

**Background Paper:**

**Sustainability of Settlements  
Assessment Update**



## Contents

Background .....	4
1.0 INTRODUCTION.....	5
2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT.....	6
3.0 METHODOLOGY .....	9
4.0 SETTLEMENT SUSTAINABILITY .....	10
5.0 THE SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY .....	16
6.0 RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS.....	18
Appendix A: .....	20
Appendix B: .....	24
Appendix C: .....	25
Appendix D: .....	26

## **Background**

This background paper sets out the settlement hierarchy for Rutland, and will form part of the background evidence for the Local Plan which covers the period from 2015 to 2036. It indicates in broad terms which settlements are best placed to deliver sustainable development, accommodating Rutland's requirements, and therefore underpins the approach to the location of development in the Local Plan. The key objective of sustainable development is set out in both the National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Practice Guidance.

The settlement hierarchy has evolved from the Sustainability Assessment of Towns and Villages in Rutland produced in April 2009 which informed the adopted (2011) Core Strategy, in particular the Settlement and Location of Development Policies and more recently the Settlement Hierarchy review in October 2015 which reflected changes to national planning policy and guidance. The settlement hierarchy categorises the towns and villages according to the level of accessibility of each settlement to facilities and services.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the 2015 review and revise the methodology to ensure the most sustainable locations are identified and provide the latest position on the Settlement Hierarchy to inform the preferred options for the Rutland Local Plan.
- 1.2 National planning policy seeks to direct development to the most sustainable locations which contain a variety of services and community facilities and where reasonable public transport services exist.
- 1.3 The settlement hierarchy is a way of categorising the villages in Rutland and grouping together those that have similar characteristics. At the top of the hierarchy are the larger settlements that have the best infrastructure in terms of facilities and services and are the most accessible by sustainable forms of travel.
- 1.4 The smaller settlements with the least facilities, services and accessibility to public transport are at the bottom of the hierarchy. This helps determine which settlements are the most sustainable.
- 1.5 In accordance with national policy this report sets out the methodology the Council intends to use to assess the villages in Rutland in terms of availability of services and facilities and level of public transport provision.
- 1.6 In order to assess the availability of services and facilities, all the Parish Councils and Meetings were contacted to complete a survey of facilities and services in 2014 and more recently December 2016. In addition evidence base studies were completed and census information was updated to include 2011 information. Collectively, this information was used to determine the most sustainable settlements.
- 1.7 Those settlements with the greatest range of services and facilities and the highest level of public transport provision and accessibility are considered the most sustainable in Rutland.

## **2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**

### **National Policy Context**

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out national planning policies for England and includes key principles which are relevant when considering the sustainability of settlements in Rutland.
- 2.2 A key message to emerge from the Framework is the delivery of sustainable development. The Framework states that planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development which includes:
- Growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas;
  - Promotes the development and diversification of agricultural land-based rural businesses;
  - Promotes rural tourism and leisure developments;
  - Support the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages.
- 2.3 The most relevant aspects of the NPPF in relation to settlement strategy and hierarchy matters include:
- The Core Principle that planning should actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable (Para 17)
  - Where practical, particularly within large-scale developments, key facilities such as primary schools and local shops should be located within walking distance of most properties (Para 38).
  - To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. For example, where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby (Para 55).
  - Planning policies should ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services (Para 70).

- 2.4 The NPPF maintains that new housing development should be avoided in isolated locations unless there are special circumstances.
- 2.5 The National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) was published in March 2014 as practice guidance in support of the NPPF.
- 2.6 The National Planning Practice Guidance reiterates that Local Plans “should be based upon and reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development” and recognises the importance of “issues facing rural areas in terms of housing supply and affordability, and the role of housing in supporting the broader sustainability of villages and smaller settlements”.
- 2.7 The guidance states that thriving rural communities in part depends on retaining local service and community facilities and that rural housing is essential to ensuring the viability of these local facilities.
- 2.8 The section on Rural Housing in the PPG goes further and states all settlements can play a role in delivering sustainable development in rural areas by avoiding blanket policies restricting housing development in some and preventing other settlements from expanding unless their use can be supported by robust evidence.

### **Local Policy Context**

- 2.9 Policy CS3 in the adopted Core Strategy (2011) sets out the settlement hierarchy for Rutland. It provides the approach for locating new development in sustainable locations with local facilities and services and so reducing the need to travel.
- 2.10 The focusing of development in locations with the most opportunities to access facilities and to use non-car modes of travel accords with the objectives of the NPPF and is still considered the appropriate approach for identifying suitable locations for development and helping promote sustainable development in Rutland.
- 2.11 For the purpose of this background paper, the settlement categories identified in the 2015 background paper have been taken into account and reflect the need to plan for development in the context of presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 2.12 A new category was included in the 2015 settlement hierarchy to acknowledge the relative sustainability of a settlement based on its access to services and facilities. The intention was for this category to include villages, which although only have a limited range of facilities have an opportunity to safely access services sustainably via walking and cycling due to their location.
- 2.13 However, after further consideration the description for the Accessible Villages with limited facilities category was the same description for the Smaller Service Centre category. Therefore, it was considered the accessible villages were better placed within the Smaller Service Centre category rather than having as an additional tier in the Settlement Hierarchy.

