6% of study parcels in Greetham have a high or high / medium sensitivity. Hence, the reserve sites in these villages are less likely to lead to significant adverse impacts on local landscape and villagescape character. The other larger villages have varying levels of study parcels with a high or high / medium sensitivity, ranging from 60% for Manton and Ryhall to 37.5% for Cottesmore.
- 9.54 Notably, none of the reserve sites are brownfield. In this respect, the reserve sites perform poorly, particularly **Land West of Ashwell Road, Oakham**, which will deliver 286 homes at a large, greenfield site. It should be noted that this site is not in a location with heightened landscape sensitivity.
- 9.55 Overall, some of the reserve sites have the potential to lead to adverse impacts on the character and quality of Rutland's landscapes through directing growth to settlements which have a high or high / medium sensitivity to housing development. It is also recognised that all of the reserve sites, by directing growth to greenfield sites, have the potential to lead to increased direct impacts on landscape character. The delivery of larger sites may lead to development which is less in keeping with existing townscape character and settlement patterns associated with the historic evolution of a settlement. Hence, **significant negative effects** are predicted at this stage.

## Commentary on the latest draft Local Plan as a whole

- 9.56 As outlined above, Rutland has distinct landscape characteristics, sensitivities and features (including important viewpoints). Rutland's most recent Landscape Character Assessment (2022) outlines that the county overlaps five different landscape character types. These range from high plateau landscapes across large areas of the north east and south west, to lowland valleys in the centre and north west and on the county's southern border along the Welland Valley. Notably, Rutland's most recent Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (2023) highlights that many undeveloped parts of the county are sensitive to housing development.
- 9.57 In response to this, Policy SC1 (Landscape Character) outlines that new development is expected to reflect and respond to Rutland's varied landscape character and contribute to the distinctive qualities of the landscape character type in which it is located. This includes the distinctive elements, features and other spatial characteristics identified in the most recent Rutland Landscape Character Assessment (2022). The policy outlines (amongst other considerations) that development proposals on the edge of settlements should reflect local identity, including how development relates to landform and landscape features. In this respect, Policy SC1 should help prevent inappropriate development from taking place.
- 9.58 With a focus on design, Policy SC2 (Place Shaping Principles) is in place to ensure that all new development is appropriate in scale and design to the location, character and features of the setting and landscape within which it is situated. The policy outlines (amongst other considerations) that development proposals must have regard to Rutland's Landscape Character Assessment (2022) and Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (2023). In this respect, where site allocations overlap parcels with a high sensitivity to housing development, mitigation measures will likely be put in place.

- 9.59 In addition, Policy SC3 (Promoting Good Quality Design) requires planning applications to be accompanied by a formal Design and Access Statement. The policy outlines (amongst other considerations) that development proposals must demonstrate how they will be visually attractive and make a positive contribution to local distinctiveness, vernacular, townscape, streetscape, and landscape character. Development proposals must also be integrated into the wider surroundings, being sensitive to edges of settlements, views, landscape character, history, built form and street character, and should be of an appropriate scale, density, massing, height, and material, given the context of the area. Hence, this policy will help ensure that new development respects local context, identity and character.
- 9.60 With a focus on density, Policy H3 (Housing Density) outlines that new residential development is required to make the most efficient use of land whilst responding to local character, context and distinctiveness. The policy outlines that residential densities will vary dependent upon the local area context and character and the sustainability of the location, but generally should be no less than 25dph. In this respect, the draft Local Plan acknowledges that sensitivity varies across the local landscape by ensuring that housing density is determined on a site-by-site basis.
- 9.61 In terms of development in the countryside, Policy SS8 (Residential Development in the Open Countryside) outlines that new-build open market housing will only be permitted in the open countryside where the proposal is either a) for affordable housing on rural exceptions sites; b) housing to meet a proven essential need for rural workers; c) re-use, adaptation and conversion of rural buildings; or d) Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites to help meet identified accommodation needs. In essence, there needs to be a determined need for housing in the countryside, which should prevent a significant scale of inappropriate development.
- 9.62 Adding on to the above, Policy SS9 (Non-Residential Development in the Countryside) highlights that non-residential development in the countryside will only be supported where it is for certain purposes, including (but not limited to) where it supports the rural economy. Policy SS10 (Conversion of Buildings outside PLDs) outlines that proposals for the conversion of existing buildings in the countryside outside the PLD will only be permitted where landscape character is not adversely affected. Additionally, Policy SS11 (New Agricultural Buildings) outlines that agricultural buildings will be permitted in the countryside where impacts on landscape character are not adversely affected. These policies should also prevent inappropriate development from taking place in the countryside.
- 9.63 More broadly, Policy EN7 (Green and Blue Infrastructure Network) requires new development to integrate existing and new GBI into the scheme design from the outset. This includes identifying and providing opportunities to enhance and improve linkages between the natural and historical landscapes of Rutland. In addition, Policy EN8 (Important Open Space and Frontages), which seeks to protect important open space and frontages, outlines (amongst other considerations) that development must have regard to its contribution to enhancing the attractiveness of the town or village setting when viewed from surrounding land. Moreover, Policy SC2 (Place Shaping Principles) outlines (amongst other considerations) that development proposals must have regard to public access to, and community value of, the local landscape and nearby open spaces.
- 9.64 The policy for Stamford North, Policy H2 (Cross-boundary development opportunity – Stamford North) also includes specific requirements to limit impacts on landscape and townscape character. This includes the provision of sensitive landscaping to the northern and western edges of the site, and a commitment to respond positively to green infrastructure opportunities in the area.
- 9.65 Finally, Policy H10 (Meeting the Needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople) outlines that (amongst other considerations) proposals for sites for Gypsy and Traveller and / or Travelling Showpeople must minimise the impact on landscape character.
- 9.66 Overall, the draft Local Plan performs well under this SA theme by ensuring that local landscape, townscape and villagescape character is protected. The policy framework recognises that some areas are more sensitive to housing development than others, and these areas should be provided the most protection. However, the spatial strategy locates some

development in sensitive landscapes and/or on large greenfield sites. Whilst the design and layout of development may mitigate the identified potential significant negative effects to some degree, it is uncertain as to the extent which negative effects will be mitigated. As such, **uncertainty** is noted.

## Historic environment

### Commentary on proposed Local Plan spatial strategy

#### Commentary on preferred sites for allocation

- 9.67 Rutland has a rich historic environment; numerous nationally listed features of historic significance and locally important conservation areas are present in most settlements. In addition, there are scheduled monuments within the settlements of Oakham, Edith Weston, Empingham, Great Casterton, and Greetham. There are also two Grade II listed registered parks and gardens in the county, namely: Burley on the Hill (located approximately 1km to the east of the eastern settlement edge of Oakham) and Exton Park (located directly to the west of the A1 trunk road).
- 9.68 Whilst the significance of the effects from the preferred sites on features of cultural, built and archaeological heritage assets depends on the location, scale and nature of development (in particular, the detailed design of development including layout, height etc.), it can be considered that a larger scale of housing development within a settlement generally increases the likelihood (and potential magnitude) of negative effects on heritage assets locally. This is linked to an increased likelihood of direct and indirect impacts on the fabric and setting of specific features and areas of historic environment interest in or near the settlement. In this respect, preferred site **Part of Stamford North (Quarry Farm)**, which will deliver 650 homes on greenfield land on the northern edge of Stamford, is likely to lead to significant negative effects on the historic setting of Stamford.
- 9.69 With a focus on the proximity of the preferred sites to nationally designated listed structures, two of the preferred sites are within 250m of a Grade I listed building. In order of proximity, these are:
- **Main Street, Empingham** (210m from Church or St Peter)
  - **Officer's Mess, Edith Weston** (240m from Church of St Mary)
- 9.70 In addition, five of the preferred sites are within 250m of a Grade II\* listed building. In order of proximity, these are:
- **Tim Norton Motors, Oakham** (30m from Hayne House)
  - **Land off Cemetery Road, Manton** (190m from Church of St Mary)
  - **Easson Garage, Cottesmore** (190m from Church of St Nicholas)
  - **Main Street, Empingham** (240m from Old Prebendal House)
  - **Land at Main Street, Cottesmore** (240m from Church of St Nicholas)
- 9.71 Due to their proximity, these seven sites – which are all within larger villages with the exception of **Tim Norton Motors, Oakham** – have the potential to adversely impact the setting of either a Grade I or Grade II\* listed building.
- 9.72 Five of the preferred sites are within 500m of a scheduled monument. In order of proximity, these are:
- **Part of Stamford North (Quarry Farm)** (21m from 'Ermine Street, section south of Quarry Farm')
  - **Main Street, Empingham** (86m from 'Dovecote 170m north east of the junction between Main Street and Exton Road').

