

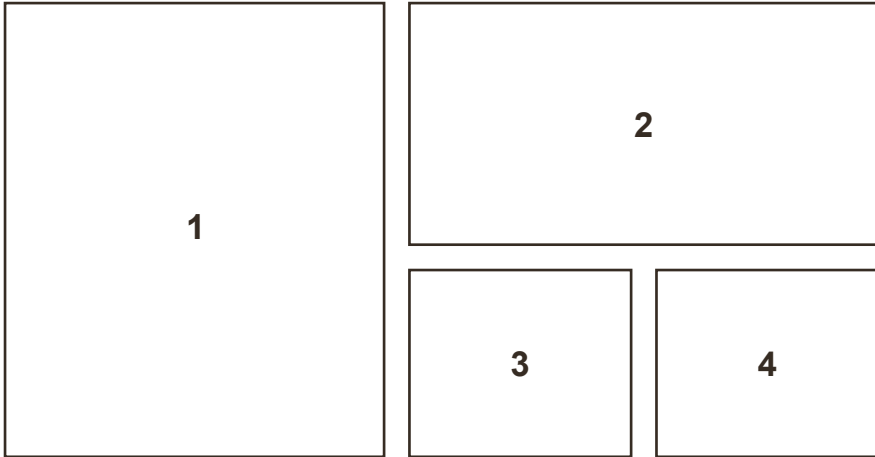


Rutland Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy

JULY 2023

Photos on front cover:

1. Brook Hill Wood
2. Wardley Wood
3. Rutland Water
4. Rutland Water



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Foreword

Our special and unique county has an abundance of green and blue infrastructure. Rutland's landscape is defined by its high ground, vales, basins, plateaus and valleys. At our county's heart is Rutland Water, a haven for wildlife and we celebrate it as an example of how nature can recover, for example our nationally known osprey and water vole populations. It is also a magnet to our residents and visitors who make use of all the recreation opportunities at the site.

Our wider landscape is dominated by agricultural land, and we praise the work of farmers and food growers across Rutland who are dealing with food security fears arising from war in Ukraine and uncertain long-term government agri-environment policies. One of the major challenges our farmers will face is to reduce run-off of nutrients and sediment into our waterways, to enable them to regain good ecological status.

Whilst green and blue infrastructure accounts for 95% of our land cover, our tree cover is low. Trees have so many benefits to landscape, wildlife and the economy, so planting more trees is an important aspect of creating resilient and climate positive places and should be a priority for Rutland.

Our community's work on the Oakham Canal Regeneration project is incredible and we recognise the work of volunteers in making the project a success for wildlife and people. We recognise the importance of access to nature for recreation and health and wellbeing and so we must address any shortfalls in provision or connectivity of greenspaces for our communities.

We want to be proactive and use green and blue infrastructure to tackle the inevitable impacts of the changing climate. Longer periods of drought will further exacerbate our water stressed land and heavy rainfall will cause flooding in our towns and villages if we do not act soon.

This Strategy is a culmination of mapping, research, discussions with stakeholders and considers how we will deliver high quality green and blue infrastructure in the right places. It tackles Rutland's priorities and is the first step in making green and blue infrastructure at the core of our decision making. We want to deliver our vision for green and blue infrastructure in Rutland and will work in partnership with landowners, businesses and communities to make this happen.

1.0 Introduction

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- 1.1 Rutland is the smallest county in England, nestled between Leicestershire, Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire.
- 1.2 Rutland is 18 miles north to south and 17 miles east to west. Its total area is 39,375 hectares. Rutland Water Park in the centre of the county covers 1,555ha. Oakham and Uppingham are the two main settlements in a predominantly agricultural county.
- 1.3 This Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) Strategy will guide the protection, enhancement, creation, and maintenance of GBI across the county. This Strategy will form part of the evidence base for Rutland's new Local Plan.
- 1.4 The vision for Rutland's GBI is:

Rutland County will host a well-connected, accessible and resilient network of green and blue infrastructure which brings multiple benefits to the environment whilst providing people with the opportunity to come into contact with diverse and nature-rich open spaces.

What is Green and Blue Infrastructure ?

- 1.5 GBI is a network of green spaces and water environments that sustains the ecosystems needed for a good quality of life. Figure 1 lists the habitats that make up the GBI network, comprising both public and private green and blue spaces.

Types of GBI

- Agricultural land
- Allotments
- Amenity open space
- Grounds to public buildings
- Grounds to religious buildings
- Parks and gardens
- Private gardens
- Sport facilities
- Vegetation along transport corridors
- Semi-natural habitats
- Water: watercourses, canals and reservoirs
- Trees and woodland

Figure 1: Types of GBI

- 1.6 The National Planning Policy Framework¹ (NPPF - 2021) defines green infrastructure as:

'A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity.'

1.7 GBI transcends administrative boundaries and professional specialisms (engineering, town planning, farming, landscape architecture, ecology, forestry and healthcare). Citizens and professionals from a range of disciplines need to collaborate in planning and delivering GBI in Rutland.

Ecosystem Services

1.8 People and nature benefit from a multitude of natural resources and processes that are dependent on ecosystem health. Ecosystem services are grouped into four broad categories.

Provisioning services, such as the production of food and clean water;

- Regulating services, such as managing the climate;
- Supporting services, such as nutrient cycles and crop pollination;
- Cultural services, such as recreational benefits.

1.9 GBI planning can help support and underpin ecosystem services and Figure 2 highlights those particularly relevant to Rutland.

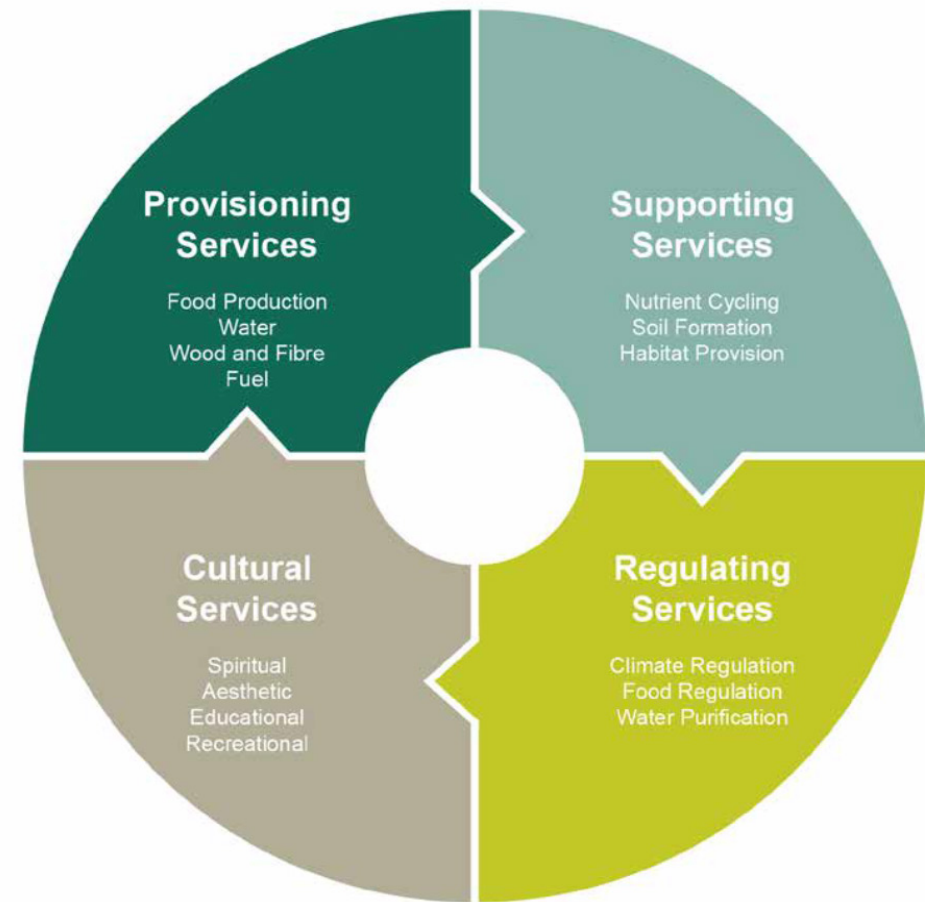


Figure 2: Diagram showing: Provisioning Services – Food production, Water; Supporting Services – Habitat Provision; Cultural Services – Aesthetic, Recreation, Mental and Physical Health, Tourism; Regulating Services – Climate Regulation, Water Purification, Pollination, Erosion Control, Nutrient Cycling

Settlement

- 1.10 Rutland's population of 40,476 is concentrated in the two main settlements and larger villages. Oakham's estimated population is 11,227 (2020) and it is Rutland's main town with range of job opportunities and higher order services including retail, leisure and health. It has a railway station with services to the Midlands, London and the South East.
- 1.11 Uppingham's population is about 5,000 and it is the second largest town in Rutland with a range of job opportunities, convenience shopping, community, education and health facilities.

Rutland Open Space Assessment

- 1.12 A supporting study, the Rutland Open Space Assessment (2023) considers open space typologies in more detail. That study assesses quantity, quality and accessibility of all open spaces across the county. The study has informed this GBI Strategy.
- 1.13 The Open Space Assessment also includes standards for open space and informs the requirement for on-site or off-site open space in relation to new development. It will become a policy document informing the Local Plan.

2.0 Rutland's Green and Blue Infrastructure

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- 2.1 The county covers 39,375 ha of which 95% is GBI. Rutland has a rural character with an undulating topography and the extensive Rutland Water (reservoir) is in the centre. Over 5% of the county is designated for international and national biodiversity and much of this is associated with Rutland Water. Agriculture is the predominant land use (over 75% of the county) with a woodland cover of about 7%.
- 2.2 Table 1 and Figure 3 quantify Rutland's GBI by type and sub-habitat. As most GBI is agricultural, Figure 4 provides a more detailed breakdown of non-agricultural GBI.

GBI Types and sub-habitats	Quantity
Green Infrastructure	36,115 ha
Agricultural land	29,719 ha
Allotments	20 ha
Amenity greenspace	1,275 ha
Cemeteries and grounds to religious buildings	25 ha
Grassland or scrubland	752 ha
Green Corridors (<i>Public Rights of Ways and Dismantled Rail-ways</i>)	361 km
Outdoor sports facilities	310 ha
Parks and gardens (<i>including limited access</i>)	290 ha
Private gardens	835 ha
Provision for Children and Young People	5 ha
Woodland (<i>accessible and non-accessible</i>)	2,885 ha
Blue Infrastructure	1,478 ha
Canal (<i>Oakham Canal</i>)	9 km
Main Rivers (<i>Statutory Main Rivers</i>)	146 km
Reservoirs (<i>Rutland Water and Eyebrook Reservoir(part)</i>)	1,275 ha
Watercourses (<i>Non-statutory Rivers and Watercourses</i>)	59 km
Wetlands	22 ha
Non GBI	1,763 ha
Built form & grey infrastructure	1,222 ha
Airfields (<i>Kendrew Barracks, St George's Barracks and Woolfox</i>)	208 ha
Quarry & cement works (<i>Quarry and cement works at Ketton, quarries at south of Clipsham, Greetham, Woolfox and Hooby Lane</i>)	359 ha

Table 1: Rutland's GBI by type and sub-habitat.

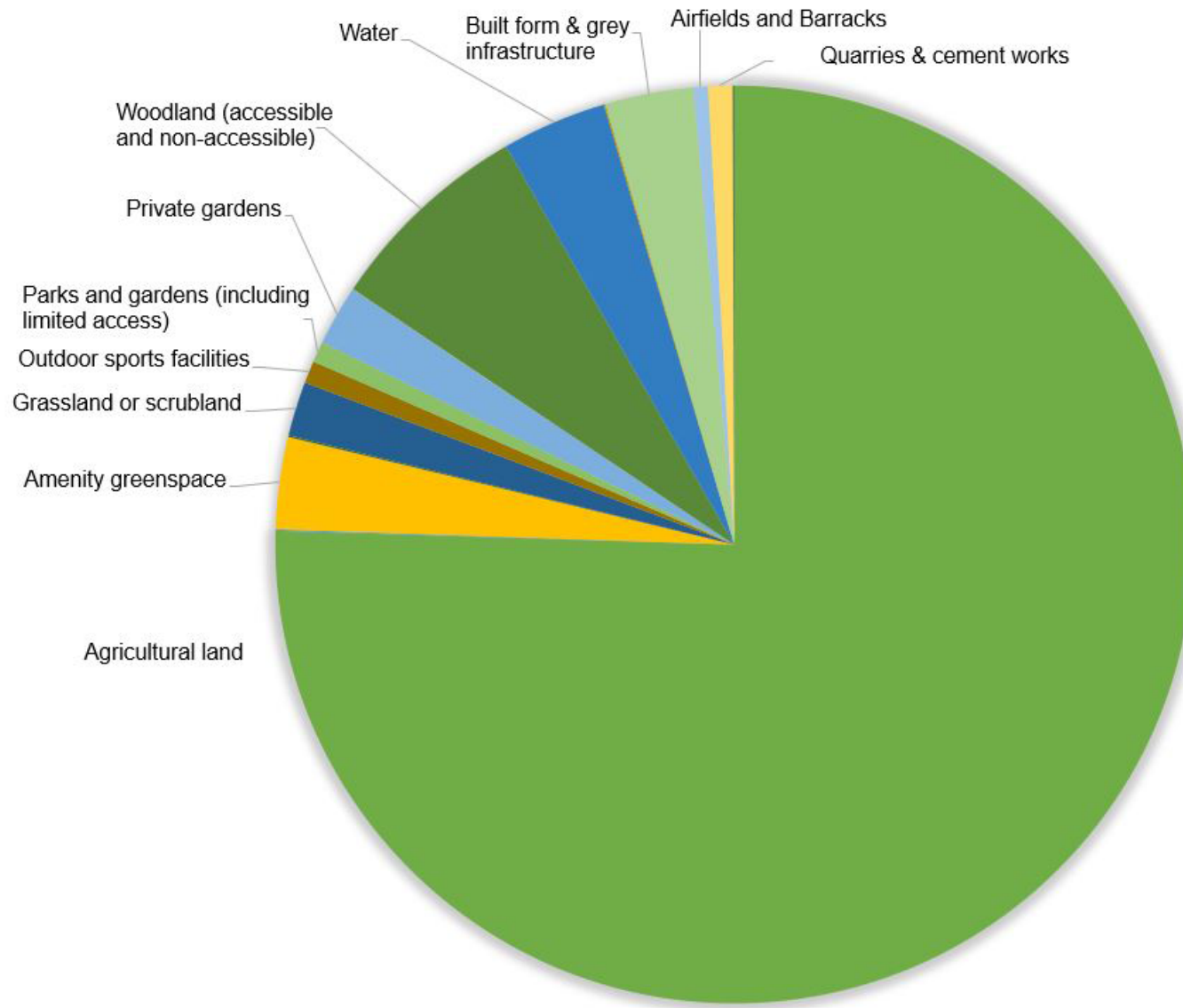


Figure 3: Green and Blue Infrastructure – sub-habitats

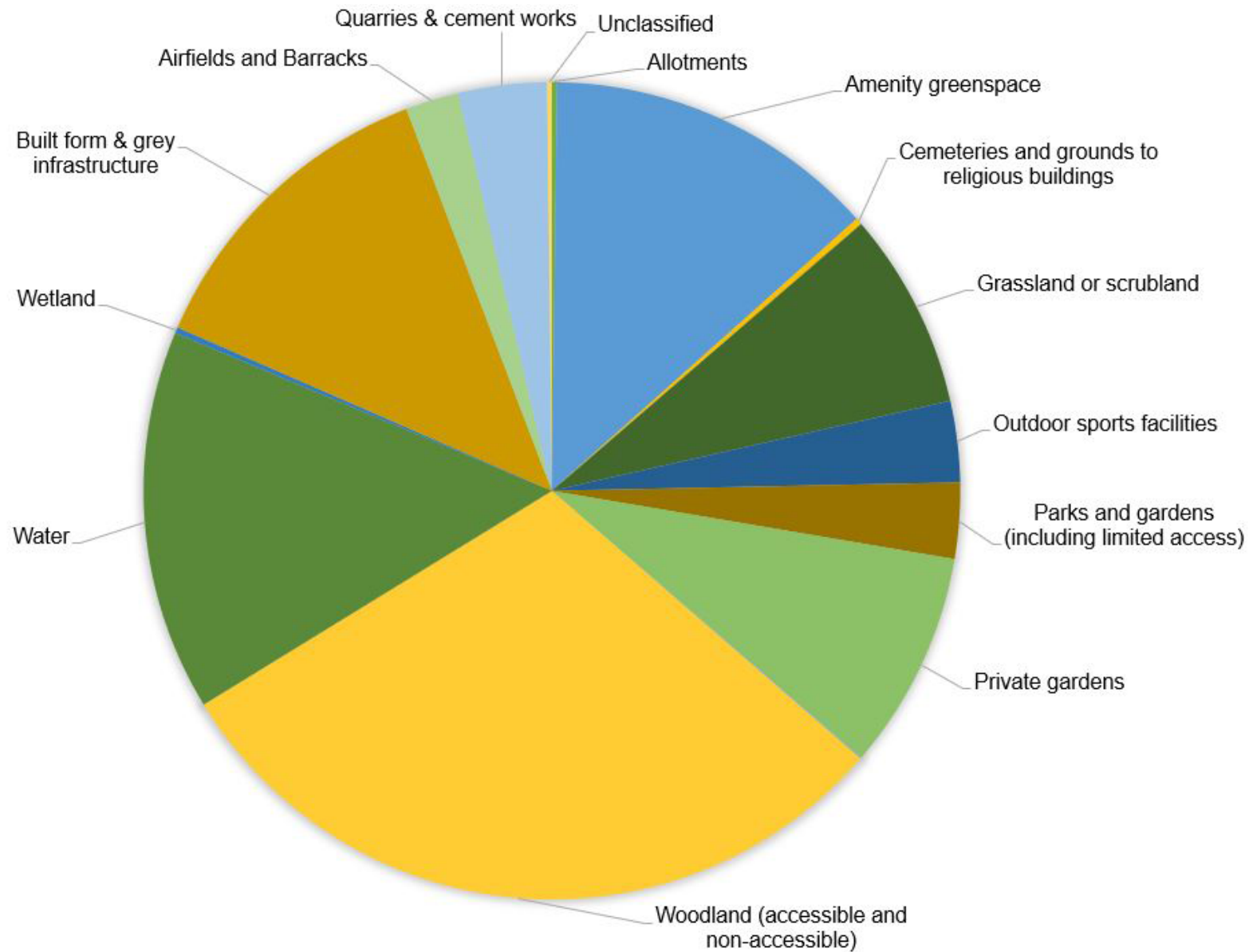


Figure 4: Green and Blue Infrastructure – non-agricultural sub-habitats

Green and Blue Infrastructure Sub-Habitats

2.3 This section describes the types (or sub-habitats) of GBI Rutland.

Agricultural Land

2.4 Agriculture is the predominant land use, comprising over 75% of Rutland with specialist arable and pastoral farms. Aerial photography confirms that arable land is much more common and, in some cases, has resulted in field amalgamation and a more limited hedgerow and wooded network on field margins.