2.14 Following the application of the methodology the Settlement Hierarchy for Rutland is defined by the following categories:

- Main Town
- Small Town
- Local Service Centres
- Smaller Service Centres
- Small Villages
- Countryside

### **Other Policy Considerations**

2.15 Whilst the allocations that are made in the Rutland Local Plan to deliver the required amount of housing development for the County will be made in accordance with the settlement hierarchy, Neighbourhood Plans can choose to allocate more housing if the community decided this was appropriate. However, paragraph 184 of the NPPF sets out that Neighbourhood Plans and orders should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan.

## **3.0 METHODOLOGY**

### **Review of the Methodology (2015)**

- 3.1 The main issues arising from the Issues and Options consultation relating to the 2015 background paper were around the purpose of the methodology used and how it applied to the sustainability assessment of the villages. This could have been in part due to the number of indicators used to assess the sustainability of the towns/villages and in particular the reasoning behind the scoring given for the population thresholds indicator.
- 3.2 The scoring given to facilities still does not differentiate clearly enough between those that could be considered key services in a village such as shop, public house or school against facilities such as a play area or sports/recreation ground.
- 3.3 This may have still given the impression that some villages were more sustainable in the settlement hierarchy than perhaps they actually were.
- 3.5 The following are the intended changes to the hierarchy methodology:
  - i) Identify 'key' services and facilities in addition to other services and facilities and give a higher weighting accordingly. In general, the more provision there is, especially of key services the more sustainable the settlement is likely to be.
  - ii) Take into consideration a settlements relative accessibility to a main town, services and facilities.
  - iii) Infrastructure and environmental constraints in or around a settlement will be taken into account as part of a separate qualitative assessment through the site appraisal process and the Sustainability Assessment

## 4.0 SETTLEMENT SUSTAINABILITY

### Assessment of Settlement Sustainability

4.1 The assessment criteria take account of the services and facilities that are considered 'key' and essential for a sustainable settlement and those which although important are not vital. This approach reflects advice in the NPPF in *table 1*. The NPPF does not define sustainability but identifies core principles and key aspects of sustainability and community facilities.

**Table 1: NPPF Guidance on key aspects of sustainability and community facilities.**

Guidance	Sustainability Indicator Used
NPPF Paragraph 34 (Promoting Sustainable Transport) <i>Plans and decisions should ensure developments that generate significant movement are located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Transport Provision</li> </ul>
NPPF Paragraph 70 (Promoting Healthy Communities)  <i>To deliver the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:</i>  - <i>plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;</i>  - <i>ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Store</li> <li>• Community facility</li> <li>• Public House</li> <li>• Employment Opportunities</li> </ul>
NPPF Paragraph 72 (Promoting Healthy Communities)  <i>The Government attaches great importance to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary School</li> <li>• Secondary School</li> </ul>
NPPF Paragraph 73 (Promoting Healthy Communities)  <i>Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities.</i> <i>Education access</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sports Recreation Ground</li> <li>• Children's Play Area</li> </ul>
NPPF Paragraph 7 (Achieving Sustainable Development)  <i>There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:</i>  - <i>a social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being;</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Medical Facility</li> <li>• Library</li> <li>• Post Office</li> </ul>

## **Key Facilities**

- 4.2 The NPPF refers to 'key facilities' such as primary schools and local shops in paragraph 38 and in paragraph 70 refers to community facilities as local shops, meeting places and public houses. The criteria used in this assessment have been grouped to reflect these 'key facilities', as well as 'other services' and 'accessibility'.
- 4.3 Local employment opportunities provide a positive indicator of vibrant sustainable settlements along with the provision of local retailing and community services such as general stores, post offices, schools and, doctor's surgeries. The NPPF acknowledges within rural areas that employment opportunities and community services and facilities are important for sustainable rural communities as they can help enhance community and reduce the number of trips made by car.
- 4.4 Therefore, the scoring system weights these 'key facilities' appropriately based upon their relative importance *and* accessibility from the settlement. The settlement sustainability assessment focuses on the availability and accessibility of a settlement to essential services such as retail facilities, education and community.
- 4.5 It considers employment opportunities within or close to a settlement and takes into account the frequency of public transport and accessibility by cycling and on foot rather than by car to a higher order settlement. **Appendix A** sets out the description of the criteria used to assess the settlements and **Appendix B** shows the settlement category and description.
- 4.6 All Parish Council's and Meetings were consulted on the proposed methodology from 20<sup>th</sup> November 2013 to the end of January 2014, and were requested to complete a village facilities and services survey form. Appendix C shows a list of the Town and Parishes that submitted responses. Just over half of all the Parishes in Rutland responded with completed surveys, this was an important source of information that fed into the matrix. The Parishes were consulted again in 2016 and the responses received have been considered.
- 4.7 Other sources of information used to determine settlement sustainability included the 2011 census, information already held by the Council, the Town and Village Appraisals 2016 update and other studies undertaken for the Local Plan evidence base.
- 4.8 This information along with the survey responses and responses to the Local Plan Review Issues and Options consultation in 2015 has informed this update and assisted with identifying the services and amenities present that provide residents with access to facilities including retail, education and employment opportunities as well as public transport links.
- 4.9 It is important to note that the assessment of the sustainability of settlements is based on a snap shot in time of services and facilities, including the availability of public transport routes and may be subject to change in the future.