- **Officer's Mess, Edith Weston** (117m from 'Village cross at junction of Well Cross and King Edward's Way')
  - **Land at The Workshops, Exton** (354m from 'Exton Old Hall')
  - **Tim Norton Motors, Oakham** (399m from 'Butter Cross and stocks')
- 9.73 Whilst these sites are unlikely to directly impact on the fabric of the archaeological remains and other features of significance that comprise these scheduled monuments, the historic setting of these features may be impacted by development at some of these locations.
- 9.74 Two of the preferred sites are within 1km of a Grade II registered park and garden. In order of proximity, these are:
- **Land at The Workshops, Exton** (40m from Exton Park)
  - **Land East of Stamford Road, Exton** (531m from Exton Park)
- 9.75 Finally, five of the preferred sites fall within, or lie adjacent to, a conservation area. In order of proximity, these are:
- **Easson Garage, Cottesmore** (falls within Cottesmore Conservation Area)
  - **Main Street, Empingham** (falls within Empingham Conservation Area)
  - **Land at Main Street, Cottesmore** (2% overlap with Cottesmore Conservation Area)
  - **Land at the Workshops, Exton** (adjacent to Exton Conservation Area)
  - **Land at Stamford Road, Oakham** (adjacent to Oakham Conservation Area)
- 9.76 Whilst all six of these sites have the potential to adversely impact the setting of these conservation areas, **Easson Garage, Cottesmore** and **Main Street, Empingham** have the greatest potential to lead to adverse impacts given they fall within conservation areas. However, the use of high-quality and sensitive design could help mitigate adverse impacts on these conservation areas to some degree. It is also noted that conservation areas have stricter planning controls to ensure development is appropriate.
- 9.77 In terms of potential impacts on historic landscape character, just under half of the preferred sites (six out of 13) are brownfield, and in this respect the preferred sites perform well, particularly as brownfield sites are limited across Rutland, which is very rural in nature. However, it is noted that the largest two preferred sites – **Part of Stamford North (Quarry Farm)** (650 homes) and **Land South of Brooke Road, Oakham** (140 homes) – are greenfield. These sites therefore have increased potential to lead to increased direct impacts on historic setting of these locations, including through leading to development which is less in keeping with the historic evolution of a settlement.
- 9.78 Overall, whilst it is noted that effects on the historic environment are largely dependent on the design and layout of development, a number of the preferred sites have the potential to lead to negative effects without appropriate avoidance, mitigation and enhancement measures. The significance of these effects depends on the location, scale and nature of development.

### Commentary on reserve sites

- 9.79 With regards to the scale of development (see **paragraph 8.5.2** above), **Land West of Ashwell Road, Oakham**, which will deliver 286 homes on the northern edge of Oakham, is most likely to lead to significant negative effects on the historic setting of Oakham.
- 9.80 With a focus on the proximity of the preferred sites to nationally designated listed structures, three sites are within 250m of a Grade I or Grade II\* listed building. These are:
- **Land South of Glebe Road, North Luffenham** (160m from Church of St John the Baptist, Grade I listed)
  - **Land at Manor Farm Lane, Essendine** (40m from Church of St Mary, Grade II\*)
  - **Land South of Glebe Road, North Luffenham** (80m from Bede House Farmhouse)

- 9.81 Due to their proximity, these sites – which are within larger villages – have the potential to adversely impact the setting of these listed buildings.
- 9.82 Four of the reserve sites are within 500m of a scheduled monument. In order of proximity, these are:
- **Land at Manor Farm Lane, Essendine** (adjacent to ‘Essendine Castle moated site’)
  - **Whitwell Road South, Empingham** (206m from ‘Moated site with fishponds and enclosures at Empingham’)
  - **Land South of Glebe Road, North Luffenham** (271m from ‘Moated site at North Luffenham’)
  - **Land South of Oakham Road, Greetham** (304m from ‘Manorial settlement, 127m north west of St Mary’s Church’)
- 9.83 Due to its proximity, the **Land at Manor Farm Lane, Essendine**, has particular potential to impact on the setting of the adjacent scheduled monument, and potentially on associated archaeological remains
- 9.84 Only one of the reserve sites is within 1km of a Grade II registered park and garden. This is:
- **Land South of Oakham Road, Greetham** (940m from Exton Park)
- 9.85 Finally, two of the reserve sites fall adjacent to a conservation area. These are:
- **Land South of Glebe Road, North Luffenham** (adjacent to North Luffenham Conservation Area)
  - **Land North of Mill Lane, Cottesmore** (adjacent to Cottesmore Conservation Area).
- 9.86 Whilst this site has the potential to adversely impact the setting of this conservation area, the use of high-quality and sensitive design could help mitigate adverse impacts on these conservation areas to some degree. It is also noted that conservation areas have stricter planning controls to ensure development is appropriate.
- 9.87 Notably, all of the reserve sites are greenfield, and in this respect the reserve sites perform poorly in relation to historic landscape character. Notably, the largest reserve site – **Land West of Ashwell Road, Oakham** (286 homes) – has increased potential to lead to increased direct impacts on the historic landscape character of this location. In particular, it may lead to development which is less in keeping with the historic evolution of Oakham.
- 9.88 Overall, whilst it is noted that effects on the historic environment are largely dependent on the design and layout of development, the reserve sites have the potential to lead to negative effects without appropriate avoidance, mitigation and enhancement measures. The significance of these effects depends on the design and nature of development.

## Commentary on the latest draft Local Plan as a whole

- 9.89 As noted above, Rutland contains a significant number of nationally and locally designated sites and areas of importance for their heritage interest. This rich and diverse historic environment of Rutland is reflected by the policy framework for the draft Local Plan, which has a strong focus on conserving and enhancing the fabric and setting of heritage assets.
- 9.90 For example, Policy EN13 (Protecting Heritage Assets) outlines that the Council will apply national policy to development proposals which affect designated heritage assets, or their setting, including listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled monuments. Meanwhile, development that has the potential to affect non-designated heritage assets will be considered with respect to the scale of any harm or loss, as well as the particular significance of the heritage asset and its setting. Adding to this, Policy SC2 (Place Shaping Principles) states that all development proposals will be assessed in relation to statutory, national and local designations and their setting. Policy SC2 outlines that proposals must also consider conservation area appraisals. In this respect, the policy framework provides robust protection

- to both designated and non-designated heritage assets, reflecting their varying significance and level of statutory protection.
- 9.91 Supporting the above, Policy EN12 (The Historic and Cultural Environment) seeks to ensure that new development protects, conserves and, where possible, enhances historic assets and their settings. It also outlines that development should also respect the historic landscape character and contribute to its conservation, enhancement or restoration, or the creation of appropriate new features. Policy EN12 outlines that a Historic Impact Assessment may be required to support proposals which affect historic assets and their settings, which should ensure that potential significant negative effects are avoided. Given impacts on the significance of a heritage resource can be diverse, the implementation of Historic Impact Assessment is an appropriate mechanism for the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment.
- 9.92 Archaeological resources are recognised as an important component of the county's historic environment through Policy EN13, which states that development affecting archaeological remains, whether known or potential, designated or undesignated, should take every practical and reasonable step to protect and, where possible, enhance their significance. The policy outlines that development proposals that would result in the removal or destruction of remains of archaeological interest that are considered to be of equal significance to a scheduled monument will not normally be permitted. In this respect, the policy framework provides protection to non-designated archaeological remains in addition to those that are designated.
- 9.93 The policy for Stamford North, Policy H2 (Cross-boundary development opportunity – Stamford North) also includes specific requirements to limit impacts on key archaeological sites. This includes through stipulating that an appropriate buffer for the protection and enhancement of the setting of the Scheduled Monument at Great Casterton is provided, the extent to which should be informed by a Heritage Impact Assessment
- 9.94 Policy EN8 (Important Open Space and Frontages) seeks to protect important open space and frontages from inappropriate development. To achieve this, the policy outlines that new development must have regard to the peripheral or transitional open character of open spaces in contributing to preserving the form and character of settlements, including heritage assets. Adding to this, Policy SC1 (Landscape Character) outlines (amongst other considerations) that development proposals on the edge of settlements should reflect local identity, including the consideration of historic settlement pattern and separation and the historic form of a settlement. Hence, the policy framework recognises the importance of the landscape in relation to the historic environment, including through its role in the setting of heritage assets.
- 9.95 More broadly, Policy SC3 (Promoting Good Design) outlines that proposals must be integrated into the wider surroundings, being sensitive to edges of settlements, views, landscape character, history, built form and street character, and should be of an appropriate scale, density, massing, height, and material, given the context of the area. With a focus on the countryside, Policy SS10 (Conversion of Buildings outside PLDs) outlines that proposals for the conversion of existing buildings in the countryside outside the PLD will only be permitted where the historic environment is not adversely affected. Finally, Policy H10 (Meeting the Needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople) outlines that (amongst other considerations) proposals for sites for Gypsy and Traveller and / or Travelling Showpeople must minimise the impact on heritage assets. In this respect, the draft Local Plan considers implications on the historic environment throughout its policy framework, and not just within the most relevant policy.
- 9.96 Overall, the draft Local Plan performs well under this SA theme by ensuring that heritage assets, both designated and non-designated, and their settings, including the wider historic landscape, are protected. The policy framework recognises that designated heritage assets should be offered greater protection than non-designated assets, however it still provides protection for both. Nevertheless, the spatial strategy locates some development in locations of sensitivity for the historic environment. Whilst the design and layout of development may mitigate negative effects to some degree, this depends on the delivery of development, and therefore **uncertainty** is noted.

## Air, land, soil and water resources

### Commentary on proposed Local Plan spatial strategy

#### Commentary on preferred sites for allocation

- 9.97 **Air quality** in Rutland is generally good. Monitoring for nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) occurs at 11 sites across the county; the results of which are included in the annual Air Quality Annual Status Reports (ASRs), the most recent of which was produced in 2019.<sup>24</sup> According to the 2019 ASR, there are no AQMAs in the county. Therefore, there is no formal requirement to develop an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP). However, Rutland County Council has encouraged and supported measures to mitigate emissions. This includes (but is not limited to) policy guidance; transport planning; public information campaigns; car lift / share schemes; and the installation of electric vehicle (EV) charging points at certain locations (including offices in Oakham).
- 9.98 It is reasonable to assume that the level of air pollution generated from the preferred sites will largely depend on the location of development, with the most sustainable locations being Oakham, Uppingham and the edge of Stamford, in South Kesteven District. The preferred sites deliver 86.6% of homes in the vicinities of these three main towns. In this respect, the preferred sites perform well by locating growth near existing services, facilities and amenities, as well as employment opportunities and educational facilities.
- 9.99 In terms of soils resources just under half of the preferred sites (six out of 13) are **brownfield**. In this respect, the preferred sites perform well, particularly as brownfield sites are limited across Rutland, which is very rural in nature. However, it is noted that the largest two preferred sites – **Part of Stamford North (Quarry Farm)** (650 homes) and **Land South of Brooke Road, Oakham** (140 homes) – are greenfield. Hence, there will still be some loss of greenfield land through the preferred spatial strategy.
- 9.100 With a focus on **mineral resources**, the following 13 preferred sites overlap, either fully or partially, with a Mineral Safeguarding Area (MSA):
- **Land South West of Belmesthorpe Lane, Ryhall** (fully)
  - **Main Street, Empingham** (fully)
  - **Part of Stamford North (Quarry Farm)** (fully)
  - **Land at the Workshops, Exton** (fully)
  - **Land at Main Street, Market Overton** (fully)
  - **Stocken Hall Road, Stretton** (GT&TS site) (fully)
  - **Land North East of Pit Lane, North of Forest Park Industrial Estate, Ketton** (employment site) (fully)
  - **Land North East of Pit Lane, East of Chater Business Estate, Ketton** (employment site) (fully)
  - **Land at Home Farm, Tickencote** (employment site) (fully)
  - **Land at Pit Lane, Ketton** (employment site) (fully)
  - **Land at Main Street, Cottesmore** (partially)
  - **Officer's Mess, Edith Weston** (partially)
- 9.101 In this respect, almost a third of the preferred sites (eight out of 13) overlap, either fully or partially, with an MSA. Therefore, the preferred sites have the potential to lead to the sterilisation of mineral resources in the county.
- 9.102 The key consideration in terms of supporting the **efficient use of land** in the county is the need to avoid unnecessary loss of the highest quality 'best and most versatile' (BMV) agricultural