2.5 Pastoral land tends to be characterised by smaller fields enclosed by mature hedgerows and hedgerow trees.

Allotments

2.6 Allotments are leased either from private or local authority landlords for growing fruit or vegetables. This category can include some community orchards.

Amenity Greenspace

2.7 Amenity green space is managed informal recreation space used for exercising, ball games, dog walking and play and is typically in and round housing and public buildings.

Cemeteries and grounds to religious buildings

2.8 This category includes external spaces to places of worship, cemeteries and spaces for burial.

Grassland or scrubland

2.9 Grassland is categorised by near continuous cover of natural or semi-natural grasses. Scrubland is vegetation dominated by native shrubs, often including grasses and herbs. Both can be found in land designated for biodiversity (international, national or local).

Green Corridors

2.10 Green corridors are narrow strips of land usually associated with public access including public right of way (PRoW) networks and cycle ways. Green corridors can also include dismantled railway infrastructure where these former routes have been colonised by vegetation. Highway verges are not included in this sub-habitat.

Outdoor Sports Facilities

2.11 Outdoor sports facilities are seasonal or fixed spaces that are formally used for junior or adult sports leagues and are openly accessible to the public (sometimes fees apply). They can also include outdoor gym equipment, tennis courts, sports pitches,

athletics tracks and other outdoor sports such as golf courses. They can be publicly or privately owned.

Parks and Gardens

2.12 Parks are open spaces that have well defined boundaries and a strong sense of place and design. They include a system of circulation routes for pedestrians and contain a range of facilities which cater for a wide range of users. Some Parks and Gardens may have limited access due to restrictions on opening times and/or areas for private members e.g., bowling greens.

Private Gardens

2.13 Private gardens are areas of soft landscape within the plot boundary of a residential property and are common in low and medium density housing. They have a valuable role in urban environments due to their ability to provide interconnected habitats, air quality improvements and localised shading. Their proximity to people and ease of accessibility means they have a role in a well-connected multifunctional GBI network.

Provision for Children and Young People

2.14 These are public areas comprising landscape or equipment which support play and activity.

Woodland

2.15 Woodland is land covered with trees, usually with an understorey of shrubs and herbaceous plants and grasses.

Blue Infrastructure

Canals

2.16 Canals are waterways or engineered channels built for drainage management or conveyancing water transport vehicles. Some canals include towpaths which have been converted into multi-use trails for pedestrian and cycle use.

2.17 The Oakham Canal ran from Oakham to Melton Mowbray. It opened in 1802, but it closed after 45 years. Most of it is infilled, although much of its route can still be seen in the landscape, and there are short sections which still hold water.

Main River

2.18 A main river is a statutory type of watercourse and is designated by being marked on a main rivers map. It can include any structure or appliance for controlling or regulating the flow of water in, into or out of the main river.

2.19 The River Welland, with its tributaries, forms a river system within a basin of 609 square miles. The basin has 257 miles

of waterway designated as “main river” and managed for flood control by the Environment Agency under the River Welland Catchment Flood Management Plan (CFMP).

- 2.20 The River Welland forms much of the southern county boundary with Northamptonshire.

Reservoir

- 2.21 A reservoir is an enlarged natural or artificial lake created using a dam to store fresh water. Reservoirs can also be used for water-sports activities and designated for biodiversity.
- 2.22 There are two large reservoirs in the county: Rutland Water and Eyebrook Reservoir. The latter is partly located in Leicestershire.

Ordinary Watercourse

- 2.23 Ordinary watercourses include every river, stream, ditch, drain, cut, dyke or sluice and passage through which water flows which does not form part of a main river (see above). Rutland County Council (RCC) is a lead local flood authority (LLFA) and has permissive powers to carry out flood defence works for ordinary watercourses at their discretion.

Wetland

- 2.24 A wetland is a distinct ecosystem that is flooded by water either permanently or seasonally.

Non-Green and Blue Infrastructure

Towns and Villages

- 2.25 Rutland has many villages and two main towns; Oakham and Uppingham.
- 2.26 In terms of GBI assets, the Oakham and Barleythorpe Neighbourhood Plan² lists 38 areas of green infrastructure ranging from grassed areas, footpaths forming part of linear green spaces, park spaces and community allotments. This is in addition to Important Open Space protected under the RCC Local Plan (Policy RLP43), which include Cutts Close Park, Farside Playing Fields and Doncaster Close Playing Fields.
- 2.27 The Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan³ highlights areas of Important Open Space including Tod’s Piece, Uppingham School playing fields and the linear open space near Lime Tree Avenue.

Airfields

- 2.28 There are three large military bases in Rutland: Kendrew Barracks, formerly known as RAF Cottesmore, St George's Barracks occupying the former RAF North Luffenham base and Woolfox, a former airfield.
- 2.29 Kendrew Barracks includes extensive areas of airfield land, technical buildings, housing and community and leisure facilities for use by service personnel.
- 2.30 St George's Barracks occupies the former RAF North Luffenham base. Some of the original housing has been sold but the remainder of the base remains in use by the army and for military training. This base also includes extensive areas of airfield land, technical buildings, and community and leisure facilities for use by service personnel. This site is to be closed and vacated in 2024.
- 2.31 The remnants of RAF Woolfox (former airfield) comprise runway strips and single storey brick shelters. The site has not been used as an airfield since 1965.

Quarry sites

- 2.32 There are several quarry sites (extracting limestone) in the county including the large quarry and cement works at Ketton and smaller quarries at Greetham, Clipsham, Woolfox and

Hooby Lane.

- 2.33 Redundant parts of Ketton quarry have been colonised by grassland, scrub and woodland and an area of 115 hectare (ha) has been designated as a biological and geological SSSI. Part of the SSSI is managed by Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust.
- 2.34 There may be longer-term restoration plans for these sites which could extend the GBI network across the county.

Distribution of Broad Habitat Types (including non-GBI)

- 2.35 The distribution of broad habitat types: agricultural, greenspace (or grassland), semi natural, water, woodland and non-GBI is mapped for the three broad areas⁴ (east, south and west) across the county:
- Casterton (east), including Great Casterton, Cottesmore, Exton, Empingham, Ketton and Ryhall.
 - Uppingham (south), including Uppingham, Edith Weston and North Luffenham.
 - Oakham (west), including Oakham, Langham and Whissendine.

Casterton

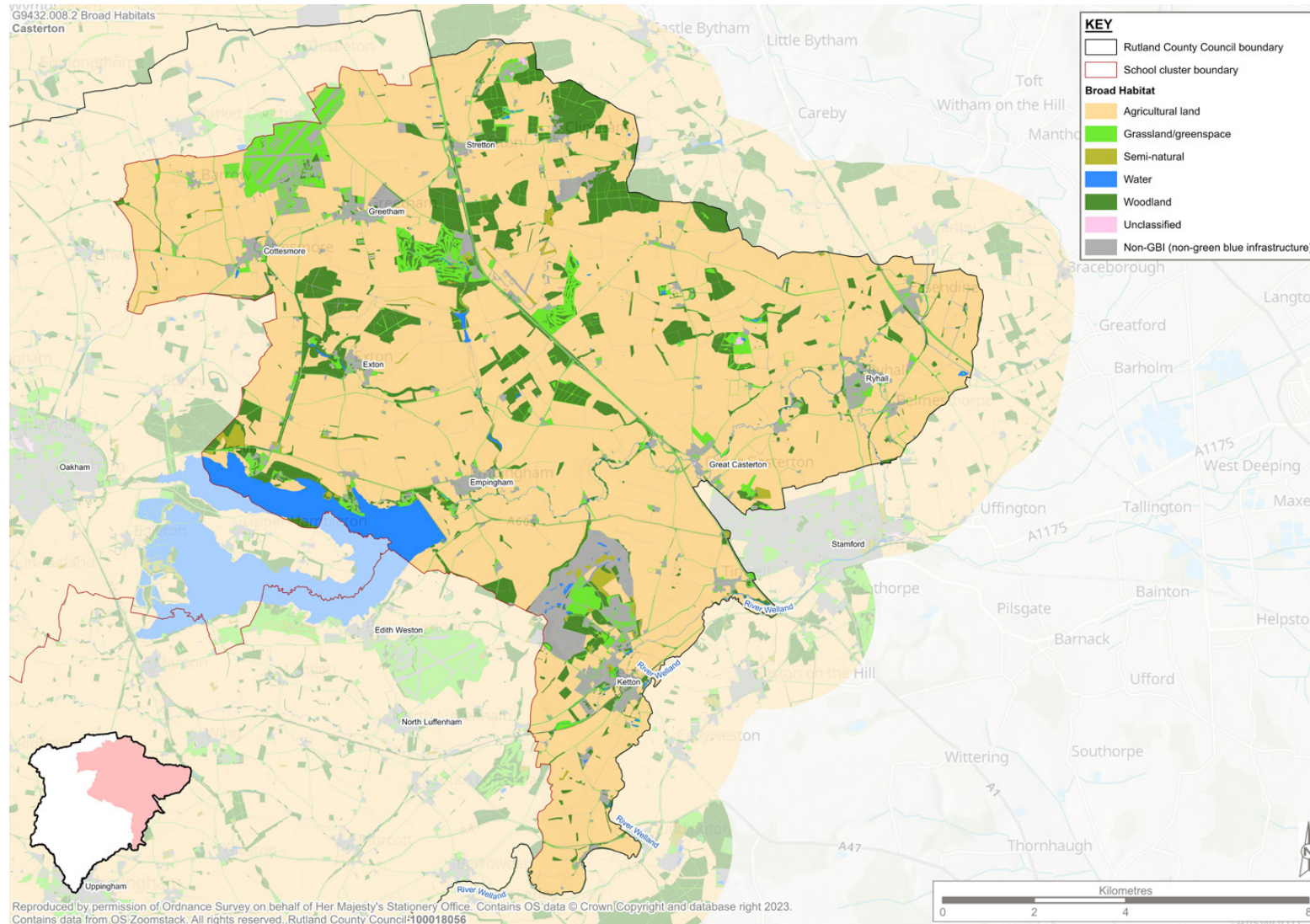


Figure 5: Map of Casterton Area with Broad Habitats in Key (G9432.008.2)

2.36 A summary description for the Casterton area is as follows:

Agricultural

- Agriculture dominates, with a mix of arable and pasture. The former tends to be on higher ground and areas of level ground. The latter tends to be closer to the network of watercourses.

Greenspace or grassland

- The larger villages include some of the following types of greenspace: outdoor sports facilities, parks, amenity greenspace, allotments and religious grounds. Most residential properties have private gardens.
- There are golf courses at Greetham and Woolfox.
- There is a large area of amenity grassland at Kendrew Barracks.

Semi natural

- Merry's Meadows SSSI (west of Stretton) has species-rich hay meadows enclosed by hedgerows, with field ponds.
- There are pockets of semi natural habitat on a former quarry site next to Big Pitts Wood (south of Clipsham) and adjacent to the north-eastern part of Ketton quarry.

Water

- The Casterton area includes the eastern part of Rutland Water north of the peninsula.
- The northern part of the Casterton area includes North Brook which is a tributary of the River Gwash.
- The River Gwash outfalls from Rutland Water and flows eastwards before joining the River Welland at Stamford.
- There is a short section of the River West Glen north of Ryhall before it flows eastwards beyond the county boundary.
- The lower section of the River Chater flows through Ketton before joining the River Welland near Tinwell.

Woodland

- There is more woodland cover in Casterton than Oakham and Uppingham. It includes blocks of woodland at Cottesmore Wood (southeast of Cottesmore), Tunneley Wood (north of Exton), Greetham Wood (east of Greetham), Clipsham Park Wood and Pickworth Great Wood (south of Clipsham), Empingham Wood (north east of Empingham), New Wood (south of Empingham) and woodland providing screening to Ketton quarry.
- There are blocks of woodland in the neighbouring South Kesteven district that adjoin the county boundary. These

include Morkery Wood, Little Maw Wood, Holywell Wood and Castledyke Wood.

- There is an area of emerging woodland and grassland at the Woodland Trust's George Henry Wood site (east of Stretton).

Non-GBI

- The larger villages in the Casterton area include Great Casterton, Cottesmore, Exton, Empingham, Ketton and Ryhall.
- Kendrew Barracks (northeast of Cottesmore) includes the airfield, barracks and supporting facilities.
- RAF Woolfox includes the remnants of the airfield strips and single-storey shelters. A large area of the site is now agricultural land with smaller areas of grassland and semi-natural grassland present.
- Stocken Prison is to the north of Stretton and Clipsham.
- There are quarries at Greetham, Clipsham, Hooby Lane, Woolfox and a very extensive quarry at Ketton. And dormant quarry at Thistelton.

Uppingham

Agricultural

- Agriculture is predominant with a mix of arable and pasture. The former tends to be on higher ground and areas of level ground. The latter tends to be closer to the network of watercourses, particularly along the River Chater and in the River Welland valley.

Greenspace or grassland

- Uppingham and the larger villages include some of the following types of greenspace: outdoor sports facilities, parks, amenity greenspace, allotments and religious grounds. Most residential properties have private gardens.
- Luffenham Heath Golf Club (east of South Luffenham).

Semi natural

- A large area of the former airfield on the St George's Barracks site has been identified as a potential Local Wildlife Site due to the extent of calcareous grassland.
- There are small pockets of semi natural habitat, ranging in size from 0.5 to 1 hectare throughout the Uppingham area. Most of these sites are isolated as they are set in agricultural land and are disconnected from other areas of semi-natural habitat.

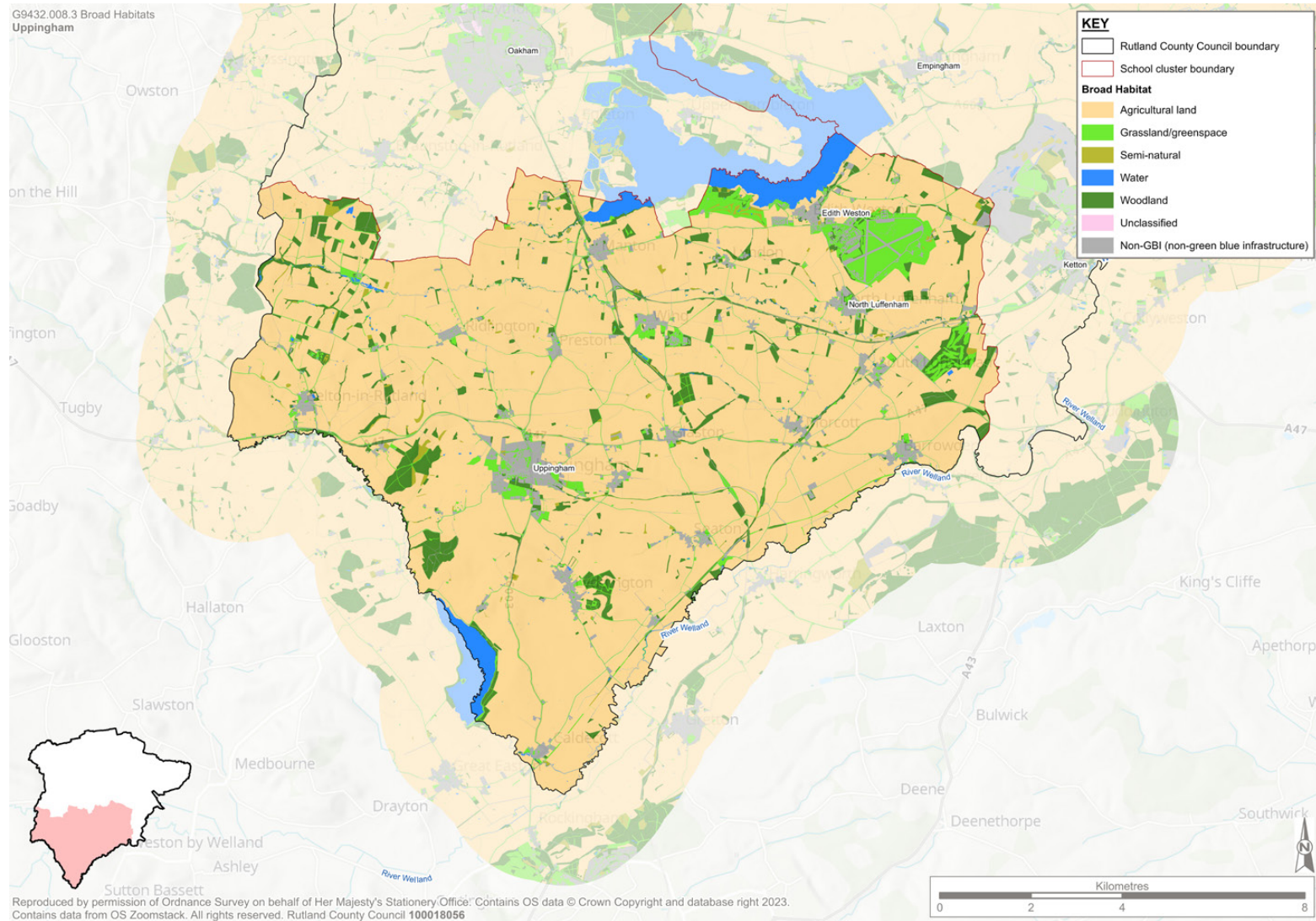


Figure 6: Map of Uppingham Area with Broad Habitats in Key (G98432.008.3)

Water

- The Uppingham area includes some of the southern reaches of Rutland Water.
- The upper section of the River Chater and Morcott Brook flow in an easterly direction towards Ketton.
- The Eye Brook flows along the county's south-western boundary into Eyebrook Reservoir. The brook outfalls at the southern end of the reservoir before joining the River Welland near Caldecott.
- The River Welland flows eastwards and forms much of the county's southern boundary.
- Uppingham Brook is a tributary of the Welland, joining the river near Harringworth.

Woodland

- Woodland blocks tend to be located closer to the western county boundary and include the southern portion of Prior's Coppice (south of Braunston-in-Rutland), Wardley Wood (west of Uppingham), Stoke Dry Wood (south west of Uppingham), wooded belt to the eastern edge of Eyebrook Reservoir, wooded areas at Prestley Hill and Bee Hill (east of Lyddington). There is also Coppice Leys and Welland Spinney (east of Barrowden).