## **Population**

- 4.10 The Parish population based on the 2011 census has been removed following consultation responses. Whilst generally, the larger the size of the population the larger the likelihood the village will contain more services and facilities, responses to the Issues and Options consultation pointed out that some Parish populations included more than one parish in the population figure so could be misleading.
- 4.11 Following Issues and Options consultation it is accepted the score given for the population threshold is subjective with no definitive justification to determine the population points category on the basis of the population figure for a village. Therefore it is considered appropriate to remove this criteria all together.

## **Employment Opportunities**

- 4.12 Local employment opportunities provide a positive indicator of vibrant sustainable settlements. Whilst there is no certainty that these local employment opportunities are taken up by local residents, it is nevertheless important that these opportunities exist. The same principle applies for the provision of local retailing and community services such as general stores, post offices, schools and doctor's surgeries
- 4.13 Within rural areas, these enterprises and community services are important for sustainable rural communities as they can help enhance community spirit and reduce the number of trips made by car. Therefore, the scoring system weights these 'key facilities' appropriately based upon their relative importance *and* accessibility from the settlement.
- 4.14 The availability of employment close to homes can reduce the need to travel by car and can increase the sustainability of a settlement. It is accepted, there will be some employment in a village if there is a facility such as a shop, school, or doctor's surgery, but additional employment opportunities are considered as a separate criterion.
- 4.15 The employment criteria have been developed to include a higher score for 'key employment sites' and employment opportunities within or adjoin a settlement and access to employment opportunities within 2 miles.
- 4.16 The location of 'key employment sites' identified in the Employment Land Assessment Review (2016) indicates the settlement preforms an economic role in land use terms. Also employment opportunities within or adjoining the settlements were identified using Revenues business rates returns.
- 4.17 The presence of employment, offers the potential for a settlement to be more sustainable if there is a reasonable source of employment such as those falling within the B Use Classes, which includes business, office, light industrial, and storage and distribution in or up to two miles in distance from the village.

- 4.18 Furthermore, local businesses can provide economic benefits to their local community as employees may spend more within the area, consequently helping to maintain local shops and services.
- 4.19 The close proximity of the Army barracks to Cottesmore and Edith Weston needs careful consideration as their presence may distort the overall sustainability score for the villages; further qualitative assessment of these villages may be necessary.

### **Accessibility of Settlements**

- 4.20 With the exception of villages in the north east of the county (Market Overton, Greetham, Thistleton, Stretton and Clipsham) all villages are within a 5 mile radius of a full range of retail, employment, education and community services at either Oakham, Uppingham, Stamford or Corby.
- 4.21 The availability and frequency of public transport is an important factor in determining the most sustainable locations, particularly in providing a service as an alternative to the car to enable people in rural communities to access the services, facilities such as shops, hospitals, leisure activities and employment opportunities.
- 4.22 Accessibility is based on the following criteria:
- Distance to a main town or large settlement
  - Accessibility, particularly by public transport to main towns
  - Frequency of bus services
- 4.23 Settlements with a good provision of services and facilities and/or good public transport links will encourage easier and more sustainable access to services than those settlements where one or both are absent; and are more capable of supporting the rural community without access to a car.
- 4.24 However, the close proximity of some settlements to Oakham, Uppingham and Stamford requires careful consideration as part of the Local Plan Review. One of the main objectives of the NPPF is to focus development where residents would have the most opportunities to access facilities and to use non-car modes of travel.
- 4.25 The close proximity to a main town in terms of access to their level of facilities and services is an important sustainability consideration. There are some villages, which although do not have many services or facilities within it are relatively sustainable because of their access to facilities and services.
- 4.26 In accessibility terms, it is considered some settlements may no longer fit the role of 'smaller village' within the settlement hierarchy. For example, Barleythorpe now has access within walking distance to a full range of key services in Oakham. These include within close proximity, a public house, petrol filling station with shop and a supermarket.

