

# Sustainability Appraisal for the Rutland Local Plan 2018-2036

SA Report to accompany the Pre-Submission version of  
the Local Plan

## NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY

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# 1. What is sustainability appraisal?

- 1.1 Rutland County Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan. A sustainability appraisal (SA) has been undertaken to inform the development of the Local Plan.
- 1.2 SA is a process that Local Planning Authorities such as Rutland County Council are legally bound to undertake for their Local Plans. The SA has incorporated a strategic environmental assessment (SEA) process as required by the SEA Regulations. Local Planning Authorities use SA to assess Local Plans against a set of sustainability objectives and the baseline developed in consultation with interested parties. The purpose of the appraisal is to help identify (and so be in a better position to avoid) negative environmental and socio-economic effects and identify opportunities to improve the environmental quality of Rutland and the prosperity and quality of life of its residents through the Local Plan.

# 2. Details of the Rutland Local Plan

- 2.1 Rutland County Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan to replace the existing planning policies in the Rutland Local Development Framework. The new Local Plan, which will cover the period to 2036, will be the key planning policy document for the County and will guide decisions on the use and development of land.
- 2.2 It is currently anticipated that the Local Plan will be submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government later in 2020 and then undergo an independent Examination in Public overseen by a Planning Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State.
- 2.3 Key information relating to the Local Plan is presented in Table NTS 1.1.

**Table NTS1: Key facts relating to the Rutland Local Plan**

Name of Responsible Authority	Rutland County Council
Title of Plan	Rutland Local Plan 2018-2036
Subject	Spatial plan
Purpose	<p>The Local Plan will guide future development and land use within Rutland County over the period up to 2036. It replaces the Rutland Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD), the Rutland Site Allocations and Policies DPD and the Minerals Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPD.</p> <p>The Local Plan will, alongside neighbourhood plans, comprise the Development Plan for the County and will be the primary basis against which planning applications are assessed.</p>
Timescale	To 2036
Area covered by the plan	Rutland County (see Figure 1.1 below)
Summary of content	<p>The Local Plan will set out the vision, strategy and policies to manage growth and development in Rutland in the period to 2036.</p> <p>It will indicate the locations in the County for future housing, employment, retail, community services and other types of development.</p>
Plan contact point	<p>Rachel Armstrong, Principal Planning Policy Officer, Catmose, Oakham, Rutland LE15 6HP</p> <p>Email address: rarmstrong@rutland.gov.uk</p> <p>Telephone number: 01572 758306</p>

## 3. Structure of the SA Report / this Non Technical Summary

3.1 Sustainability Appraisal reporting essentially involves answering the following questions:

- 1) What has plan-making / SA involved up to this point?
- 2) What are the appraisal findings at this current stage?
- 3) What are the next steps?

3.2 Each of these questions is answered in turn below.

## 4. What has plan-making / SA involved up to this point?

4.1 Figure NTS1 below summarises the key SA documents prepared to date in association with those of the Local Plan.

4.2 The key stages of the SA process undertaken prior to the current stage are described below.

### The scope of the SA

4.3 The scoping process is the first stage in the SA process, and aims to:

- Define the broader context for the Local Plan and associated SA through summarising the regulatory and legislative landscape;
- Establish the baseline for the SA (i.e. the current and future situation in Rutland) in the absence of the Local Plan) in order to help identify the plan's likely significant effects;
- Identify particular issues that should be a particular focus of the SA; and
- Develop an SA framework comprising objectives and appraisal questions on the basis of the identified issues, which can then be used to appraise the plan.

4.4 The scoping process was undertaken in July 2015 and is essentially reflected in a list of sustainability objectives. Taken together these objectives, which are accompanied by appraisal questions and grouped by seven SA themes, indicate the parameters of the SA, and provide a framework for appraisal. The SA Framework is presented in Table 2.1 of the main body of the SA Report.