- In addition, there are smaller pockets of woodland east of Uppingham.
- There is a wooded edge to sections of the Oakham to Corby railway.
- There is a section of disused railway that follows the River Welland between Caldecott and Barrowden. Large sections are now wooded.
- Sections of the River Chater corridor are wooded.

Non-GBI

- Uppingham is the main settlement in the area and the larger villages include Edith Weston, North Luffenham, South Luffenham and Barrowden.
- St George's Barracks (formerly RAF North Luffenham) is southeast of Edith Weston. It is occupied by the British Army and includes residential and operational facilities. The redundant runways are also still present.

Oakham

Agricultural

- Agriculture is the predominant habitat type and there is a mix of arable and pasture. The former tends to be on higher ground and the latter closer to the network of watercourses.

Greenspace or grassland

- There are a range of greenspaces in Oakham and the larger villages including outdoor sports facilities, parks, amenity, allotments and religious grounds. Most residential properties have private gardens.

Semi natural

- There are pockets of semi natural habitat next to Prior's Coppice (south of Braunston-in-Rutland), Brook Hill Wood south of Oakham (including some conservation grazing), at the western edge of Rutland Water and at Burley Wood in Burley Park.

Water

- The Oakham area includes the western reaches of Rutland Water which are separated by the peninsula.
- The northern part of the Oakham area includes the

Somerby Brook, Whissendine Brook and Langham flowing north into Leicestershire forming part of the Wreake River catchment.

- The North Gwash flows through Oakham and then enters Rutland Water.
- The South Gwash flows through Braunston-in-Rutland and then enters Rutland Water.
- The Upper Chater flows through the southern part of the Oakham area.
- An 800m section of the Melton Canal just north of Oakham has a water channel available to anglers and a footpath alongside for pedestrians. Much of the remaining section has been colonised by vegetation.

Woodland

- There are blocks of woodland at Prior's Coppice (south of Braunston-in-Rutland), at the Seek (northeast of Braunston-in-Rutland), Brook Hill Wood south of Oakham and by the western edge of Rutland Water.
- There is a large area of woodland at Burley Wood in Burley Park and smaller blocks around Brick Kiln Covert north of Burley.
- There are smaller pockets of woodland throughout the Oakham area including sections along South Gwash, North

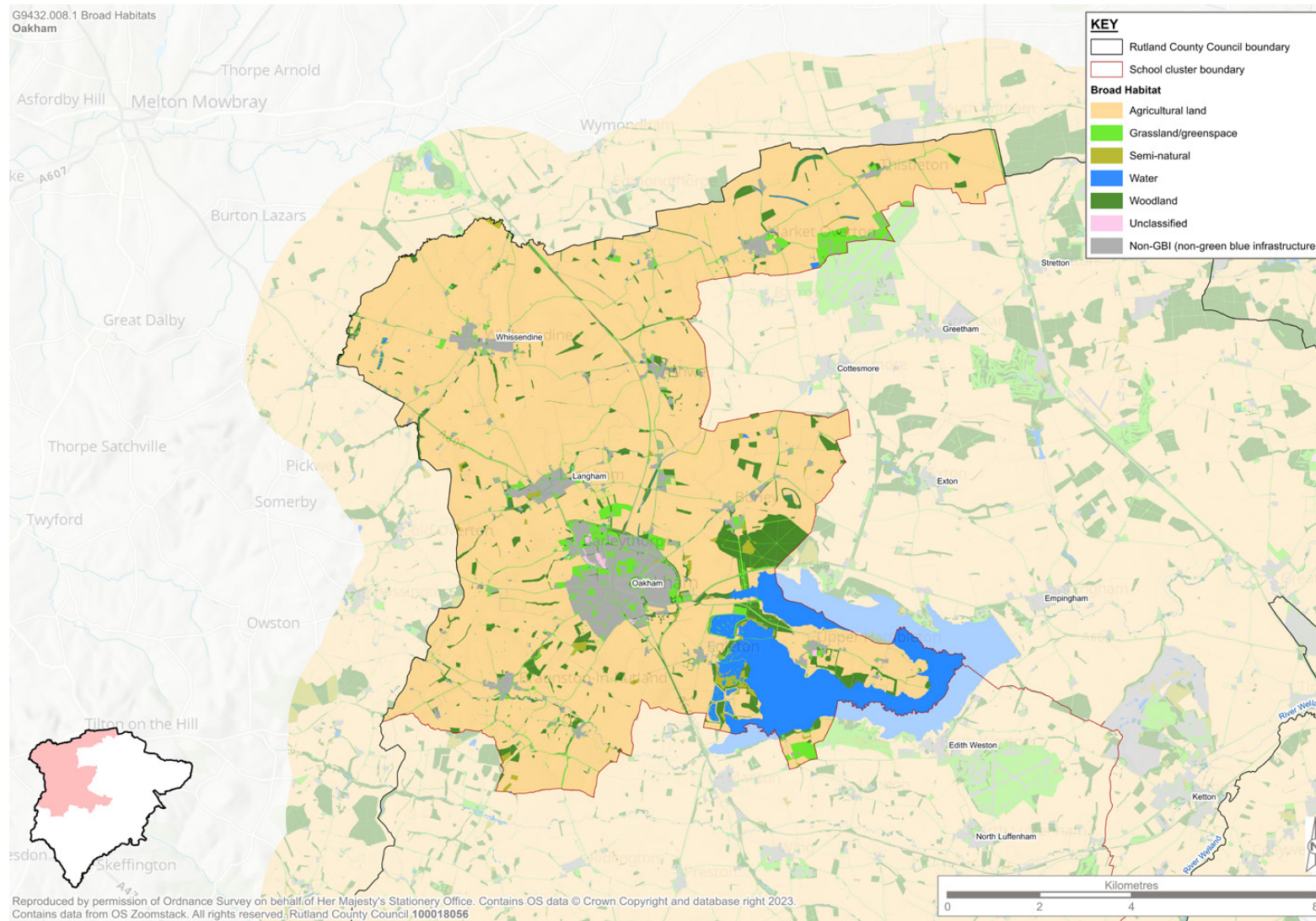


Figure 7: Map of Oakham Area with Broad Habitats in Key (G9432.008.1)

Gwash, Burley Park Way (A606) and Melton Canal.

- Much of the former Melton Canal is evident in the landscape as it runs north from Oakham Enterprise Park towards the county boundary. Although now infilled, the canal's line is marked by colonisation of hedgerow or woodland.

Non-GBI

- The main settlement is Oakham, and the larger villages include Langham and Whissendine.

3.0 Policy Context and Stakeholder Engagement

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3.1 GBI has national and local policy and protection.

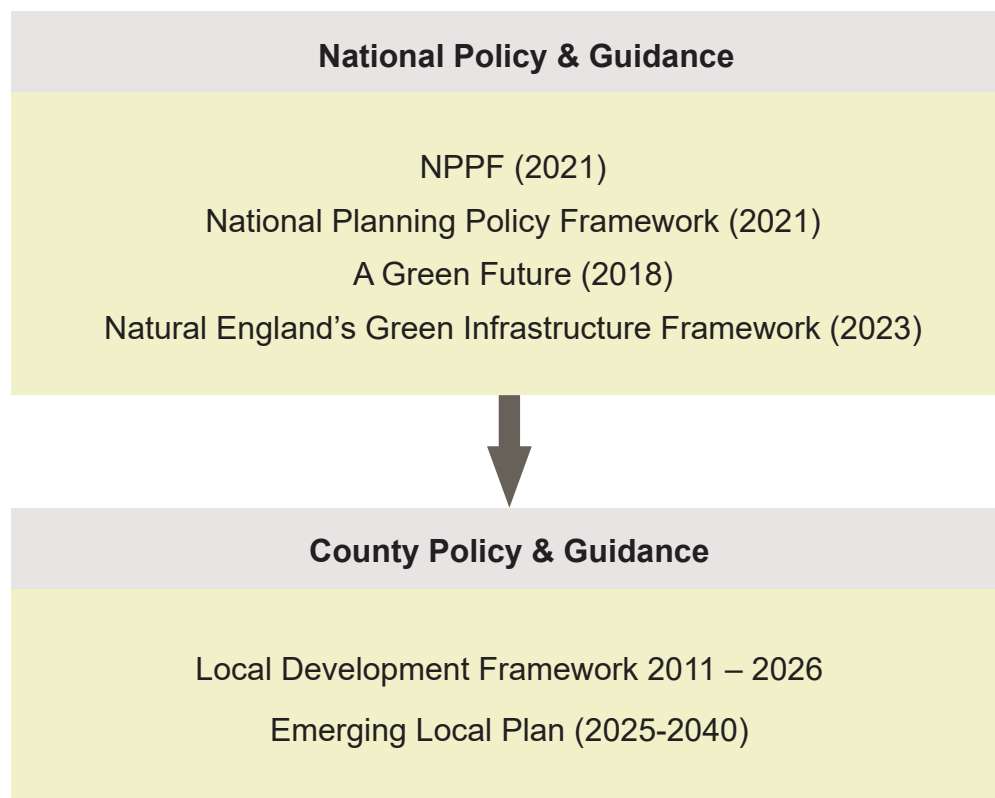


Figure 8: Policy Summary

National Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021)

3.2 The NPPF requires local authorities to make every effort to promote healthy communities, meet the challenges of climate change and flooding and conserve and enhance the natural and historic environment through the planning process. The NPPF directs local authorities to make every effort to allocate land for development where it is of low environmental value. The following NPPF policies influence the objectives and outcomes of this GBI strategy:

- Core land use principles;
- Promoting healthy and safe communities;
- Achieving well-designed places;
- Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change; and
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

3.3 Relevant extracts from those policies are provided in a separate summary.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

- 3.4 PPG sets out the value and benefits of open space, sports and recreation and the need to protect and enhance PRow. In terms of biodiversity, it reinforces the NPPF with the need to pursue sustainable development and achieve net gain in the context of an expanding ecological network. It promotes evidence-based authority-wide green infrastructure strategies and recognises that green infrastructure networks cross administrative boundaries and the need for collaboration among stakeholders to address cross-boundary issues. Arrangements for the management and funding of green infrastructure are also key.
- 3.5 Green infrastructure helps absorb pollutants, including emissions from farmland, enabling better air quality. The PPG considers climate change and how a comprehensive approach to green infrastructure can promote better water efficiency and water quality. Green infrastructure can also reduce overall flood risk on development through sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), which can also deliver benefits for amenity, recreation and wildlife.

A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment (2018)

- 3.6 The 25 Year Environment Plan sets out government action to help the natural world regain and retain good health. It aims to deliver cleaner air and water in the UK's cities and rural landscapes, protect threatened species and provide richer wildlife habitats. It calls for an approach to agriculture, forestry, land use and fishing that puts the environment first. The Plan details proposals for tackling waste and soil degradation, in addition to addressing pollution for people living in less favourable areas. The Plan covers the approach to tackling the effects of climate change, including higher land and sea temperatures, rising sea levels, extreme weather patterns and ocean acidification.

Green Infrastructure Framework 2023

- 3.7 Natural England has devised the Green Infrastructure Principles Wheel (see Figure 9), and this is accompanied by the Green Infrastructure Framework, Green Infrastructure Standards, online interactive Green Infrastructure Mapping, GI Planning and Design Guide, and a "Process Journeys" document.
- 3.8 The guidance states that "*GI strategies and policies can be used to support aspirations for a Nature Recovery Network (NRN), connecting across urban, urban-fringe, coastal and rural*

areas and enhancing landscape character”.

3.9 There are 5 principles of multiple benefit – the “Why” principles of place-shaping:

- Nature-rich beautiful places;
- Active and healthy places;
- Thriving and prosperous places;
- Improved water management; and
- Resilient and climate positive places.

3.10 There are 5 principles to influence GI design – the “What” principles of good GI design:

- Multifunctional;
- Varied;
- Connected;
- Accessible; and
- Responds to Local Character.

3.11 There are 5 process principles – the “How” principles which set out how to plan for GI effectively, work with communities and ensure partnerships and good governance:

- Partnership and Vision;
- Evidence;

- Plan Strategically;
- Design; and
- Managed, valued and evaluated.

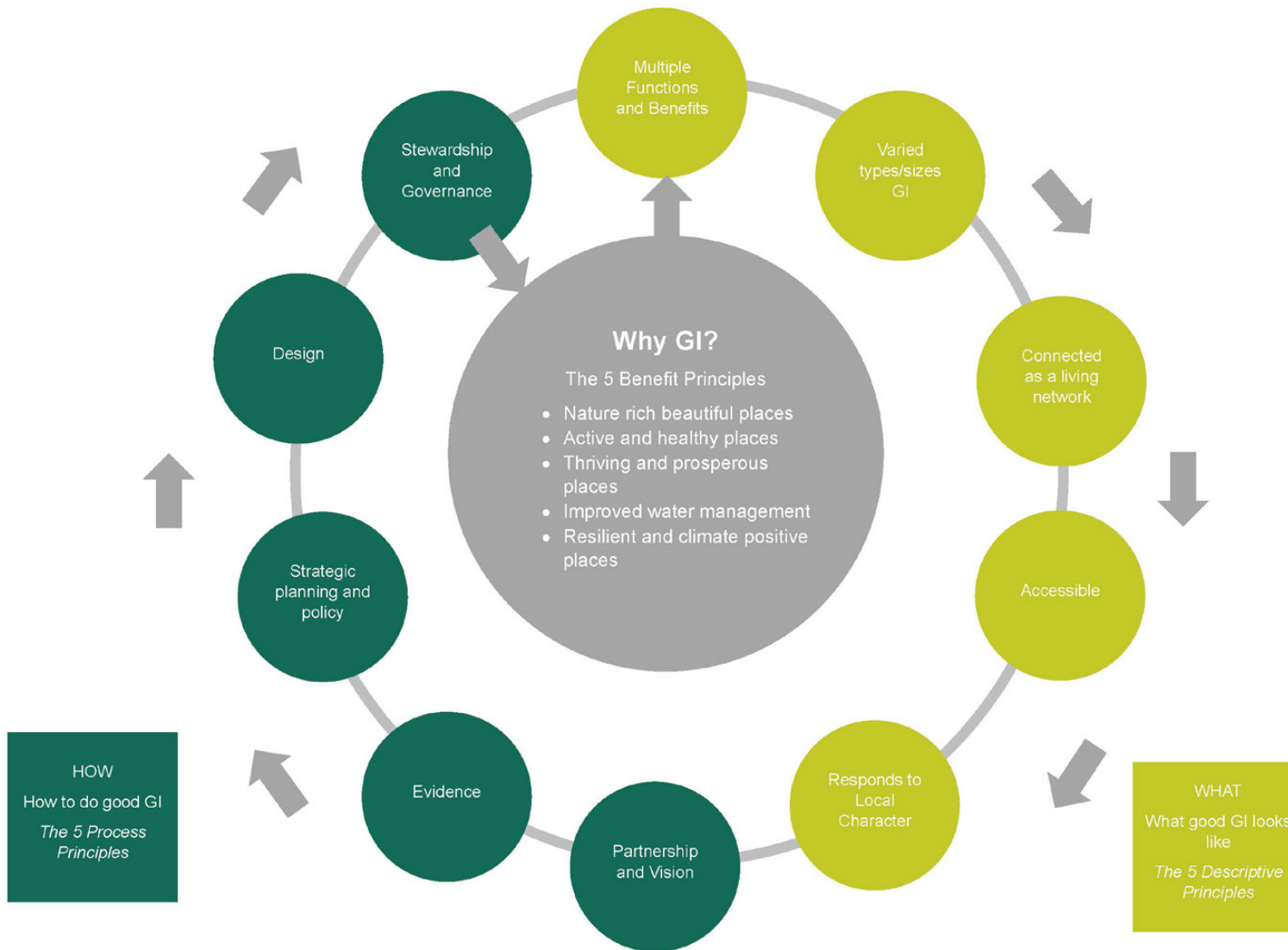


Figure 9: Green Infrastructure Principles Wheel

Agri-Environment Policy

- 3.12 Delivery and management of GBI in a rural food-producing county is a mission shared by the farming sector. In 2022 farmers across England joined Defra to test the Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) through the SFI pilot, which will run for 3 years until 2025. Farmers will be paid to provide public goods such as improved water quality, biodiversity, climate change mitigation and animal health and welfare. In terms of GBI, one aim is to encourage actions that improve soil health;
- 3.13 Following the launch in 2022 Defra have announced the introduction of 6 more SFI standards relevant to GBI: -
- nutrient management standard;
 - integrated pest management standard;
 - hedgerows standard;
 - arable and horticultural land standard;
 - improved grassland standard; and
 - low/no input grassland standard.
- 3.14 The SFI provides opportunities to create and sustain valuable habitats and improve the countryside environment for enjoyment by the community and visitors.
- 3.15 At the time of writing, the SFI is still in early stages and, in the light of food security fears, long-term government policy for agri-

environment measures in England is not yet settled, meaning farmers and estate managers face short-term uncertainty in planning their business activities.

- 3.16 Delivery of GBI through agri-environment measures is discussed at chapter 5.

Local Policy and Guidance

Local Development Framework (2011 to 2026)

- 3.17 Rutland's Local Development Framework comprises a Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) as well as a Site-Specific Allocations DPD and Minerals Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPD.
- 3.18 The Core Strategy establishes the overall vision, objectives and spatial strategy for the period up to 2026.
- 3.19 The Core Strategy recognises the variety of built and natural environment green and blue infrastructure assets that promote an active and high-quality experience for residents, visitors and wildlife within Rutland.
- 3.20 Whilst acknowledging that the county is well served by green infrastructure it acknowledges the importance of protecting and increasing provision in the future, to meet the future needs associated with development.

3.21 The Core Strategy sets out how existing green and blue infrastructure network will be safeguarded, improved and enhanced by further provision to ensure accessible multi-functional green spaces by linking existing areas of open space.

Emerging Local Plan (2021-2041)

3.22 Rutland County Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan which will replace the Local Development Framework, once adopted.

3.23 The Issues and Options document⁵ recognises GBI as “a network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.”

Stakeholder Engagement

3.24 Engaging with stakeholders was essential in developing this GBI Strategy as it provided local experience and knowledge of Rutland, its current GBI, and the opportunities and challenges it faces in protecting and enhancing GBI.

3.25 Stakeholder engagement was carried out in summer 2022. RCC officers responsible for the county’s health and wellbeing, sustainable travel, public rights of ways, open spaces and leisure and trees and woodlands all provided their expertise.