- 4.27 It is recognised that the level of services and facilities within some villages remain few. Consequently, it is not appropriate to categorise these settlements as a more sustainable location within the hierarchy.
- 4.28 On this basis it is considered appropriate for some settlements to be included within the Smaller Service Centre category to acknowledge their sustainable location within 2 miles of a main town. However, it will be important to acknowledge the separate identity of the villages to ensure the character is retained and protected.
- 4.29 This will address the NPPF presumption in favour of sustainable development and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), which states that all settlements can play a role in delivering sustainable development and so blanket policies restricting housing development in some settlement and preventing other settlements from expanding should be avoided unless their use can be supported by robust evidence.
- 4.30 **Appendix D** includes maps for Oakham, Uppingham, and Stamford, which includes all the settlements within 2 miles of the towns. This will allow a settlement's sustainable location to be taken into account based on its access to a range of services and facilities where by a limited amount of housing such as infill, previously developed land, conversion, local needs may be acceptable providing the scale of development does not affect the environment or character of the settlement.

#### **Education**

- 4.31 The presence of a school in a settlement is considered a 'key facility' as it provides an opportunity to reduce the need to travel by car.

#### **Rural Issue – Reliance on the car**

- 4.32 One key sustainability issue, which affects all settlements in Rutland to some extent, is the reliance on the car either for employment or other services and facilities. This is due to the rural nature of the County and limited public transport opportunities. This issue is greater in the smaller settlements which generally have lower provision of employment and little or no services or facilities.
- 4.33 The availability of local community services, retail and employment opportunities along with good public transport links can contribute towards delivering sustainable communities. Furthermore, the existence of such facilities within or in close proximity to rural settlements can reduce commuting distances associated with a range of important daily activities, thereby decreasing the need and likelihood to travel by car.

### **Overall Settlement Sustainability**

- 4.34 Other supporting studies and evidence may be taken into consideration such as the Landscape Sensitivity Capacity Studies of land around settlements, Employment Land Assessments and the Town and Village Appraisals 2016 update.
- 4.35 The suitability of a settlement to accommodate development in terms of environmental, infrastructure and other constraints is a key consideration through the Site Appraisal process. Where a village has a number of key facilities and other services, supporting studies and evidence will be taken into account before allowing further development.

## 5.0 THE SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY

### The Settlement Hierarchy

- 5.1 The Settlement Hierarchy has been developed to guide the location of development. The hierarchy identifies the most sustainable locations based on their provision of facilities and accessibility to services. **Appendix B** sets out the Settlement Categories and description.
- 5.2 It is not the role of this background paper to set a firm description of the capacity of each settlement, or to advise on the likely quantum of growth which each settlement should accommodate. This is partly because this study acknowledges that service provision is not necessarily a fixed given but can evolve over time according to market forces or changing travel and service patterns. This study presents a snapshot in time.
- 5.2 The availability of suitable sites within each of the centres will regulate actual levels of development after taking into account ownership and any constraints. It will not follow that every settlement within each category of the hierarchy will accommodate the same level of growth as opportunities for development will differ.
- 5.4 The outcome of this approach is that a number of the smallest settlements in Rutland with no services and facilities will not be considered appropriate locations for taking further development.

### The Scoring System

- 5.5 The scoring system is devised to rank the villages according to the level of services and facilities available, which in turn determines the settlement hierarchy. The higher the settlement scores the more sustainable it is considered.
- 5.6 The scoring is based on the availability and relative importance of each facility, in that some key facilities are more essential and used more frequently than others or are considered important facilities that reduce the need to travel by car. This reflects those referred to as key facilities in the NPPF and are given a higher score.

### Key Facilities

- 5.7 The range of key facilities comprise of general convenience store; post office; primary/secondary school; public house; key employment site and employment opportunities within or adjoining a settlement and a village/community hall.
- 5.8 The existence of a key facility in a settlement provides a high level of accessibility and an additional score is awarded where there is more than one of a key facility in a settlement, this acknowledges the level in terms of sustainability.

### Other Services

- 5.9 These services comprise a general medical practice and library. The existence of one or more of these services in a village is considered important but not vital for a

settlement's sustainability so 2 points is awarded and 1 point, awarded for a sports/recreation ground and/or children's play area.

**Accessibility**

- 5.10 The potential for access to public transport to employment and the wide range of services available in Oakham, Uppingham, Stamford, Melton and Corby is an important sustainability consideration. The assessment is made based on the frequency of regular bus service from Mon – Sat 7am – 6pm . The existence of an hourly service scores 3 points, 2 hourly service 2 points, daily service 1 point and a weekly service get no points.
- 5.11 Some villages are in easy and suitable walking/cycling distance of Oakham, Uppingham and Stamford. Where the distance is within two miles and there is potential for cycling or walking via suitable road, cycle/footway 2 points is awarded.
- 5.12 Each settlement has been assessed against the scoring in *table 2* below and ranked according to its overall score. The highest score a settlement can achieve if all the criteria are met is 31 points. Therefore, the more points a settlement scores, the more sustainable it is considered to be. The settlements are set out in **Appendix E** showing the settlement hierarchy and how the villages satisfy the criteria.