<sup>24</sup> Rutland County Council (2019): '2019 Air Quality ASR', [online] available to access via [this link](#)

land. In relation to this, the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) classifies land into six grades (plus 'non-agricultural' and 'urban'), where Grades 1 to 3a are recognised as being BMV land and Grades 3b to 5 are of poorer quality. Not all locations in Rutland have had recent detailed ALC undertaken; due to this, there is a reliance on less detailed pre-1988 national classifications for agricultural land. Under this older classification, subdivision of Grade 3 agricultural land into 3a (BMV land) and 3b (poorer quality land) is not available.

9.103 None of the preferred sites overlap with Grade 1 agricultural land. In addition, only six of the preferred sites overlap, either fully or partially, with Grade 2 agricultural land. These are:

- **Seaton Road, Uppingham** (GT&TS site) (100% overlap).
- **Land off Glaston Road, Morcott** (employment site) (100% overlap).
- **Car Park 3, Rutland Showground, Oakham** (employment site) (96% overlap).
- **Burley Appliances, Oakham** (employment site) (89% overlap).
- **Uppingham Gate, Uppingham** (employment site) (67% overlap).
- **Land South of Brooke Road** (29% overlap).

9.104 The majority of the preferred sites overlap, either fully or partially, with Grade 3 agricultural land. Therefore, whilst the preferred sites have the potential to lead to the loss of BMV land (i.e. Grade 2 and 3a land), uncertainty is noted at this stage as it is not clear whether the Grade 3 agricultural land overlapping the majority of sites is Grade 3a land (BMV) or Grade 3b (poor quality).

9.105 Land around Uppingham is underlain by a mixture of Grade 3a and Grade 3b land, with some areas of Grade 2 land. Therefore, the preferred sites have the potential to lead to the loss of BMV land (i.e. Grade 2 and 3a land) in the vicinity of the town. As the site allocations within Uppingham will be determined by the Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan and the Local Plan does not have preferred sites in the town, the Local Plan spatial strategy will not influence the specific location of growth in this settlement.

9.106 **Waste generation** is an inevitable consequence of development, including both waste generated by construction and during occupation. The management of waste, including the minimisation of waste generation in the first instance, and the encouragement of the re-use, recycling and recovery of waste materials in the second instance, would all be undertaken on a site-by-site basis. In this respect, it is reasonable to assume that the level of waste generated will correspond to the scale of development. However, it is recognised that larger schemes can present an opportunity to incorporate innovative waste management practices and technologies, and **Part of Stamford North (Quarry Farm)** (650 homes) performs well in this respect.

9.107 With a focus on **water resources**, Rutland is within the supply area of Anglian Water and is located in an area of high water stress. It is therefore important to consider the Local Plan's effects on water resources. It is considered that higher growth will place a greater demand upon the already stressed supply. In this respect, the relatively moderate level of growth proposed under the preferred spatial strategy (1,375 homes) represents less of an additional burden. It is anticipated that the Water Resources Management Plans (WRMPs) prepared by water supply companies will address long-term water supply issues associated with growth.

9.108 Whilst five of the preferred sites are within 250m of a statutory main river, the southern boundary of **Land at Stamford Road, Oakham** lies adjacent to a river. Therefore, the preferred sites have the potential to pollute nearby rivers from the runoff of point source pollution from new development. However, it is recognised that this will likely be considered during the site design stage, with mitigation measures put in place to limit pollution.

9.109 It is also noted that eight of the preferred sites overlap Source Protection Zone (SPZ) 2 (outer zone) and 3 (total catchment). These are:

- **Easson Garage, Cottesmore**
- **Part of Stamford North (Quarry Farm)**

- **Land at Main Street, Cottesmore**
- **Officer's Mess, Edith Weston**
- **Stocken Hall Road, Stretton** (GT&TS site)
- **Land North East of Pit Lane, North of Forest Park Industrial Estate, Ketton** (employment site)
- **Land North East of Pit Lane, East of Chater Business Estate, Ketton** (employment site)
- **Land at Pit Lane, Ketton** (employment site)

9.110 Therefore, these eight sites have a greater potential to pollute groundwater sources used to supply drinking water. However, it is recognised that the SPZ designation provides a degree of protection to these areas.

9.111 Overall, by delivering a relatively moderate level of growth (1,375 home), the preferred spatial strategy reduces the severity of potential negative effects on air, land, soil and water resources. Whilst it is recognised that some of the preferred sites overlap MSAs and SPZs, in light of the widespread coverage of these areas / zones across the county, and the protection provided by these designations, **no significant effects** are predicted.

### Commentary on reserve sites

9.112 As noted above, the level of air pollution generated from the reserve sites will largely depend on the location of development, with the most sustainable locations being Oakham, Uppingham and the edge of Stamford, in South Kesteven District. The reserve sites deliver 43.5% of homes in Oakham. In this respect, the reserve sites perform relatively well by locating some growth near existing services, facilities and amenities, as well as employment opportunities and educational facilities. However, this is all delivered at one site – **Land West of Ashwell Road, Oakham** – which may lead to concentrated impacts on air quality.

9.113 With a focus on mineral resources, the following seven reserve sites overlap, either fully or partially, with an MSA:

- **Land at Manor Farm Lane, Essendine** (fully)
- **Land South of Oakham Road, Greetham** (fully)
- **Land North of Pennine Drive, Edith Weston** (fully)
- **Land between Meadow Lane and Belmesthorpe Road, Ryhall** (fully)
- **Land South of Glebe Road, North Luffenham** (partially)
- **Whitwell Road South, Empingham** (partially)
- **Land North of Mill Lane, Cottesmore** (partially)

9.114 In this respect, three quarters of the reserve sites (six out of eight) overlap, either fully or partially, with an MSA. Therefore, the reserve sites have the potential to lead to the sterilisation of mineral resources in the county.

9.115 Regarding the efficient use of land, the reserve sites deliver all growth on greenfield sites. None of the reserve sites overlap with Grade 1 agricultural land. In addition, only two of the reserve sites overlap, partially, with Grade 2 agricultural land. These are:

- **Land West of Ashwell Road, Oakham** (22% overlap)
- **Land between Meadow Lane and Belmesthorpe Road, Ryhall** (19% overlap)

9.116 All of the reserve sites overlap, either fully or partially, with Grade 3 agricultural land. As such, whilst the reserve sites have the potential to lead to the loss of BMV land (i.e. Grade 2 and 3a land), uncertainty is noted at this stage as it is not clear whether the Grade 3 agricultural land overlapping the reserve sites is Grade 3a land (BMV) or Grade 3b (poor quality).

- 9.116.1 Regarding **waste generation**, it is assumed that the level of waste generated will correspond to the scale of development. However, it is recognised that larger schemes can present an opportunity to incorporate innovative waste management practices and technologies, and **Land West of Ashwell Road, Oakham** (286 homes) performs well in this respect.
- 9.117 With a focus on **water resources**, the additional growth proposed under the reserve sites (657 homes), whilst relatively modest, represents an additional burden on water supply in the county. However, as noted above, it is anticipated that the WRMPs prepared by water supply companies will address long-term water supply issues associated with growth.
- 9.118 Whilst three of the reserve sites are within 250m of a statutory main river, the southwestern boundary of **Land South West of Belmesthorpe Lane, Ryhall** lies adjacent to a river. In this respect, this reserve site has the potential to pollute nearby rivers from the runoff of source point pollution from new development. However, it is recognised that this will likely be considered during the site design stage, with mitigation measures put in place to limit pollution.
- 9.119 It is also noted that three of the reserve sites overlap Source Protection Zone (SPZ) 2 (outer zone) and 3 (total catchment). These are:
- **Land at Manor Farm Lane, Essendine**
  - **Land South of Oakham Road, Greetham**
  - **Land South of Glebe Road, North Luffenham**
  - **Land North of Pennine Drive, Edith Weston**
- 9.120 Therefore, these three sites have a greater potential to pollute groundwater sources used to supply drinking water. However, it is recognised that the SPZ designation provides a degree of protection to these areas.
- 9.121 Overall, by delivering a relatively moderate level of additional growth (657 home), the reserve sites reduce the severity of potential negative effects on air, land, soil and water resources. Whilst it is recognised that some of the preferred sites overlap MSAs and SPZs, in light of the widespread nature of these areas / zones across the county, and the protection provided by these designations, **no significant effects** are predicted.