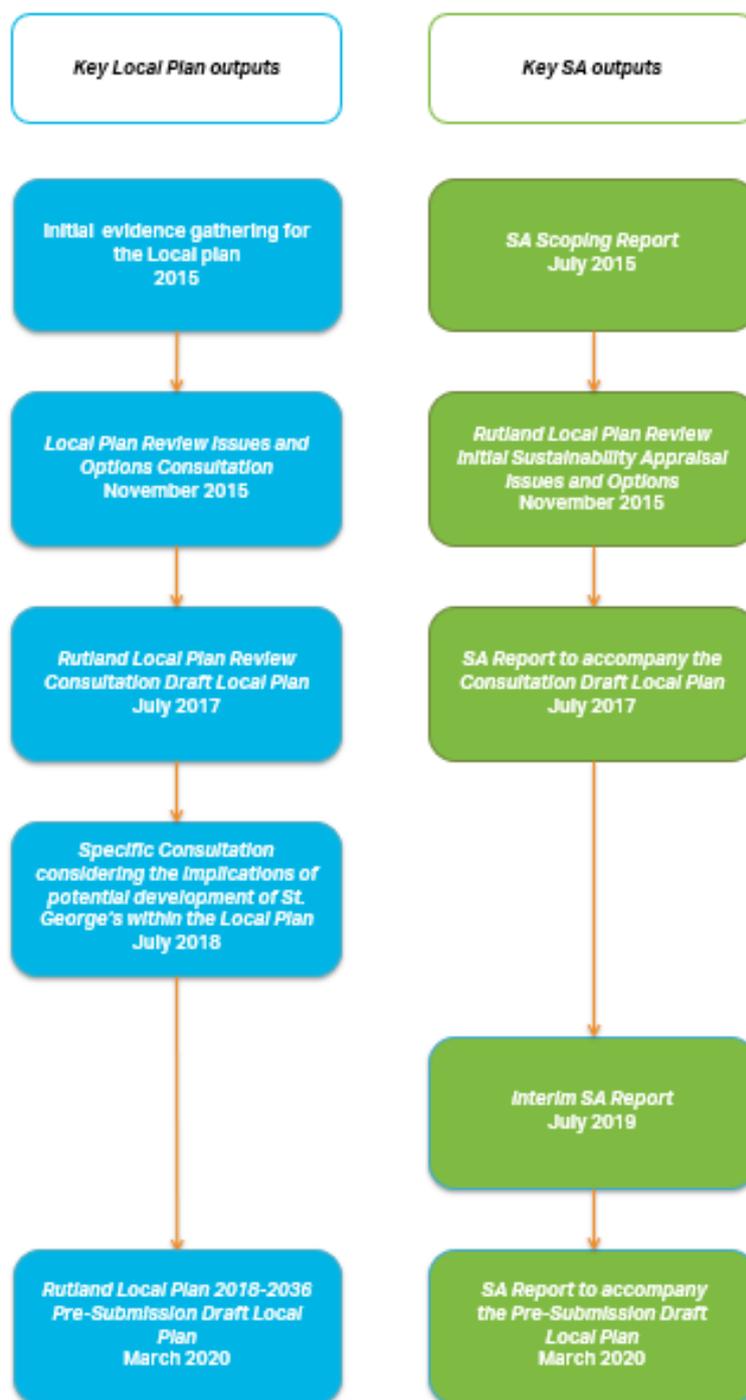


Figure NTS1: Key outputs of the Rutland Local Plan 2018-2036 and accompanying SA process to date

## Initial SA Report

- 4.5 In November 2015 the *Rutland Local Plan Review, Issues and Options* was published for consultation by Rutland County Council. The aim of the consultation was to gain stakeholders' views on the approach Local Plan policies could take to various key planning issues.
- 4.6 To accompany the Issues and Options consultation, an Initial SA Report (November 2015) was prepared.<sup>1</sup> This included an appraisal of options for a range of plan issues.

<sup>1</sup> Rutland County Council (November 2015) *Rutland Local Plan Review, Initial Sustainability Appraisal, Issues and Options*

4.7 These options included the following:

- Options relating to the proportion of development to be allocated in Local Service Centres in association with neighbourhood plans.
- Options relating to groupings of settlements within settlement hierarchy categories.
- Options for housing numbers to deliver between 2015 and 2036.
- Options relating to the mix of new housing in terms of types, sizes and tenures.
- Options on the broad distribution of growth between settlements.
- Options which explored the distribution of development between Uppingham and Oakham.
- Options which considered directions of growth around Oakham.
- Options which considered directions of growth around Uppingham.
- Options relating to minerals and aggregate production and supply.
- Options relating to minerals safeguarding.
- Options relating to waste management and disposal.

4.8 The Initial SA Report released with the Issues and Options consultation can be accessed at:

<https://www.rutland.gov.uk/my-services/planning-and-building-control/planning/planning-policy/local-plan-review/>

## Consultation Draft of the Local Plan Review

4.9 In July 2017, a *Consultation Draft* version of the Local Plan was published for consultation.<sup>2</sup> Presenting an initial draft of the Local Plan, the consultation sought views on the proposed sites to be allocated for development in the plan and the more detailed policies intended to provide criteria for determining planning applications.

4.10 The *Consultation Draft Plan* was accompanied by an SA Report.<sup>3</sup> This presented an assessment of the draft plan as consulted on. No further options were appraised through the SA process or presented in the SA Report at this stage.<sup>4</sup>

## Appraisal of sites for potential allocation

4.11 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.

4.12 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.

4.13 Subsequent to the Call for Sites, 206 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 were assessed to support the choice of housing and employment allocations taken forward through the Local Plan.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Rutland County Council (July 2017) Rutland Local Plan 2016-2036, Local Plan Review Consultation Draft Plan

<sup>3</sup> Rutland County Council (July 2017) Rutland Local Plan Consultation Draft Sustainability Appraisal

<sup>4</sup> AECOM have undertaken the stages of the SA process subsequent to the preparation of the SA Report on the *Consultation Draft Plan*.

<sup>5</sup> Included within the 206 sites identified for the SHELAA are the sites identified as potential locations for garden settlements in Rutland - St George's Barracks and Woolfox.

- 4.14 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.
- 4.15 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.
- 4.16 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 the SA Report (*SA Report Technical Annex to accompany the Pre-Submission version of the Local Plan*).

