

# Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan

Environmental Report Addendum to accompany the submission  
version of the Neighbourhood Plan

Uppingham Town Council

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## Quality information

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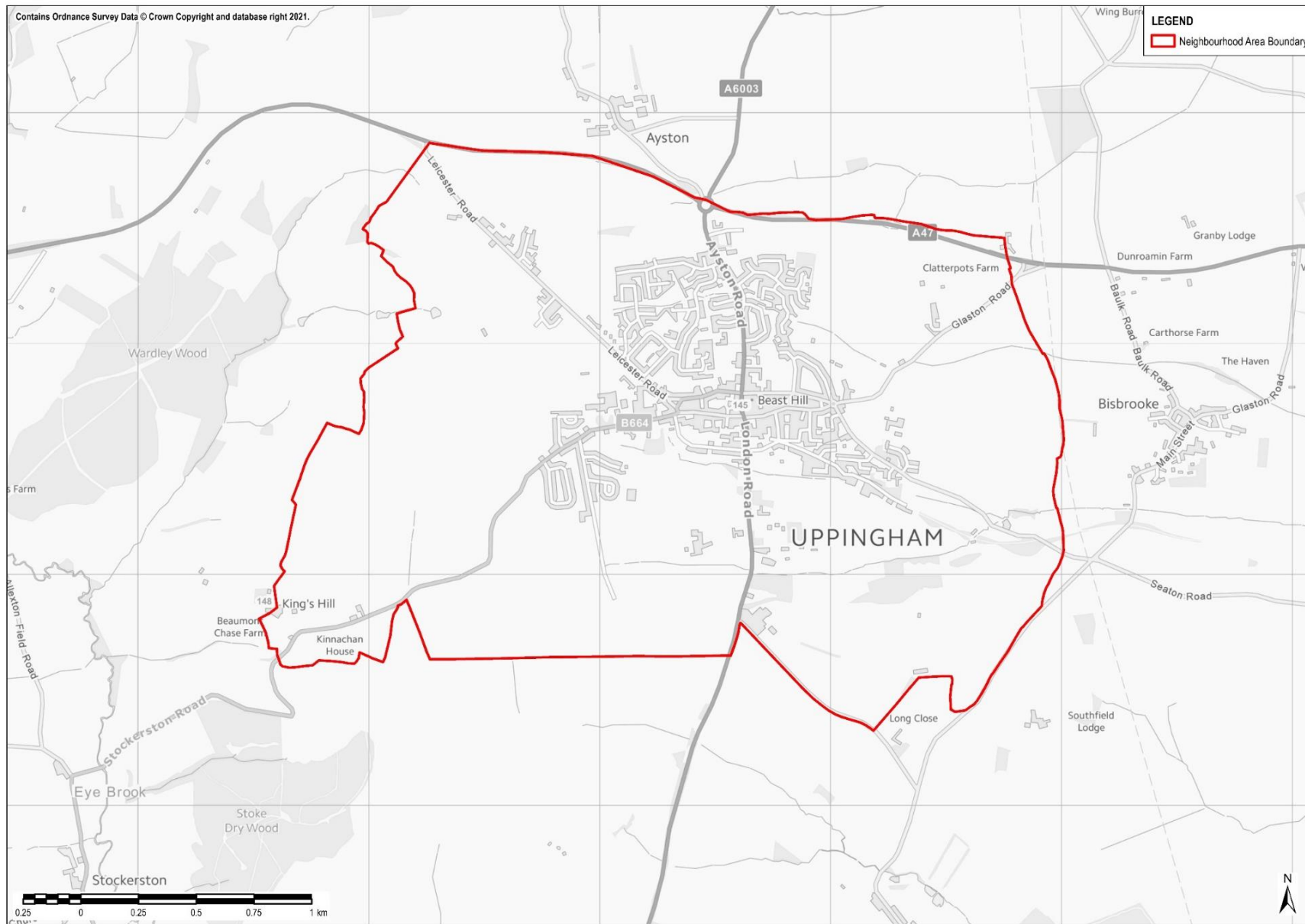


Figure 1.1: Uppingham neighbourhood area

# 1. Overview of plan making / SEA work to date

## Key deliverables

1.1 Documents produced as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process to date include:

- The SEA Scoping Report (October 2022), which contained information about the neighbourhood area's environment and community.
- The SEA Environmental Report (January 2023), which accompanied the Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan at Regulation 14 consultation. This document identified, described and evaluated the likely significant effects of the Neighbourhood Plan and alternatives, and was prepared to meet the procedures prescribed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations).

## Consideration of reasonable alternatives through the SEA

### Initial identification of site options

1.2 With a view to meeting the housing target for the parish, the Steering Group were keen to consider where new homes should be delivered within the neighbourhood area. In light of this, the Steering Group undertook initial assessments of the various sites in the parish in terms of their suitability, availability, and achievability for the purposes of a potential Neighbourhood Plan allocation.

1.3 A total of 15 sites were considered through the initial site assessment process. Sites were identified via a local 'call for sites' exercise (in December 2020) along with sites which were put forward in Rutland County Council's Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA)<sup>1</sup>. Nine sites were initially discounted on the basis that they were not suitable, available, or achievable; or not favoured by the local community through a local consultation process. A summary of the reasons for discounting the sites is provided in the Regulation 14 version of the SEA Environmental Report.

### SEA appraisal of site options

1.4 Following the initial site assessment process, a total of six sites were identified as potential locations to consider for a Neighbourhood Plan allocation. Specifically:

Table 1.1: Site options considered through the SEA to date

Housing Sites Selection Report ref.	SEA ID	Name of site, address	Size (Ha) <sup>2</sup>
UNP21/LS/04	Site A	Leicester Road (Front of Cricket Club)	8.37
UNP21/LS/05	Site B	Land off Ayston Road	4.17

<sup>1</sup> Rutland County Council (2019, 2021): 'SHELAA', [online] available to access [here](#)

<sup>2</sup> Represents total site size and not necessarily total developable area and is taken from the initial housing sites selection report evidence base document accompanying the Regulation 14 version of the UNP.

