



ALLISON
HOMES

UPPINGHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN RESPONSE

November 23

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1. Introduction

1.1. Allison Homes

- 1.1.1. Allison Homes is an established and respected housebuilder operating successfully over 30 years. Award-winning developments across the country have quickly grown into thriving communities attracting local buyers and those from further afield.
- 1.1.2. Allison Homes currently has an annual output of around 500 homes and are looking to increase this figure to over 2,000 homes annually by 2027. We currently operate from four regional offices in Central, Eastern and South West and more recently the opening of our East Midlands region.
- 1.1.3. Allison Homes have a strong reputation in Rutland, with major involvement in bringing the Barleythorpe Sustainable Urban Extension forward several years ago, as having our Stamford North development currently in for Outline planning for circa 650 units.
- 1.1.4. Our aim is to build strong and lasting relationships with all parties involved in bringing sites forward, including the Local Planning Authority and relevant Town/Parish Councils. We believe that by building high quality homes that allow communities to thrive, it demonstrates our desire to enhance the areas where we build.

1.2. Background

- 1.2.1. A planning application was made in 2014 for the erection of 79 no. residential units with associated landscaping, access, and parking. The application was refused planning permission in 2016 solely on the grounds that the site was not allocated (either in the Rutland Local Plan or in an emerging Neighbourhood Plan). It is notable that there were no technical or other objections to the scheme or to the practical implications of developing the land.
- 1.2.2. The Site has since been promoted for residential and commercial development as part of the Rutland County Council Local Plan making process/Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan Review and the background to this is outlined below. The Site was originally assessed under the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) 2008 under reference 'R/UPP/16'. The SHLAA identified a capacity of 123 dwellings and noted that the site had 'reasonable' access to amenities, 'excellent' access to public transport and has the potential to benefit the community.
- 1.2.3. The SHLAA concluded that mitigation would be required in terms of infrastructure capacity and that the site has reasonable access to amenities, excellent access to public transport and the potential to benefit the community. The Site was considered to be available and viable and was considered suitable for development.
- 1.2.4. Since the production of the SHLAA, the Site Allocations and Policies DPD was published (April 2013) and did not allocate any sites for development in Uppingham, on the basis that the Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan would consider proposals for



residential, employment and other land use allocations within the Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan Area, which was extended to include parts of Ayston lying south of the A47. The Site was identified in the SHELAA (December 2019) under reference SHELAA/UPP/05. The SHELAA identified a capacity of 75 dwellings and considered the site to be 'developable'.

1.2.5. The Site has also been considered in terms of the Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan Review initiated by the preparation of a draft Town Centre and Business Zones Plan (TCBZ), by the Uppingham First Community Partnership. The Neighbourhood Plan Group of the Town Council has now taken over the production of the 'Refreshed Neighbourhood Plan' and issued a 'Call for Sites' specifically seeking sites which are suitable for residential development within/around the town. A representation for the development Site was submitted as part of this process in November 2020.

1.2.6. Allison Home have, in the past year, met with the Town Council/ Uppingham Vanguard group twice to discuss proposals on our site.

1.3. Proposals

1.3.1. The application proposed the development of 78 residential dwellings (Use Class C3) with associated access, landscaping, and infrastructure alongside an indicative masterplan for approximately 1,500 sqm of retail floor space.

1.3.2. The proposal has been developed to respect the surrounding landscape and the proposed dwellings range in height from 1-2 storeys.

1.3.3. 30% of the proposed dwellings are to be affordable.

1.3.4. Vehicular access into the site will be via a single point off Ayston Road. The access strategy is set out in further detail in the Transport Assessment submitted to Rutland County Council.

1.4. Response

1.4.1. The following document has been prepared to respond to the Submission Version of the Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan (Review) 2022/2023.

1.4.2. Allison Homes have previously responded to prior consultation earlier this year, and we welcome the opportunity to provide a further consultation response.

2. Consultation

2.1. Neighbourhood Plan Dwelling Requirements

2.1.1. Allison Homes welcomes Uppingham's ambition to further cement themselves as Rutland's second largest town, with the Neighbourhood Plan recognising the need to provide more housing than Rutland County Council required. The benefits of housing are wide-reaching and can impact the Town in numerous ways, including much needed affordable housing (in this case, 30%), providing enhanced local spaces and play areas, providing developer contributions in line with Rutland County Council's Community Infrastructure Levy policy, of which the Town Council will receive 25% for having a Neighbourhood Plan in place.

2.1.2. In conclusion, we welcome the inclusion of more houses and encourage the Neighbourhood Plan to allocate more housing to further boost the local economy.

