

## Issues and Options

Rutland County Council (RCC) is consulting on a New Local Plan (LP). The previously submitted Local Plan was withdrawn in September 2021, largely as a result of the opposition by local parishes, as it would have meant a new town bigger than Uppingham on the St. George's Barracks site.

The Issues and Options consultation (it runs from 30th June until 16th September) is the first point at which RCC will seek the views of residents on the development of the LP.

Size does matter as one of the options concerns where in the county development, particularly housing, should take place. RCC will take notice of the number of responses and the bigger populations of Oakham and Rutland may well suggest anywhere other than in their own towns. North Luffenham Parish Council (NLPC) would therefore like as many residents as possible to respond to this Issues and Options consultation.

Unfortunately the consultation document is rather long, detailed and indigestible so NLPC has provided a guide to the questions it feels are most important in the hope this might be helpful for individuals in making a response. For each question, an option is suggested and/or a comment for this response.

### HOW TO RESPOND

The full version is available on the RCC website:

<https://www.rutland.gov.uk/my-services/planning-and-building-control/planning/the-local-plan/the-new-local-plan/issues-and-options-june-2022/> To respond to the consultation, you need to access the website and either login to your existing account, if you have created one in the past, or register.

The full version can also be downloaded from this post on the village website:

<https://northluffenham.com/>

- ***The following responses have been discussed and agreed by NLPC but are guidelines only. You may have different opinions; all comments are valid at this stage.***
- ***Please DO respond; every response matters.***

### Question 1 Local Plan Vision

Please indicate which option you think should be used as the basis for preparing the Local Plan:

**Option A: The Future Rutland Vision should be used as the basis of preparing the Local Plan bearing in mind that it will be for the Local Plan to establish a sustainable strategy for the scale and location for future growth and development.**

**Option B: Create a new vision specifically for the Local Plan and the plan period it will cover.**

**NLPC response:**

- *Option B: Create a new vision specifically for the Local Plan and the plan period it will cover.*
  - *Develop a new vision which is simple, not cloaked in jargon, and which reflects the results of the recent Rutland Conversation. The overwhelming response to that conversation was that we place enormous value on our rural characteristics. It follows that housing provision above the Government targets should be resisted.*

**Question 2 Local Plan Strategic Objectives**

**Do you agree with these proposed objectives for the Local Plan Review?**

**Question 3 Please let us have additional suggestions you may have.**

**NLPC response:**

- *12 strategic objectives is far too many and, as set out, just a wish list. Objectives 2, 3, 9 and 12 should be prioritized as they deal with our rural environment, truly affordable housing, and essential infrastructure.*

**Question 5 & 6 Local Plan Issues**

**Do you agree with the proposed issues to be addressed through the Local Plan?**

**NLPC response:**

- There are too many and not prioritized and aligned with the objectives.

**Question 7 Reducing energy use and carbon emissions in new buildings**

**Please indicate which of the option(s) below you think should be included in the Local Plan?**

**Option A: Plan for net-zero carbon from the adoption of the plan This would require all new development to be net-zero carbon upon adoption of the plan. This would be at a cost and may affect viability. As a consequence, Rutland may see less affordable housing built and maybe fewer other social and community benefits from development.**

**Option B: Plan towards meeting net-zero carbon from a stated future date This would require all new development to achieve net zero carbon from a future date in the plan period, and which might align with the government's timetable for introducing "zero-carbon ready" development. This could allow time for the development industry to adjust to the higher standards and may mean Rutland secures more affordable housing and community benefits from development**

**Option C: Do neither of the above, and not set a local target. This would mean that new development will only have to comply with national building regulation (Part L) requirements (and any subsequent changes to them) in respect of carbon reduction in new buildings.**

**NLPC response:**

- *Option B: Plan towards meeting net-zero carbon from a stated future date*
  - *This reflects the Government's intentions; why should RCC differ or even try to differ.*

### **Question 8 Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Proposals**

**Please indicate which of the option(s) below you think should be included in the Local Plan?**

**Option A: Identify areas which might be suitable for development of commercial scale renewable /low carbon energy proposals such as wind turbines, solar farms, or biomass plants. This will need to consider technology requirements, impacts on the local environment, landscape, and heritage assets (Note: Government policy requires sites for large scale wind farms to be identified in the Local Plan)**

**Option B: Set out policy criteria to assess planning applications for renewable and low carbon energy schemes. This will mean determining relevant applications on a case-by-case basis against the criteria instead of providing greater clarity to communities and developers by identifying potentially suitable areas.**

- *Option B: Identify areas which might be suitable for development of commercial scale renewable /low carbon energy proposals, such as wind turbines, solar farms or biomass plants.*
  - *This option B will allow a case by case assessment and more flexibility.*