3.26 The components of GBI do not end at the county boundary so neighbouring authorities at South Kesteven, North Northamptonshire, Harborough, Melton, and Leicestershire, were also invited to provide their insights on projects and proposed developments that could affect Rutland’s GBI, as well as sharing good practice case studies.

3.27 Many other key stakeholders such as Natural England, Welland Rivers Trust, Rutland Bridleways Association and Anglian Water also shared their expertise, provided case studies and outlined their views on the challenges and opportunities in managing Rutland’s GBI.

3.28 Engagement with stakeholders has informed the priorities for Rutland’s GBI and analysis presented in the next chapter.

4.0 Rutland's Priorities for GBI

4.0 Rutland's Priorities for GBI

4.1 Using the mapping, spatial analysis, policy review and insights from engagement with local stakeholders it is possible to identify Rutland's highest priorities for GBI (in no particular order) as:

- Restoring biodiversity and ecosystem integrity;
- Protecting and enhancing tree cover;
- Enhancing water and soil quality;
- Incorporating GBI into new developments; and
- Enabling active lifestyles and accessibility to GBI.

4.2 The analysis which has led us to identify these as the highest priorities is set out below. These five priorities are equal and intertwined. Where possible GBI projects should address as many priorities as possible and include as many relevant stakeholders as possible.

Analysis of Rutland's GBI

4.3 The strengths, weaknesses of Rutland's GBI, along with opportunities and challenges facing the County's natural environment and those who care for it, are summarised in Table 2.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Nationally significant blue infrastructure re-source at Rutland Water owned and managed by Anglian Water as a reservoir and water park.	Low tree canopy cover
Landowners and farmers in Rutland are eligible to apply for Catchment Sensitive Farming Grants	Lack of woodland connectivity
Protected Verges	Poor water quality in many watercourses
Network of PRow and National Routes	Relatively low accessibility to GBI
Park Run, Junior Park Run and Park Play initiatives	Relatively fragmented connectivity of existing cycleways, footpaths and PRow
Many settlements and surrounds have historic landscape character and active civic groups	
Strong farming and estate community with long ties to the land	
Restoration of greenspaces at Ketton Cement Works	
Successful re-introduction of osprey and water vole	
Important areas of calcareous grassland	
Welland Rivers Trust has a track record of successful projects in the Welland catchment's watercourses ¹⁴	
Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust manage four local nature reserves in the County including Rutland Waters and Ketton Quarry	
Opportunities	Challenges
New developments can incorporate characterful and multi-functional GBI	Re-use of brownfield land
Nature Recovery Partnership with Leicestershire County Council will aim to expand, improve and connect wildlife-rich places ¹⁵	Increasing tree cover on agricultural land and alongside watercourses to maintain soil and water quality
Restoration at Greetham Quarry	Tree retention in new development
Promotion of Oakham Canal as a GBI corridor	Necessary reliance on car journeys in rural areas may reduce willingness to cycle/walk
Natural Flood Management, using woodland planting to slow the flow	Maintaining Soil Quality in face of climate change
Proposed Tree and Woodland Strategy	Water Stressed Area
Promotion of walking and cycling network	
Emerging Local Walking and Cycling Improvement Plan	

Table 2: SWOC Analysis

5.0 Why GBI in Rutland?

5.0 Why GBI in Rutland?

5.1 The priorities for GBI align with Natural England's five 'Why' principles outlined in Chapter 3.0. This chapter explores why GBI is so important to the county under each of the top five priorities:

- Restoring biodiversity and ecosystem integrity;
- Protecting and enhancing tree cover;
- Enhancing water and soil quality;
- Incorporating GBI into new developments; and
- Enabling active lifestyles and accessibility to GBI.

Restoring Biodiversity and Ecosystem Integrity

5.2 Enhancing biodiversity and restoring landscape character where it has become fragmented relates to Natural England's 'why' principle of nature-rich beautiful places.

5.3 The changing climate in the UK has the potential to cause a devastating decline in biodiversity so it is more important than ever that habitat creation and protection is prioritised in Rutland.

5.4 The habitat mapping shows us that Rutland's landscape is dominated by agricultural land. Some agricultural practices reduce the biodiversity of an area through:

- Reducing variety of habitat types;

- Reducing connectivity of habitats through fragmentation of natural corridors; and
- Applying chemicals at levels beyond natural soil tolerances or exceedance limits, which are not fully understood.

5.5 Habitat and soil decline threaten future productivity and sustainability of agriculture and therefore food security⁶.

5.6 The impact of chemical run-off on blue infrastructure is a concern for biodiversity, and this is discussed under *Enhancing Soil and Water Quality*.

5.7 Good farming practices can encourage biodiversity and capture carbon while producing healthy food⁶.

5.8 An effective network of GBI provides opportunities for wildlife to move and colonise new habitats. Rutland is amongst the most nature-depleted counties in the UK in terms of sites of recognised nature conservation value⁷. Figure 10 identifies sites in Rutland that are designated for their importance for wildlife.

5.9 Connectivity of these sites will be crucial for enhancing biodiversity in Rutland in a changing climate and a growing population.

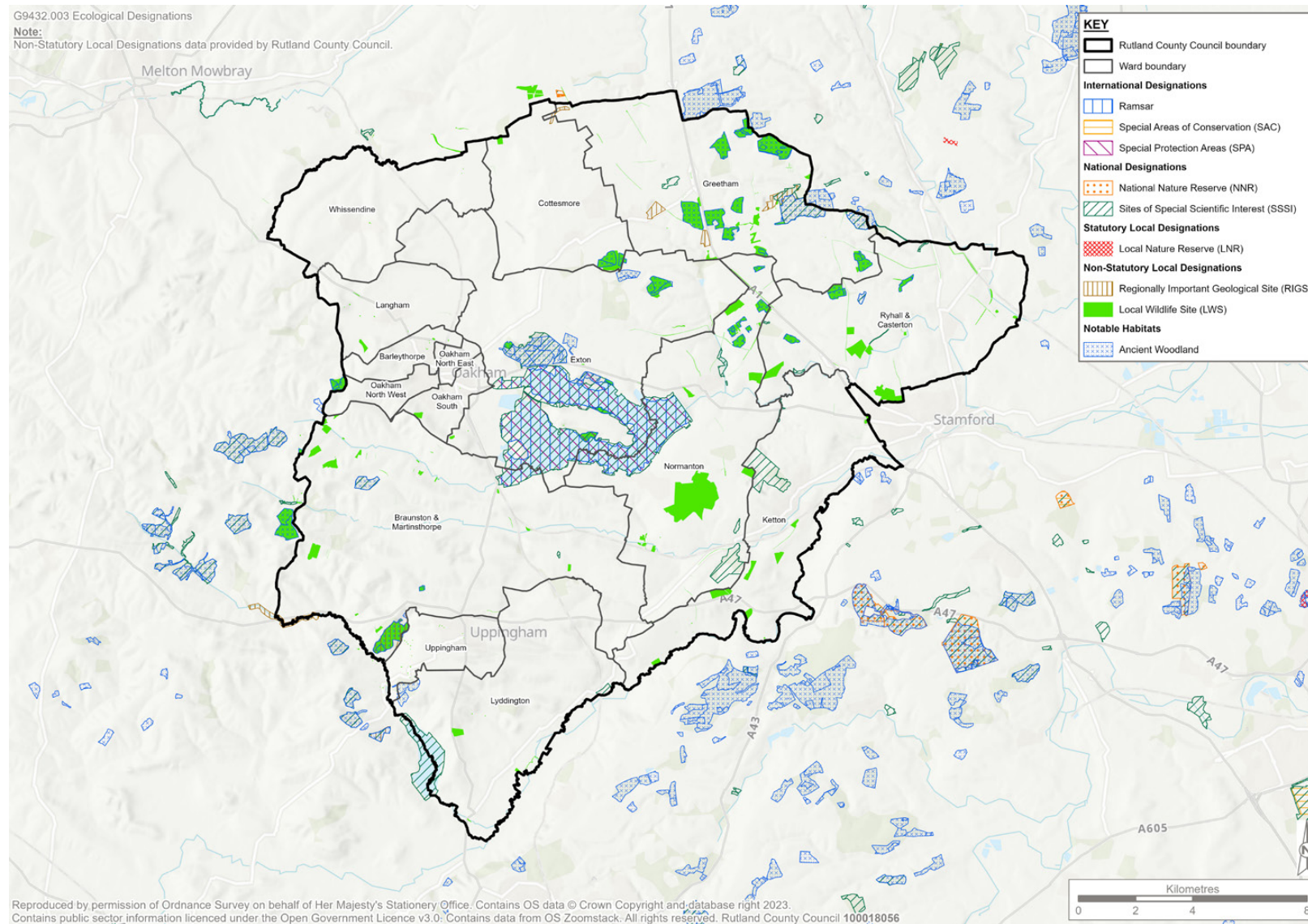


Figure 10: G9432.003 which shows designated sites.

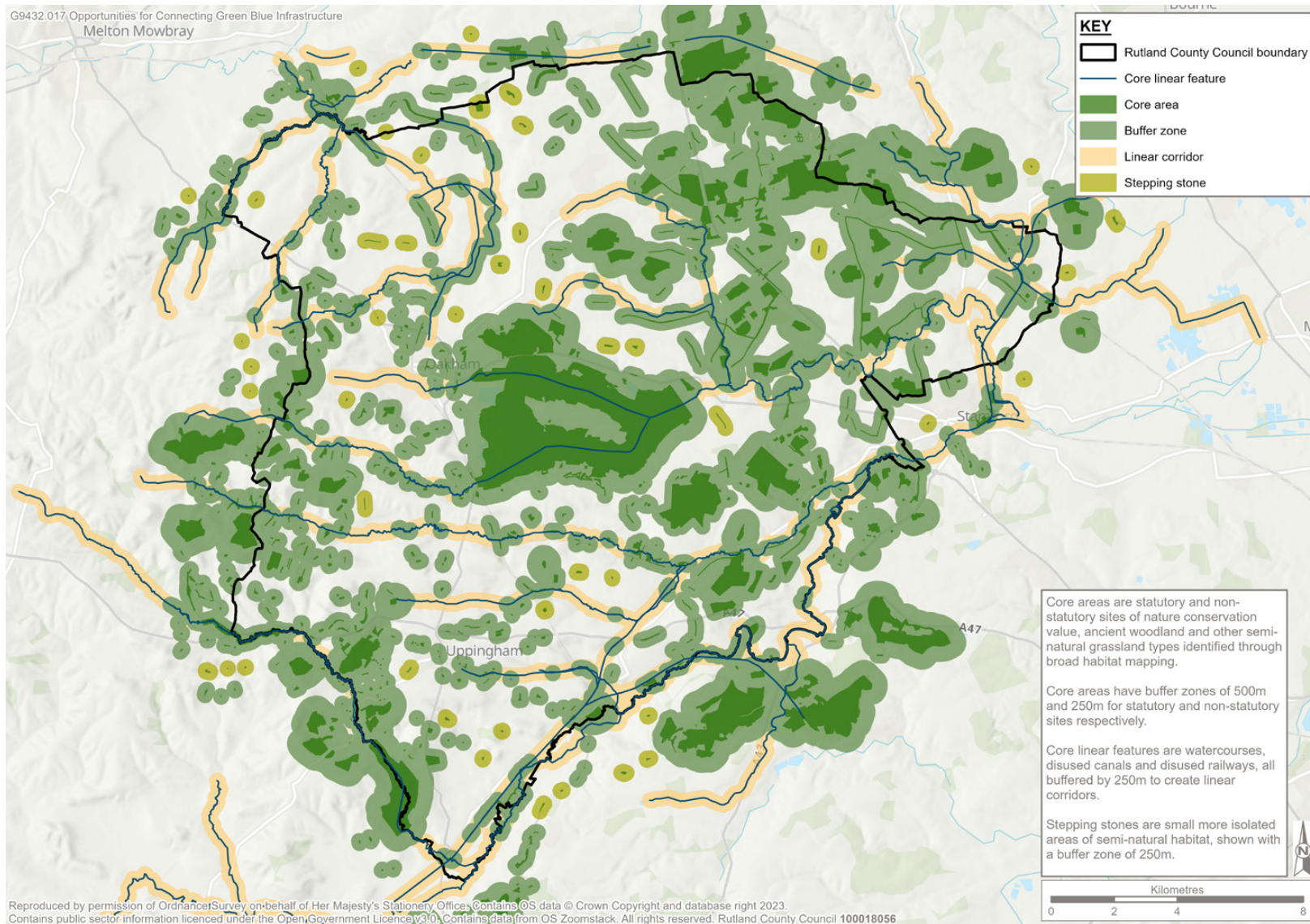


Figure 11: G9432.017 Opportunities for Connecting GBI

- 5.10 Figure 11 highlights opportunities for connecting GBI which could inform the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Rutland and Leicestershire.
- 5.11 The LNRS will establish priorities for the county's nature recovery and map proposals for the specific actions needed. Many stakeholders believe that the LNRS will be the catalyst for connecting fragmented GBI.
- 5.12 Enhancing and restoring habitats through land and water management in the opportunity areas would result in significant nature recovery.
- Core areas cover 3,706 hectares (9.41% of Rutland). They represent the best of the county's existing biodiversity; including designated sites, ancient woodland, nature reserves and semi-natural grasslands.
 - Buffer zones around core areas cover 17,498 hectares.
 - Linear corridors, including a 250m buffer zone, cover an additional 3,288 hectares outside the core areas and their buffer zones.
 - "Stepping stones" and their associated 250m buffer zones cover 779 hectares.
 - A long-term aspiration for Rutland's GBI would be to see ecosystems in the core areas all actively managed for nature recovery, and ideally at least half the buffer zones

and corridors (say 11,000 hectares or 28% of the county) also managed with biodiversity enhancement as an objective.

Protecting and Enhancing Tree Cover

- 5.13 Planting more trees is an important aspect of creating resilient and climate positive places and is a priority for Rutland.
- 5.14 Modest increases in tree canopy can make a significant contribution to climate change adaptation through reducing the urban heat island effect and improving air quality which often declines with higher temperatures⁸.
- 5.15 Trees are a vital component of green infrastructure.
- 5.16 Trees contribute to good water management and an increasingly important effect of trees is their ability to slow the flow of rainwater and reducing the risk of flooding. Whilst these issues are not of an immediate concern for Rutland, stakeholders felt that it would be better to be pro-active than taking reactive or remedial measures in the future.
- 5.17 Trees absorb nitrates and phosphates⁹ which are present in the soils of agricultural land and can have significant consequences to water. This overlaps with the priority to enhance Rutland's water and soil quality.

- 5.18 Trees provide other less tangible benefits; they absorb CO₂ and help create a significant carbon sink by sequestering carbon through photosynthesis¹⁰.
- 5.19 Figure 12 identifies the wide-ranging benefits trees provide.
- 5.20 Rutland has relatively low tree canopy cover (see Figure 13). Increasing woodland is a priority for Rutland to enhance biodiversity and protect ecosystems, soils and water. Engagement with Leicestershire County Council highlighted that Rutland's woodlands in the Clipsham area would have wider benefits for biodiversity if they were connected.
- 5.21 Growing sustainably and planting more trees are priorities for Rutland that go hand in hand. Not only will planting more trees provide lasting benefits to Rutland's people and wildlife but one must also consider how to protect existing trees for the same reason. Consultation concluded that the importance of tree retention over tree replacement was of significant importance.
- 5.22 It is important to remember that the right tree needs to be in the right place. For example, extensive tree planting in the Vale of Catmose Landscape Character Area would not be in keeping with the character of the area, tree planting must be directed to where it is needed most and in line with Rutland's landscape character areas.
- 5.23 A particular beneficial impact would be harnessed from planting trees on the steeper gradients shown on Figure 14. Planting in these locations reduces soil erosion as the tree roots bind loose soil on sloping ground⁹. Reducing soil erosion would prevent excess soil (and chemical run-off within them) from entering watercourses.
- 5.24 To balance the need for food security and protection of soils and water, tree planting on higher grade agricultural land (ALC classes 1,2,3a) is better focussed on field margins, uncultivable areas, flood-prone surface water pathways and watercourse edges i.e. areas where trees can help farmers to retain soils and protect water quality (see "Agroforestry" case study later).
- 5.25 Larger-scale woodland planting is more appropriate on lower grade agricultural land (3b, 4 or 5). Much of Rutland is grade 3a or 3b, but there is no county-wide data on the distribution of grades 3a and 3b. However, Figure 15 shows crop types. Grasslands are more likely to be on grade 3b land, and larger-scale new woodlands may be beneficial to farmers in these areas as the relative loss of yield is lower than on higher-grade land; and new woodlands can provide shade and shelter to livestock in the face of climate change.

Climate	Countering climate change	Trees remove CO ₂ to create a carbon sink	
	Tempering severe weather	Trees provide significant low-carbon options for buildings and energy The capacity of trees to attenuate heavy rains and floodwater slows run-off and renders Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems more effective	
	Moderating temperatures	The ability of trees to evaporate water, reflect sunlight and provide shade combine to cut the effects of urban heat island	
Environmental	Valuable aesthetic contributions	More attractive landscape Eyesores hidden Greener and more natural Linking town to country	
	Cutting soil erosion	Preserves the valuable soil resource and keeps carbon locked in	
	Positive impact on water quality	Trees act as natural filters improving water quality	
	Contributing to wildlife	Increased biodiversity as countryside becomes more porous with additional habitat Brings wildlife closer to people	
Economic	Providing profitable by-products	Firewood/woodchip Compost and leaf litter mulch Renewable fuel – via coppicing Timber Fruit – community orchards	
		Reducing greenspace maintenance costs	Trees are much less maintenance intensive
	Contributing indirectly to local economies	People more productive Job satisfaction increased Jobs created Inward investment encouraged Retail areas with trees perform better Increased property values Adds tourism and recreational revenue	
		Delivering a range of health benefits	Cleaner air means less respiratory conditions Lower risk of skin cancer Quicker patient recovery times Reduced stress Positive impact on mental health and wellbeing Encourages exercise that can counteract heart disease and Type 2 Diabetes
			Assisting urban living
	Adding to social values		
Offering spiritual value	Heightened self esteem Puts people more in touch with Nature and the seasons Symptoms of anxiety, depression and insomnia alleviated		

Figure 12: The wide-ranging benefits trees provide.