## Introduction of further potential locations for strategic-scale development in Rutland

### St. George's Barracks site

- 4.17 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. Rutland County Council subsequently established in October 2017 an agreement with the MoD through a Memorandum of Understanding to examine the scope for the potential development of the St. George's Barracks site. This was with a view to working together to manage the delivery of potential development and ensure the best possible outcome for the site, taking account of its brownfield land status.
- 4.18 As part of this process, an evolving masterplan has been in development for the site, which proposes the creation of a new settlement. This is based on the concept of a Garden Village capable of accommodating between 1,500 and 2,215 new homes of mixed tenures, along with 14ha of employment land, associated education, health and community facilities, and extensive areas of open space. The implications of considering the establishment of a garden community at St. George's for the Local Plan was the subject of a discrete public consultation undertaken in 2018 under Regulation 18 of the Local Planning Regulations.

### Woolfox site

- 4.19 In September 2018, the owners of the former Woolfox Airfield and surrounding agricultural land came 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.
- 4.20 Incorporating two areas of land, including the former Woolfox Airbase, the site's proponents have prepared an initial masterplan which incorporates the delivery of 10,000 homes, employment land, community infrastructure and green infrastructure provision.
- 4.21 A public consultation event on the proposals was undertaken by the site promoters in April 2019.
- 4.22 In light of proposals for George's Barracks and the availability of the former Woolfox Airfield, it was necessary for the SA process to revisit options with regards to the potential Local Plan spatial strategy for the county. This was because the availability of these two sites, which are both of significant scale, increased the range of strategic approaches that could be taken to delivering housing and employment uses in Rutland through the Local Plan. In addition, potentially taking forward either of the sites could influence potential Local Plan allocations taken forward in Oakham and Uppingham, as well as the Local Service Centres in the county.
- 4.23 As a result, a number of new development strategy options were considered as reasonable alternatives through the SA process in late 2018.

## Appraisal of reasonable alternatives for spatial development strategy options

- 4.24 A key element of the Local Plan's development process to date has been to consider different approaches to delivering new growth in Rutland, in conjunction with delivering a range of housing numbers in different locations in the county.
- 4.25 To help support this process, the SA has considered a number of development strategy options as reasonable alternatives. Twelve development strategy options were considered in detail, which presented different approaches to delivering housing in the county. Table NTS2 below summarises these options; more detail on the distributions between different locations in Rutland are presented in Table 5.4 and Figures 5.1 to 5.5 in the main body of the SA Report.

**Table NTS2: Development strategy options considered as reasonable alternatives**

Development strategy option	Rationale
Option 1: Growth in Oakham and Uppingham including preferred sites, and reserve sites with lower growth in Local Service Centres	This option seeks to deliver in the region of 2,229 dwellings over the plan period. It is based on a distribution reflecting a higher level of growth in Oakham and Uppingham, with a lower level of growth in the Local Service Centres.
Option 2: Growth in Oakham and Uppingham including preferred and reserve sites, with intermediate growth in Local Service Centres	This option seeks to deliver in the region of 2,333 dwellings over the plan period. It is based on a distribution reflecting a higher level of growth in Oakham and Uppingham, with an intermediate level of growth in the Local Service Centres.
Option 3: Limited growth in Oakham and Uppingham only on preferred sites, with higher growth in Local Service Centres	This option seeks to deliver in the region of 2,468 dwellings over the plan period. It is based on a distribution reflecting a lower level of growth in Oakham and Uppingham, with a higher level of growth in the Local Service Centres.
Option 4: Growth in Oakham and Uppingham, including preferred and reserve sites, with higher growth in Local Service Centres	This option seeks to deliver in the region of 2,730 dwellings over the plan period. It is based on a distribution reflecting a higher level of growth in Oakham and Uppingham, with a higher level of growth in the Local Service Centres.
Option 5: Growth in Oakham and Uppingham only on preferred sites, low growth at Local Service Centres, and a small new settlement at St George's Barracks	This option seeks to deliver in the region of 2,317 dwellings over the plan period. It is based on a distribution reflecting a lower level of growth in Oakham and Uppingham, a lower level of growth in the Local Service Centres, and the development of a Smaller Service Centre at St George's Barracks.
Option 6: Growth in Oakham and Uppingham only on preferred sites, with intermediate growth in Local Service Centres and a small new settlement at St George's Barracks	This option seeks to deliver in the region of 2,421 dwellings over the plan period. It is based on a distribution reflecting a lower level of growth in Oakham and Uppingham, an intermediate level of growth in the Local Service Centres, and the development of a Smaller Service Centre at St George's Barracks.
Option 7: Growth in Oakham and Uppingham only on preferred sites, low growth at Local Service Centres, and a medium sized new settlement at St George's Barracks	This option seeks to deliver in the region of 2,967 dwellings over the plan period. It is based on a distribution reflecting a lower level of growth in Oakham and Uppingham, a lower level of growth in the Local Service Centres, and the development of a larger settlement at St George's Barracks.
Option 8: Growth in Oakham and Uppingham only on preferred sites, low growth at Local Service Centres, and a larger sized new settlement at Woolfox	This option seeks to deliver in the region of 3,717 dwellings over the plan period. It is based on a distribution reflecting a lower level of growth in Oakham and Uppingham, a lower level of growth in the Local Service Centres, and the development of a larger settlement at Woolfox.