2.2. Policy GP1

2.2.1. Allison Homes supports the introduction of a policy that focuses on sustainable development and helping addressing climate issues.

2.2.2. We strive to provide sustainable development in line with the latest Building Regulations, with the many of our new homes achieving EPC ratings of A or B, helping reduce CO2, as well as saving people money.

2.3. Policy H1

2.3.1. A target of 25 dwellings per hectare is achievable on sites and is reflective of the local character and context of the majority of the sites. The Allison Homes site is adjacent to both lower and higher densities, with the bungalows located to the south of the site at around 19 dwellings per hectare due to the larger land-take of bungalows. A recently approved Outline permission off Leicester Road had a density of 28 per hectare, indicating that the policy figure is sound.

2.3.2. The indicative dwellings used to calculate allocated numbers per site should be based off the density of 25 dwellings per hectare to ensure there are no conflicting policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. This will be discussed further into the response.

2.4. Policy H4

2.4.1. There are five sites allocated to deliver the housing requirements, with the following table summarising the allocations

Allocation	Indicative Dwellings	Site Size- Gross (Ha)	Density Per Hectare
U-HA1	110	8.37ha	13 dph
U-HA2	40	4.19ha	8.9 dph
U-HA3	60	3.3ha	18 dph
U-HA4	60	4.12ha	14 dph
U-HA5	60	2.4ha	25 dph

2.4.2. Policy H4 should use Policy H1 as guidance for the density of the proposed developments. Allison Homes are focused on U-HA2, as that is controlled by us and we are looking to bring this site forward. As highlighted above, the indicative dwellings is taken from Policy H4, and the size is taken from the associated allocation policy for each site. The nett hectare has not been used, as the Neighbourhood Plan, along with the developer, does not know the site constraints and as such, the nett hectare cannot be used due to this being an unknown.

2.4.3. As evidenced above, the densities do not correspond with Policy H1 of the Neighbourhood Plan, nor does it comply with Policy CS10 of the Adopted Local Plan, with a minimum of 30 dwellings per hectare required by Policy CS10.

2.4.4. At a density of 8.9 dph, it is extremely low, even compared to the lower-than-policy densities of some of the other allocations. This will be discussed further into the response.

2.5. Policy U-HA2

2.5.1. Firstly, the Neighbourhood Plan indicates that the developable area of the site is 3.04ha, however, this should not be included as it is a 'best guess' at the developable area, and instead gross hectares should only be included.

2.5.2. The initial wording of the policy indicates that the site is allocated for up to 40 dwellings. The size of site is 4.19ha gross and densities are calculated by dividing the number of dwellings by the number of hectares.

2.5.3. The gross density of the site is therefore 8.9 dph, and even when calculated against the estimated nett developable area, the density is still only 13.1 dph.

2.5.4. These two figures are considerably lower than the indicative density per hectare stated in Policy H1, which is 25 dph. Currently, Policy U-HA2 and Policy H1 conflict with each other, and Policy U-HA2 also conflict with the relevant density policies found in the Adopted Local Plan and Emerging Local Plan, with the Adopted Local Plan Policy CS10



identifying a minimum of 30 dwellings per hectare to be required in villages, and 40 dwellings per hectare within the built-up area of Oakham and Uppingham town.

2.5.5. The allocation of 'up to 40 dwellings' is therefore conflicting with density policies and the allocation numbers should be increased to ensure Policy U-HA2 does not conflict with other policies.

2.5.6. Furthermore, Policy criteria a highlights a mix of smaller housing and bungalows to ensure the mix caters for first time buyers, families, and older persons. The use of smaller mixes and house types would create further excess land that would not relate to the context of the developments to the south, as they have a higher density of around 20-25 dwellings per hectare.

2.5.7. Allison Homes are confident that we can provide a high-quality development that have an increased density in accordance with Policy H1 of the Neighbourhood Plan and Policy CS10 of the Local Plan, with policy compliant open space in accordance with the Adopted Site Allocation and Policies DPD, and also include a suitable area for the retail/commercial element of this site.

2.5.8. Further discussion with the Neighbourhood Planning group on this matter will be needed, as Allison Homes are looking to submit a planning application in the coming months.