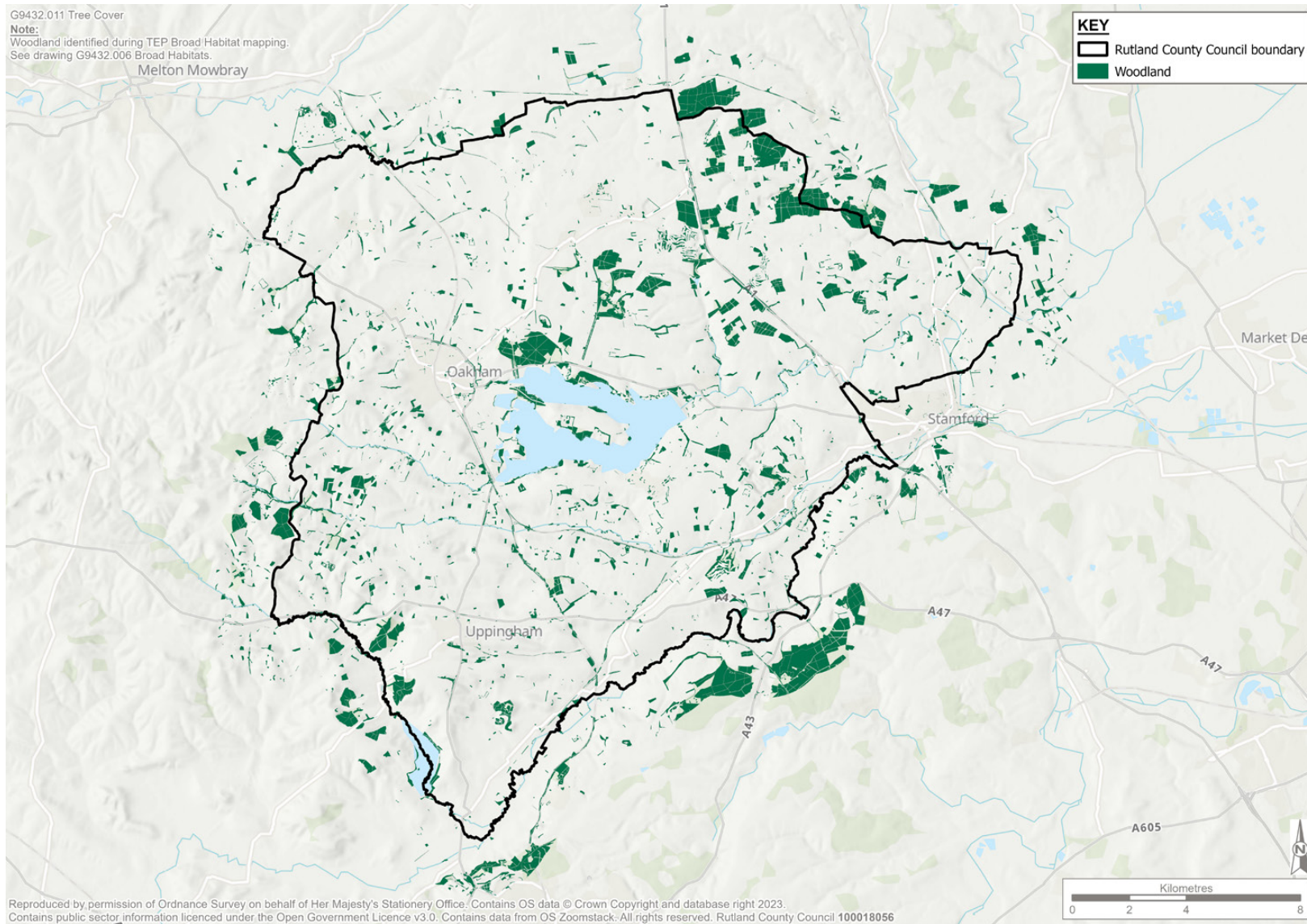


Figure 13: Map of Tree Cover G9432.011

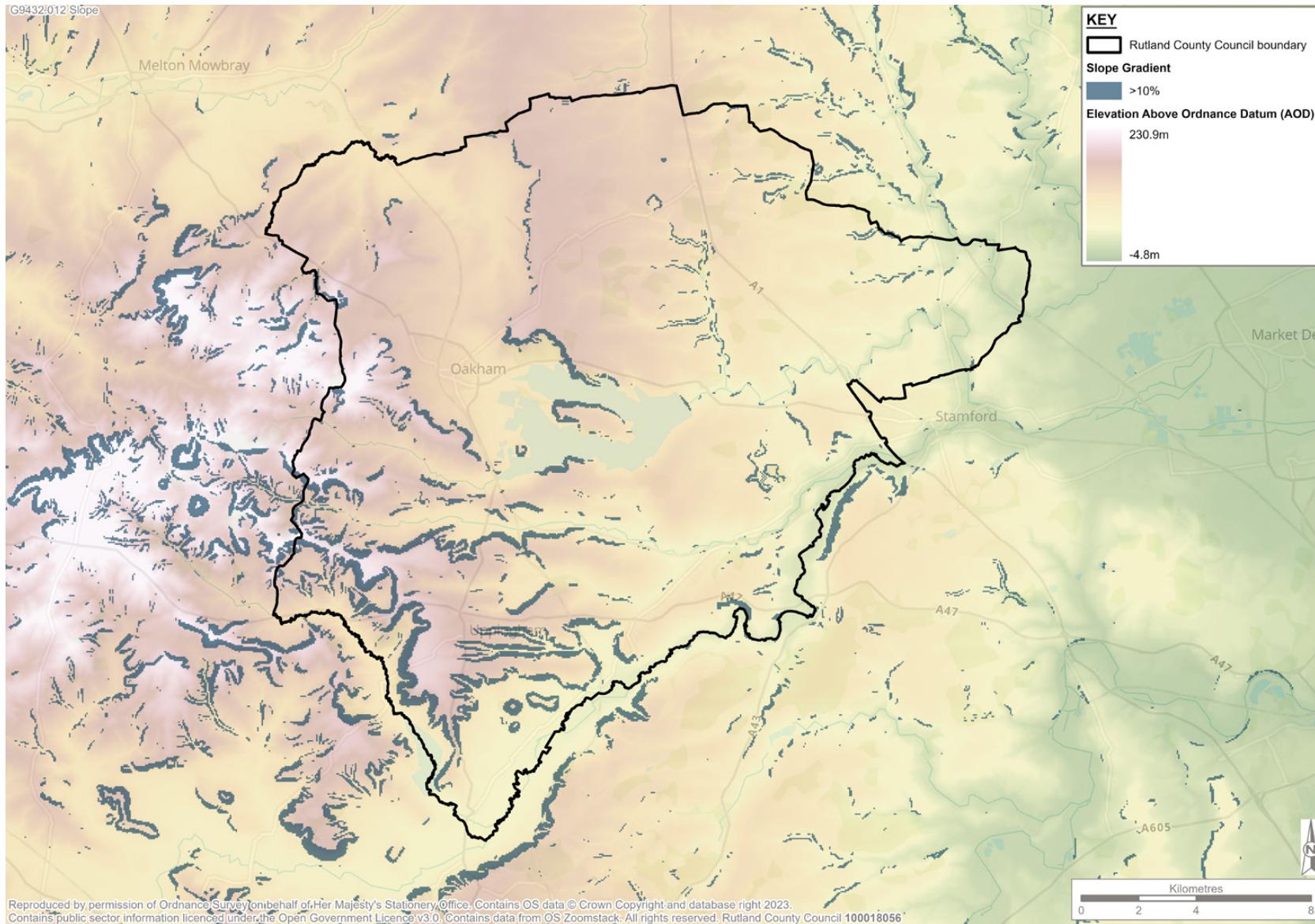


Figure 14: Map of slopes (G9432.012)

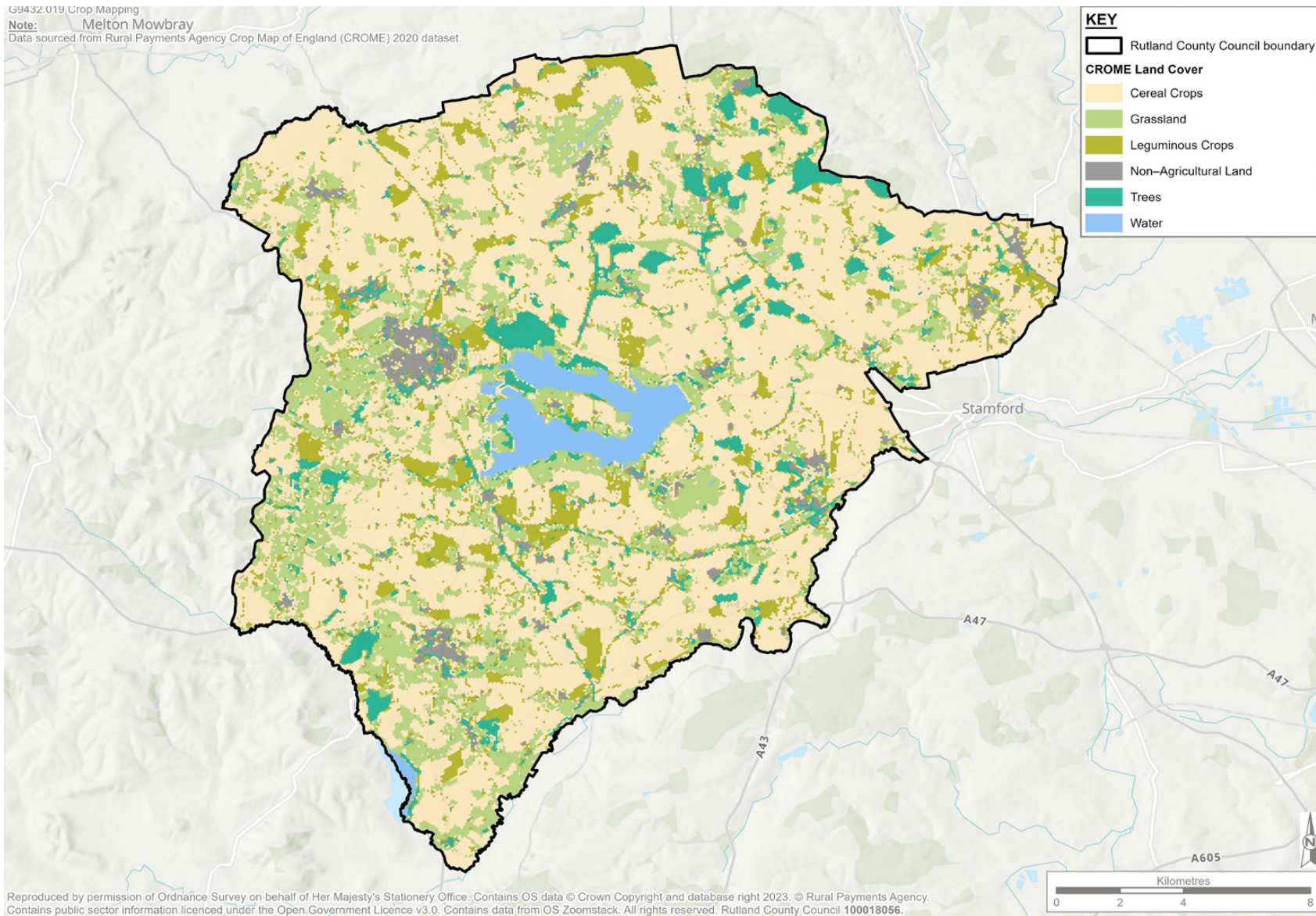


Figure 15: Crop Map (G9432.019)

Enhancing Water and Soil Quality

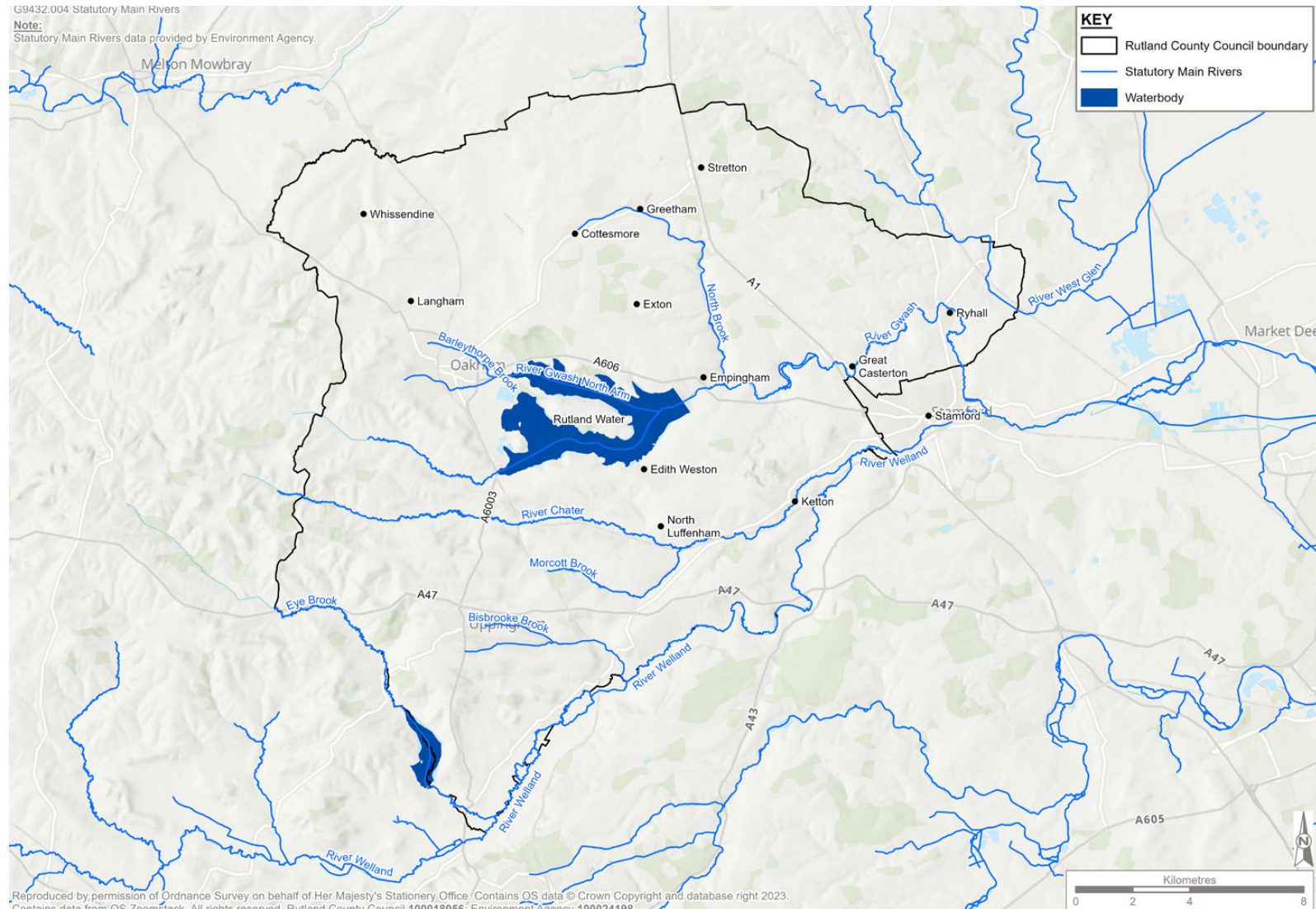


Figure 16: Map of Statutory Main Rivers G9432.004

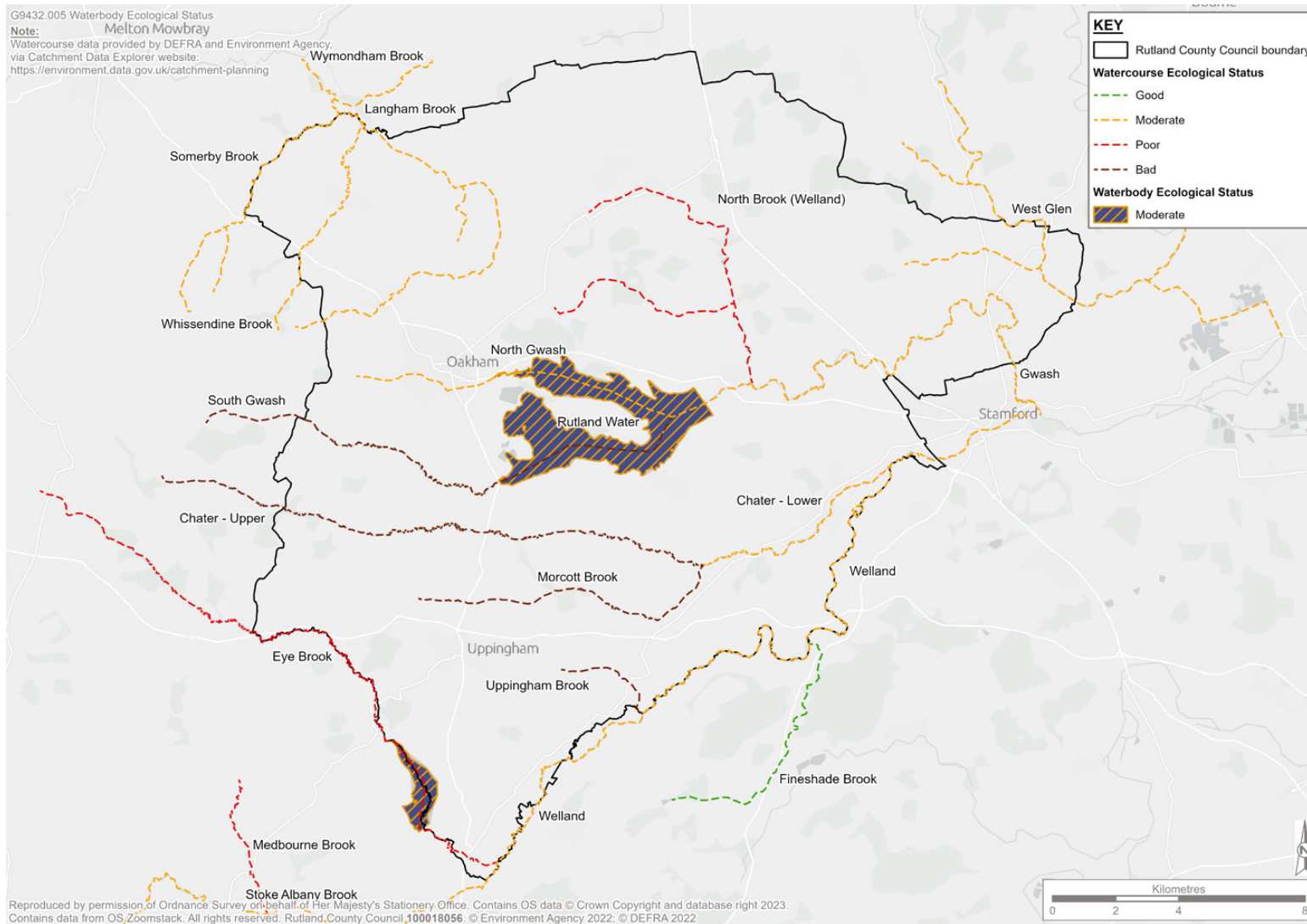


Figure 17: Map of Waterbody Ecological Status G9432.005

- 5.26 Improving Water and Soil Quality is a key priority for Rutland and related to Natural England's 'Why' principle of Improved Water Management.
- 5.27 There are three main rivers in Rutland: River Gwash, River Chater and River Welland as shown on Figure 16.
- 5.28 Figure 17 highlights the sections of the main rivers including South Gwash, Upper Chater and tributaries. Morcott Brook, Uppingham Brook with a bad ecological classification. The North Brook has a poor ecological classification and all others in the county have a moderate ecological classification.
- 5.29 The Reasons for Not Achieving Good Status (RFNAGS) and Reasons for Deterioration (RFD) include:
- Diffuse source issues from poor livestock management and poor nutrient management relating to agriculture and rural land management; and
 - Point source (sewage discharge) and physical modifications are also listed as RFNAG.
- 5.30 A high proportion of Rutland's GBI is agricultural land and reducing or trapping chemicals such as phosphorus on agricultural land will reduce diffuse source issues and prevent further degradation of rivers.
- 5.31 The UK's departure from the European Union and the Single Market in 2021, the subsequent change of the rules and regulations that govern export and imports as well as a shortage of labour, has put a financial burden on the farming community. These issues, coupled with rising global gas prices and unpredictable weather destroying crops means that it is now even more important that farmers receive the support needed to maximise food production whilst reducing harm to the environment.
- 5.32 Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has identified Rutland as a priority for water quality improvement. Landowners and farmers are able to apply for grant assistance for environment-friendly farming practices. Natural England has a local farm adviser which supports landowners and farmers through one-to-one advice, group training and on-farm events, guidance on funding and associated agricultural transition schemes, help to get funding and visits from agricultural specialists¹¹.
- 5.33 Common capital items that farmers apply for grants from the Rural Payments Agency for include:
- Concrete yard renewal which reduces foul drainage volumes and run-off and therefore reduces the risk of air and water pollution.
 - Roofing (for sprayer washdown area, manure storage area,

livestock gathering area, slurry stores, silage stores) which reduces water pollution by preventing rainfall from getting into the areas listed.