Development strategy option	Rationale
Option 9: Growth in Oakham and Uppingham including preferred and reserve sites, with high growth in Local Service Centres and a medium new settlement at St George's Barracks	This option seeks to deliver in the region of 3,730 dwellings over the plan period. It is based on a distribution reflecting a higher level of growth in Oakham and Uppingham, a higher level of growth in the Local Service Centres, and the development of a larger settlement at St George's Barracks.
Option 10: Growth in Oakham and Uppingham including preferred and reserve sites, with high growth in Local Service Centres and a larger sized new settlement at Woolfox	This option seeks to deliver in the region of 4,480 dwellings over the plan period. It is based on a distribution reflecting a higher level of growth in Oakham and Uppingham, a higher level of growth in the Local Service Centres, and the development of a larger settlement at Woolfox.
Option 11a: Development focused on a single large new settlement at Woolfox with limited development in all other settlements.	This option seeks to deliver in the region of 2,861 dwellings over the plan period. It is based on a distribution which limits growth in Oakham, Uppingham and the Local Service Centres to that which already has planning permission and facilitates the development of a larger settlement at Woolfox.
Option 11b: Development focused on a single large new settlement at St George's Barracks with limited development in all other settlements	This option seeks to deliver in the region of 2,111 dwellings over the plan period. It is based on a distribution which limits growth in Oakham, Uppingham and the Local Service Centres to that which already has planning permission, and facilitates the development of a larger settlement at St George's.

- 4.26 The development strategy options presented above were then appraised. For each of the options, the assessment identifies / evaluated 'likely significant effects' on the baseline, drawing on the SA themes/objectives identified through scoping as a methodological framework.
- 4.27 Table NTS3 below presents summary appraisal findings in relation to the alternatives introduced above. Detailed appraisal findings are presented in Appendix C of the main body of the SA Report

**Table NTS3: Appraisal of development strategy options: overall appraisal findings**

<b>Biodiversity and geodiversity</b>	<b>Option</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11a</b>	<b>11b</b>
	Ranking	1	3	5	6	2	4	11	8	12	9	7	10

The potential for significant negative effects cannot be excluded for any of the options at this strategic scale of assessment. However, potential effects are established on a site-by-site basis through the individual site assessments and Habitats Regulations Assessment.

In terms of the options which support new garden communities, Option 7, 9 and 11b have the potential to lead to the most significant impacts to Rutland Water as they propose a larger-sized garden settlement at St George's Barracks. Whilst not in close proximity to Rutland water, the Woolfox site is sensitive from an ecological perspective due to its proximity to the nationally designated Greetham Meadows SSSI and the Clipsham Old Quarry & Pickworth Great Wood SSSI. Similarly, the presence of ancient woodland, LWS and several BAP priority habitats within the site boundaries present additional ecological constraints to development at this location. In this respect, Options 8, 10 and 11a have the potential to lead to the most significant impacts on these local receptors through the delivery of a garden settlement at Woolfox.

With regard to nationally designated sites, Uppingham, along with eight of the ten local service centres 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 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. Options 1, 2, 4, 9 and 10 for Oakham and Options 3, 4, 9 and 10 for Edith Weston and Empingham) could potentially impact upon the integrity of these nationally designated sites for biodiversity.

In relation to effects on European designated sites, the HRA currently being undertaken for the Local Plan will help limit any significant effects relating to the Rutland Water SPA through the implementation of avoidance and mitigation measures where appropriate. It will also limit any significant effects relating to further sites in the wider vicinity of the county, including the Grimsthorpe SAC, the Barnack Hills and Holes SAC and the Baston Fens SAC.

<b>Historic environment</b>	<b>Option</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11a</b>	<b>11b</b>
	Ranking	7	8	9	10	4	5	6	3	11	12	2	1

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, it can be considered that a higher level of housing development within a settlement increases the likelihood (and potential magnitude) of negative effects on the heritage assets locally. This is linked to an increased likelihood of direct and indirect impacts on the fabric and setting of features and areas of historic environment interest near the settlement.

Uppingham has a rich historic environment resource, with a large number of listed buildings and a significant proportion of the town being covered by conservation area status. In this respect Options 1, 2, 4 and 9 have increased potential to impact on the fabric and setting of the historic environment of Uppingham through delivering higher growth in the town. These options are also likely to increase impacts on the historic environment in Oakham. The county's Local Service Centres also have a rich historic environment resource and a distinctive historic character. In this context Options 1, 2, 5, 6, 7 and 8, through delivering low or intermediate growth in these settlements have the potential to limit potential impacts on the fabric and setting of the villages' historic environment.

Regarding the potential garden settlement at St George's Barracks which is proposed through Options 5, 6, 7, 9 and 11b, development at this location has the potential to lead to the regeneration of the existing service family accommodation buildings which are on site. Although the Grade II\* listed structure 'Thor missile site at former RAF North Luffenham' is within the site boundary, the incorporation of high-quality and sensitive design with reference to Historic England guidance has the

potential to enhance the setting of this nationally designated heritage structure. The potential location for the garden settlement at Woolfox proposed through Options 8, 10 and 11a does not contain any nationally designated heritage assets. The presence of the A1 trunk road will also limit impacts on Exton Park, located directly to the west of the site.