### **Question 9 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems**

**Do you agree that the Local Plan should require the provision of Sustainable urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) in all new built development unless it is demonstrated to be technically unfeasible?**

**NLPC response:**

- *Yes*

### **Question 10 Carbon saving and climate change suggestions**

**Are there other carbon saving measures or climate change-related policy areas the Council should be considering in the new Local Plan?**

**NLPC response:**

- *Solar panels generation with battery storage and wind farms on suitable sites.*
- *Biomass: 'green' gas generation.*

### **Question 11 Options for the scale of housing growth**

Which option do you consider to be most appropriate to include in the Rutland Local Plan as the minimum housing requirement?

**Option A: Apply Government LHN of 140 dwellings per annum with a contingency of 10%. This would accommodate levels of house building that accord with current Government requirements. It may mean, however, that Rutland will fall short of meeting all affordable housing needs.**

**Option B : Apply the SHMA housing market analysis of 160 dwellings per annum with 10% contingency as a more detailed assessment of housing needs arising from demographic projections. This would potentially result in most affordable housing needs being met and also would be roughly equivalent to applying the Government LHN of 140 dwellings per annum with a contingency of 25%.**

**Option C :Apply the higher position from the 2019 SHMA housing market analysis of 190 dwellings per annum with a 10% contingency – this is likely to more fully meet the identified affordable housing needs of the county.**

***[Contingency means the additional supply of housing sites which would be required to deliver the minimum requirement as it provides flexibility and choice and allows for the “non-delivery” of some allocated sites.]***

#### **NLPC response:**

- *Option A: Apply Government LHN of 140 dwellings per annum with a contingency of 10% This would accommodate levels of house building that accord with current Government requirements. It may mean, however, that Rutland will fall short of meeting all affordable housing needs.*
  - *This is the most important question in the document as it dictates much of what the future will be. The overwhelming response to the Rutland conversation was the protection of our rurality. The Government target for Rutland of 140 dwellings per annum, plus a 10% buffer, is the lowest number suggested. The Government expects their guidance to be followed except in exceptional circumstances, so why should RCC contemplate more housing in Rutland.*
  - *The comments about affordable housing are specious . Affordable does not mean low income families can afford the dwellings deemed ‘affordable’. Fixed percentage reductions to market rents and local sales prices mean the resultant affordable housing is still well out of reach of local low income families. **The real need is for housing at rents that local low income families can afford, loosely defined as social housing.** The Council’s powers are limited in this regard, but it should somewhere be an aspiration.*
  - *Anything other than Option A would be a direct contradiction of the rural conversation, a refusal to accept the opinions that led to the withdrawal of the previous Local Plan.*

- *Choosing option A would also be the best defence against any proposed new town – which was the element that proved so unpopular in the previous LP. The county simply does not need any new housing above the Government target.*

**Question 13 Options for the spatial strategy for new housing development**

**Which option(s) do you consider to be most appropriate to include in the Rutland Local Plan?**

**Option A: Continuation of the Core Strategy apportionment of growth between the towns (70%) and villages (30%) This would spread planned growth in line with the past spatial strategy.**

**Option B: Provide a higher proportion of growth in Oakham. This would concentrate more development in the main centre of population in Rutland but would put additional pressure on infrastructure and the local environment.**

**Option C: Provide a higher proportion of growth at Uppingham. This would concentrate more development on the second largest settlement in Rutland but would put additional pressure on infrastructure and the local environment.**

**Option D: Provide a higher level of growth at Local Service Centres. This would propose more development in the larger villages with a range of services and facilities but would put additional pressure on infrastructure and the local environment.**

**Option E: Provide for meeting growth through a new sustainable community (or communities) This would be dependent on sustainable, viable and deliverable proposals coming forward through the Local Plan. This would ease the pressure of growth for Oakham, Uppingham and Local Service Centres but would put additional pressure on the infrastructure and local environment on the areas surrounding any new settlement(s).**

**NLPC response:**

- *Option A: Continuation of the Core Strategy apportionment of growth between the towns (70%) and villages (30%) This would spread planned growth in line with the past spatial strategy.*
  - *Option A has had historical consensual acceptance. There could be some flexibility around the fact that Uppingham might be in favour of more development. Option E, a new town, would be to reopen old wounds and lead to the same confrontations.*
  - *Look at present infrastructure that would support new development.*

**Question 14 If development in Rutland is proposed as part of a sustainable urban extension to Stamford should this count towards Rutland's housing needs and so reduce the requirement for new housing elsewhere in Rutland?**

**NLPC response:**

- *Agree*

### **Question 16 Options for Housing Mix**

Which option do you consider to be most appropriate to include in the Rutland Local Plan?