### Commentary on the latest draft Local Plan as a whole

- 9.122 As noted above, air quality in Rutland is generally good. Nevertheless, due to the rural nature of the county, future development will still likely result in an uplift in the use of private cars, which has the potential to lead to deteriorating air quality locally. In response to this, Policy SC4 (Pollution Control) outlines that development should seek to minimise pollution and, where possible, contribute to the protection and improvement of the quality of air, land, and water. Specifically, development that would result in significant air pollution would only be permitted if the potential negative effects can be mitigated to an acceptable level.
- 9.123 With a focus on land and soil resources, it is expected that the draft Local Plan will positively promote the most efficient use of land. However, where this is not possible due to the lack of brownfield sites, the policy framework ensures that development is sensitively designed in order to avoid causing significant adverse impacts to land and soil resources. Most notably, Policy EN6 (Protecting Agricultural Land) is in place to protect BMV agricultural land (Grades 1, 2 and 3a) from new development. The policy only permits development which would lead to the loss of such land where a) the land is allocated for development in the Local Plan; b) no other more suitable sites are available; or c) it will be used for photovoltaics (PV) (only Grade 3).
- 9.124 The draft Local Plan has a robust suite of policies on waste reduction. For example, Policy CC1 (Supporting a Circular Economy) supports proposals which demonstrate their compatibility with, or the furthering of, a strong circular economy. The policy requires that development proposals set out their approach to site waste management and how construction waste will be addressed following the waste hierarchy together with the five R's of waste management: refuse, reduce, reuse, repurpose, recycle. Supporting this, Policy SC3 (Promoting Good

Quality Design) highlights that development proposals should include measures to secure the management of waste in accordance with the waste hierarchy during both construction and operation. Other relevant policies include:

- Policy WST1 (Capacity Requirements and Spatial Strategy for Waste Development), which outlines that the development of a sustainable waste management network for Rutland will be supported through the recognition of waste as a resource. It will involve the provision of facilities to meet the indicative waste management capacities.
- Policy WST2 (Waste-Related Development), which accepts waste-related development where it meets the criteria set out within the policy.
- Policy WST3 (Sites for Waste Management), which states that for proposals for waste development on unallocated sites, preference will be given to industrial and employment sites and the re-use of previously developed land in line with the spatial strategy for waste management.

9.125 The protection of minerals within the county is a key focus of the draft Local Plan. For example, Policy MIN3 (Safeguarding Rutland's Mineral Resources) seeks to protect MSAs from unnecessary sterilisation as a result of new development. In addition, Policy MIN1 (Spatial Strategy for Minerals Development) outlines that the extraction of mineral resources will be focussed within the limestone for aggregates and building stone Area of Search (AoS), as well as the cement primary and secondary materials AoS. Policy MIN1 also outlines that small-scale extraction of non-aggregate minerals for building / roofing stone and clay, where linked to historic environment conservation outcomes, will be supported in rural areas or within settlements. Moreover, Policy MIN4 (Development Criteria for Mineral Extraction) permits proposals for extraction of minerals where it can be demonstrated (amongst other considerations) that it is required to maintain a sufficient supply of material. Notably, preference will be given to proposals for mineral extraction at allocated sites. Other relevant policies include:

- Policy MIN2 (Mineral Provision), which highlights that the Council will make provision for the extraction of 5.6 million tonnes of crushed rock (limestone) during the plan period, in addition to maintaining a sufficient stock of permitted reserves for limestone and clay in order to supply the Cement Works at Ketton. The policy will also support the supply of minerals where necessary for conservation purpose and/or maintaining the local distinctiveness of the built environment within Rutland. In this respect, the Local Plan recognises the economic value of continuing the production of building materials in the county for conservation purposes.
- Policy MIN5 (Site-Specific Allocations for the Extraction of Building Stone), which outlines that proposals for the extraction of building stone at M1 New Road, Hooby Lane (yield unknown) will be permitted in accordance with other relevant Local Plan policies.
- Policy MIN6 (Safeguarding of Minerals Development), which seeks to safeguard the provision to be delivered by the allocated and committed mineral extraction sites by ensuring that proposals for non-minerals development within / adjacent to an allocated site are justifiable.
- Policy MIN7 (Borrow Pits), which outlines that permission will be granted for borrow pits where it meets the criteria set out within the policy.
- Policy MIN8 (Development Criteria for Other Forms of Minerals Development), which outlines that permission will be granted for other forms of minerals development where it can be demonstrated that the development complies with relevant Local Plan policies and avoids and/or mitigates potentially adverse impacts to acceptable levels.
- Policy MIN9 (Restoration and Aftercare), which states that all temporary minerals and waste development must include a restoration scheme to secure delivery of high-quality restoration and aftercare, including provisions for ongoing management and maintenance where necessary.

- 9.126 Finally, with a focus on water resources, Policy CC6 (Water Efficiency and Sustainable Water Management) states that all new dwellings should achieve the Optional Technical Housing Standard of 110 litres per day per person for water efficiency as described by Building Regulation G2. The policy provides additional support for development proposals that go further than this minimum requirement. Policy CC6 also highlights that new development must utilise permeable paving; drought tolerant planting; green roofs (only when the roof is flat and not being used for PV or thermal solar panels); and rain harvesting (only when there is garden area included in the plot). More broadly, Policy SS11 (New Agricultural Buildings) outlines that agricultural buildings will be permitted in the countryside where impacts on water quality are not adversely affected. In this respect, the policy framework seeks to recognise that the county is in an area of high water stress by ensuring that new development is efficient in its use of this resource.
- 9.127 Overall, the draft Local Plan has a robust set out policies on air, land, soil and water resources, with a particular focus on minimising waste and protecting mineral resources. Whilst the spatial strategy will inevitably lead to the loss of some BMV agricultural land, this is largely unavoidable due to the limited number of brownfield sites in Rutland. In light of this, minor **positive significant effects** are predicted at this stage.

## Climate change

### Commentary on proposed Local Plan spatial strategy

#### Commentary on preferred sites for allocation

- 9.128 With respect to **climate change mitigation**, road transport is a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) in Rutland. High car dependency and the rural nature of the much of the county, as well as issues relating to public transport provision, mean that car ownership within Rutland is higher than the regional average. Only 10.3% of households in Rutland do not have access to a car or van, compared to 23.5% nationally (Census 2021). Due to this, by delivering growth, the preferred spatial strategy has the potential to lead to increases in GHG emissions from transport. It is also unlikely to give rise to the required improvements in sustainable transport choices that would offset the increase in car-based trips.
- 9.129 However, it is recognised that the most sustainable locations are Oakham, Uppingham and the edge of Stamford, in South Kesteven District. The preferred sites deliver 86.6% of homes in these three main towns. In this respect, the preferred sites perform well by supporting the use of sustainable transport modes, given residents have good access to existing services, facilities and amenities in these towns. Notably, Rutland is served by a rural bus network, a public rights of way (PRoW) network, and there is a substantial joint cycleway / footway network. Due to the main towns forming key nodes to local transport networks, directing growth to these settlements would help to encourage a modal shift and reduce reliance on the private vehicle, helping to minimise an increase in emissions.
- 9.130 Notably, Oakham has the only railway station in the county, which provides direct links to the east coast main line, Stansted Airport, Birmingham, and a limited twice daily service to London St Pancras. Stamford, which is located just outside of the county in South Kesteven District, also has a railway station on this line. The preferred sites deliver 63.6% of homes in Oakham and the edge of Stamford. This will likely lead to positive effects by locating people in walking / cycling distance to the railway station. However, it could be argued that by directing more growth to Oakham and the edge of Stamford, the preferred sites would perform even more favourably in this regard.
- 9.131 The preferred sites also deliver some homes (13.4%) in the larger villages. Whilst these villages have a reduced range of services and facilities on offer when compared to the main settlements, they still have some services and facilities. All of the preferred sites within the larger villages are also less than 400m from the nearest bus stop. Whilst some residents will likely opt to travel by car to access wider services and facilities at the main towns, where bus services are good, residents will likely utilise them.

- 9.132 In terms of the other contributors to GHG emissions, the sustainability performance of development partially depends on energy efficiency during operation. This could include the inclusion of elements such as energy efficient design (i.e. positioning development to maximise solar gain) and the provision of renewable energy on-site. Whilst it is considered that this can only be assessed on a site-by-site basis, it is noted that there are generally more opportunities to integrate low carbon and renewable energy into large-scale developments. For example, large-scale PV systems can be combined with community heating schemes to support renewable energy and increased energy efficiency. **Part of Stamford North (Quarry Farm)** (650 homes) performs relatively well in this respect.
- 9.133 With respect to **climate change adaptation**, the Rutland Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) Update (2020)<sup>25</sup> states that fluvial flood risk is of limited spatial extent within the county. The majority of the higher risk flood zones (2 and 3) are located in rural areas, outside of the built-up areas. This SFRA is currently being updated.
- 9.134 Despite this, there are a number of areas where the flood map shows properties at risk, including Oakham, as several small watercourses flow through / near the town. However, high flood risk areas are isolated to a small area to the east of the main settlement. It is therefore considered that directing growth to Oakham would result in a residual neutral effect. This is because, in accordance with the provisions of the NPPF and national policy, new development should be avoided in the highest flood risk areas and suitable mitigation implemented where necessary.
- 9.135 Several of the larger villages are identified as having areas at high risk of fluvial flooding. Whilst three of the preferred sites overlap with Flood Zone 2 / 3 to a small degree (<5% overlap), **Land East of Stamford Road, Exton** has a 17% overlap with Flood Zone 2 / 3. **Area 1 of Five Counties Extension, Greatham** (GT&TS site) also contains >5% overlap with Flood Zone 2 / 3. Therefore, the preferred sites do not entirely avoid the highest flood risk areas, with potential to lead to increased pressures on the floodplain. However, as highlighted above, it is considered that appropriate mitigation measures will be implemented in accordance with national planning policy and the SFRA.
- 9.136 Rutland is generally at low risk of surface water flooding, as identified in the SFRA (2020). The preferred sites that overlap those limited areas which are at risk of surface water flooding are not anticipated to lead to significant effects given risk would be reduced through the 'exception test'<sup>26</sup> and higher-level policy requirements. The use of good design principles (i.e. the siting and design of development) will likely mitigate against adverse effects, as will the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS).
- 9.137 Notably, the preferred sites present an opportunity to support adaptation to the potential effects of climate change through providing improvements to green infrastructure networks. This is particularly true of the brownfield sites, which may currently be lacking such infrastructure.
- 9.138 Overall, in the context of wider regional, national and global contributions to and impacts on climate change, the preferred sites are unlikely to represent a significant change in the baseline. As a result, **no significant effects** are anticipated.