Whilst Option 11a and 11b will help direct new development away from the most significantly constrained areas in terms of heritage (i.e. away from the existing settlements), this does not eliminate the potential for below-ground archaeological assets at these locations or the potential impacts to the setting of heritage assets in nearby settlements, particularly: Edith Weston and North Luffenham (to the north and south of St George's Barracks, respectively), along with Clipsham and Stretton (to the north east and north west of Woolfox).

<b>Landscape</b>	<b>Option</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11a</b>	<b>11b</b>
	Ranking	1	4	6	7	2	5	9	10	11	12	8	3

Higher growth options are likely to have an increased impact on the character and quality of Rutland's landscapes as a consequence of directing a significantly higher quantum of development to settlements which do not necessarily have the highest capacities for change. Although delivering larger-sized new settlements through St George's Barracks or Woolfox could limit growth in existing settlements, development of this scale has the potential to negatively contribute to the particular qualities of the Landscape Character Areas in the locations for the proposed garden communities.

Overall, and reflecting upon the results of the landscape character assessment and the landscape sensitivity and capacity studies, options which deliver low or medium growth across existing settlements and/or through the potential garden settlements are those which are least likely to cause significant adverse impacts to the character of local landscapes and village-scapes.

<b>Land, soil and water resources</b>	<b>Option</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11a</b>	<b>11b</b>
	Ranking	6	8	9	10	3	7	4	5	11	12	2	1

Both the St George's and Woolfox sites are major brownfield sites. However only 30% of the Woolfox site is former airfield and can be classified as previously developed land. As such Options 7, 9 and 11b have the most potential to deliver new development on previously developed land. In terms of Options 1, 2, 3 and 4, given the limited availability of previously developed land in Oakham, Uppingham and the Local Service Centres, these options are less likely to support the efficient use of land. This is due to the options having more limited potential to deliver a significant proportion of development on brownfield land.

St George's Barracks and Woolfox both have minerals constraints. As such, Options 7, 9 and 11b, and to a lesser extent, Options 5 and 6 have the most potential to lead to the loss of minerals resources at St George's Barracks, whilst development taken forward through Options 8, 10 and 11a may lead to some sterilisation of minerals resources at Woolfox. It should be noted though that at both locations, this could be mitigated against if the economic mineral extraction area were safeguarded from development through masterplans for each area.

Land around Oakham and Uppingham is a mixture of Grade 3a and Grade 3b land, with some areas of Grade 2 land. The options which deliver a higher level of growth to the town (Options 1, 2, 4, 9 and 10) therefore have increased potential to lead to the loss of the best and most versatile land in the vicinity of the towns (i.e. the Grade 2 and 3a land present). Options 3, 4, 9 and 10 would be more likely to lead to the additional loss of productive agricultural land in the vicinities of Cottesmore, Edith Weston, Empingham, Great Casterton, Greetham, Ketton, Langham, Market Overton, Ryhall, Whissendine. Given a significant proportion of the Woolfox site is under agricultural use, development at this location has the potential to lead to the significant loss of productive agricultural land (although recent agricultural land classification has not been carried out at this location to determine in detail the quality of agricultural land at this location).

In terms of water resources, it is considered that higher growth options will place a greater demand upon the already stressed supply, whilst lower growth options will represent less of an additional burden. However, it is anticipated that the Water Resources Management Plans prepared by water supply companies will address

long-term water supply issues associated with growth. There also may also be potential for the development of a new garden village scheme to provide opportunities for innovative design techniques to support the efficient use of water resources.

<b>Climate change</b>	<b>Option</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11a</b>	<b>11b</b>
	Ranking	1	4	6	7	2	5	9	10	11	12	8	3

Delivering higher growth in the larger towns of Oakham and Uppingham through Options 1, 2 and 4 is likely to better support the use of sustainable transport modes than the other options, given residents have good access to local services and facilities. These options would therefore help to encourage a modal shift and reduce reliance on the private vehicle, having a positive effect on climate change mitigation. In this respect, Option 4, which also directs a high level of growth to the Local Service Centres, is likely to perform less positively given the limited range of services/ facilities on offer, and less comprehensive access to sustainable transport modes in these settlements.

To avoid significant increases in greenhouse gas emissions from transportation, the delivery of larger-scale development at St George's Barracks or the Woolfox Site through Options 7-11b would need to be accompanied by comprehensive measures to enhance accessibility by non-car modes.

In terms of the other aspects relating to greenhouse gas emissions, the sustainability performance of developments depends on elements such as the integration of energy efficient design within new development and the provision of renewable energy. While 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 development. It is therefore considered that the delivery of the garden settlements at St George's Barracks and the Woolfox Site through Options 7-11b have a greater potential to lead to significant positive effects in this respect. The options also have the potential to deliver significant green infrastructure enhancements, which will support both climate change mitigation and adaptation.

In accordance with the provisions of the NPPF and national policy, it is anticipated that new development would seek to avoid the highest flood risk areas, and appropriate mitigation measures will be implemented in accordance the SFRA undertaken for the county. As such it is not possible to differentiate between the options in this regard.