Housing Sites Selection Report ref.	SEA ID	Name of site, address	Size (Ha) <sup>2</sup>
UNP21/LS/01	Site C	Uppingham Gate, Ayston Road	5.60
UNP21/LS/03	Site D	Land off the Beeches <sup>3</sup>	4.10
UNP21/LS/02	Site E	Land off Goldcrest and North of Firs Avenue	2.63

- 1.5 To support the consideration of the suitability of the shortlisted sites for a potential allocation of a type appropriate for the Neighbourhood Plan, the SEA process appraised the key constraints and opportunities present at the each of the relevant sites. The detailed assessment findings are presented in Regulation 14 version of the SEA Environmental Report. A summary of the assessment findings are presented below.

**Table 1.2: Summary of SEA site appraisal findings**

Site	Biodiversity and Geodiversity	Climate Change	Community Wellbeing	Historic Env.	Land, Soil and Water Resources	Landscape and Townscape	Transport
A	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Blue	Red	Red	Green
B	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Blue	Red	Red	Green
C	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Red	Blue	Green
D	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Yellow	Red	Blue	Red
E	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Blue	Red	Red	Red
<b>Key</b>							
Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)				Red	Likely positive effect		Green
Neutral/no effect				Yellow	Uncertain effect		Blue

- 1.6 As highlighted in **Table 1.2** above, the key constraints to development for all available site options are linked to the ‘Landscape’ SEA theme, and the ‘Land, Soil, and Water Resources’ SEA theme. This is primarily linked to the sites comprising of greenfield land surrounding the town, and the proximity (and in some places, overlap) of sections of the sites with areas of ‘high’ landscape sensitivity and ‘low’ capacity for change. It is also recognised that there are constraints relating to the ‘Transportation’ SEA theme with respect to Site D and Site E, as these sites do not currently connect to the existing road network.
- 1.7 Whilst there are possible constraints to development with respect to the ‘Historic Environment’ SEA theme, none of the sites directly overlap any designated heritage assets or areas. Nonetheless, the SEA recommended that if the sites are taken forward as allocations, each is accompanied by a proportionate heritage assessment at the planning application stage to determine the potential impacts of the proposal to the historic environment.

<sup>3</sup> The boundary for this site is a combination of the following two SHELAA sites: SHELAA/UPP/01 and SHELAA/UPP/12.

## Appraisal of options for the level of growth within the neighbourhood area

- 1.8 The 'Housing Requirement Past Development Rates' evidence base document (which accompanied the UNP at Regulation 14 consultation) outlines that Uppingham has experienced an under-delivery of housing in recent years. Specifically, *“over the period 2006 to 2021, approximately 60% of all dwellings were completed in Oakham and Uppingham, which was below the Core Strategy DPD’s Spatial Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy target of 70%”*.
- 1.9 Additionally, in the absence of a five-year housing land supply in Rutland (at the time of completing the alternatives assessment), plan makers were considering an approach which would deliver higher levels of growth within the neighbourhood area to provide certainty as to the future location of development. On this basis, the SEA also considered the relative sustainability merits associated with the following options:
- **Option A:** Deliver growth in line with existing housing requirements for the neighbourhood area<sup>4</sup>
  - **Option B:** Deliver higher levels of growth within the neighbourhood area<sup>5</sup>
- 1.10 The detailed assessment findings are presented in Regulation 14 version of the SEA Environmental Report.

## Developing the preferred approach

- 1.11 The preferred approach within the Regulation 14 version of the Neighbourhood Plan was to deliver higher levels of growth across the available site options within the neighbourhood area (**Option B**), delivering much needed housing (including a mix of types and tenures) to meet local requirements.
- 1.12 All five of the shortlisted site options were included as allocations, specifically:
- Policy UHA-1: Leicester Road (in front of Cricket Club), for 110 homes.
  - Policy UHA-2: Land off Ayston Road, for 40 homes.
  - Policy UHA-4: Uppingham Gate, Ayston Road, for 60 homes.
  - Policy UHA-5: Land off the Beeches, for 60 homes.
  - Policy UHA-6: Land off Goldcrest and North of Firs Avenue, for 60 homes.

## Purpose of this document

- 1.13 Following Regulation 14 consultation, the Neighbourhood Plan was updated to reflect the comments received. The preferred approach remained the same, to deliver growth across the five shortlisted site options identified through the site assessment process to date.
- 1.14 Uppingham Town Council submitted the updated Neighbourhood Plan to Rutland County Council in Autumn 2023 for subsequent Independent Examination. It was concluded that a hearing was required to more fully consider the way in which Uppingham Town Council arrived at their housing site allocations. This hearing took place on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

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<sup>4</sup> Reflecting the latest local policy position on housing numbers at the time of completing the alternatives assessment.

<sup>5</sup> Reflecting the total capacities of the five shortlisted site options following the initial site assessment process.

- 1.15 This Environmental Report Addendum considers the implications of the Neighbourhood Plan modifications for the SEA findings previously presented (as summarised above). This includes relating to the potential for any significant effects that may arise as part of the modifications.
- 1.16 The Addendum should be read alongside the SEA Environmental Report which accompanied Regulation 14 consultation on the UNP.



## 2. Key considerations for plan makers and the SEA

### Examiner's note on outstanding evidence

2.1 Based on the hearing and a review of the evidence, a 'Note on Outstanding Evidence' was published on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2024. The Examiner's Note outlines some outstanding evidence for consideration by plan makers (and the SEA). This includes (but is not limited to):

- The way in which the sites proposed for housing development were considered and assessed.
- The way in which yield / densities for each site were determined (taking account of landscape and topographical issues and making the most effective use of land).
- The extent to which the strategic housing requirement for the town could be accommodated on a lesser number of sites at a higher density.
- The level of information provided in Policies U-HA4 and U-HA5 including development criteria.
- The agricultural land value of the sites concerned.