## Commentary on reserve sites

- 9.139 With respect to **climate change mitigation**, it is recognised that the most sustainable locations are Oakham, Uppingham and the edge of Stamford, in South Kesteven District. The reserve sites deliver 43.5% of homes in Oakham. In this respect, the preferred sites perform well by supporting the use of sustainable transport modes, especially as the town forms a key node to the local transport networks and contains the only railway station in the county.
- 9.140 The reserve sites direct over half of homes (56.5%) to the larger villages. In line with the above, all of the reserve sites within the larger villages are less than 400m from the nearest bus stop. Hence, where bus services are good, residents will likely utilise them.

<sup>25</sup> Rutland County Council (2020): 'Rutland SFRA Update', [online] available to access via [this link](#)

<sup>26</sup> Under the exception test, the developer needs to show that the sustainability benefits of the development to the community outweigh the flood risk.

- 9.141 With respect to **climate change adaptation**, it is anticipated that directing growth to Oakham through the reserve sites would result in a residual neutral effect.
- 9.142 Concerning the larger villages, whilst one of the reserve sites overlaps with Flood Zone 2 / 3 to a small degree (<5% overlap), **Land between Meadow Lane and Belmesthorpe Road, Ryhall** has a 21% overlap with Flood Zone 2. Hence, the reserve sites do not entirely avoid the highest flood risk areas, with potential to lead to increased pressures on the floodplain. However, as discussed above, appropriate mitigation measures will likely be implemented in accordance with national planning policy and the SFRA (2009).
- 9.143 As noted above, the county is generally at low risk with regard to surface water flooding. The reserve sites that overlap those limited areas which are at risk of surface water flooding are not anticipated to lead to significant effects.
- 9.144 As with the preferred sites, the reserve sites present an opportunity to support adaptation to the potential effects of climate change through providing improvements to green infrastructure networks. However, it is noted that all the reserve sites are greenfield, and therefore the loss of greenfield land will likely outweigh any benefits that might arise from the provision of green infrastructure as part of development.
- 9.145 Overall, in the context of wider regional, national and global impacts on climate change, the reserve sites are unlikely to represent a significant change in the baseline. As a result, **no significant effects** are anticipated.

## Commentary on the latest draft Local Plan as a whole

- 9.146 The delivery of 1,375 new dwellings over the plan period, and about 27ha of new employment land (including existing commitments and development built since 2021), will increase the built footprint of Rutland, with associated increases in GHG emissions. However, the extent to which this takes place on a per capita basis depends on the implementation of policies designed to limit emissions, which is explored further in the commentary on the draft Local Plan below.
- 9.147 In terms of climate change mitigation, Policy CC2 (Design Principles for Energy Efficient Buildings) outlines that development proposals should aim to meet the highest possible energy efficiency standards. The policy outlines that planning applications should demonstrate how the following principles have influenced the development proposed: solar gain; insulation; passive heating, ventilation and cooling (HVAC); the use of renewable energy for heating; and the generation of renewable energy on-site.
- 9.148 With a focus on net zero, Policy CC4 (Net Zero Carbon (Operational)) outlines that all development proposals should provide for the maximum generation of renewable electricity as practically and viably possible on-site. Meanwhile, Policy CC5 (Embodied Carbon) seeks to ensure that embodied carbon associated with new development is reduced, where practical and viable, by choosing materials that are associated with fewer carbon emissions. The policy favours the reuse of existing buildings over their demolition, as this is associated with fewer carbon emissions. Additionally, Policy CC10 (Wider Energy Infrastructure) supports proposals that are necessary for, or form part of, the transition to a net zero carbon sub-region. This could include energy storage facilities and upgraded or new electricity facilities. Such proposals will need to be appropriately located to mitigate any harm they may lead to on the surrounding environment.
- 9.149 Carbon sequestration, which is an important and often overlooked aspect of climate change mitigation, is also considered within the policy framework of the draft Local Plan. For example, Policy CC11 (Carbon Sinks) seeks to protect, and where possible enhance, existing carbon sinks. Meanwhile, Policy CC12 (Carbon Sequestration) supports proposals that demonstrate carbon sequestration through nature-based solutions. Notably, this will have knock-on benefits for biodiversity, the wellbeing of residents and the local landscape. It will also benefit climate change adaptation, as an increase in green infrastructure will help mitigate flooding, by reducing non-permeable surfaces, and manage drought by providing localised cooling.

- 9.150 Continuing the theme of energy efficiency, Policy CC7 (Reducing Energy Consumption in Existing Buildings) highlights that development proposals concerning existing buildings should, where possible, improve the energy efficiency of the building through a submitted Energy Statement. With a focus on renewable energy, Policy CC8 (Renewable Energy) supports proposals for renewable energy schemes, whilst Policy CC9 (Protecting Renewable Energy Infrastructure) seeks to protect existing or approved renewable energy infrastructure from development.
- 9.151 In terms of climate change adaptation, Policy CC3 (Resilient and Flexible Design) outlines that development proposals should consider, in their design, how they might minimise / prevent overheating, flooding and wind exposure, as well as flexibility to future social, economic, technological, and environmental requirements. With a focus on flooding, Policy CC14 (Flood Risk) states that all major development proposals will be considered against the NPPF, including application of the sequential test and, if necessary, the exception test. The policy outlines that, where appropriate, development proposals should incorporate SuDS.
- 9.152 Adding to the above, Policy EN7 (Green and Blue Infrastructure Network) requires new development to integrate existing and new GBI into the scheme design from the outset. This includes ensuring that the design and layout of new GBI supports climate change adaptation and drought resilience, including through the use of appropriate habitats and drought resilient species. This, combined with the policies outlined above, all contribute positively towards climate change adaptation.
- 9.153 Overall, by providing a thorough consideration of both climate change mitigation and adaptation, the Local Plan policy framework performs well under this SA theme. Whilst the spatial strategy will inevitably lead to an increase in GHG emissions, the delivery of sites in sustainable locations – combined with the policy framework – should minimise emissions where possible. Due to this, minor **positive significant effects** are predicted at this stage.

## Communities, health and wellbeing

### Commentary on proposed Local Plan spatial strategy

#### Commentary on preferred sites for allocation

- 9.155 The preferred sites will deliver a significant number of new homes (including a mix of types, sizes and tenures, with a proportion of affordable housing) to meet existing and future housing needs, with the potential for significant positive effects. Delivering 86.6% of new homes in the main towns of Oakham, Uppingham and the edge of Stamford, in South Kesteven District, will likely deliver a mix of housing to meet local needs in these settlements. Positive effects are anticipated through the delivery of housing (including affordable housing) in the locations with the broadest range of services, facilities and amenities, employment opportunities and public transport networks in the county.
- 9.156 In addition to the above, delivering the remaining 13.4% of new homes to the larger villages will help provide an increased variety of housing for a wider range of social groups, including younger people and those with particular needs. This has the potential to increase community vitality and will contribute towards meeting localised housing needs in these settlements.
- 9.157 Rutland has low levels of deprivation and based on 2019 data, ranks 303 out of 326 local authorities regarding overall Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), where 1 is the most deprived. Despite this, pockets of deprivation still exist within the county – but these are masked by wider prosperity. In line with other rural areas, Rutland fairs less favourably regarding the 'Barriers to Housing and Services' deprivation domain, ranking 160 out of 326 local authorities.
- 9.158 Focusing growth at Oakham and Uppingham would therefore lead to positive effects in terms of contributing towards lower levels of deprivation relating to this category, by ensuring residents have suitable access to services and facilities. This is because these settlements are the largest settlements in the county and are therefore the locations with the broadest range of services and facilities and public transport networks. It is, however, also recognised that growth

at the larger villages might support local amenities and increase community vitality in these locations.

9.159 Whilst the preferred sites have the potential to place increasing demands on existing services, facilities and amenities, the requirements for developers to support infrastructure and services, for example through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 agreements / payments, means there is potential for new development to support the provision of new and enhanced facilities and services, as well as transport links. This will support accessibility to services and amenities in existing settlements.

9.160 In terms of accessibility to educational facilities, only four of the preferred sites are not within 750m (or walking distance for most people) of either a primary or secondary school. These are:

- **Land off Cemetery Road, Manton** (3.8km from nearest school)
- **Stocken Hall Road, Stretton** (GT&TS site) (3.4km from nearest school)
- **Land at Main Street, Market Overton** (2.3km from nearest school)
- **Uppingham** (GT&TS site) (827m from nearest school)

9.161 In this respect, growth at these sites is likely to result in a reliance on the private car to access schools, unless bus routes to these schools exist from these settlements. These sites are both within the larger villages.

9.162 Almost all of the preferred sites are within 500m of the nearest Important Open Space. This will benefit the health and wellbeing of residents. The exception to this is **Stocken Hall Road, Stretton** (GT&TS site), which is 945m from the nearest Important Open Space.

9.163 Overall, the preferred sites are likely to bring a broad range of benefits for the vitality of communities given that they would deliver a sustainable level of growth which will support local services and facilities. In addition, they focus growth at the towns and larger villages, where accessibility to services, facilities and amenities is most favourable in the county. Due to this, **significant positive effects** are predicted.

### Commentary on reserve sites

9.164 The reserve sites will deliver additional new homes (including a mix of types, sizes and tenures, with a proportion of affordable housing) to meet existing and future housing needs, with the potential for significant positive effects. Directing a significant proportion (43.5%) of new homes to the main town of Oakham will likely deliver a mix of housing to help meet local needs here. Positive effects are anticipated through the delivery of affordable housing in the location with the broadest range of services, facilities and amenities, employment opportunities and public transport networks in the county.