**Table 2: The scoring used for determining a settlement's sustainability**

Indicator		Points
<b>Key Facilities</b>	General Store with Post Office	5
	General Store	3
	Part-time/mobile Post Office	1
	School & extended school within the settlement	4
	Public House	2
	Key employment sites identified in the Employment Land Review update 2016	5
	Employment opportunities within/adjoining the settlement identified from RCC Business Rate Revenues by settlement/Parish	3
	Community Hall	2
<b>Other Facilities</b>	More than 1 of a 'key facility'	2
	General Medical Practice	2
	Library	2
	Sports/recreation ground	1
	Play area	1
<b>Accessibility</b>	Suitable access on foot or by bicycle to a town within 2 miles	2
	Hourly bus service	3
	2 hourly bus service	2
	Daily bus service	1

## **6.0 RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 6.1 From the evidence collected, the findings show that the larger villages tended to score well across the range of sustainability indicator's from employment opportunities, level of services and facilities within the settlement rather than the smaller villages.
- 6.2 As such, the larger settlements are better placed to absorb growth, even if some further provision of facilities are required whereas, developments in the smaller villages is still likely to lead to the need to travel beyond the village to access a range of facilities and services.
- 6.3 The matrix in **Appendix D** presents the settlements in order of highest to lowest score awarded for the number of criteria met. The settlements in the hierarchy are grouped according to their score. Those settlements with similar scores and similar levels of services and/or accessibility will be categorised as Local Service Centres, Smaller Service Centres, and Small Villages.
- 6.3 If considered necessary, further assessments and evidence work will be undertaken in order to establish a settlement in the appropriate category.
- 6.4 The settlement hierarchy will help determine sustainable locations for future development and ensure the scale of any new development proposed in the Local Plan will be appropriate to the settlement and will be adequately supported by physical infrastructure.
- 6.5 The amount of new development directed to each settlement will be determined through the Local Plan, taking account of the settlement hierarchy and various other technical studies such as sustainability appraisal, landscape sensitivity, work to assess transport capacity, flood risk and other key constraints, opportunities and issues. This will ensure the scale of any new development identified in the Local Plan is suitable for the settlement.
- 6.5 Therefore, not every settlement within each category of the hierarchy will necessarily accommodate the same level off growth as opportunities for development will vary.

### **Identification of Settlements**

#### **Main Town – Oakham.**

- 6.6 The Main Town is considered the most sustainable location in the County as it 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.

#### **Small Town - Uppingham**

- 6.7 Uppingham is the second largest settlement in the County in terms of population, 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.

### **Local Service Centres**

6.8 The tier of settlements below the towns are referred to as Local Service Centres. The villages identified in this category, comprise of the largest villages in terms of population size that have most of the 'key facilities' and overall score well in terms of either 'other services' provision or accessibility. Although, Ketton, Ryhall and Cottesmore have all of

**Key facilities** as identified in the NPPF:

- A general convenience store that meets the day to day needs (particularly for food shopping)
- A primary school and/or a secondary school and extended school service
- Public house
- Local Employment opportunities within or up to 2 miles from the settlement
- Village or community hall
- More than one of the above facilities

6.9 Typically the Local Service Centre villages are in areas that are more accessible in terms of frequent public transport provision or close proximity to the main settlements or provide a number of key facilities.

6.10 These villages are unsuitable for substantial growth but capable of accommodating an allocation either within or adjoining the settlement.

### **Smaller Service Centres**

6.11 The tier below local service centres are referred to as Smaller Service Centres. These villages tend to have only some of the key facilities with fewer shops and services and are less accessible to high order centres. The villages identified in this category provide a range of facilities and other services.

6.12 Also included in this category are the villages that have limited facilities but are accessible either on foot or by bus to the main towns and are served by an hourly bus service. The villages of Preston and Toll Bar have limited facilities but are recognised as accessible sustainable locations within 2 miles of Uppingham and Stamford in accordance with the NPPF. They may be capable of taking residential infill and development of an appropriate scale and character to within the settlement.

6.14 The exceptions to this approach are the villages of Little Casterton, Belmesthorpe, Burley, Egleton and Braunston. These villages are within 2 miles of the main towns but either do not have suitable access on foot or by bicycle and/or do not have an hourly bus service as such these villages fall in the Small Villages category.

6.13 Villages in the Smaller Service Centre category are unsuitable for accommodating a large allocation but capable of taking residential infill and development of an appropriate scale to the settlement either within or adjoining the settlement.

### **Small Villages**

- 6.13 The Small Villages category comprises of the villages in Rutland which have a limited range or no shops and services, little or no employment opportunities and poor or no accessibility by public transport. It is likely the residents will rely on private cars for transport to neighbouring villages or will travel to Oakham, Uppingham and Stamford.
- 6.14 These settlements are not considered sufficiently sustainable to justify further development unless it is small scale to meet the local needs within the village. This will be limited to appropriate infill or development of previously developed land which will result in a positive environmental improvement.

### **Countryside**

- 6.15 Development away from the defined settlements is unlikely to meet all the elements of sustainable development particularly the access to a range of services, except those normally acceptable in the countryside.