### Consideration of additional site options

2.2 Rutland County Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan to replace the existing planning policies in the Rutland Local Development Framework.<sup>6</sup> The new Local Plan, which will cover the period to 2041, will be the key planning policy document for the County and will guide decisions on the use and development of land.

2.3 To support the consideration of which sites to potentially allocate through the new Local Plan, developers, landowners, town and parish councils, and other interested parties were invited to submit sites for potential inclusion in plan the through a "Call for Sites" process. This process has been ongoing throughout the development of the new Local Plan.

2.4 Since the completion of Regulation 14 consultation for the Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan, six additional sites have been put forward within the neighbourhood area. The sites have been subject to detailed assessment by Rutland County Council<sup>7</sup> and have been appraised through the Sustainability Appraisal (SA)<sup>8</sup> process which has been undertaken for the new Local Plan.

2.5 The aim of the site assessment process was to help inform the identification of site allocations for the new Local Plan. The process has been undertaken in the following three stages.

- **Stage 1** was an initial assessment of sites to screen out those with significant constraints, or sites that are not in accordance with Rutland

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<sup>6</sup> The current Local Development Framework comprises: Minerals Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPD (October 2010); the Core Strategy DPD (July 2011); and the Site Allocations and Policies DPD (October 2014)

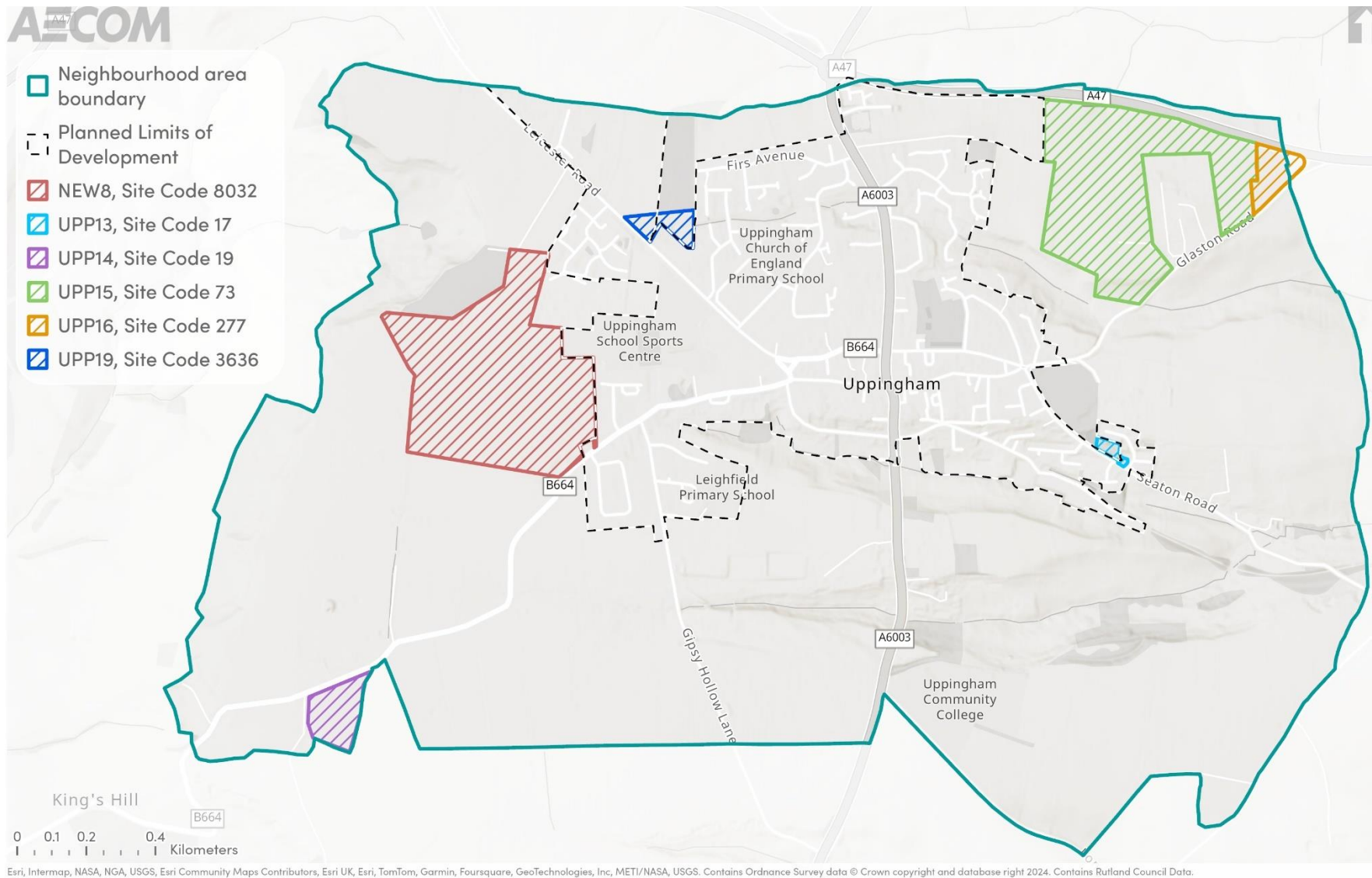
<sup>7</sup> Rutland County Council (2024): [Site Allocation Assessment](#)

<sup>8</sup> AECOM (2024): [SA Technical Annex: GIS Site Assessment](#)

County Council's emerging spatial strategy. If the site passes, it moves to Stage 2a.