- Sprayer or applicator load and washdown area which contains and collects washings from sprayers or applicators. These will then be degraded in a biofilter or biobed, which will help reduce the risk of water pollution.

5.34 Addressing Rutland's water quality will improve their potential to increase their ecological status and bring more wildlife and diversity into its watercourses.

Case Study: River Wardens

The River Wardens scheme was introduced in the Welland Catchment by Welland Rivers Trust. It is a flagship citizen science project where local communities are connected to their local water courses. The River Warden volunteers are trained to use EarthWatch's FreshWater Watch kit to monitor turbidity, phosphate and nitrate concentrations and follow the Riverfly Partnership's methodology to survey the riverbed for eight different aquatic invertebrates. This data informs and support the Trusts' restoration work in the Welland Catchment.

5.35 Incorporating blue infrastructure in new developments is an important aspect of planning for a changing climate particularly in a water stressed area such as ours. SuDS and natural flood management (NFM) such as woodland planting, leaky dams and grip-blocking can slow the flow of surface water whilst providing a range of other benefits for wildlife. SuDS features will attenuate surface water run off whilst also providing benefits to biodiversity and recreation¹².

Case Study:

Agroforestry is the practice of combining forestry and agricultural operations in the same space. This usually takes the form of planting trees that provide some form of cash crop in and amongst existing arable, pasture or a combination of the two. One of the early UK pioneers of a modern form of agroforestry is Stephen Briggs who farms 300 acres of arable land in Cambridgeshire. Wanting to establish more resilience into the farm system, Stephen planted 4500 apple trees of thirteen different varieties across 150 acres in long row, allowing arable operations to continue unhindered between. This works out at a density of around 8% tree cover. The main benefits of such a system have been to provide large wind breaks across exposes fields, reducing soil erosion, reducing evapotranspiration in the summer and increasing water movement into the soil during

the winter, preventing soil erosion and runoff. Soil health has also massively increased in the immediate region of trees, with a large increase in soil fungal populations. The trees also provide significant apple crops which can be sold directly in the farm shop onsite, or as juice throughout the year. This provides an extra level of financial resilience to the farm, as well as environmental resilience.

Agroforestry can be applied to almost any type of agricultural land. An understanding of what tree species would work best, and how this can easily be implemented into a farms existing operation must be understood. With large amounts of agricultural land, agroforestry could be one method of introducing greater land resilience into the area, without the need for massive investment and change in land use.

Incorporating GBI into New Developments

- 5.36 Rutland’s population is set to increase by 4,031 by 2037, therefore creating thriving and prosperous places for Rutland residents is a part of sustainable development.
- 5.37 The NPPF recognises the opportunities that appropriately located and well-designed open spaces can provide. Paragraph 98 states:

Access to a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and supports efforts to address climate change.

- 5.38 Figure 18 summarises the 2022 Open Space Assessment in which 157 open spaces were audited for their quality against the Green Flag Award National Benchmark. Currently 102 meet the recommended quality target of at least Good Condition. The detailed breakdown of scores is Excellent (2), Very Good (38), Good (62), Fair (51) and Poor (4).
- 5.39 In terms of GBI Strategy, the open space typologies most capable of multi-functional management are “Parks and Gardens” and “Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspaces” (see Figure 21 for typologies).

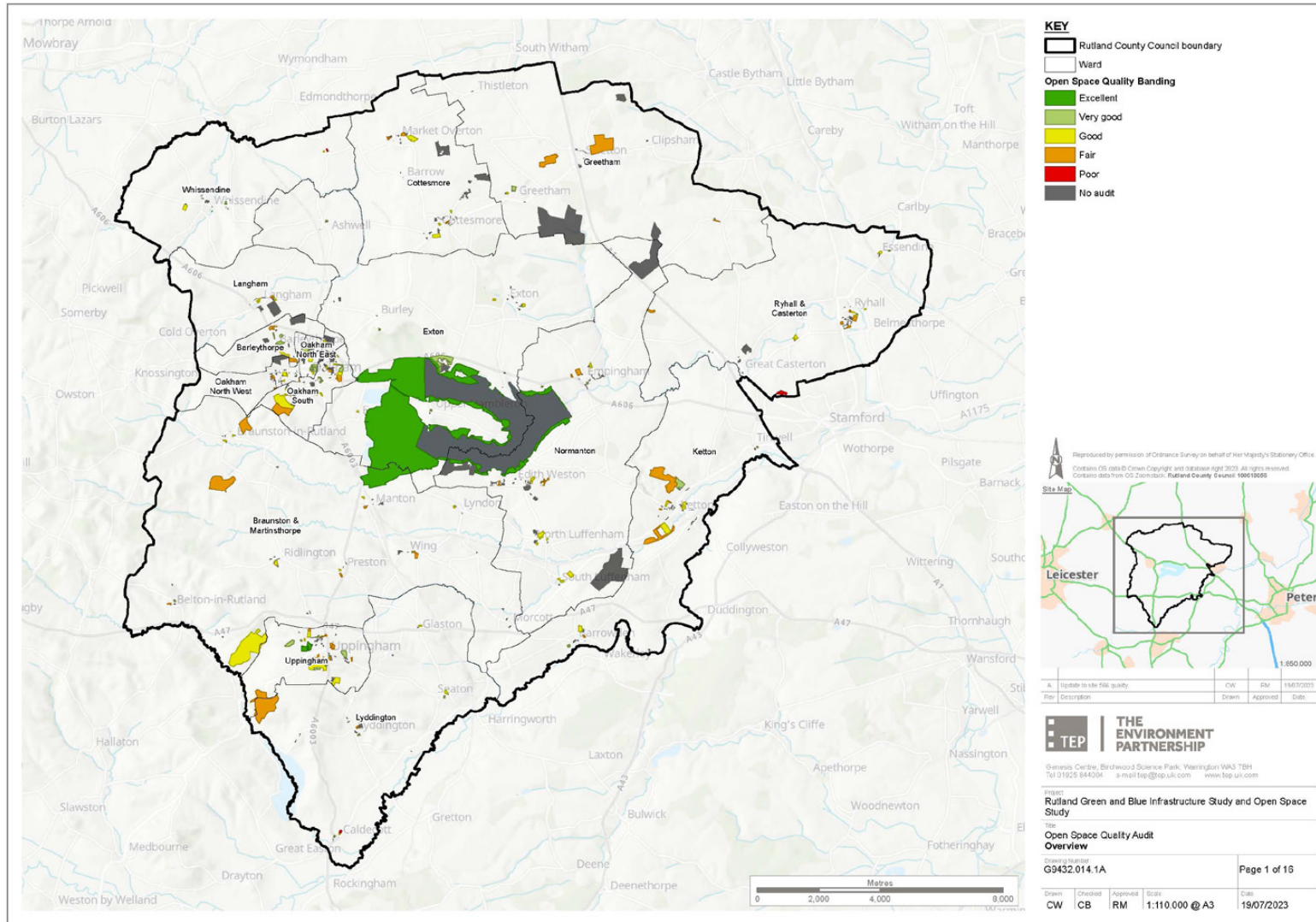


Figure 18: Map of Open Space Quality Score (County-wide summary) G9432.014A

- 5.40 Rutland's Parks and Gardens have high average quality scores of "Very Good". However Natural and Semi-Natural greenspaces have an average quality of Fair.
- 5.41 In terms of the GBI Strategy, a focus for new development is to ensure the following priorities:
- 5.42 Policy and/or funds should be directed towards enhancement of quality of natural and semi-natural greenspaces within or near the new development;
- 5.43 Where neighbourhoods are currently served predominantly by poor or fair quality open spaces, new development should either incorporate new spaces that meet Very Good standards or should release funds for improvement of existing spaces.
- 5.44 GBI is critical to high quality environments and streetscapes, and it is important that new developments in Rutland have well-designed GBI. GBI should be considered at the outset (pre-application stages) of projects. Incorporating GBI into new developments will enable Rutland to grow sustainably.
- 5.45 Rutland is in a water stressed area so implementing drought resilient species in new development and encouraging rain harvesting will be key to ensuring GBI is sustainable in a changing climate.

Case study:

The Stamford Brook development is a highly successful award-winning new neighbourhood comprises 700 energy-efficient new homes on land that once formed part of the National Trust's Dunham Massey estate. The neighbouring community was consulted with during the masterplan and planning application stages.

A key part of the development's green infrastructure is the remodelling of the formerly canalised Sinderland Brook, which reduced the flood risk to property and enhanced biodiversity. This was complemented by the creation of attenuation ponds, wildlife corridors, footpath/cycleways, play areas and community woodland.



Figure 19: Photograph of development with high quality GBI – Stamford Brook

Enabling Active Lifestyles and Accessibility to GBI

- 5.46 Promoting active travel and access to GBI is key to Rutland having active and healthy places, one of Natural England's 'why' principles.
- 5.47 The benefits of GBI for encouraging healthy lifestyles range from contact with nature to enabling physical exercise.
- 5.48 The benefits of interaction with the natural, outdoor settings provided by GI assets are well documented, and have been shown to support good mental health, combat social isolation and aid recovery from illness. Population level change will also require a 'whole system'¹⁷ approach involving policy, social environment and personal choice.
- 5.49 Rutland's population enjoys better than average health and lengthy life expectancy¹³. Nevertheless, Rutland's health and wellbeing priorities are to:
- embed prevention in everything they do;
 - to create active and inclusive communities; and
 - increase the opportunities to maintain good mental and physical health¹⁵.
- 5.50 High quality connected GBI will contribute towards Rutland's health and wellbeing priorities.

Enabling Active Lifestyles

- 5.51 GBI can be used to encourage active travel, providing an enhanced environment for integrated walking and cycling networks, promoting improved health and reducing carbon emissions. Increasing investment now in maintaining and creating these assets will make us healthier both physically and mentally and can have wider social benefits in addressing inequalities. Sport England⁶ has devised ten principles of active design to inspire and inform the layout of cities, towns, villages, neighbourhoods, buildings, streets and open spaces, to promote sport and active lifestyles. GBI can contribute to the 10 principles which are:
1. Activity for all neighbourhoods
 2. Walkable communities
 3. Connected walking and cycling routes
 4. Co-location of community facilities
 5. Network of multifunctional open space
 6. High quality streets and spaces
 7. Appropriate infrastructure
 8. Active buildings
 9. Management, maintenance, monitoring and evaluation
 10. Activity promotion and local champions

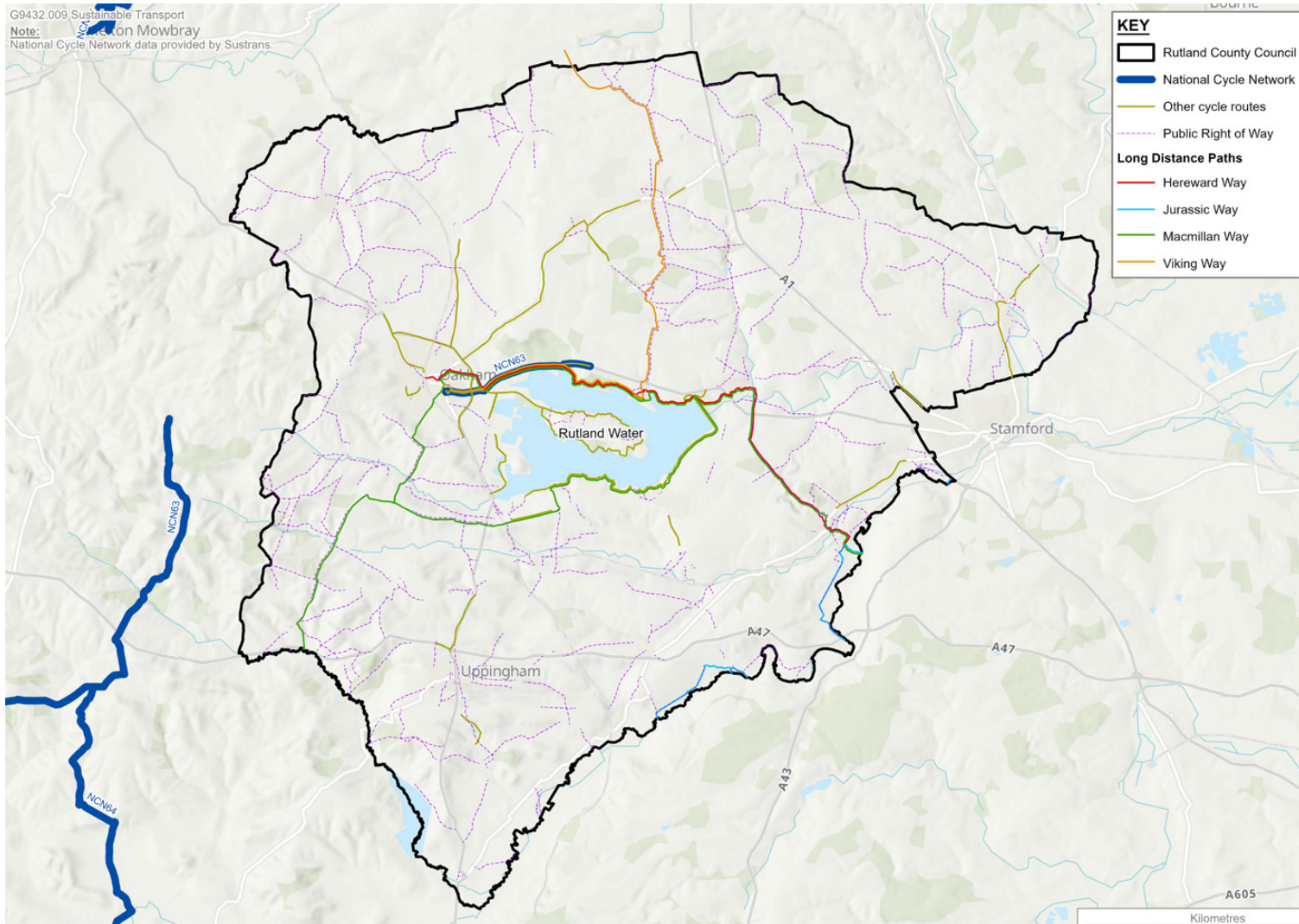


Figure 20: Map of Sustainable Transport (G9432.009)

- 5.52 Rutland's rural nature means that residents are never far away from GBI. However, coupled with the county's limited public transport uptake, the result is a reliance on car journeys. Stakeholder told us that minimising short day-to-day car journeys is a priority for Rutland. ONS data shows that 61% of Rutland's population work in Rutland too. Some will be home based but others will travel within the county to work, and it is these journeys that could be addressed through provision of more green routes.
- 5.53 Rutland has an abundance of opportunities for active travel. Figure 11 shows just how wealthy Rutland's population is when it comes to the network of walking and cycling routes in the county.
- 5.54 Promoting and improving existing green routes and establishing green routes in new developments should encourage more residents to leave their cars at home.
- 5.55 The Local Cycling and Walking Improvement Plan to be published in 2023, will prioritise the county's aspirations for walking and cycling projects. Stakeholders informed us that there is likely to be a focus of cycling in Rutland and the Plan will map existing routes and identify gaps to be addressed through new projects.

Case study:

Park runs are free weekly community running, walking, or jogging events. These events take place every Saturday at 9am.

Rutland Waterpark Run takes place at Rutland Water Reservoir.

Rutland Waterpark hosts both a 5km park run for 14 years and above and a 2km junior park run for 4 – 14-year-olds.

The 5km park run has on average 228 runners weekly whilst the Junior park run attracts 52 participants.

The park run benefits the health and wellbeing of those taking part in the event as well as those that volunteer their time to support the weekly events.