**Option A:** Maintain the current flexibility on the different house types/sizes that should be provided by developers and encourage the mix to reflect local needs.

**Option B:** Set specific requirements for the types and mix of homes that should be provided on development sites, to ensure that new housing more closely matches need.

**NLPC response:**

- *Option B: Set specific requirements for the types and mix of homes that should be provided on development sites, to ensure that new housing more closely matches need.*
  - *There are limitations to affordable housing in a local context and social housing is the real need as: see question 11.*

### **Question 17 Options for Affordable Housing**

Which option do you consider to be most appropriate to include in the Rutland Local Plan?

**Option A:** Maintain current 67%/33% split between affordable rental and affordable home ownership on development sites and embed this within Local Plan policy. This option would be supported by the 2019 SHMA which concluded overall that this split between rented and low-cost home ownership is appropriate.

**Option B:** Increase the proportion of affordable home ownership properties required within the affordable provision on development sites. This option would recognise the government's strong push to increase levels of home ownership but would not support the Council's strong local priority to increase affordable rent provision nor the level of need outlined in the SHMA.

**Option C:** Increase the proportion of affordable rent properties required within the affordable provision on development sites. This option would increase the proportion of affordable homes that would be required to be for affordable rent above the current ratios, and so provide more homes for those most in need.

**NLPC response:**

- *Option C: Increase the proportion of properties that are at affordable rents on development sites.*

### **Question 18 Options for Self and Custom Build**

Which option do you consider to be most appropriate to include in the Rutland Local Plan?

**Option A:** Encourage self-build development by setting out where it will be supported in principle.

**Option B:** Consider allocating sites specifically for self-build housing or requiring a proportion of large housing sites to be available for self-builders. This option would ensure more land and plots are available to self-builders, by identifying sites in the Local Plan solely for self-build

**NLPC response:**

- Option B: Consider allocating sites specifically for self-build housing or requiring a proportion of large housing sites to be available for self-builders.

#### **Question 19 Options for Older Persons Housing**

Which option (s) do you consider to be most appropriate to include in the Rutland Local Plan?.

**Option A: To require all or a proportion of new homes to be built to higher Building Regulations for accessibility and future adaptation.**

**Option B: To identify sites specifically for specialist housing for older people such as support housing or extra care schemes; this policy approach could also consider requiring certain types of housing to be provided on development sites as part of the mix, such as bungalows.**

**Option C: both of the above requirements**

**NLPC response:**

- *Option C – both of the above requirements*

#### **Question 22 Options for economic development**

Which option do you consider to be most appropriate to include in the Rutland Local Plan?

**Option A: Make no additional allocations of employment land on the basis that there is evidence of an existing over-supply of employment land in Rutland.**

**Option B: Adopt a longer-term approach and allocate land for employment development to maintain a flexible employment land supply. This would allow the Local Plan to meet the full range of needs, provide choice and flexibility in supply, and help support the recovery of the local economy following the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic.**

**Options C: Plan for greater growth and inward investment by allocating land in locations which would attract large employers, business park proposals, and maximise the potential of locations adjacent to the A1 to attract new employment to Rutland to enhance the prosperity and resilience of the local economy.**

**NLPC response:**

- *Options C: Plan for greater growth and inward investment by allocating land in locations which would attract large employers, business park proposals, and maximise the potential of locations adjacent to the A1 to attract new employment to Rutland to enhance the prosperity and resilience of the local economy.*

#### **Question 23 Options for Employment Sites within Rutland**

Which option(s) do you consider to be most appropriate to include in the Rutland Local Plan?

**Option A: Retain all existing allocated employment sites.**

**Option B: Consider changing the allocation of any sites currently allocated for employment and have not been developed (by site reduction or de-allocation).**

**Option C: Allocate new sites for employment uses within Rutland.**

**Option D: Include sites for employment uses within Rutland as part of any major housing proposal or new settlement.**

**Option E: Allocate new sites for employment alongside the County's main transport corridor adjacent to the A1.**

**NLPC response:**

- *Option E. The A1 transport corridor would be the most appropriate location for any commercial development.*

#### **Question 27: Policy Approach for Rutland Water**

**Do you agree with the continuation of the current policy approach to permit small scale development within the five defined recreation areas and the wider Rutland Water area for certain specified uses related to the enjoyment of Rutland Water or for operational uses?**

**NLPC response:**

- *The existing policies have been successful in maintaining a balance between tourism and preserving the rural nature, they should be retained.*

#### **Question 32 Do you agree with the approach to defining the limits of development for settlements should be retained?**