- **Stage 2a** of the SHELAA assessment was undertaken to assess the effect of potential development of a site against a wide range of environmental, social and physical criteria using a red, amber, green assessment. If the site passes, it moved onto Stage 2b.
- **Stage 2b** of the assessment goes on to consider any potential constraints in detail alongside advice from technical experts and uses planning judgement to consider the suitability of a site for a potential allocation.

2.6 The additional six sites which have been put forward within the neighbourhood area are shown in **Figure 2.1** below. **Table 2.1** (which follows) provides further detail with respect to the additional sites, including the rationale for whether they would or would not be appropriate to consider in further detail through the SEA. Consideration has been given to the potential constraints to development at these locations; whether development at these locations would align with emerging policy requirements; and the findings of the detailed assessments which contribute to the evidence base for the new Local Plan.



**Figure 2.1: Additional SHELAA sites within Uppingham**

**Table 2.1: Consideration of additional site options**

Site ID	Justification
Site 8032 - Land off Stockerston Road, Uppingham – SHELAA NEW8	This site has a net site area of 14.78 hectares, and an indicative housing number of 443 dwellings. It was discounted at Stage 2a of the SHELAA due to the site containing important open spaces and a local wildlife site – as such, development of the site would result in the loss of this important area. The site also has a medium landscape sensitivity, a high provisional ALC grade (Grade 1 or Grade 2), and is at medium to high risk of surface water flood risk. Given these factors, along with issues regarding access to the site, this site has not been taken forward for further consideration through the SEA.
Site 17 – Uppingham old sewage works – SHELAA UPP13	This site has a net site area of 0.32 hectares and has an indicative housing number of 10 dwellings. It was discounted under Stage 2a of the SHELAA assessment, due to having a medium landscape sensitivity, and being included under a blanket tree preservation order. There were also concerns raised around access to the site and potential impacts on the wider road network, given its location on Seaton Road, which already serves a number of residential roads and cul-de-sacs. Reflecting on this, given the potential for adverse impacts on landscape if development were to go forward at this location, this site has not been taken forward for further consideration through the SEA.
Site 19 – Stockerston Road – SHELAA UPP14	This site has a net site area of 1.98 hectares and has an indicative housing number of 60 dwellings. It was discounted under Stage 1 of the SHELAA assessment due to being located outside of Uppingham’s Planned Limits of Development. As such, development here is not likely to be sustainable in terms of location and landscape impacts – reflecting that the site is positioned in the surrounding countryside and a distance from important infrastructure and facilities. As such, this site has not been taken forward for further consideration through the SEA.
Site 73 – Launde Farm Uppingham – SHELAA UPP15	This site has a net site area of 12.23 hectares, and an indicative housing number of 367 dwellings. The site was assessed under Stage 2a of the SHELAA assessment and was discounted. This is largely due to its agricultural land quality – the site is currently in agricultural use and has a provisional Grade 1 or Grade 2 agricultural land classification (ALC) quality. Further to this, the site partially intersects with fluvial Flood Zone 2 or Flood Zone 3, and development could impact upon public right of way E270/3/Uppingham, which intersects the site in the north-eastern area and the south-western extent. Additionally, the site is located outside of Uppingham’s Planned Limits of Development. As such, development here is not likely to be sustainable in terms of location and landscape impacts – reflecting that the site is positioned in the surrounding countryside and a distance from important infrastructure and facilities. As such, it has been discounted from further consideration through the SEA based on its flood risk potential, its likelihood to impact the public footpath, and its distance from the settlement. This conclusion is also based on its impact on productive agricultural soils – the loss of which cannot be mitigated.
Site 277 - Land at Junction of A4 and	The site was discounted under Stage 1 of the SHELAA assessment due to being promoted as a crematorium; this use was not being considered under the Local Plan. The site is largely unconstrained – though it does have public footpath

Site ID	Justification
Glaston Road, Uppingham, LE15 – SHELAA UPP16	E270/3/Uppingham intersecting the site. However, it has been discounted for further SEA assessment due to being located outside of Uppingham’s Planned Limits of Development. As such, development here is not likely to be sustainable in terms of location and landscape impacts – reflecting that the site is positioned in the surrounding countryside and a distance from important infrastructure and facilities.
Site 3636 - Land at Leicester Road, Uppingham – SHELAA UPP19	This site has a net site area of 0.95, and an indicative housing number of 29 dwellings. It was discounted under Stage 1 of the SHELAA assessment due to part of the site having planning permission for up to 163 dwellings (application reference 2019/0524/OUT), which was approved in March 2023. The remaining developable area has a large pond, which is an important habitat for a population of newts. Due to the ecological sensitivities associated with the site, it has not been taken forward for further consideration through the SEA.

## 3. Appraising the updates within the Neighbourhood Plan

### Methodology

- 3.1 The modifications within the Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan have been screened for likely significant effects. The purpose of this screening exercise is to establish whether the proposed updates are likely to lead to significant effects in relation to the findings presented in the Regulation 14 version of the Environmental Report, which should then be appraised in more detail.
- 3.2 The focus of the screening is on the modifications within the Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan; however, explicit consideration is also given to the effects of the plan (i.e., the cumulative effects of the updates and the rest of the plan).

### Findings of the screening exercise

- 3.3 The table below presents the findings of the screening of the modifications within the Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan.

