

RUTLAND RETAIL CAPACITY ASSESSMENT (2016 UPDATE)

CONSULTATION STATEMENT

Bilfinger GVA have been instructed by Rutland County Council ('the Council') to undertake a Retail Capacity Assessment Update, which will form part of the evidence base for the Council's Local Plan review. The study was completed in April 2016. The study updates the previous retail capacity evidence base for the County, which comprises the Rutland Retail Capacity Assessment (RRCA) (Roger Tym & Partners, 2010) and the Rutland Retail Capacity Assessment Update (RRCAU) (Peter Brett Associates, 2013).

The purpose of the study is to:

- Provide an updated assessment of the vitality and viability of the two main centres of Oakham and Uppingham;
- Provide an updated assessment of the quantitative and qualitative 'need' for additional retail floorspace in the County over the period to 2036; and
- Make recommendations to the Council in respect of its future approach to retail provision in its Local Plan.

The findings set out in the study have been underpinned by a new household telephone survey of shopping patterns, superseding the previous survey work which dates from 2009, having been undertaken in support of the RRCA. In order to ensure continuity with the previous studies, the boundaries of the 'survey area', and the subdivision of this survey area into zones (which allows for a more localised analysis of shopping patterns to be undertaken), are all unchanged.

The following consultation has been undertaken as part of the study:

1. Discussion with officers at Rutland County Council, as follows:

- A project inception meeting, at which Bilfinger GVA were briefed on matters relevant to the performance of the town centres of Oakham and Uppingham which would require consideration as part of the Study. Information was also provided in respect of extant planning applications for retail floorspace in the County which would need to be factored into the assessment, and proposed levels of housing growth expected to come forward in the County, particularly in relation to the Oakham North development.
- A presentation of interim findings to officers and Members took place in February 2016, which allowed officers and Members to comment on the initial findings and highlight issues which they felt required further consideration, which were subsequently were incorporated into the final report.

2. Household telephone survey

- As set out above, a household telephone survey of residents in the County and surrounding areas was undertaken by a sub-consultant, NEMS Market Research. A total of 800 surveys were undertaken across a survey area agreed with the Council. The survey asked respondents on their patterns of food, non-food and leisure spending, as well as attitudinal responses. The findings of this survey were used as to inform the retail capacity forecasts and the quantitative and qualitative recommendations which form the key outputs of the study.