9.165 Additionally, directing the remainder of homes (56.5%) to the larger villages will help provide an increased variety of housing for a wider range of social groups, including younger people and those with particular needs. This has the potential to increase community vitality and will contribute towards meeting localised housing needs in these settlements.

9.166 Whilst Rutland has low levels of deprivation, pockets of deprivation still exist and the county fairs less favourably regarding the 'Barriers to Housing and Services' domain. Focusing growth at Oakham would therefore lead to positive effects in terms of contributing towards lower levels of deprivation relating to this category. It is, however, also recognised that growth at the larger villages might support local amenities and increase community vitality in these locations.

9.167 Whilst the reserve sites have the potential to place increasing demands on existing amenities, the requirements for developers to support infrastructure and services means there is potential for new development to support the provision of new and enhanced facilities and services, as well as transport links. This will support accessibility to services and amenities in existing settlements.

9.168 In terms of accessibility to educational facilities, four of the reserve sites are not within 750m (or walking distance for most people) of either a primary or secondary school. These are:

- **Land at Manor Farm Lane, Essendine** (2.4km from nearest school)
- **Land South of Oakham Road, Greetham** (1.2km from nearest school)
- **Land North of Pennine Drive, Edith Weston** (1km from nearest school)
- **Whitwell Road South, Empingham** (900m from nearest school)

9.169 In this respect, growth at these sites is likely to result in a reliance on the private car to access schools, unless bus routes to these schools exist from these settlements. Notably, these sites are all within the larger villages.

9.170 Only one of the reserve sites – **Land North of Pennine Drive, Edith Weston** – is not within 500m of the nearest Important Open Space.

9.171 Overall, as with the preferred sites, the reserve sites are likely to bring a broad range of benefits for communities, health and wellbeing. The reserve sites also focus growth at the main town of Oakham and the larger villages, where access to services, facilities and amenities, employment opportunities and public transport networks are most favourable. Due to this, **significant positive effects** are predicted.

## Commentary on the latest draft Local Plan as a whole

9.172 Policy H1 (Sites Proposed for Residential Development) outlines the preferred sites allocated for development, which will deliver a total of 1,375 new dwellings. Policy SS1 (Spatial Strategy for New Development) allocates the total of 2,460 dwellings over the plan period, which includes existing commitments and development built since 2021. This is equivalent to 123 dwellings per annum. Policy SS1 also allocates approximately 27ha for new employment generating uses. The majority of new development will be focussed within the planned limits of development (PLDs) of Oakham and Uppingham, and on land adjacent to Stamford. Some development will also be permitted in the defined larger villages. In this respect, the spatial strategy performs well by delivering an appropriate level of growth for the county in the most sustainable locations.

9.173 More broadly, Policy SS2 (Requirements for Planning Applications) outlines that planning applications must be supported by sufficient information and evidence to demonstrate compliance with all relevant policies included in the plan. Additionally, Policy SS3 (Development within Planned Limits of Development) supports proposals within the PLDs where impacts on settlement form, built heritage, character and important open space are considered acceptable. Policy SS4 (Infill and Rounding Off Development in Smaller Villages and Hamlets) permits small-scale infill, redevelopment and rounding off development (defined as <5 dwellings) in the small settlements which do not have a PLD. In this respect, the draft Local Plan supports windfall development as long as it is appropriate in terms of location and size and respects the surrounding landscape.

9.174 Whilst the draft Local Plan does not allocate the St George's Barrack site for development, it does identify it as a 'Future Opportunity Area'. In light of this, Policy SS5 (St. George's Barracks Opportunity Area) provides a framework to help ensure any redevelopment of St. George's Barracks is sustainable and holistically planned and is aligned to the spatial strategy set out in the plan. The preparation of a masterplan, with the status of a Development Plan Document, will be required prior to a planning application being submitted. The policy states that redevelopment proposals are not expected to deliver more than 350-500 dwellings as part of a mixed-use development.

9.175 Policy SS6 (Use of Military Bases and Prisons for Operational or Other Purposes) supports development required for the continued operation of military bases or prisons. Alongside, Policy SS7 (Re-Use of Redundant Military Bases and Prisons) outlines that any proposal for the re-use or redevelopment of redundant military bases and prisons should be planned and developed in an appropriate manner. Specifically, proposals must be in accordance with an agreed development brief or masterplan setting out the main requirements of the scheme.

9.176 Policy H4 (Meeting all Housing Needs) outlines that development proposals for sites of 10 or more dwellings should provide a range of house types, sizes, and tenures to meet the general

and specialist needs for housing in Rutland as identified in the latest Housing Market Assessment or other up-to-date evidence of local housing need. This includes specialist housing for older people, family homes, and affordable housing. With a focus on affordable housing, Policy H7 (Affordable Housing) outlines that all major residential developments comprising 10 or more dwellings (or with a site area of 0.5 hectares or more) will be required to make provision, onsite, for a minimum of 30% of the scheme's total capacity as affordable housing. In the Designated Rural Areas (all parishes outside Oakham and Uppingham), developments of between 6-9 dwellings inclusive will also be required to make affordable housing provision for 30% of the scheme's total capacity. These policies will therefore support the provision of a wide range of types and tenures of housing in Rutland.

- 9.177 The policy framework considers the adaptability of homes through Policy H5 (Accessibility Standards), which outlines that all new dwellings are required to be adaptable and accessible as defined in part M4(2) Category 2 accessible and adaptable dwellings of the Building Regulations, unless, by exception only, where M4(2) is impractical and unachievable.
- 9.178 The needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople are considered through Policy H10 (Meeting the Needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople). The policy seeks to meet the need identified in the latest Gypsy, Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (GTTSA) over the plan period. This was identified as 16 pitches for Gypsies and Travellers and 33 plots for Travelling Showpeople.
- 9.179 More broadly, Policy H6 (Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding) outlines that proposals for self and custom build housing, to be occupied as homes by those individuals, will be supported by the Council where they are in conformity with all other relevant local and national policies. Additionally, Policy H8 (Rural Exception Housing) permits small sites for affordable housing within or adjoining villages as an exception to normal policies of restraint provided that they meet the requirements. Meanwhile, Policy H9 (First Homes Exception Sites) permits small exception sites for first homes within or adjoining Oakham and Uppingham on land not allocated for housing provided that they meet the requirements.
- 9.180 With a focus on design, Policy SC3 (Promoting Good Quality Design) states that development proposals must demonstrate how streets and spaces have been designed to be high quality and attractive; have a clear function; encourage healthy lifestyles, active travel, and social interaction; and include trees and other natural elements such as water. They must also demonstrate how they provide and connect to a range of conveniently located and accessible local services and community facilities and high-quality public spaces to create vibrant communities and places. In doing so, this policy will support high-quality developments that support the health and wellbeing and quality of life of residents.
- 9.181 Adding to the above, Policy SC5 (Designing Safer and Healthier Communities) seeks to ensure development proposals promote, support and enhance physical and mental health and wellbeing, and thus contribute to reducing health inequalities. The policy outlines that major development proposals of 50 or more dwellings, or of 0.5ha or more for other types of development, should be accompanied by a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) to show the impacts of the proposal on criteria set out within the policy.
- 9.182 With a focus on green / open spaces, Policy SC7 (Creation of New Open Space) outlines that all new residential developments of 10 dwellings or more will be required to provide new or enhanced publicly accessible open space. Residential development proposals of 300 or more dwellings will also be expected to make provision on-site for outdoor sports facilities. Policy EN9 (Local Green Spaces) protects existing LGS, as identified within adopted Neighbourhood Plans, from development in line with the NPPF. In addition, Policy EN7 (Green and Blue Infrastructure Network) requires new development to integrate existing and new GBI into the scheme design from the outset. This includes ensuring that the design and layout of new GBI encourages healthy and active lifestyles.
- 9.183 More broadly, Policy SC6 (Community Facilities) supports development proposals that protect, retain or enhance the provision, quality or accessibility of existing community, education, leisure, and cultural facilities.

9.184 Overall, the draft Local Plan performs well from a community wellbeing perspective. This is given its proposed delivery of an appropriate number of new homes to meet local needs, of a range of types and tenures including affordable homes and specialist housing. These will be delivered in the more sustainable and accessible locations, and will support the vitality of the main towns and larger villages in Rutland. The policies also support developments which promote health and wellbeing and quality of life, including through the protection of existing green / open spaces, and the delivery of new spaces through GBI provision on-site. In light of this, **positive significant effects** are anticipated in relation to the SA theme.

## Transportation

### Commentary on proposed Local Plan spatial strategy

#### Commentary of preferred sites for allocation

- 9.186 High car dependency and the rural nature of much of the county, as well as issues relating to public transport provision, mean that car ownership within Rutland is higher than the regional average. Only 10.3% of households in Rutland do not have a car or van, compared to 23.5% nationally (Census 2021). Due to this, the preferred sites have the potential to lead to increases in traffic and congestion.
- 9.187 However, delivering 86.6% of new homes in the main towns of Oakham, Uppingham and the edge of Stamford, in South Kesteven District, is likely to better support the use of sustainable transport modes, given residents have good access to local services and facilities in these towns. As noted under the climate change SA theme, the county is served by a rural bus network, a PRow network, and a substantial joint cycleway / footway network. In addition, Oakham has the only railway station in the county. Stamford, which is located just outside of the county in South Kesteven District, also though has a railway station on this line. Growth at Oakham and the edge of Stamford is therefore likely to lead to positive effects by locating people in good proximity to public transport networks, including the rail and bus network. This will promote accessibility by sustainable transport modes.
- 9.188 The preferred sites deliver the remainder of homes (13.4%) to the larger villages. As noted under the climate change SA theme, these villages have some services and facilities, and all of the preferred sites within the larger villages are within walking distance (<400m) to a bus stop. Whilst some residents will likely opt to travel by car to access services and facilities, where bus services are good, residents will likely utilise them. However, it is noted that GT&TS site **Seaton Road, Uppingham** is 516m from the nearest bus stop and **Areas 1, 2 and 3 of Five Counties Extension, Greetham** is 1.4km from the nearest bus stop as there is currently no pedestrian crossing over the A1 in proximity to the site.
- 9.189 Overall, by delivering a significant proportion of new homes in the main towns, where the broadest range of services and facilities and key nodes to public transport networks are located, the preferred sites perform relatively well. However, **no significant effects** are anticipated at this stage as the quantum of growth is unlikely to lead to significant improvements to existing transport infrastructure, including new public transport or active travel routes. One exception is however relates to the delivery of the Land at Stamford North, which, when combined with the proposed allocations associated with the proposals in South Kesteven, is of a size which has the potential to deliver significant new transport infrastructure.