2.6. **Criteria a**

2.6.1. Policy criteria a highlights that "A mix of housing to include 50% of dwellings as 2/3-bed bungalows, semi-detached and detached market dwellings catering for first time buyers, families, and older persons". The wording of this policy is unclear and should be reworded to provide clarity. It currently reads that 2/3 bed bungalows, semi detached units and detached units should account for 50% of the dwellings on site, however, Table 1 states that 50% of the dwellings should be bungalows. This is a conflict and Allison Homes read this policy as 2/3 bed bungalows, semi-detached and detached units should account for 50% of the units. Providing 50% of bungalows would be commercially unviable and should be removed from Table 1 and replaced with criteria a to provide consistency.

2.7. **Criteria b**

2.7.1. Allison Homes support criteria B in providing much needed affordable housing at 30% of the number of dwellings, which also aligns with the Rutland Emerging Local Plan.

2.7.2. Allison Homes also support the provision of a play space and ensuring that the development is reflective of the character and context of Uppingham. We also support the enhancement existing hedgerows around the site and enhanced tree planting to the north of the site.



2.8. **Criteria f**

- 2.8.1. Criteria f will be broken down into two points. Firstly, discussing the single point access for both the commercial land and residential development, and secondly, discussing the connection to U-HA5.
- 2.8.2. Criteria f requires a single vehicular access point off Ayston Road, which will reduce the number of junctions coming off the west side of Ayston Road and will cause the residential area of the site to share an access point with the commercial land.
- 2.8.3. This has been incorporated into our design and the single vehicular access has been discussed with Rutland County Council informally over the past several months, with the County Council highlighting their concerns over the use of articulated lorries using an entrance so close to the roundabout.
- 2.8.4. Allison Homes have undertaken a formal pre-application process with the Local Planning Authority to formally understand the position of the Council. We propose a left-hand turn only out of the site and relevant studies undertaken by our Transport Consultants prove that the junction can be designed to highway standards to provide access to the commercial land.
- 2.8.5. County Highways are concerned over the use of articulated lorries coming into the site and if the pre-application comes back negative and it is determined that the entrance is not suitable for articulated lorries, this severely restricts the use of the commercial land and ultimately, the site would not be able to meet the provision of Policy BE2.
- 2.8.6. The Pre-application response should be provided to Allison Homes by December 2023, and we will look to discuss this response with the Neighbourhood Planning group to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan is updated accordingly.
- 2.8.7. We hope to deliver the commercial aspect of this site and are looking to submit a planning application containing Outline uses for the Commercial land, and a Full on the residential land, and hope that the Neighbourhood Plan is aligned in our aspirations to deliver both a quality residential scheme with the commercial land to the north. If the Pre-application is negative and Rutland County Highways stay firm on their current position, the retail aspect required in criteria g cannot be provided as it retail stores cannot function without the use of articulated lorries.
- 2.8.8. Allison Homes are looking to incorporate the pedestrian and vehicular access to allocation U-HA5, and this will help unlock that access of an additional 60 dwellings.
- 2.8.9. Ultimately, if this site cannot provide the commercial land that is desired by both Allison Homes and the Neighbourhood Plan, we will seek to provide a site that has a suitable outcome for all parties involved in bringing this site forward, and in turn, policy U-HA5.



2.9. **Criteria g**

2.9.1. Criteria g of the policy states that the site should provide a new retail store on land to the north of the site.

2.9.2. Allison Homes are committed to bringing this site forward with the commercial aspect to the north, and will look to submit a Hybrid Planning Application in the coming months to secure the Outline planning permission for the northern commercial development.

2.9.3. As previously mentioned, however, we have submitted a pre-application to ensure that the access is suitable for Rutland County Highways, as they have previously raised some concerns over the use of articulated lorries.

2.9.4. Criteria g cannot be met if the pre-application is determined negatively and as mentioned, Allison Homes will be in discussion with the Neighbourhood Planning Group to ensure a suitable outcome is brought forward.

2.9.5. The map used on policy U-HA2 and BE2 should be altered to restrict only the northeast part of the site to be used as commercial, as the northwestern corner should be allocated a residential due to the narrow nature of that part of the site. This northwestern corner could not be used for a commercial aspect due to the size, shape and constraints involved.



3. Conclusion

3.1.1. Ultimately, the Pre-App will decide the type of application submitted for this site, as certain commercial use can only come forward if Rutland County Highways are comfortable with articulated lorries using the site entrance.

3.1.2. Allison Homes are comfortable that the Pre-App will be positive, however, the Neighbourhood Plan Review suggests that the land can be used for alternative commercial uses that would be accepted by Highways.

3.1.3. We would also look to float the site as fully residential by the Town Council and Rutland County Council, however, this would need backing by the Town Council through planning due to the deviation away from the Neighbourhood Plan Review.