**Table 3.1: Key updates to the Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan**

Update (Policy ref)	Focus (changes in relation to...)	Screened in?	Rationale
H1	<p>Renamed policy title from overall housing numbers and densities to overall housing numbers.</p> <p>The housing requirement has been updated to a minimum of 515 (previously 330). Additionally, the detail about development densities has been removed.</p>	<b>Yes</b>	<p>The policy has been updated to remove the density requirements that were previously set. The housing numbers have been updated to reflect the latest evidence for the neighbourhood area, as informed by the local policy position for Uppingham as presented in the Regulation 19 version of the new Local Plan.</p> <p>This is a major modification to the existing policy and has been screened-in as requiring further consideration through the SEA.</p>
H4	<p>Policy has been updated to include three sites to meet the residual housing requirement. These are: U-HA1 Land off Leicester Road (in front of Cricket Club), for approximately 125 dwellings; U-HA2 Ayston Road, for approximately 76 dwellings; and U-HA3 Uppingham Gate mixed use site, for approximately 105 dwellings.</p> <p>This removes sites U-HA5 and U-HA6.</p>	<b>Yes</b>	<p>The removal of two site allocations and an increase in the indicative housing number across three site allocations are major modifications to the Neighbourhood Plan. These provisions have the potential for likely significant effects which should be explored through the SEA.</p>
U-HA1	<p>The policy has been updated to increase the developable land (from 5.02 hectares to 5.3 hectares), and an additional stipulation has been added to ensure access is based on a full transport assessment and agreed with the LPA.</p> <p>The total number of homes to be delivered on the site has increased from 110 to 125 homes.</p>	<b>Yes</b>	<p>Whilst the overall aim and focus of the policy has not changed, the increase in the proposed housing number for the site has the potential for likely significant effects which should be explored through the SEA.</p>
U-HA2	<p>Policy has been updated to increase the number of homes from 40 to 76 homes and has an additional focus on providing open community space. Access</p>	<b>Yes</b>	<p>Whilst the overall aim and focus of the policy has not changed, the increase in the proposed housing number for the site has the potential for likely significant effects which should be explored through the SEA.</p>

Update (Policy ref)	Focus (changes in relation to...)	Screened in?	Rationale
	stipulations have also been added with respect to the design considerations for new development areas.		
U-HA3	<p>Policy has been updated to increase the number of homes from 60 to 105, and to change the percentage of different housing types and tenures to be delivered on site.</p> <p>Additional stipulations have also been added with respect to the design considerations for new development areas.</p>	<b>Yes</b>	Whilst the overall aim and focus of the policy has not changed, the increase in the proposed housing number for the site has the potential for likely significant effects which should be explored through the SEA.
U-HA4	Previously Policy U-HA5, the policy has been updated to place the site in reserve and to provide for approximately 75 homes. It also includes development stipulations for the site – including highways access, and the need for the site to be developed to support the site under policy U-HA3.	No	The site is no longer taken forward as a Neighbourhood Plan allocation to meet residual housing requirements. However, it is recognised that housing targets for Rutland could increase in the coming months in light of the planning reforms proposed through the latest NPPF consultation (which closed in September 2024). On this basis, the site is considered as a ‘reserve’ site for development within the Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan.
U-HA5	Previously Policy U-HA6, the site has been put in reserve under the updated policy to deliver up to 60 homes, and more detailed provided (including around access to the site, affordable housing provision, and the need for the site to meet unmet demand / housing shortfalls).	No	The site is no longer taken forward as a Neighbourhood Plan allocation to meet residual housing requirements. However, it is recognised that housing targets for Rutland could increase in the coming months in light of the planning reforms proposed through the latest NPPF consultation (which closed in September 2024). On this basis, the site is considered as a ‘reserve’ site for development within the Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan.
GP1; H2; TC1; OR1; and BE1.	Minor updates to the policies to strengthen their provisions with additional details where appropriate.	No	The revisions do not comprise any significant changes to the overall aim and focus of the policies and do not impact on the overall spatial strategy within the Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan.



## Screening conclusions

- 3.4 The SEA Regulations require the SEA process to identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects of the Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan and alternatives.
- 3.5 The screening of the updates has concluded that **the Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan has the potential for additional likely significant effects to those presented in the SEA Environmental Report which accompanied the Regulation 14 consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan.**
- 3.6 In light of the above, in association with the requirements of the SEA Regulations, further detailed assessment work is required to explore the implications of the modifications to the Neighbourhood Plan. This is presented in **Chapter 4** below.

## 4. Consideration of additional reasonable alternatives

### Introduction

4.1 In light of the conclusions of the screening exercise undertaken in **Chapter 3**, alongside the Note of Outstanding Evidence provided by the Independent Examiner, the SEA has considered the relative sustainability merits of an additional set of spatial strategy options for delivering growth within the neighbourhood area. Specifically:

- **Option A:** deliver lower density development across several site options<sup>9</sup>.
- **Option B:** deliver higher density development across fewer site options<sup>10</sup>.

### Assessment findings

4.2 The options have been assessed against the SEA Framework developed at SEA scoping and is presented against the SEA themes.

4.3 For each SEA theme an assessment of the likely significant effects of the options is presented. This is accompanied by a ranking of the options, which provides an indication of the relative sustainability performance of the options relating to the SEA theme being considered.

4.4 **Table 4.1** below presents the findings of the appraisal of the options assessment for each SEA theme.

**Table 4.1: Summary of assessment findings**

Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options (for each SEA theme)	Rank of preference	
	A	B
<p><b>Option A: Deliver lower density development across several site options</b></p> <p><b>Option B: Deliver higher density development across fewer site options</b></p>		
<p><b>Biodiversity and Geodiversity</b></p> <p>Delivering lower density development across several sites through Option A may result in development designs being able to provide greater infrastructure to support biodiversity connectivity. This could include providing more space for green features and areas within the site boundaries, which would likely allow for safe species movement through the site into the surrounding area. Furthermore, lower density growth across multiple sites could allow for adjacent sites to work collaboratively to bring forward positive effects – for example, improving biodiversity connectivity between the sites. This would likely be the case for Site E and Site B, and Site C and Site D.</p> <p>However, Option A also has the potential to bring forward negative effects for biodiversity and geodiversity. Whilst it is noted that none of the sites</p>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>

<sup>9</sup> Specifically, at the five site options (Site A – Site E) identified as the preferred approach within the previous iterations of the Neighbourhood Plan (and SEA), as discussed in Chapter 1 in this Environmental Report Addendum.