<b>Population and communities</b>	<b>Option</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11a</b>	<b>11b</b>
	Ranking	7	6	8	5	10	9	4	3	2	1	5	6

Each option will deliver a significant number of new homes (including a mix of types, sizes and tenures, including a proportion of affordable housing) to meet existing and future housing needs; with the potential for significant long term positive effects. Overall, through delivering the highest quantum of growth, Option 10, followed by Option 9, has the largest potential to deliver a broader range of housing types and tenures in the county.

At the local level, it is considered that directing higher levels of growth to the main towns of Oakham and Uppingham through Options 1, 2, 4, 9 and 10 will likely deliver a mix of housing to meet local needs in these settlements. Increased development in the Local Service Centres through Options 3, 4, 9 and 10 will also help provide an increased variety of housing for a range of groups in these smaller settlements, which has the potential to increase community vitality, and support the meeting of localised housing needs. Conversely, directing growth away from Oakham and Uppingham and the Local Service Centres through Options 11a and 11b would lead to negative effects 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.

Focusing growth at Oakham and Uppingham through Options 1, 2, 4, 9 and 10 would lead to help support accessibility to services and facilities. This is given that these settlements are the largest settlements in the county and are the locations with the broadest range of amenities. It is however also recognised that increased

delivery of growth at Local Service Centres may support local amenities and increase community vitality in these locations. Positive effects in this respect relate to Options 3, 4, 9 and 10.

The Woolfox site, and to a lesser extent, St Georges Barracks are relatively disconnected from existing settlements and the services/ facilities they provide. The delivery of low growth at St George's Barracks (Options 5 and 6) will not provide the same range of services and facilities for new residents as a higher growth option at this location. It is considered therefore that the delivery of a Garden Village scale settlement at St George's Barracks (Options 7, 9 and 11b) and a Garden Town settlement at the Woolfox Site (Options 8, 10 and 11a) would likely perform more positively through providing a critical mass which enables the delivery of a wider range of services/ facilities compared to more limited scale of growth. Positive effects are also anticipated through the likely delivery of measures such as enhancements to local multi-functional green infrastructure networks.

<b>Economy and employment</b>	<b>Option</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11a</b>	<b>11b</b>
	Ranking	7	6	8	5	10	9	4	3	2	1	5	6

Overall, through delivering a larger number of dwellings in the county, Option 10 followed by Option 9 perform more positively compared to other options given the potential to deliver increased levels of housing and employment provision, directed growth to both the existing main economic centres of Oakham and Uppingham, and through the delivery of new settlement. This has the greatest potential for supporting Rutland's economic vitality. Options 1, 2, 4, 9 and 10 will deliver proportionally higher levels of growth to Oakham and Uppingham, which will support the economic vitality of the two main towns of the county. The delivery of St George's Barracks or the Woolfox Site has the potential to support the rural economy and rural diversification through the provision of employment land at these locations. However, the delivery of a new garden settlement is considered less likely to enhance the viability of existing towns and local centres, given their relatively isolated locations.

## Overview of reasons for choosing the preferred development strategy for the Local Plan

- 4.28 The following overview presents Rutland County Council's reasons for selecting the preferred spatial strategy approach for the Local Plan. Chapter 6 of the main body of the SA Report presents a more detailed overview.
- 4.29 In sustainability terms there is no option that performs significantly better when compared to the others, they all have potential benefits and drawbacks. The Council's preferred option is Option 7 for the reasons set out below.
- 4.30 Option 7 is one of the options that most closely fits delivering the Local Housing Need (LHN) figure and provides a buffer over the plan period, providing not only for choice and flexibility in the market but also responding to housing market signals and issues around demographic trends as identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) Update 2019.
- 4.31 It delivers growth in Oakham, Uppingham and the Local Service Centres, reflecting the existing settlement hierarchy, and where new development would support these existing communities, maintaining viability and helping to meet their housing and employment needs. Growth of these settlements into open countryside is however more limited than other options and will therefore reduce the impact of development on the historic environment and the landscape character and setting of existing settlements.
- 4.32 Under Option 7, the scale of development proposed for the new settlement at St George's would provide the critical mass to enable the creation of a sustainable neighbourhood with the delivery of a wider range of services/facilities, sustainable transport and economic benefits compared to more limited scale growth (such as that included in Option 5). It also provides the opportunity to reuse a significant brownfield site, thereby limiting the amount of best and most versatile and productive agricultural land that may be lost in other locations across the County.
- 4.33 Whilst there are similarities between the SA outcome for the two new settlement options, a detailed comparative assessment of the Woolfox and St George's Barracks sites has concluded that the Woolfox site is not justified or deliverable within the plan period. In particular there is a lack of robust evidence to determine the traffic and highway implications of the proposal and how mitigation, including the provision of a new junction onto the A1 would be delivered. In addition the Woolfox site is subject to the following physical constraints: development of parts of the site are likely to have a significant impact on sensitive landscape; the site is subject to a mineral safeguarding area and insufficient evidence has been provided to show how development can be achieved without impacting on this national resource; and the site is largely green field resulting in the loss of productive agricultural land. These concern impact on the master planning of the whole site and therefore impact on the viability of the proposal and raise questions about its deliverability within the plan period.
- 4.34 The assessment of site availability, suitability and deliverability issues, alongside specialist evidence reports (including Sustainability of Settlements Assessment Update, Landscape Capacity and Sensitivity, Whole Plan Viability and infrastructure delivery plan) alongside consultation responses and advice from statutory consultees have informed decisions about which sites are considered most suitable for allocation.
- 4.35 The preferred option for the Local Plan spatial strategy is to continue to provide for growth in the two towns and some Local Service Centres as well as providing for the development of a new garden community on a major brownfield site which would deliver new homes together with employment, local services, retail and community uses on the site of St George's Barracks. The development of this site will ultimately fulfil the role of a Local Service Centre over the lifetime of the Local Plan and will continue to meet the County's housing and employment needs beyond the plan period. This strategy will ease pressure to bring forward large areas of greenfield land on the edge of existing settlements, protecting the character and setting of settlements whilst still ensuring that the County's development needs are met and that an appropriate amount of growth is planned for the most sustainable locations, particularly Oakham, Uppingham and Local Service Centres.