### **Next Steps**

- 6.16 This background paper forms part of the evidence base for the Local Plan Review Consultative draft. It identifies the most sustainable settlements in Rutland based on their level of key facilities and other services, access to employment opportunities and accessibility to higher order centres such as Oakham, Uppingham, Melton and Stamford, and Leicester.
- 6.17 The broad scale of development in Rutland will be guided by a settlements position in the settlement hierarchy.

### **Revised Settlement Hierarchy 2017**

- 6.18 The villages with the highest sustainability ratings are included in the Local Service Centres category and the 15 villages with the next highest ratings in the Smaller Service Centres category with the exception of Seaton due to its inaccessibility having no public transport links. The main changes compared with the current settlement hierarchy are:
- Langham, Great Casterton, Market Overton and Whissendine are now included in the Local Service Centres category;
  - Barleythorpe, Preston and Toll Bar are included in the Smaller Service Centres category;
  - The category previously named 'Restraint Villages' has been re-named 'Small Villages' reflecting National Planning Policy Guidance on rural housing;

**Table 3: Proposed Settlement Hierarchy**

**Settlement Hierarchy**

**Main town**

Oakham

**Small town**

Uppingham

**Local Service Centres**

Cottesmore, Edith Weston, Empingham, Great Casterton, Greetham, Ketton, Langham, Market Overton, Ryhall, Whissendine

**Smaller Service Centres**

Barleythorpe, Barrowden, Belton, Caldecott, Essendine, Exton, Glaston, Lyddington, Manton, North Luffenham, Preston, South Luffenham, Preston, South Luffenham, Tinwell, Toll Bar, Wing

**Small Villages**

Ashwell, Ayston, Barrow, Belmesthorpe, Bisbrooke, Braunston, Brooke, Burley, Clipsham, Egleton, Little Casterton, Lyndon, Morcott, Pickworth, Pilton, Ridlington, Seaton, Stoke Dry, Stretton, Teigh, Thistleton, Thorpe by Water, Tickencote, Tixover, Wardley, Whitwell

**Countryside** – Open countryside and villages not identified in the settlement categories

**Appendix A: The criteria used for determining the settlement hierarchy:**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Key Facilities</b>	
<b>General convenience store with Post Office</b>	<p>A permanent general convenience store with a post office located in the village provides access to basic goods and reduces the need to travel by car.</p> <p>A post office (including part-time * &amp; mobile) provides a valuable community facility allowing access to a number of financial and communication services.</p>
<b>School &amp; Extended School Service</b>	<p>A primary school provides an opportunity to reduce the need to travel by car and may be used in the evening or out of term time as a community facility.</p> <p>Most primary schools now provide extended school services including such services as before and after school clubs, pre-school nurseries, parenting skills/family centre and health services.</p> <p>Access to secondary schools provides facilities for the wider community.</p>
<b>Public House</b>	Aside from serving food and drink, pubs provide a meeting place for people and can contribute to a sense of community.
<b>Employment Opportunities within/adjoining the settlement</b>	<p>Key employment sites' identified in the Employment Land Assessment Review (2016) indicates a settlement performs an economic role in land use terms</p> <p>Employment opportunities identified using Revenues business rates returns</p>
<b>Village hall/community centre</b>	Village halls are important community facilities, often providing a base for local organisations and community events.
<b>More than one of a Key Facility</b>	An additional score is given for a settlement with more than one of a key facility such as school, shop and food and drink outlet (includes public houses, restaurants and takeaways).
<b>Other Services</b>	
<b>General medical practice</b>	Provides important healthcare facilities & services and the opportunity to access some medical facilities in the settlement and reduces the need to travel by car.
<b>Library</b>	A library provides facilities available for use by the community. This provides an opportunity to access facilities within the settlement and reduces the need to travel by car.
<b>Sports/recreation ground</b>	Sports/recreation grounds are important to encourage outdoor sports and general health and wellbeing. They also provide a home for local sports teams
<b>Children's play area</b>	Children's play areas are valuable for the physical development of young people.
<b>Accessibility</b>	
<b>Suitable Access by walking or cycling to higher order centres.</b>	Some villages are in suitable walking/cycling distance of the edge of Oakham, Uppingham and Stamford. Where the distance is within two miles and there is potential for cycling or walking via a suitable road, cycle/footway.
<b>Good access to higher order</b>	These include Oakham, Uppingham, Stamford, Melton Mowbray, Corby, Peterborough and Leicester.