Accessibility to Rutland's GBI

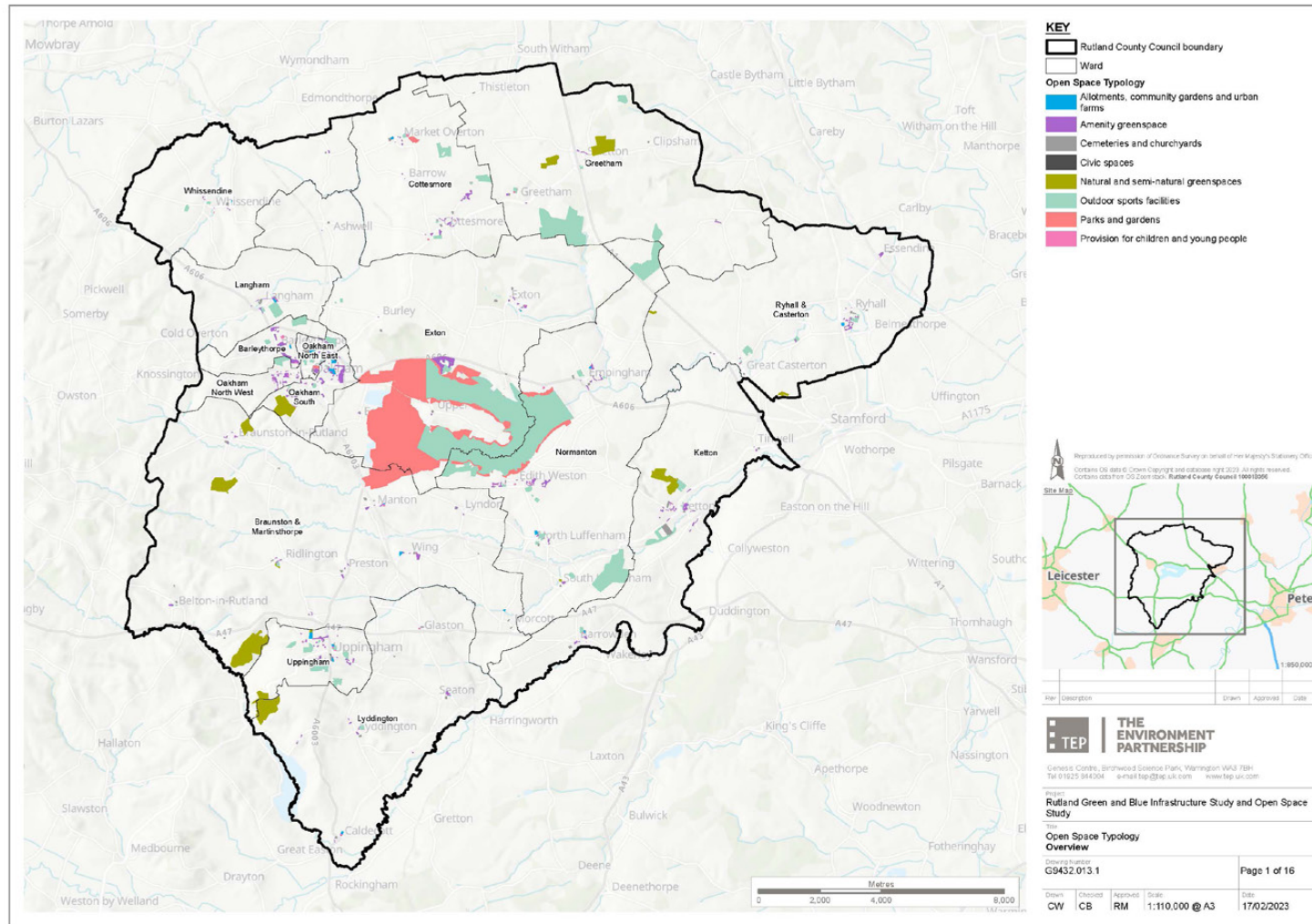


Figure 21: Map of Open space typology G9432.013.1

- 5.56 Stakeholder consultation suggests that cycling infrastructure in towns such as Oakham is in need of improvement. Providing Rutland's residents with good access to such infrastructure and green corridors in more urban settings can raise levels of physical activity such as cycling, having secondary health benefits such as reducing obesity and improving overall levels of health. GBI-based activity is a cost-effective method of improving public health and wellbeing.
- 5.57 Figure 21 shows the different types of open space in the county.
- 5.58 Accessibility to open space is generally higher in urban sub-areas around Uppingham and Oakham, which is expected due to their higher density. Other sub-areas are more rural in nature so there is an expectation to travel further to some typologies such as Allotments and Community Gardens, Outdoor Sports Facilities, Parks and Gardens and Cemeteries and Burial Grounds
- 5.59 Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace and Parks and Gardens have been assigned an accessibility standard.
- 5.60 Communities in Langham, Whissendine, Cottesmore Exton, Ryehall and Casterton have limited access to semi-natural greenspaces, so a GBI priority is to encourage private woodland and watercourse owners to open up their sites for informal access, along with improvement of green corridors in these areas.
- 5.61 One of the County Council's health and wellbeing priorities is to promote low-cost and free activities for families.
- 5.62 Rutland Water is often perceived by local people as a tourist attraction, and some residents consider that parking charges and costs for activities are a barrier to participation.
- 5.63 A priority for Rutland's GBI is to ensure these and other opportunities for recreation are made more accessible to Rutland's population.
- 5.64 For example, Rutland Water has a well-signposted 17-mile circuit of the reservoir, which can be cycled in full or in part according to ability. The Woodland Trust has open-access sites at Gorse Field in Oakham and Henry Wood in Stretton. The Park Play case study shows how open space assets can provide free or low-cost recreation.

Case study:

ParkPlay aims to build stronger, healthier, connected communities nationwide; through the life-changing power of play.

ParkPlay provides an opportunity for communities to take part in active and inclusive play. Activities are relaxed enough to attract the shy and less confident but structured enough to reassure¹⁶.

Uppingham Park Play held weekly on a Saturday morning at Uppingham CofE Primary School in Oakham.

6.0 What Good Green and Blue Infrastructure Looks Like in Rutland

6.0 What Good Green and Blue Infrastructure Looks Like in Rutland

6.1 Natural England has 5 principles for what good GBI looks like:

- Multifunctional;
- Varied;
- Connected;
- Accessible; and
- Responsive to Local Character.

6.2 This chapter considers what good GBI looks like for Rutland using case studies identified by stakeholders in Rutland and further afield.

GI delivers multiple functions and benefits.

GI should deliver a range of functions and benefits for people, nature and places, address specific issues and to meet their needs. Multifunctionality (delivering multiple functions from the same area of GI) is especially important in areas where provision is poor quality or scarce.

Multi-functional

6.3 A multi-functional green space can provide a huge range of functions and benefits to people, the environment and the economy. The most relevant to Rutland’s priorities are shown in Table 3.

Rutland’s GBI Theme	GBI Functions
Restoring biodiversity and ecosystem integrity	Habitat for wildlife Corridor for wildlife Learning
Protecting and enhancing tree cover	Shading from sun Evaporative cooling Trapping air pollutants Carbon storage
Improving Water and Soil Quality	Soil stabilisation Water storage Water Interception Water infiltration Water conveyance Pollutant removal from soil or water Flow reduction through surface
Incorporating GBI into new developments	Aesthetic
Enabling active lifestyles and accessibility to GBI	Green travel route Recreation

Table 3: The functions and benefits of green spaces.

6.4 Most of Rutland's GBI is agricultural land, the primary function of which is food production. In order to sustain long-term food security and healthy soils in a changing climate, it is vital to enable farmers to manage their land in alignment with Rutland's GBI priorities, of which the most relevant are:

- Restoring biodiversity and ecosystem integrity;
- Protecting and enhancing tree cover (most pertinent on lower grade agricultural land); and
- Improving water and soil quality.

6.5 As farmland is generally privately owned, a good relationship between the farming community and regulators and stakeholders such as Natural England, Environment Agency and Anglian Water will be critical to achieving catchment-scale nature recovery across the farming landscape.

6.6 Figure 22 is just one example of how a change to land management (sowing winter cover crops) could improve the GBI value of farmland, as well as having the primary benefit of improving water and soil quality.

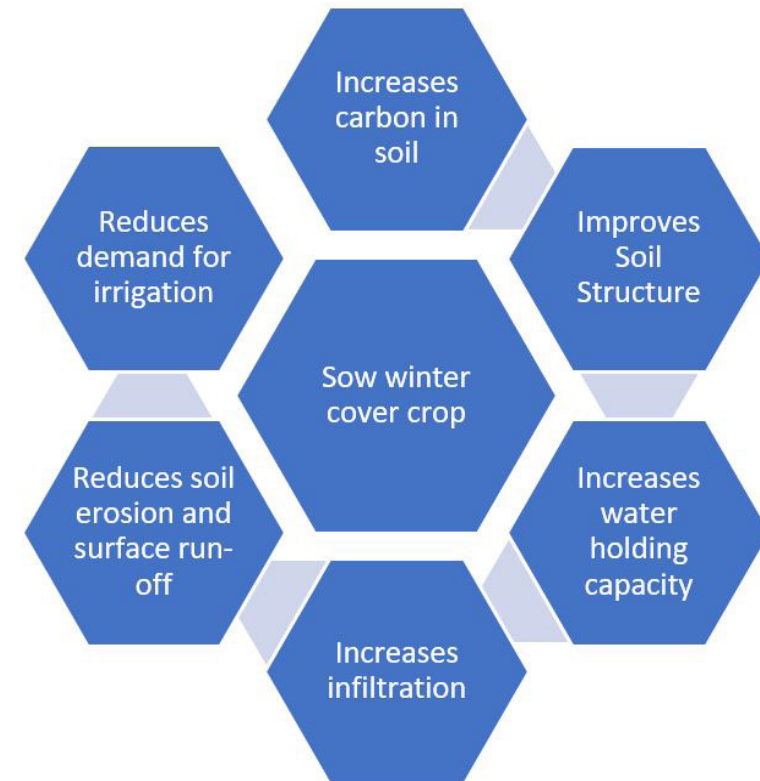


Figure 22: Example of Benefits from Farmland Management Change

6.7 Reviewing Rutland's council-owned open spaces to identify small scale opportunities for increasing their multi-functionality is also key. In a changing climate, shading from the sun, habitats and corridors for wildlife can be achieved in conjunction with recreation through tree planting, introduction of swales and managing grassland as long grass wherever short amenity grass is not required.

6.8 Key drivers for improving multifunctionality across RCC’s GBI will be the Open Space Assessment and Local Nature Recovery Strategy. These documents will highlight large scale and consistent enhancements which will achieve an increase in benefits over time.

Case Study:

Rutland Water, at the heart of the county, is not only a high quality GBI asset but is also incredibly multi-functional.

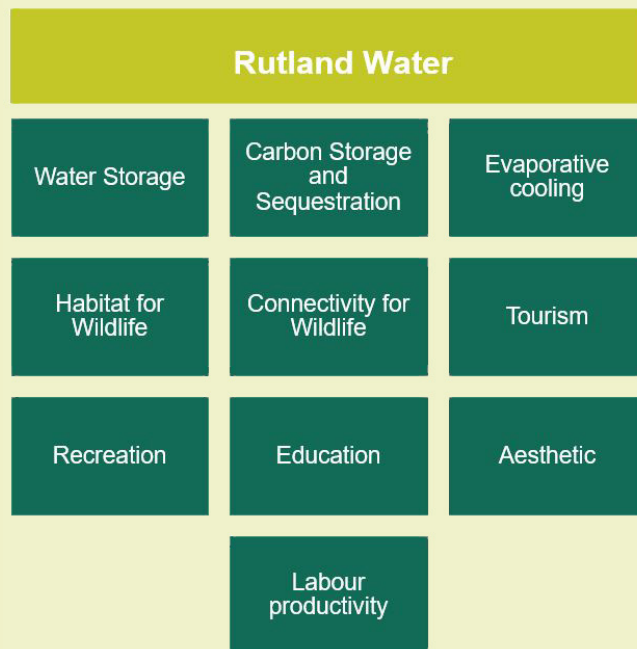


Figure 23:: Functions of Rutland Water

Whilst the Reservoir’s number one priority is for water storage and provision, it simultaneously provides all of the functions listed in Figure 23.

The management of Rutland Water falls into two categories:

- 1) An area managed by the Wildlife Trust for wildlife; and
- 2) An area managed as a Water Park for people and recreation.

The Reserve is a haven for wildlife and is designated as a Ramsar Site, Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Protection Area (SPA) due to its regional importance as a site for breeding and wintering waterbirds. The Reserve is dominated by the artificial freshwater reserve with a mosaic of wetland habitats and semi-natural woodland.

Rutland Water attracts thousands of visitors a year and boasts two visitor centres. The opportunity for recreation includes walking, cycling, relaxation as well as water-based sports such as canoeing, kayaking and paddle boarding.

Varied

GI includes a mix of types and sizes that can provide a range of functions and benefits to address specific issues and needs.

GI should comprise a variety of types and sizes of green and blue spaces, green routes and environmental features (as part of a network) that can provide a range of different functions, benefits and nature-based solutions to address specific issues and needs.

Quantity of Open Space

- 6.9 Rutland has 656 open space sites covering 2,439 hectares. This represents a provision of 60.26ha per 1,000 population.
- 6.10 These include 16 Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace sites totalling 263ha, and 3 Parks and Gardens totalling 788ha.
- 6.11 Quantity standards have been proposed in the Open Space Assessment; these are based on existing open space standards, consultation and best practice standards set out in Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play: Beyond the Six Acre Standard, Fields in Trust.
- 6.12 When assessed against the proposed quantity standards, there

is a county-wide current (2020) surplus and future (up to 2037) surplus in all typologies except provision for children and young people.

- 6.13 The Open Space Assessment also provides a ward level analysis of open space quantity showing some local priorities for new open spaces.
- 6.14 In terms of the GBI Strategy, the focus should be on providing accessible, high-quality and well-connected open spaces wherever local deficiencies are identified.

Case Study:

Portmore Golf Course was created in the 1990's on existing agricultural land by Colin Webber and his father. Colin's ethos has always been low input systems, and so wanted the golf course to be self-sufficient in terms of water, and not rely on external water sources. This has allowed the facility to be much more resilient to climate pressures and provide additional green and blue infrastructure across the site. The golf course was designed around water harvesting, with natural wet and low points identified early on, with ponds created in these.

Localised drainage installed across the site is then directed into a series of eleven interconnected ponds across the

site, capturing the majority of excess runoff. Water is naturally cleaned as it passes through the system, removing any contaminants before it leaves the site, or is used for irrigation. These lakes have also been stocked with a variety of fish species, which act as an additional amenity facility for the site. Water is abstracted from the system and used as irrigation water during dry periods, meaning the club only requires mains water for potable uses inside the clubhouse.

Landscape water harvesting can be applied to any type of land use. It can also be at any scale, from an existing building, through to an entire holding. An understanding of a site's hydrological network is needed to optimize any system, which can scale to suit the requirements of a site.

Connected

GI connects as a living network at all scales, connecting provision of GI with those who need its benefits.

GI should function and connect as a living network at all scales (e.g., within sites; and across regions/ at national scale). It should enhance ecological networks and support ecosystems services, connecting provision of GI with those who need its benefits.

- 6.15 It is important to consider the importance of connected GBI for people as well as wildlife.
- 6.16 At the timing of writing, Rutland was partnering with Leicestershire County Council to produce a Local Nature Recovery Strategy. The Local Nature Recovery Strategy will identify ways to link existing habitats to address habitat fragmentation and to ensure flora and fauna communities are resilient in a changing climate.
- 6.17 Connected GBI is important for people; it improves accessibility to nature and the plethora of benefits that connection brings. It also enables healthier lifestyles by allowing people to commute through GBI for recreation or as a sustainable travel option. This is particularly relevant to Rutland's priority of Enabling Active Lifestyles and Accessibility to GBI.

Case Study: Oakham Canal Green Corridor Project:

The Oakham Canal Green Corridor project is a registered charity which aims of are to:

- Engage the local community in developing and maintaining this important leisure corridor;
- Preserve the remains of the Oakham Canal as a heritage asset and provide historical interpretation; and
- Enhance the environment improving footpaths and public access while developing habitats and diversity.

The volunteer-led project is focussed on 2.5 miles of canal side footpaths from Springfield Estate to the proximity of Oakham Enterprise Park. The Charity has delivered guide walks and has produced a leaflet for a self-guided walk which is available on their website.

Accessible

GI creates green, liveable places where everyone has access to good quality GI.

GI should create green liveable places that enable people to experience and connect with nature, and that offer everyone, wherever they live, access to good quality parks, greenspaces and recreational walking and cycling routes that are inclusive, safe, welcoming, well-managed and accessible for all.

- 6.18 The principle of Accessible GBI is relevant to Rutland's priorities for GBI of:
- Incorporating GBI into new developments; and
 - Enabling active lifestyles and accessibility to GBI.
- 6.19 Development is the most likely pathway to creating new GBI in Rutland. New GBI enables more people to access GBI and could address the fragmentation of existing GBI. It is the role of designers and planners to ensure new GBI is of a high quality and as accessible as possible to as many people as possible. This includes local residents and those who come to Rutland to visit or to work.

- 6.20 The Open Space Assessment has identified areas of low accessibility to GBI and development in these areas must address the shortfall of accessible GBI.

Case Study: Gorse Field, Harris Grove and Ball’s Meadow

Gorse Field, Harris Grove and Ball’s Meadow on the outskirts of Oakham is an example of accessible GBI in Rutland. The Woodland Trust purchased the sites from John Ball, a local farmer who wanted to safeguard the land for community use.

The site comprises woodland planting and open grassland.

The site can be reached by car, train and bus. Most importantly, it can be accessed on foot by the residents of Oakham. This publicly accessible semi-natural greenspace provides a haven and connection to the wider countryside for people and wildlife.

Responds to Local Character

GI should respond to an area’s character.

GI should respond to an area’s character so that it contributes to the conservation, enhancement and/or restoration of landscapes; or, in degraded areas, creates new high-quality landscapes to which local people feel connected.

- 6.21 Rutland gets its distinctive character from the interplay of geology, topography and hydrology and other aspects such as land use, land cover and settlement. The expansive Rutland Water reservoir exerts a strong influence on the landscape in the central part of the county. The system of valleys and hills in the western part of Rutland and along the River Welland means there are variety of long range and more local views, while the more wooded and level topography of the eastern part of the county tends to foreshorten views.
- 6.22 Planning for GBI in Rutland at a landscape scale can ensure that this distinctive character is conserved and enhanced across the county. GBI can contribute to character in rural areas through woodland planting and shelterbelts, hedgerows and hedgerow trees, wetlands, grasslands, waterbodies and restoring floodplains. In settlements, it can contribute through

street trees, village greens, pocket parks, semi-natural green space and sustainable drainage systems. More specific opportunities to enhance the character of Rutland's landscape with multi-functional GBI are considered below.

Rutland Landscape Character Assessment

6.23 The County Landscape Character Assessment describes five landscape character types (LCTs), covering high ground, vales, basins, plateaus and valley landscapes. The LCTs are:

- A - High Rutland;
- B - Vale of Catmose;
- C - Rutland Water Basin;
- D - Rutland Plateau; and
- E - Welland Valley.