## 5. What are the appraisal findings at this current stage?

### Appraisal of the current version of the Local Plan

5.1 Part 2 of the SA Report answers the question – what are the appraisal findings at this stage? – by presenting an appraisal of the current version of the Local Plan. Appraisal findings are presented under the seven SA theme headings, and summary findings are presented below. Where applicable, the appraisal narrative identifies the nature and significance of effects.

5.2 Detailed findings are presented in Chapter 7 of the main body of the SA Report.

#### ***Biodiversity and geodiversity***

<b><i>Likely significant effect</i></b>	<b><i>Effect dimensions</i></b>	<b><i>Recommendations</i></b>
Protecting the integrity of European and nationally designated sites located within and within proximity to the county.	Direct and indirect, long-term and positive.	None proposed.
Improved ecological resilience.	Direct and indirect, long-term, permanent and positive.	None proposed.
Enhancements to ecological networks through green and blue infrastructure enhancements.	Direct and indirect, long-term, permanent and positive.	None proposed.
Achieving net-gain for biodiversity through new development.	Direct, long-term, permanent and positive	None proposed.

#### ***Historic environment***

<b><i>Likely significant effect</i></b>	<b><i>Effect dimensions</i></b>	<b><i>Recommendations</i></b>
Protection and enhancement of the historic environment (including both designated and non-designated heritage assets) and their settings	Direct, long-term, permanent and positive	None proposed.

#### ***Landscape***

<b><i>Likely significant effect</i></b>	<b><i>Effect dimensions</i></b>	<b><i>Recommendations</i></b>
Enhancements to landscape / townscape / villagescape character and local distinctiveness.	Direct and indirect, long-term, permanent and positive	None proposed.
Impacts to visual amenity, important viewpoints and landscape perception.	Direct and indirect, long-term and short term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative.	None proposed.
Safeguarding rural character and the open countryside.	Direct and indirect, long-term, permanent and positive.	None proposed.

#### ***Land, soil and water resources***

<b><i>Likely significant effect</i></b>	<b><i>Effect dimensions</i></b>	<b><i>Recommendations</i></b>
Loss of areas of the best and most versatile agricultural land.	Direct, long-term, permanent and negative	None proposed.
Loss of greenfield land.	Direct, long-term, permanent and negative	None proposed.
Efficient use of land through intensification of uses, increased housing densities and a focus on the use of previously developed land where possible.	Direct, long-term, and positive	None proposed.

Supporting improvements to the water quality status of the main rivers and ordinary watercourses flowing through the county.	Indirect, short and long-term, and positive	None proposed.
Reduced per capita water consumption through improved water efficiency in new developments	Direct, long-term and positive	None proposed.
Safeguarding the integrity and preventing the sterilization of mineral resources.	Direct, long-term and positive	None proposed.

### **Climate change**

<b>Likely significant effect</b>	<b>Effect dimensions</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
Limitation in greenhouse gas emissions resulting from growth through reducing the need to travel and promoting alternative methods of transport.	Direct and indirect, long-term, permanent and positive	None proposed.
Limitation in greenhouse gas emissions resulting from growth through the development of low carbon and renewable energy installations and the promotion of energy efficient development.	Direct and indirect, long-term, permanent and positive	None proposed.
Enhancements to improve resilience to the effects of climate change (including flooding).	Direct and indirect, short, medium and long-term, permanent and positive	None proposed.
Adapting to climate change effects through the application of sustainable design and construction techniques and green infrastructure provision.	Direct and indirect, long-term, permanent and positive	None proposed.

### **Population and communities**

<b>Likely significant effect</b>	<b>Effect dimensions</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
Delivery of housing numbers which meet objectively assessed housing needs.	Direct, long-term and positive.	None proposed.
Increased delivery of affordable housing, including in smaller settlements.	Direct, long-term, permanent and positive.	None proposed.
Provision of housing of a range of types and tenures to meet different needs.	Direct, long-term, permanent and positive.	None proposed.
Provision of gypsy and traveller sites to meet projected need.	Direct, long-term, permanent and positive.	None proposed.
Support for health and wellbeing through the delivery of high quality, energy efficient housing.	Direct, long-term and positive.	None proposed.
Enhancements to the vitality and viability of Rutland's towns and Local Service Centres.	Direct, indirect, long-term and positive.	None proposed.
Support for rural vitality.	Direct, indirect, long-term and positive.	None proposed.