**Background Paper: Sustainability of Settlements Assessment**  
**Update – July 2017**

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<b><i>centres by public transport</i></b>	<p>Public transport availability is considered important in determining the most sustainable locations. Bus services are the only form of public transport considered within Rutland, given the only railway station is in Oakham.</p> <p>A regular bus service is important in providing a service for those without a car or as an alternative to the car. Settlements have therefore been given a positive score if a minimum 2 hourly bus service operates to a higher order centre is provided between 7am and 7pm Monday to Saturday.</p> <p>Also considered is the potential to use public transport to access employment opportunities in the higher order centres if a bus service operates before 8.30am in the morning or after 5pm in the evening which reduces reliance on a private car.</p>
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**Appendix B: Settlement Category and Description**

<b>Settlement Category</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Main Town</b>	This is the main town with a range of job opportunities, retail, leisure, and health facilities for the surrounding rural area and has good public transport links to higher order centres.
<b>Small Town</b>	This is the second largest town with a range of job opportunities, convenience shopping, education, community, and health facilities but with more limited public transport links.
<b>Local Service Centres</b>	These comprise of the largest villages with a full range of key facilities and access to public transport, unsuitable for substantial growth but capable of accommodating an allocation.
<b>Smaller Service Centres</b>	<p>These comprise of smaller villages with a more limited range of facilities than the local service centres, or comprise of villages (Barleythorpe, Preston, Toll Bar) with few services and facilities but within 2 miles of a higher order settlement (Oakham, Uppingham &amp; Stamford) with good accessibility either on foot, by bicycle or public transport.</p> <p>Unsuitable for accommodating an allocation but capable of taking residential infill and development of an appropriate scale and character to the settlement.</p>
<b>Small Villages</b>	These comprise of villages with few services and facilities and/or poor access to public transport and not able to support any allocations but some additional development may be appropriate on infill sites or previously developed land within the village.
<b>Countryside</b>	Open countryside and villages not identified in the settlement categories.

**Appendix C: two Mile buffer zones for Oakham, Uppingham and Stamford**

**Appendix D: Settlement Hierarchy Matrix**

# Oakham - 2 Mile Buffer Zone



## KEY

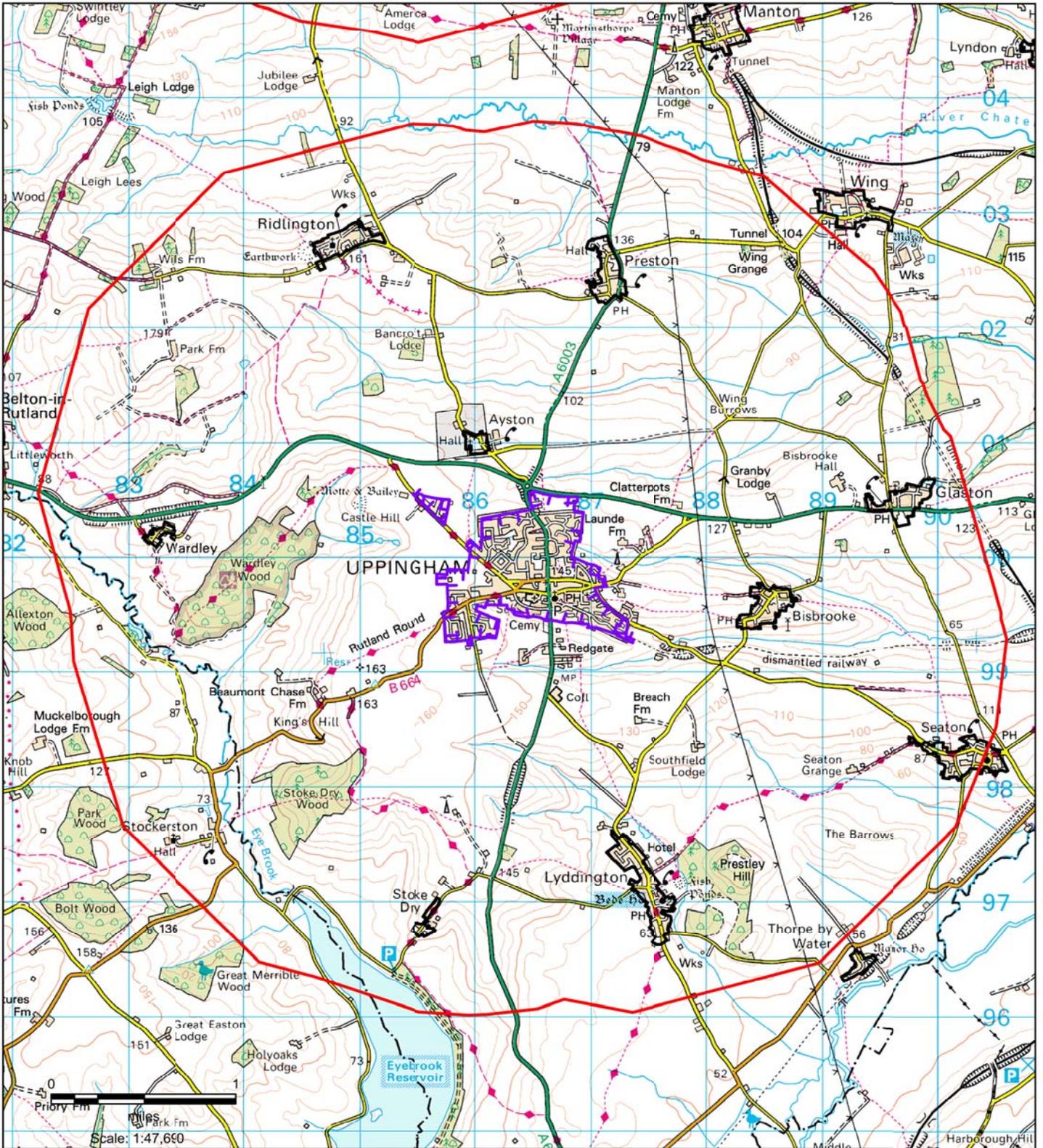
-  Town
-  Village
-  2 Mile Buffer Zone