#### Commentary on reserve sites

- 9.190 As noted above, car ownership within Rutland is higher than the regional average. Due to this, the reserve sites also have the potential to lead to increases in traffic and congestion. The reserve sites are also unlikely to give rise to significant improvements in sustainable transport choices that would offset the increase in car-based trips.
- 9.191 However, delivering a large proportion (43.5%) of new homes in the main town of Oakham is likely to better support the use of sustainable transport modes, given residents have good access to local services and facilities in this town, as well as access to the only railway station in the county.

- 9.192 The reserve sites direct the remainder of homes (56.5%) to the larger villages. As noted above, these villages have some services and facilities, and all of the reserve sites within the larger villages are within walking distance (<400m) to a bus stop.
- 9.193 Overall, by delivering a significant proportion of new homes in the main towns, where the broadest range of services and facilities and key nodes to public transport networks are located, the reserve sites perform relatively well. However, **no significant effects** are anticipated at this stage as the quantum of growth is unlikely to lead to significant improvements to existing transport infrastructure, including new public transport or active travel routes.

## Commentary on the latest draft Local Plan as a whole

- 9.194 As noted above, car ownership within Rutland is higher than the regional average. Due to this, growth as a result of the implementation of the spatial strategy within the draft Local Plan has the potential to lead to increases in traffic and congestion. In addition, with the exception of the Land North of Stamford proposals, the draft Local Plan is unlikely to give rise to significant direct improvements in sustainable transport choices that would offset the increase in car-based trips.
- 9.195 In response to the above, Policy SC3 (Promoting Good Quality Design) states that development proposals should demonstrate how they have been designed to prioritise and encourage sustainable and active travel modes such as walking, wheeling, cycling and the use of public transport. They should also make provision for sufficient parking and cycle storage, as well as EV charging points in accordance with Policy CC13 (Sustainable Travel), which supports proposals that include EV parking provision that exceeds or improves on the requirements set by Building Regulations.
- 9.196 Also supporting active travel, as well as public transport provision, Policy INF2 (Securing Sustainable Transport) outlines that new development which will have an impact upon the county's transport network will be expected to (amongst other considerations) a) minimise the distance people need to travel to shops, services and employment opportunities; b) give priority to active travel solutions through the delivery of an integrated walking and cycling network; and c) make adequate provision (where appropriate) to put in place or improve bus routes, services and passenger facilities.
- 9.197 Adding to the above, Policy INF3 (Walking and Cycling) outlines that development proposals should facilitate active travel by incorporating appropriate measures within the design and layout of proposals which give priority to the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, people with impaired mobility, and users of public transport. This will be achieved by providing a network of high-quality pedestrian and cycle routes and green corridors, linking to existing routes and PRowS, wherever opportunities exist. This will ensure that the needs of active travel and public transport users are considered from the offset, as opposed to retrospectively, with positive effects anticipated.
- 9.198 More broadly, Policy INF1 (Infrastructure and Connectivity) will ensure that all new development is supported by the provision of necessary infrastructure to meet the needs arising from new development in a timely way. Additionally, Policy SS10 (Conversion of Buildings outside PLDs) outlines that proposals for the conversion of existing buildings in the countryside outside the PLD will only be permitted where traffic is not adversely affected. These policies perform well in this respect.
- 9.199 Overall, whilst the spatial strategy will inevitably lead to an increase in the number of private cars on the roads across Rutland and beyond, it locates development in the most sustainable locations to help minimise this where possible. In addition, the draft Local Plan's policy framework supports active travel and public transport, including the connection of these networks to new development. It also supports EV charging infrastructure, which is important due to the rural nature of the county. In light of this, **positive significant effects** are considered likely at this stage.

## Economic vitality

### Commentary on proposed Local Plan spatial strategy

#### Commentary of preferred sites for allocation

9.200 Unemployment in Rutland is low; only 1.9% of people aged 16 years and over are economically inactive and unemployed, compared to 3.5% nationally (Census 2021). In addition, 37.9% of people aged 16 years and over hold a Level 4 qualification or above, compared to 33.9% nationally (Census 2021). In terms of occupation, 18.2% of people aged 16 years and over in employment are managers, directors and senior officials, compared to 12.9% nationally (Census 2021). Hence, Rutland has a highly skilled workforce, which is reflected by the percentage of the population in managerial occupations. It will be important that future growth supports this workforce.

9.201 According to the Rutland Employment Needs & Economic Development Evidence<sup>27</sup>, the largest employment sectors in Rutland are education (12.2%); public administration and defence (12%); and wholesale and retail (11.6%). Rutland has particular strengths in comparison to the region and nationally in the mining and quarrying sector, public administration & defence, agriculture and hospitality (1,900 jobs) sectors. In terms of service sectors, professional, scientific and technical, followed by business administration and support services, have the strongest roles.

9.202 In light of the above, increased growth across the settlement hierarchy should support the economic vitality of settlements; helping ensure residents have suitable access to local employment, services and facilities, and that the service offer expands positively. Oakham is the main service centre for Rutland and offers diverse retail and shopping opportunities. The preferred sites, by delivering 16.4% of homes in Oakham, perform positively by promoting the sustainable growth of this main centre, which has the best accessibility to employment opportunities (both within and outside of the county).

9.203 The preferred sites also deliver some homes (13.4%) to the larger villages. Directing growth to these settlements is likely lead to positive effects in relation to economic vitality through supporting local amenities, as well as increasing economic vitality and viability in these locations. Due to the role of the larger villages as centres for the rural economy, the preferred sites also have the potential to support localised economies, including through supporting diversification. It is also recognised that the larger villages where the preferred sites are located are all relatively well located in terms of access to the local bus service (all sites are within 400m of a bus stop).

9.204 Increased growth in the main towns of Oakham and Uppingham, as well as the larger villages, has the potential to support the vitality of local centres and retailing to a greater degree. This has the potential to support the visitor economy through protecting and enhancing key selling points in the county, such as independent shops and restaurants.<sup>28</sup>

9.205 In terms of access to employment, eight of the preferred sites (with the exception of employment sites) are located over 5km from the nearest safeguarded employment site. These are:

- **Stocken Hall Road, Stretton** (GT&TS site) (11.7km from Lands End Way, Oakham)
- **Land South West of Belmesthorpe Lane, Ryhall** (7.9km from Pit Lane, Ketton)
- **Land East of Stamford Road, Exton** (7.3km from Lands End Way, Oakham)
- **Land at Main Street, Market Overton** (7.1km from Lands End Way, Oakham)
- **Land at The Workshops, Exton** (7km from Lands End Way, Oakham)
- **Easson Garage, Cottesmore** (6km from Lands End Way, Oakham)

<sup>27</sup> Icen Projects Limited on behalf of Rutland County Council (August 2023): 'Rutland Employment Needs & Economic Development Evidence, [online] available to access via [this link](#)

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

- **Land at Main Street, Cottesmore** (5.5km from Lands End Way, Oakham)
- **Officer's Mess, Edith Weston** (5.3km from Pit Lane, Ketton)

9.206 Overall, as the preferred sites deliver a moderate level of growth, it is likely to support a boost to the local economy by creating new jobs. As such **positive effects** are considered likely as a result of the level of growth proposed.

### Commentary on reserve sites

9.207 The reserve sites, by directing 43.5% of new homes to Oakham, perform positively in terms of promoting the sustainable growth of this main centre and directing growth to the location with the best accessibility to employment opportunities.

9.208 The reserve sites direct over half (56.5%) of new homes to the larger villages. This will likely lead to positive effects in relation to the economic vitality of these settlements. It is also noted that the larger villages where the reserve sites are located are all relatively well located in terms of access to the local bus service (within 400m of a bus stop).

9.209 In terms of access to employment, five of the reserve sites are located over 5km from the nearest safeguarded employment site. These are:

- **Land at Manor Farm Lane, Essendine** (9.8km from Pit Lane, Ketton)
- **Land South of Oakham Road, Greatham** (7.8km from Lands End Way, Oakham)
- **Land between Meadow Lane and Belmesthorpe Road, Ryhall** (6.9km from Pit Lane, Ketton)
- **Land North of Mill Lane, Cottesmore** (5.9km from Lands End Way, Oakham)
- **Land South of Glebe Road, North Luffenham** (5.3km from Pit Lane, Ketton)

9.210 Overall, the reserve sites deliver a relatively modest level of growth on top of the preferred sites, which will support the local economy.

### Commentary on the latest draft Local Plan as a whole

9.211 As noted above unemployment in Rutland is low. In addition, more people aged 16 years and over hold a Level 4 qualification or above when compared to the national average. Similarly, more people aged 16 years and over in employment are managers, directors and senior officials when compared to the national average. Hence, Rutland has a highly skilled workforce, which future growth will need to consider.

9.212 To ensure that the local economy continues to grow and support the county's workforce, Policy E1 (Strategic Employment Land Allocations) proposes eight sites as strategic employment development sites within Rutland. These sites are location across Oakham, Uppingham, Ketton, Tickencote and Morcott and include a range of uses, such as office and employment spaces and industrial uses. This will support the availability of suitable employment land for a range of uses.