<sup>10</sup> In this option, it is assumed that the residual housing requirements will be delivered across a few (but not all) of the five shortlisted site options identified through the detailed site assessment work to date.

**Option A: Deliver lower density development across several site options**

**Option B: Deliver higher density development across fewer site options**

Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options (for each SEA theme)	Rank of preference	
	A	B
<p>overlap with international or national designations, nor do they contain or are in proximity to BAP Priority Habitats, all potential sites have a level of boundary vegetation. Additionally, Site A partially overlaps and is adjacent to a local wildlife site – Ash trees south of Leicester Road. As such, delivering lower density growth across more sites could impact upon biodiversity connectivity in the neighbourhood area through species disruption – for example, through increased noise and light pollution. Higher density growth on fewer sites through Option B could allow for development on Site A to be avoided (thus reducing the biodiversity impact on the local wildlife site). However, it could also result in less available space for green infrastructure, and therefore potentially less opportunity to deliver net gains for nature. Although it is noted that Biodiversity Net Gain regulations will require proposals to deliver ecological enhancements.</p>		
<p><b>Climate change</b></p> <p>Growth through either option is likely to result in an increase in carbon emissions associated with transport and access to and from the sites, as well as an increase in activity in the neighbourhood area (for example, electricity and gas consumption). Given both options would deliver the same amount of growth, it is anticipated both would have the same impact on carbon emissions originating from the neighbourhood area.</p> <p>However, Option A could bring forward a positive effect for climate change mitigation; given it promotes lower density growth over more sites, there is the potential for increased green infrastructure provision linked to more available space on the sites. This could help to offset carbon emissions by providing a greater number of carbon capture and storage opportunities.</p> <p>It is noted that Option B could also bring forward a positive effect for climate change mitigation – as focusing on higher density growth on fewer sites could help to focus greater development on sites that are close to existing community infrastructure, and active and sustainable transportation opportunities. This could help to reduce emissions linked to private vehicles.</p> <p>It is recognised that Site A has a small area at low risk of surface water flooding on the eastern site boundary, Site B has two areas at low and medium risk of surface water flooding linked to the northern site boundary, and Site C has an area at low risk of surface water flooding in the centre of the site. Overall, when considering climate change adaptation, the sites are largely at low risk of fluvial and surface water flooding.</p> <p>Reflecting on this, Option A has the potential to bring forward positive effects in relation to climate change adaptation. Lower density growth across multiple sites will reduce the level of built development on each site, which in turn could help to reduce potential surface water flood risks. This is due to lower density development leaving greater levels of space on the site, which will likely allow for greater levels of ground infiltration by water that is trapped on the surface by impermeable surfaces. Furthermore, less dense development could allow for more space for green infrastructure,</p>	2	1

**Option A: Deliver lower density development across several site options**

**Option B: Deliver higher density development across fewer site options**

Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options (for each SEA theme)	Rank of preference	
	A	B
<p>which could also aid in flood water management through natural flood water interception.</p> <p>Growth distributed through Option B could also bring forward positive effects in relation to climate change adaptation, by providing the opportunity to focus greater levels of development on sites that do not currently have any significant surface water flood risks. This could include higher levels of growth on Site D and Site E, which would avoid exacerbating existing (albeit low) surface water flood risk on Site A, Site B and Site C.</p> <p>Considering this, Option B is ranked most favourably. Higher density development has the potential to deliver additional growth in more sustainable locations within the neighbourhood area with respect to accessing public transport options. This will help to limit emissions within the neighbourhood area. Additionally, higher density development may help to locate growth in locations which are at less of a risk of flooding.</p>		
<p><b>Community wellbeing</b></p> <p>It is important to note that the distribution of growth through either option will bring forward positive effects for community wellbeing by contributing to residual housing requirements. However, it is noted that higher density growth across fewer sites under Option B will likely support a greater mix of housing types and tenures. This could include higher levels of affordable housing; given more development would come forward on the sites, and a greater percentage of new homes could be provided for under affordable housing schemes.</p> <p>However, higher density growth over fewer sites under Option B could mean there is less available land for green space and infrastructure on the site. In contrast, lower density growth across more sites under Option A could allow for greater levels of green space infrastructure and easier access to them, given the lower level of development. As green space and infrastructure are key components of physical and mental health and wellbeing, it is likely Option A would perform more favourably – though it is noted that effects under either option would be linked to the design of the development scheme taken forward.</p> <p>All five sites are at least 330m from the nearest primary school (Uppingham C of E Primary) and 680m from the nearest secondary school (Uppingham School). Additionally, four of the five sites are at least 89m from the nearest safeguarded employment site (Uppingham Gate); however, Site C intersects with this area. Lower density growth over more sites could result in development coming forward a greater distance from important community infrastructure and could lead to impacts on the safeguarded employment site. In contrast, higher density growth over fewer sites under Option B could allow for development to be focused on sites closest to community infrastructure.</p> <p>In conclusion, growth through either option will help to meet the housing need for Uppingham. However, Option B is found to be the most favourable distribution option. This is due to higher density development providing the opportunity to deliver a greater mix of housing types and tenures, including</p>	2	1