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# Uppingham - 2 Mile Buffer Zone



## KEY

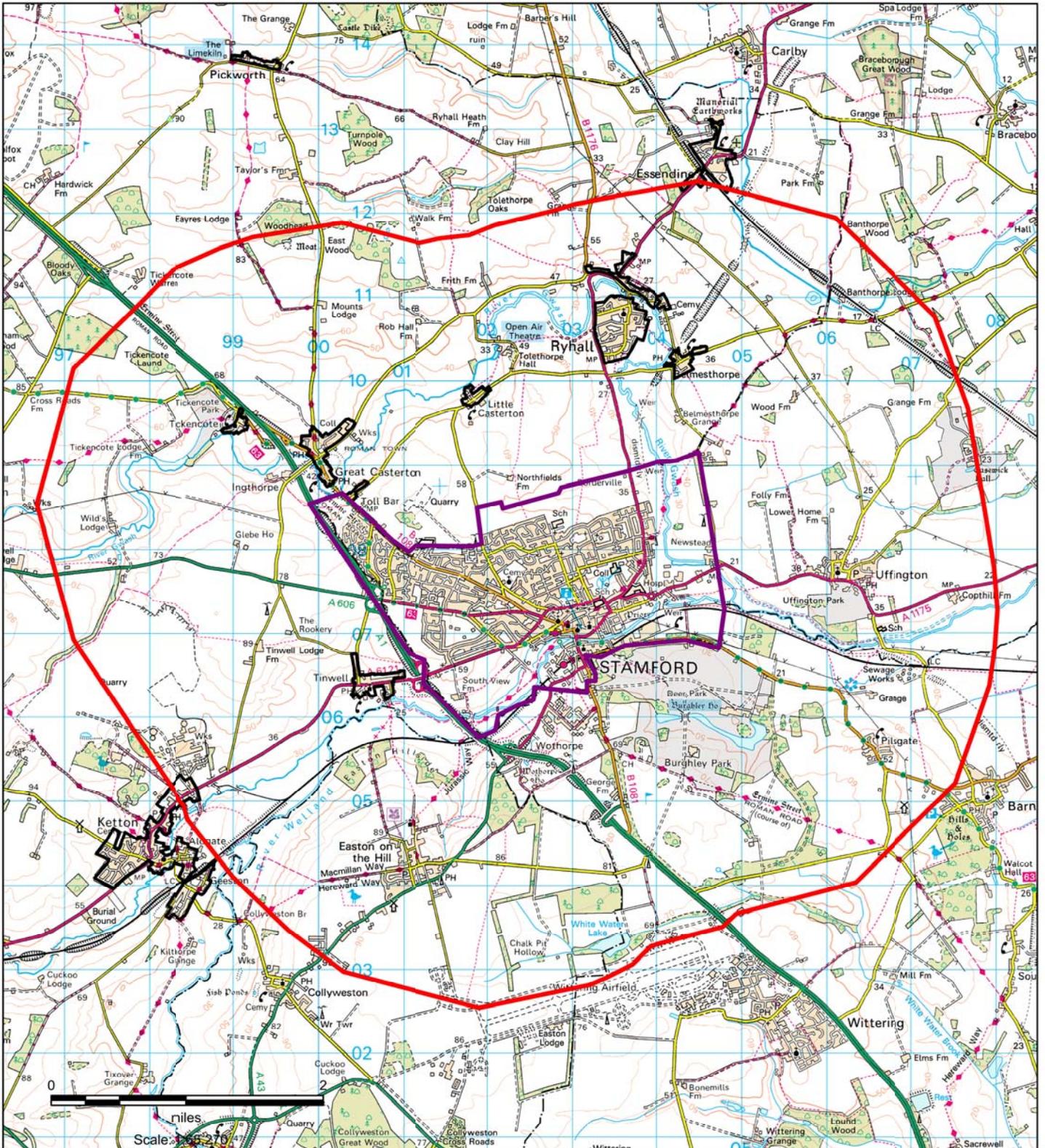
-  Town
-  Village
-  2 Mile Buffer Zone



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# Stamford - 2 Mile Buffer Zone



## KEY

-  Town
-  Village
-  2 Mile Buffer Zone



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