9.213 In terms of windfall development, Policy E2 (Employment Development on Unallocated Sites) supports proposals for employment development within the PLD defined for the towns and larger villages. In addition, work-live units will be supported within the PDL, whilst the conversion and re-use of existing buildings will be supported outside the PLD. The redevelopment and intensification of existing low density, underused, or poor-quality employment sites for higher value employment uses will also be supported, particularly in the town and local service centres. In this respect, the draft Local Plan performs favourably with regards to encouraging a range of business types, and support the start up and expansion of new businesses, including at the micro-scale.

9.214 Strengthening the policy framework, Policy E3 (Protecting Existing Employment Land and Premises) seeks to protect and enhance existing employment sites and premises in order to maintain a supply of good quality commercial sites and premises to meet the needs of businesses and the local economy. This will be reinforced by Policy E4 (Rural Economy),

which seeks to strengthen the rural economy by supporting certain types of development outside of the towns and larger villages. More broadly, other relevant policies include:

- Policy E5 (Sustainable farm diversification), which permits proposals for new rural enterprises within established agricultural holdings provided that they meet the criteria set out within the policy.
- Policy E7 (Fibre to the Premises (FTTP)), which outlines that all new commercial proposals of 100sqm or over shall be provided with FTTP connections to an approved industry standard within the building together with suitable ducting / cabling to the public highway to allow connections to be made.
- Policy E8 (Local Visitor Economy), which supports proposals which strengthen the local visitor economy providing that they meet the criteria set out within the policy.
- Policy E9 (Caravans, Camping, Lodges, Log Cabins, Chalets and similar forms of Self-Services Holiday Accommodation), which accepts caravans, camping, lodges, log cabins, chalets and other similar forms of self-serviced holiday accommodation in areas outside the Rutland Water Area and the Eyebrook Reservoir Area, provided that it meets the criteria set out within the policy.

9.215 With a focus on employability and skills, Policy E6 (Employment and Skills) supports development proposals that will help to raise skills levels and increase employability; tackle skills shortages; promote construction skills; address barriers to employment for economically inactive people; and provide the development of childcare facilities.

9.216 With a focus on retail, Policy E10 (Town Centres and Retailing) supports main town centre uses where they are located in accordance with the retail hierarchy, with Oakham being the main town centre serving the whole county and Uppingham being a town centre serving the town and surrounding rural catchment and tourists. Focusing on the larger villages, Policy E13 (Retail in the Neighbourhood Centres and Larger Villages) supports the expansion and additional provision of local shops of a scale appropriate to the existing settlement or the planned expansion of that settlement. This is providing that the proposal adds to the range and accessibility of goods and services within the location, or it is demonstrated that the proposal will improve the viability of the existing business. More broadly, other relevant policies supporting retail include:

- Policy E11 (Primary Shopping Areas), which supports A1 retail uses within the Primary Shopping Area. The policy outlines that proposals for non-retail uses in the primary shopping frontages will only be permitted where they meet the criteria set out within the policy.
- Policy E12 (Sites for Retail Development), which seeks to identify suitable site(s) which meet the identified need in Oakham for new retail development proposals for non-food retail – Use Class A1 at ground floor level with other appropriate town centre / residential uses at upper floors.

9.217 Overall, by providing a suite of policies dedicated to the economy and employment, with a focus on both the need for new and improved employment sites and support for upskilling, the policy framework of the draft Local Plan performs well. As such, **positive significant effects** are predicted at this stage.

## Cumulative effects

9.219 Whilst the geographic scope of the draft Local Plan only addresses the area covered by Rutland, the in-combination effects of new development proposed through the adopted or emerging Local Plans for the Local Planning Authorities adjoining or in close proximity to the county have the potential to lead to cumulative effects. This includes relating to adopted or emerging Local Plan documents for:

- Harborough
- Melton

- South Kesteven
- Peterborough
- East Northamptonshire
- Corby

9.220 As such, the in-combination effects of housing growth across these Local Planning Authority areas (and further afield) have the potential to lead to cumulative effects.

9.221 Furthermore, the combination of Local Plan proposals and other proposals and activities being taken forward in the wider area have the potential to lead to cumulative effects. Examples include:

- Proposed transport schemes in the county, including in Oakham town centre.
- The development of Stamford North (taken forward through the South Kesteven Local Plan) and upgrades to the A1/A606 junction.
- Minerals proposals.
- Proposals to increase visitor numbers to Rutland Water.
- Activities designed to enhance sub-regional green infrastructure networks.
- Melton Mowbray Distributor Road and urban extensions to Melton Mowbray.
- Urban extensions to Corby.
- Enhancements to the railway network in the county to increase capacity for freight, and implications for existing level crossings (including in Oakham).

9.222 In this context, potential effects (both positive and negative) which may occur as a result of the in-combination effects of the draft Local Plan and other plans and proposals in the area include the following:

- Increases in traffic flows and congestion from the in-combination effects of development and capacity enhancements, with potential impacts on air and noise quality and landscape character. However, the in-combination effects of proposals on enhancing public transport and pedestrian and cycle infrastructure may help limit potential negative effects and secure positive effects in this regard.
- Cumulative impacts on ecological networks from the in-combination effects of new development and associated infrastructure on habitats and biodiversity corridors. However, enhancements to green infrastructure provision facilitated through the draft Local Plan proposals and other projects in the area, as well as an increased focus on biodiversity net gain, have significant potential to support local, sub-regional and regional ecological networks.
- Impacts on regional housing demand from the in-combination effects of the draft Local Plan and other Local Plans in the sub-region not meeting full local housing need.
- Impacts on flood risk from the in-combination effects of new development, including relating to surface water and fluvial flooding. However, the provisions of the NPPF and measures and policy approaches implemented through the relevant plans and proposals will limit the significance of effects.
- Changes in land uses resulting from the UK leaving the European Union, including associated with the replacement of schemes such the Common Agricultural Policy with new agricultural subsidy regimes.
- Improvements to accessibility resulting from the in-combination effects of enhancements to public transport and walking and cycling networks.

9.223 Regarding the development at Stamford North development, which is being taken forward through the new South Kesteven Local Plan, Part of Stamford North (Quarry Farm), which is allocated through the draft Rutland Local Plan, is dependent on the delivery of this development. In terms of in combination effects of the development at Stamford North with the

remaining allocations being taken forward through the draft Rutland Local Plan, it is acknowledged that some of the key areas being taken forward for housing and employment are relatively close to Stamford North. This includes site allocations at settlements in proximity to Stamford, including Empingham and Ryhall. In this respect, there is potential for minor in-combination effects to arise from the development at Stamford North and new development being taken forward through the draft Rutland Local Plan.

- 9.224 In relation to the above, Policy H2 (Cross-boundary development opportunity – Stamford North) recognises the cross-boundary nature of this development by reiterating that a proposal for the development of Part of Stamford North (Quarry Farm) will only be supported where it is in accordance with an agreed Masterplan or Development Brief or as part of a comprehensive planning application for the whole of the Stamford North development area. This is expected to include (amongst other things) an appropriate full transport assessment and phasing plan for the entire site. This will help limit the in-combination effects of development at Stamford North and development which takes place elsewhere on traffic and congestion in the area, with associated benefits for air and noise quality and the health and wellbeing of residents.
- 9.225 As highlighted above, for many potential cumulative effects, the policy approaches proposed by the draft Local Plan will help reduce the significance of these in-combination impacts. However, monitoring for the various Local Plans will be a key means of ensuring that unforeseen adverse environmental effects are highlighted, and remedial action can be taken where adverse environmental effects arise.
- 9.226 No additional mitigation measures or recommendations have been proposed relating to the potential effects identified. This reflects the carefully designed spatial strategy and robust policy framework which are put forward through the draft Local Plan. In particular, the draft Local Plan will help limit the magnitude and scale of the potential negative environmental effects associated with the delivery of 2,460 dwellings and approximately 27ha of employment land over the plan period to 2041.
- 9.227 It should be noted, however, that the policies put forward through the draft Local Plan do not prevent the likelihood of negative effects taking place, including those highlighted in the SA Report for the proposed site allocations. Instead, they reduce the likelihood of significant negative effects resulting from new development in Rutland. It should also be noted that the delivery of housing allocations and employment provision in the county will require inevitable trade-offs to take place between the various environmental, social and economic elements which have been highlighted through the SA process to date.
- 9.228 In order to understand these trade-offs during the implementation of the Local Plan, the SA Report accompanying the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan will present a proposed monitoring programme to evaluate the ongoing effects of the plan.

## 10. Next steps

- 10.1 This SA Report accompanies the current Regulation 18 consultation on the Rutland Local Plan (*Rutland Local Plan - Preferred Options Consultation November 2023*).
- 10.2 Following the receipt of responses on this Regulation 18 consultation, the Local Plan will be updated and released by RCC for Regulation 19 consultation with a full SA Report. Regulation 19 consultation on the Submission Draft Plan is anticipated to take place in autumn 2024.
- 10.3 Once the period for representations on the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan document / SA Report has finished, the main issues raised will be identified and summarised by RCC, which will then consider whether, in light of representations received, the plan can still be deemed 'sound'. If this is the case, the Local Plan will be submitted to the Secretary of State for Examination, alongside a statement setting out the main issues raised during the consultation. The Council will also submit the SA Report alongside it. This is anticipated to take place at the beginning of 2025.
- 10.4 At Examination, the Inspector will consider representations (alongside the SA Report) before then reporting back. If the Inspector identifies the need for modifications to the Local Plan, these will be prepared (and undergo SA) and will then be subject to consultation (with an SA Report Addendum published alongside).
- 10.5 Once found to be 'sound', the Local Plan will be formally adopted by RCC. At the time of adoption, an SA 'Statement' must be published that sets out (amongst other elements) 'the measures decided concerning monitoring the Plan'.