**Option A: Deliver lower density development across several site options**

**Option B: Deliver higher density development across fewer site options**

Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options (for each SEA theme)	Rank of preference	
	A	B
<p>the potential for greater affordable housing provision, as well as allowing for development to be focused closer to existing community infrastructure and facilities. This will likely contribute to enhanced community health and wellbeing. Option A, by focusing on lower density development, would likely be in contrast to local and national policy and may reduce the viability of bringing forward a suitable housing mix (in terms of types, tenures and affordability). There is the potential for significant negative effects through Option A in this respect.</p>		
<p><b>Historic environment</b></p> <p>As the sites are a distance from heritage features, the distribution of growth through Option A or Option B is unlikely to impact upon the significance of specific listed buildings and scheduled monuments (and their wider settings) in the neighbourhood area. It is also noted that Site B, Site C, Site D and Site E are located a distance from the Uppingham Conservation Area. Whilst they are at a lower elevation than the designated area, it is considered that existing development provides screening effects between the conservation area and the available site options which would come forward through either option.</p> <p>It is noted that Site A is also a distance from the Uppingham Conservation Area; however, it is at a higher elevation than the main settlement and designated area. Whilst there is a level of development between the site and the Uppingham Conservation Area along Leicester Road that could provide screening effects, it is possible development at this site could change long-distance views to the north-west from the Uppingham Conservation Area. Based on this, Option B would be more preferable, as it would potentially deliver higher density growth on sites to the north.</p> <p>The importance of transboundary effects on the historic environment is recognised. The Ayston Conservation Area is within proximity to the northern neighbourhood boundary. Given it is at a higher elevation than the potential sites, and the location of the sites in proximity to the neighbourhood boundary, there is the possibility for long-distance south and south-eastern views from the Ayston Conservation Area to be negatively impacted by development. Furthermore, low density growth across multiple sites under Option A could contribute to closing the gap between Uppingham and Ayston, which would likely negatively impact upon the wider historic environment through changes to the historic settlement pattern. Growth through Option B would allow for the concentration of growth on fewer sites; this could reduce the potential for impacts to the Ayston Conservation Area.</p> <p>Based on the above, the distribution of growth through Option B is considered the most favourable option for the historic environment. This is due to higher density growth on fewer sites being less likely to impact upon the setting and views to and from important conservation areas.</p>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
<p><b>Land, soil and water resources</b></p> <p>Given that all the sites are greenfield, and growth through either option would involve the development of land considered to be Grade 2 'Very</p>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>

**Option A: Deliver lower density development across several site options**

**Option B: Deliver higher density development across fewer site options**

Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options (for each SEA theme)	Rank of preference	
	A	B
<p>Good' agricultural quality (all sites but Site D are 100% Grade 2; Site D is 67.39% Grade 2 and 32.61% Grade 3 'Good to Moderate'), both options would likely result in the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land which cannot be mitigated.</p> <p>It is recognised that brownfield site options within the neighbourhood area are limited. In this respect, a growth strategy which would limit the loss of greenfield land is preferable with respect to this SEA theme. On this basis, Option B would likely result in fewer sites being developed. This would help to ensure that development proposals make optimal use of the potential of each site and reduce the loss of greenfield land (safeguarding soil and water resources).</p> <p>As all of the sites are removed from mineral safeguarding zones, mineral consultation zones, and watercourses, and are all within a nitrate vulnerability zone (NVZ) associated with the River Welland, it is anticipated that both options would result in similar impacts to mineral resources and the water environment. This reflects the options being related to distribution as opposed to the amount of overall growth.</p>		
<p><b>Landscape and townscape</b></p> <p>Neither option would deliver growth within a nationally designated landscape. On this basis, the potential for the options to protect and enhance local landscape and townscape character are key considerations for the assessment for this SEA theme. This is discussed below.</p> <p>The 2023 Rutland Settlement Landscape Sensitivity Assessment<sup>11</sup> assesses the sensitivity of four of the five sites. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site A is considered under study parcel UPP11. It has a medium landscape sensitivity to housing development. This reflects the site being located on a relatively elevated flat plateau and its potential to disrupt long-distance views. It is noted that the site may be able to accommodate housing without significantly impacting upon the landscape character.</li> <li>• Site B and Site E are considered under study parcel UPP2 – the area is considered to have a medium landscape sensitivity to housing development. This is linked to it contributing to the setting of the town and the character of the gateway into Uppingham from the north. It may be able to support development on the higher elevated, flatter ground in the southern extent – which would act as a continuation of the existing settlement pattern; development in the eastern part would likely be visually intrusive.</li> <li>• Site D is considered under study parcel UPP4. It has a medium landscape sensitivity to housing development, which is associated with its location in an open area on the eastern edge of Uppingham. Whilst this could impact upon views from existing development to the west, it is indicated that development of the site would be a continuation of the</li> </ul>	1	2

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.rutland.gov.uk/planning-building-control/local-plan/new-local-plan/local-plan-evidence-base/landscape-evidence>

**Option A: Deliver lower density development across several site options**

**Option B: Deliver higher density development across fewer site options**

Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options (for each SEA theme)	Rank of preference	
	A	B
<p>existing settlement pattern, and that the area has a weak rural sense of place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Site C is within the planned limit of development for Uppingham and is therefore not assessed.</li> </ul> <p>When considering the distribution of growth, lower density development over more sites (Option A) could allow for the development of smaller areas within the site boundaries that are perhaps less sensitive from a landscape and townscape character perspective. This includes the southern extent of Site E and Site B, and the western extent of Site D, as this could bring forward growth adjacent to existing housing development. However, the distribution of growth through Option A could have in-combination negative impacts on landscape and townscape character due to additional site options being developed across the neighbourhood area.</p> <p>Comparatively, higher density growth across fewer site options through Option B would lead to an intensification of use at the sites and could result in the loss of key landscape and townscape features within the site boundaries which contribute to the special qualities of the neighbourhood area. For example, it may adversely impact the form of the existing built environment which may contrast with historic development patterns. Additionally, higher density growth will likely deliver growth on areas of the site options which are more sensitive and with less capacity to accommodate change (as per the results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment).</p> <p>Considering the above, Option A is considered to be the more favourable distribution option. This is largely due to lower density growth across more sites providing the potential to focus growth on more suitable locations within the site boundaries. This would also avoid exacerbating the landscape sensitivity of the sites. For either option, the SEA recommends that proposals are accompanied by a proportionate landscape and visual impact assessment or landscape / green infrastructure strategy which provides further detail on the design and mitigation measures for new development areas. This will help to protect the sense of place and distinctiveness of the neighbourhood area.</p>		
<p><b>Transportation</b></p> <p>All five sites are within 211m of the nearest Public Right of Way (PRoW), and 581m from the nearest cycle route. Additionally, all five of the sites are within 160m of the nearest bus stop; however, Site A and Site B are within 2m of the nearest stops. Site A is within proximity to the Shepherd’s Way bus stop on Leicester Road, which allows for access to the Centrebus 747 Leicester-Uppingham service. Site B is within proximity to the Surgery bus stop on Ayston Road / A6003, which allows for access to the R1 Melton Mowbray – Oakham – Corby, and R5 Stamford - Uppingham bus services, provided by Blands. In this respect, higher density development across fewer sites through Option B could allow for a greater percentage of development to come forward on sites with good access to sustainable</p>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>