Enhancements to local green infrastructure networks and associated benefits for health and wellbeing.	Direct, indirect, long-term and positive.	None proposed.
Enhanced accessibility to services, facilities and amenities	Direct, long-term and positive.	None proposed.
Increase use of sustainable transport modes, including public transport and walking and cycling.	Direct, long-term, permanent and positive.	None proposed.

### **Economy and employment**

<b>Likely significant effect</b>	<b>Effect dimensions</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
Facilitation of the growth of the economy and employment opportunities through appropriate employment land provision and the protection of existing employment land.	Direct, long-term and positive	None proposed
Enhancements to the economic vitality and viability of Rutland's towns.	Direct, indirect, long-term and positive	None proposed
Promotion of the vitality and viability of Rutland's Local Service Centres	Direct, indirect, long-term and positive	None proposed
Support for Rutland's rural economy.	Direct, indirect, long-term and positive	None proposed
Promotion of Rutland's visitor economy	Direct, indirect, long-term, permanent and positive.	None proposed
Promotion of Rutland's minerals economy.	Direct, long-term, permanent and positive.	None proposed

## **Appraisal of cumulative effects and monitoring**

5.3 In combination effects can also result from the combined impacts of a plan with impacts of another plan or initiative. The Rutland Local Plan therefore has the potential to combine with other planned or on-going activities in the vicinity of the county to result in cumulative effects.

5.4 These include as follows:

- Growth associated with the emerging or adopted Local Plans for the Local Planning Authorities adjoining or close proximity to the county, including Harborough, Melton, South Kesteven, Peterborough, East Northamptonshire and Corby.
- Proposed transport schemes in the county, including in Oakham town centre.
- The development of the Land North of Stamford (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 railway network in the county to increase capacity for freight, and implications for existing level crossings (including in Oakham).

5.5 Potential effects which may occur as a result of the in-combination effects of the Local Plan and other plans and proposals in the wider area therefore may 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. This is from the in-combination effects of new development and associated infrastructure on habitats and biodiversity corridors. However, enhancements to green infrastructure provision facilitated through 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 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.

5.6 Specifically, in relation to the Land North of Stamford development, whilst it includes land within Rutland at Quarry Farm, the proposal was taken forward through the new South Kesteven Local Plan. As such the proposal was fully appraised as part of the SA undertaken for the South Kesteven Local Plan, with potential significant effects being evaluated as part of that process. In terms of in combination effects of the Stamford North development with the proposals taken forward through the current version of the Rutland Local Plan, it is acknowledged that the key areas taken forward for housing and employment through the Rutland Local Plan are at some distance from the development. This includes the significant proportion of Local Plan development being taken forward at the St George's Garden Community and in the vicinity of Oakham. This limits the potential for significant in-combination effects to arise from the Land North of Stamford development and new development taken forward through the Rutland Local Plan.

5.7 However, Local Plan Policy H4 (Cross Boundary Development Opportunity – Stamford North) recognises the cross-boundary aspect through reiterating that development within Rutland at Quarry Farm associated with the Land North of Stamford proposal should only be taken forward as part of the wider Development Brief, a country park is incorporated, and community infrastructure and an appropriate range of housing types and tenures are delivered. In addition, the policy supports current proposals to deliver a distributor road facilitating the connection of the Old Great North Road, Little Casterton Road and Ryhall Road and enhancements at the A1/A606 junction, and initiate traffic and highway safety measures in accordance with the requirements of an agreed Traffic Impact Assessment and a travel plan. This will help limit the in-combination effects of development at the Land North of Stamford proposal 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.

5.8 As highlighted above, for many potential cumulative effects, the policy approaches proposed by the current version of the 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.

- 5.9 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 approaches which are put forward through the Local Plan. In particular the Local Plan will help limit the magnitude and scale of the potential negative environmental effects associated with the delivery of 2,131 homes and approximately 14 ha of employment land over the plan period to 2036.
- 5.10 It should be noted, however, that the policies put forward through the current version of the 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.
- 5.11 Therefore, in order to understand these trade-offs during the implementation of the Local Plan, the SA Report presents a monitoring programme to evaluate the ongoing effects of the plan (Chapter 8 of the main body of the SA Report).

## 6. Next steps

- 6.1 Part 3 of the SA Report answers the question – What happens next?
- 6.2 This SA Report accompanies the publication of the Pre-Submission version of the Rutland Local Plan 2018-2036 (Rutland Local Plan 2018-2036: Pre-Submission Draft).
- 6.3 Once the period for representations on the Pre-Submission Draft / SA Report concludes, the main issues raised will be identified and summarised by the Council, who 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 for Examination, alongside a statement setting out the main issues raised during the consultation. The Council will also submit the SA Report.
- 6.4 At Examination, the Inspector will consider representations (alongside the SA Report) before then either reporting back on the Local Plan’s soundness or identifying the need for modifications. If the Inspector identifies the need for modifications to the Local Plan these will be prepared (and undergo SA) and then be subject to consultation (with an SA Report Addendum published alongside).
- 6.5 Once found to be ‘sound’, the Local Plan will be formally adopted by Rutland County Council. At the time of adoption, an SA ‘Statement’ must be published that sets out (amongst other elements) ‘the measures decided concerning monitoring’.

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