6.24 Three LCTs (High Rutland, Rutland Plateau and Welland Valley) are subdivided into more specific landscape character areas (LCAs).

6.25 The High Rutland LCT encompass higher ground in the western fringes and south of the county. The LCT is characterised by distinctive steeper hills and rolling landforms in the west, compared with a larger scale, more open and gently undulating landscape in the south. Exposed and elevated areas provide sweeping panoramas across neighbouring lowlands, in contrast

to the deeper valleys where views are shortened.

6.26 The Vale of Catmose LCT is characterised by a broad, shallow, flat bottomed, elongated basin defined to the west and south by a distinct rise to the rolling hills of the High Rutland LCT. The LCT encompasses Oakham and extends to the western shores of Rutland Water. The soft and gently undulating landscape and low levels of woodland cover create a relatively open and expansive landscape. Wide panoramic views are possible across the vale, especially from elevated areas along its fringes. Views are shortened in low lying areas, particularly where intact hedgerow networks and belts of trees truncate views.

6.27 Rutland Water Basin LCT in the centre of the county is dominated by the expansive reservoir in a shallow basin and surrounded by low, gently sloping hills to elongated skylines formed by the Rutland Plateau LCT to the north and east, and High Rutland LCT to the south and west. The reservoir is largely unobtrusive in the landscape, due to the undulating topography and surrounding woodlands limiting views of the water, although glimpses and occasionally panoramic views are available. From the edge of the reservoir there are expansive views across the water with the partly wooded sloping hills forming a backdrop in the middle distance.

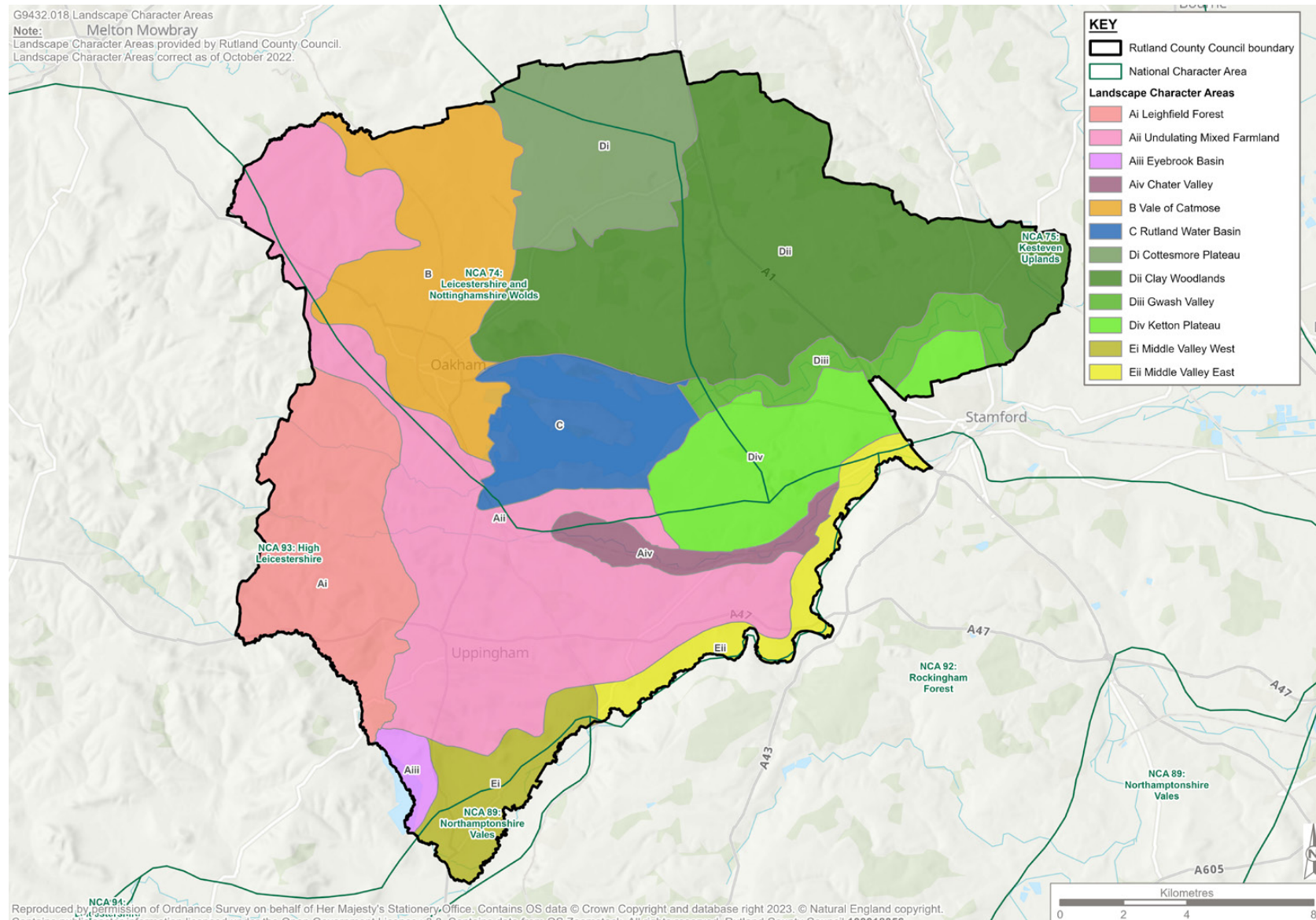


Figure 24: Landscape Character Areas (G9432.018)

- 6.28 Rutland Plateau LCT forms the eastern part of the county and includes higher parts around Cottesmore and Greetham, while the Gwash Valley dissects and separates higher land above Ketton from the main Rutland Plateau LCT to the north. The LCT is characterised by large areas of woodland enclosing farmland, parkland, estates and quarries. In general, views are shortened by the pattern of woodland on the plateau landscape.
- 6.29 Welland Valley LCT forms a continuous valley landscape of varying width across the entire southern fringe of the county. The character of the landscape is a shallow river valley with relatively extensive flat valley floor and gradually climbing slopes rising to the north where the transition from the river valley into High Rutland and Rutland Plateau LCTs. The northern valley slopes and crest are wholly within Rutland, but the southern valley sides are in Northamptonshire. Some longer views across the valley floor are shortened by shelterbelts, while longer distance views are possible from upper slopes of the north valley side.

GBI Opportunities to Enhance Character

- 6.30 The Rutland Landscape Character Assessment includes a landscape management strategy and guidelines for each landscape character area (LCA). Specific guidelines for enhancement of character through GBI measures are provided in Table 4 .

A - High Rutland LCT	
Leighfield Forest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Link remaining fragments of ancient woodlands through the planting of new native woodlands and hedgerows, including along watercourses. ▪ Restore the historic field pattern through the planting of new native hedges and hedgerow trees. ▪ Encourage the appropriate management of existing woods and other valuable wildlife habitats. ▪ Use new tree planting and woodland to screen new residential and agricultural development.
Undulating Mixed Farmlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use new tree planting and woodland to screen new agricultural development. ▪ Restore the historic field pattern through the planting of new native hedges and hedgerow trees. ▪ Encourage the appropriate management of existing woods and other valuable wildlife habitats.
Eyebrook Basin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage the appropriate management of existing woods, hedgerows, and other valuable wildlife habitats. ▪ Encourage the appropriate replacement of trees lost through disease.
Chater Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage restoration of typical landscape character by replacing hedgerow loss. ▪ Encourage the appropriate management of existing woods, flood meadows and other valuable wildlife habitats.
B - Vale of Catmose LCT	
Vale of Catmose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage positive management to restore hedgerows, create new hedges and areas of permanent pasture. ▪ Encourage positive management along stream margins with appropriate planting to enhance the visibility of watercourses whilst increasing the occurrence of semi-natural habitats. ▪ Extensive woodland planting would generally be inappropriate within the open expansive vale but limited individual tree planting or small copses around settlements could help integrate new development whilst maintaining the perception of a well-treed landscape, and to increase semi-natural habitats.
C - Rutland Water Basin LCT	
Rutland Water Basin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage the continued management of the mosaic of landscape features and habitats. ▪ Introduce new landscape elements and features, such as new hedgerows, hedgerow trees and small copses, around existing facilities such as the Lyndon Top caravan park and camp site to better integrate it into the landscape and to increase semi-natural habitats.

Table 4: Guidelines for enhancement of character through GBI measures (continued on next page)

D - Rutland Plateau LCT	
Cottesmore Plateau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase woodland cover and link dispersed woodlands through the planting of new native trees and hedgerows. ▪ Restore the historic field pattern through the planting of new native hedges and hedgerow trees, particularly around settlements. ▪ Encourage the appropriate management of existing woods and other valuable wildlife habitats, including calcareous grassland sites and RIGS. ▪ Use new tree planting and woodland to screen new residential and agricultural development, and quarrying activities. ▪ Protect the remaining smaller scale field pattern, pasture and treescape on the periphery of settlements when siting new development.
Clay Woodlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reinforce and protect woodland cover and link dispersed woodlands through the planting of new native trees and hedgerows. ▪ Enhance existing and historic field patterns through the planting of new native hedges and hedgerow trees, particularly across the east of the LCA. ▪ Use new tree planting and woodland to screen new residential and agricultural development. ▪ Protect the remaining smaller scale field pattern, pasture and treescape on the periphery of settlements when siting new development.
Gwash Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reinforce and protect riparian treescapes and extend native tree planting along the river course where trees have been lost, and the establishment and reinforcements of new and weak hedgerows and reducing field size. ▪ Encourage the appropriate management of existing woodland and wet pasture as well other valuable riverside wildlife habitats. ▪ Use new tree planting and woodland to screen new residential and agricultural development. ▪ Protect the remaining smaller scale field pattern, pasture and treescape on the periphery of settlements when siting new development.
Ketton Plateau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reinforce and protect remaining treescapes and to extend native tree planting across the plateau where trees have been lost to minerals extraction, the airfield and arable farming, and the establishment and reinforcements of new and weak hedgerows, increasing hedgerow trees and reducing field size. ▪ Encourage the appropriate management, extension and reconnection of existing woodland, calcareous and other unimproved grasslands and pockets of marsh. ▪ Encourage better agricultural management, for example with new hedgerow planting. ▪ Use new tree planting and woodland to screen new residential and agricultural development where proposed

Table 4 Guidelines for enhancement of character through GBI measures (continued from previous page).

E - Welland Valley LCT	
Middle Valley West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase woodland (including wet woodland) cover and link dispersed woodlands through the planting of native trees and hedgerow restoration, reflecting more extensive treescapes to the south of the river. ▪ Restore the historic field pattern through the planting of new native hedges and hedgerow trees, particularly around settlements but also across the valley floor. ▪ Encourage the appropriate management of existing woods and other valuable wildlife habitats in relation to the valley’s significant wildlife corridor value. ▪ Use new tree planting and woodland to screen new residential and agricultural development. ▪ Protect the remaining smaller scale field pattern, pasture and treescape on the periphery of settlements when siting new development
Middle Valley East	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase wet woodland cover and link dispersed woodlands through the planting of native trees and hedgerow restoration, reflecting more extensive treescapes to the south of the river. ▪ Restore the historic field pattern through the planting of new native hedges and hedgerow trees, particularly around settlements but also across the valley floor. ▪ Encourage the appropriate management of existing woods and other valuable wildlife habitats in relation to the valley’s significant wildlife corridors under representation of ecological sites ▪ Use new tree planting and woodland to screen new residential and agricultural development. ▪ Protect the remnant smaller scale field pattern, pasture and treescape on the periphery of settlements when siting new development.

Table 4: Guidelines for enhancement of character through GBI measures (continued from previous page).

7.0 How to Do Good Green and Blue Infrastructure in Rutland

7.0 How to Do Good Green and Blue Infrastructure in Rutland

7.1 Natural England have 5 principles for implementing GBI:

- Developed through Partnership and Vision;
- Based on Evidence;
- Planned Strategically;
- Designed well; and
- Managed, Valued and Evaluated.

7.2 The final chapter of this GBI Strategy provides recommendations on how to ensure GBI is multifunctional, varied, connected, accessible and responsive to local character to meet Rutland's GBI priorities. While the County Council may need to take the lead on several recommendations, they will need the support of numerous partners to deliver the overall vision for GBI.

Recommendations for Partnership and Vision

1. Deepen support for the Welland Valley Partnership and provide policy support for its objectives.
2. Support the Oakham Canal Regeneration Project.
3. Support and value the work of community groups in delivering GBI projects, even where direct financial support is

not available.

4. Appoint a GBI Champion to:

- a. Work with local stakeholders, including, local councillors, Anglian Water, Natural England, Environment Agency, Woodland Trust, Landowners and Sustrans to advocate for GBI in Rutland;
- b. Work with Anglian Water to encourage farmers to reduce chemical run-off and signpost them to funding streams.
- c. Work with neighbouring stakeholders, including, North Northamptonshire Council, Lincolnshire County Council, South Kesteven Council, Nene Rivers Trust to develop catchment-wide nature recovery strategies.
- d. Work with local landowners to promote trees, woodland and new access wherever suitable.
- e. Identify ways to encourage residents to use green travel routes.

Case Study:

Blackpool's Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy will protect and enhance the borough's urban, coastal and rural environments to ensure the social, economic and environmental benefits derived from them are maximised.

Following the production of the Strategy, Blackpool Council appointed a Green Infrastructure Development Manager. The role takes on ownership and delivery of the town's Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy and crucially, forms partnerships with health, housing, town centre, schools, cultural and art specialists. The position seeks to drive change in policy and delivery of GBI through new development, including developer contributions and bid writing.

Case Study: Fens for the Future – Collaborative Project

The Cambridgeshire Fens are one of the most agriculturally productive areas of the UK, but also one of the most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. The Fenland was artificially drained in the 17th Century to provide land for agriculture. This had the result of fragmenting the important Fen habitat and significantly altering its ability to provide ecosystem services. A number of multi-disciplinary partnerships exist in the region, all with similar aims to promote collaborative working to restore some of the fenland functionality, reconnect existing habitats, reduce peat loss, promote peat restoration, investment into the region, and help agriculture modify some of its practices to reduce its impact. At the heart of this is an integrated water management strategy, designed to work with water and not against it, in order to increase the region's resilience to flooding and drought. Key to all these aims, is collaborative and cross-industry working. This recognises that multiple stakeholders use the land in its current form and need different services from it. Any future change to this landscape can benefit all parties, but education and continuous collaboration is needed to make it a success.

Recommendations for Evidence

5. Review the “call for sites” to assess how they could provide new open space and GBI linkages at future masterplanning stages; and develop policy to embed the GBI provision at planning application stages.
6. Ensure new GBI in new developments is mapped and included in RCC’s open space dataset.
7. Carry out a review of the Open Space Assessment in 10 years to update data against population trends and projections, and check that accessibility standards are being used.
8. Once the mandatory requirement for new developments to deliver 10% Biodiversity Net Gain has become established practice, explore policy opportunities to move beyond this into wider environmental net gain, such as carbon-positive and health-positive metrics.
9. Identify an area of land in Rutland for a Habitat Bank which can help deliver the LNRS.
10. Provide an opportunity for the Environment Agency, Anglian Water and Natural England to share data which can be used to inform the LNRS and measure its success.
11. Keep abreast of natural capital policy and examine ways that Rutland’s farmers and landowners can secure resources to

manage land in a way that helps to boost its natural capital (e.g. soil health, water quality, carbon stock).

Case Study: A Natural Capital Approach in Greater Manchester

Greater Manchester was the first city-region in the UK to develop a Natural Capital Investment Plan. The aim of the plan is to encourage investment in its natural environment to secure financial and social returns and benefits to the environment. The Investment Plan includes an action to develop new finance models to improve the quality and quantity of Greater Manchester’s natural environment including those around mitigating the impacts from new development on biodiversity and carbon through habitat banking and carbon trading.

Plan Strategically

- 12. Appoint a lead to co-ordinate the LNRS on behalf of RCC.
- 13. Work with Leicestershire County Council and Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust on the LNRS.
- 14. Ensure GBI is considered in all RCC’s plans, strategies and guidance documents.



Figure 25: Green and blue infrastructure.

Design

- 15. Encourage the use of the Landscape Character Assessment and Design Guidelines for Rutland.
- 16. Encourage green travel routes in new and existing developments that link to open spaces, schools, places of work and public transport links.
- 17. Review functionality of existing open spaces and increase functionality wherever possible.
- 18. Ensure that open spaces meet the quality standards recommended in the Open Space Assessment.
- 19. Address the deficiencies in access to open spaces detailed in the Open Space Assessment.
- 20. Promote SUDS in new developments and retro-fit wherever possible in existing developments.
- 21. Promote drought resilient and multifunctional GBI in new developments.
- 22. Retain existing trees in new developments and where this is not possible, adopt a tree replacement strategy based on tree canopy size and carbon store.

Managed, valued and evaluated

23. Create a guide for landowners to understand the funding streams for projects that will deliver the priorities of this GBI Strategy.
24. Update the GBI Strategy every 5 years to review delivery against the priorities for Rutland.
25. Review water quality data every 5 years to measure the success of reduced chemical run-off.
26. Enable the GBI Champion to monitor progress on an annual basis, and encourage recognition for landowners, community groups and businesses who deliver GBI.
27. Secure management in-perpetuity of GBI in new developments to ensure it is maintained appropriately and so that it achieves BNG.

Case Study:

Manchester's Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy acknowledges that the Council would not have the resources or the reach to deliver the GI Strategy successfully on its own or by working with a small number of partners.

Instead, it takes an inclusive approach which mirrors the approach of the City's climate change action plan, Manchester: a Certain Future (MACF), which was written by a collective of over 200 stakeholders and is delivered by the MACF steering group.

A sub-group, the MACF Green and Blue Infrastructure Group and the Council created a Stakeholder Implementation Plan within their GI Strategy.

The first part of the Plan sets out the objectives and headline actions and the second part details how the Plan will be delivered and monitored through transparent reporting. The latter involves MACF, the City Council and local universities in establishing a set of key performance indicators, undertaking an annual review of the actions set out in the Stakeholder Implementation Plan and undertaking a full review of the Plan's progress cyclically¹⁷.

References

- 1 [National Planning Policy Framework](#)
- 2 [Oakham and Barleythorpe Neighbourhood Plan \(2022\), Regulation 16, Submission Version](#)
- 3 [Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan \(2016\)](#)
- 4 [Rutland Education Clusters](#)
- 5 [Issues and Options \(June 2022\) | Rutland County Council
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- 6 [UK Food Security Report 2021](#)
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- 8 [Green Infrastructure Position Statement](#)
- 9 [Forestry Commission](#)
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