**Option A: Deliver lower density development across several site options**

**Option B: Deliver higher density development across fewer site options**

Discussion of potential effects and relative merits of options (for each SEA theme)	Rank of preference	
	A	B
<p>transport infrastructure, which may help to reduce the number of private vehicles on the local road network.</p> <p>There is a need to consider the impact of growth distribution on the local road network. Higher density growth over fewer sites under Option B could allow for greater development on Site A, Site B and Site C – which are all adjacent to main roads (Leicester Road for Site A, Ayston Road / A6003 for Site B, and the A47 for Site C). By focusing higher density growth adjacent to main roads, the impact on the local road network could be reduced – as these routeways should be able to accommodate a greater increase in use than minor roads in the neighbourhood area.</p> <p>On this basis, Option B is found to be the more favourable option. This is due to this distribution option presenting the opportunity to focus growth on sites with better access to active and sustainable transportation networks, and the ability to focus growth adjacent to roads that have the capacity (in their current form) to accommodate additional vehicle use.</p>		



## 5. Developing the preferred approach for the Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan

### Overall housing numbers

- 5.1 On 26 September 2024, Rutland County Council approved the Pre-Submission Rutland Local Plan (Regulation 19 Publication Version) for consultation<sup>12</sup>. The emerging new Local Plan makes provision for 123 dwellings per annum across the County over the period 2021 to 2041 together with a 10% buffer- a total of 2,706 dwellings. Policy H1 makes provision for a minimum of 515 homes during the plan period.
- 5.2 Since 31 March 2021 there have been 201 completed and committed dwellings, leaving a residual minimum requirement of 314 dwellings. Policy H1 confirms that this requirement is to be met through the allocation of sites in the Neighbourhood Plan.

### Choice of sites to take forward as allocations

- 5.3 The preferred approach for the Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan is to support higher density development across fewer site options during the plan period (**Option B**). This is with a view to ensuring that development proposals make optimal use of the potential of each site and reduce the loss of greenfield land. The residual minimum requirement of 314 homes is proposed on the following site allocations (as specified in Policy H4):

- U-HA1 (Site A): Land off Leicester Road (for approximately 125 homes)
- U-HA2 (Site B): Ayston Road (for approximately 76 homes); and
- U-HA3 (Site C): Uppingham Gate (mixed-use development, including approximately 105 homes).

- 5.4 This approach does not seek to preclude development at the remaining sites (Site D and Site E), with these options identified as 'reserve sites' through Policy U-HA4 and U-HA5. The rationale for incorporating the reserve sites is framed within the Housing Discussion Paper<sup>13</sup> which contributes to the evidence base for the Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan. Specifically:

*“National planning reforms which are proposing a new method for assessing local housing need which would more than double the indicative housing need in Rutland from 123 dwellings per annum to 264 dwellings per annum.*

*“While transitional arrangements could enable the new Local Plan to proceed based on current housing need requirements, a subsequent review of the Local Plan would need to take account of new housing targets, if confirmed. An increase in the housing requirement for Uppingham would seem inevitable.”*

- 5.5 The Town Council have taken a collaborative approach to engaging with developers for the proposed site allocations. In this respect, the Town Council

<sup>12</sup> Rutland County Council (2024): [Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan Consultation \(Regulation 19\)](#)

<sup>13</sup> Plan-It X (November 2024): Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan Review: Housing Discussion Paper

are keen to ensure that high-quality design is delivered through new development areas which meets local needs, in terms of housing types, tenures, and affordability. Additionally, the Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan has taken a pro-active approach to addressing the key constraints to development at the site allocations, as identified through the detailed site assessment work, the SEA findings, and via regular engagement with Rutland County Council.

## 6. Next steps

### Plan Finalisation

The modified Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan will be submitted to Rutland County Council along with this Environmental Report Addendum. The County Council will again publicise the submitted plan for a six-week period and invite comments. At Independent Examination, the Neighbourhood Plan will be considered in terms of whether it meets the Basic Conditions for Neighbourhood Plans and is in general conformity with local planning policy. The Plan can only proceed to a referendum if the Examiner and the County Council are satisfied that it meets the Basic Conditions.

If the Independent Examination is favourable, the Neighbourhood Plan will be subject to a referendum, organised by Rutland County Council. If more than 50% of those who vote agree with the Neighbourhood Plan, then it will be 'made'. Once made, the Neighbourhood Plan will become part of the Development Plan for the parish.

### Monitoring

The SEA regulations require 'measures envisaged concerning monitoring' to be outlined in this report. This refers to the monitoring of likely significant effects of the Neighbourhood Plan to identify any unforeseen effects early and take remedial action as appropriate.

It is anticipated that monitoring of effects of the Neighbourhood Plan will be undertaken by Rutland County Council as part of the process of preparing its Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). No significant negative effects are considered likely in the implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan that would warrant more stringent monitoring over and above that already undertaken by Rutland County Council.