**NLPC response:**

- *Every Parish /Town Council should be asked to review and recommend any necessary or desired changes.*

#### **Question 36 Community Facilities**

**Do you agree/disagree that the Local Plan should protect community facilities in sustainable locations and support the provision of new local community services and facilities alongside new development?**

**NLPC response:**

- *Agree.*

#### **Question 39 Options for promoting sustainable modes of travel**

**Which option(s) do you consider to be most appropriate to include in the Rutland Local Plan?**

**Option A: Continue with the existing approach to direct development to the most sustainable locations and encourage the use of a range of sustainable travel options. (This would need to be updated to reflect national policy and guidance)**

**Option B: Include policies which actively discourage the use of private cars. This might include requiring traffic calming measures in new developments, reducing maximum car parking standards and accepting that the capacity of junctions and routes may be exceeded. As a rural County, there are high levels of car dependency which might make this option difficult to implement.**



**Option C:** Include policies which actively promote sustainable travel (this might include requiring new developments to connect to existing centres and services by high quality walking and cycling network and where practical public transport services or establishing maximum walking distances from new homes to a range of identified services (including stops on operational bus routes).

**Option D:** Consider the use of a specific policy which looks to improve walking and cycling connections. This policy could be used to promote walking and cycling routes within new development sites and ensure there are safe walking and cycling links to the nearest services and facilities. It would set out that streets must be designed to be attractive, safe and prioritise pedestrians and cyclists making this a more attractive way to travel.

**Option E:** Revise parking standards for new developments to reduce the availability of car parking spaces, increase the availability of racks and secure storage for bicycles and increase the availability of electric vehicle charging points. This would also include requirements for electric charging for both vehicles and bicycles.

**NLPC response:**

- *Options A and D: Continue with existing approach to direct development to the most sustainable locations and encourage the use of a range of sustainable travel options. (This would need to be updated to reflect national policy and guidance)*
  - *Any option should recognize that as a rural county Rutland is and will continue to rely on the car. Reducing car parking standards for new developments would disadvantage those living in new developments. Option A would direct new development to the most sustainable locations. I.e Oakham/ Uppingham where walking and cycling is a realistic option.*

#### **Question 41 Options for Health and Wellbeing**

**Which option(s) do you consider to be most appropriate to include in the Rutland Local Plan?**

**Option A:** Require new development to demonstrate how health and wellbeing principles are incorporated within the proposal

**Option B:** Require a Health Impact Assessments to be provided by applicants for specific development, depending on the scale and type of proposal.

**NLPC response:**

- *Both A and B.*

#### **Question 43 Design**

**Which option do you consider to be most appropriate to include in the Rutland Local Plan?**

**Option A:** Reference the Rutland Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in design policies to provide clear guidance in how to achieve high standards of design and build quality. The SPD will be used to provide design guidance for a wide range of design related issues including those that could enhance the health and wellbeing of the future community of new developments and create places that are resilient to climate change.

**Option B:** Include more detailed design requirements in the design policy. Going beyond the current policy approach, additional design requirements could be set out for specific policy areas and additional design criteria could be included for large developments. Policy will specify that 'Building for a healthy Life' will be used to assess the design of new development.

**NLPC response:**

- *Option B: Include more detailed design requirements in the design policy. Going beyond the current policy approach, additional design requirements could be set out for specific policy areas and additional design criteria could be included for large developments. Policy will specify that 'Building for a healthy Life' will be used to assess the design of new development.*

**Question 45: Possible policy approach for the protection of historical assets**

**Which option(s) do you consider to be most appropriate to include in the Rutland Local Plan?**

**Option A: To refresh and update local policy further in line with the NPPF including a strategic policy for the conservation and enhancement of the built and historic environment.**

**Option B: To resource the updating of the historic environment evidence base including conservation area management plans and appraisals and identified assets of local historic importance.**

**NLPC response:**

- *Option A: To refresh and update local policy further in line with the NPPF including a strategic policy for the conservation and enhancement of the built and historic environment.*

**Question 47 Biodiversity**

**Which option do you consider to be most appropriate to include in the Rutland Local Plan?**

**Option A: Review and update existing Local Plan policies to take full account of national planning policy and guidance, and the Environment Act, (this would include a clear statement of the mitigation hierarchy; the requirement for 10% net gain in biodiversity; and support for the development of a Local Nature Recovery Strategy covering Rutland as it relates to requirements from new development.)**

**Option B: Consider a mapping exercise to record a biodiversity baseline for Rutland and identify locations where there are opportunities to improve or restore existing wildlife habitat and create new habitat to strengthen the ecological network across the plan area. This would help provide guidance on how Rutland County Council can meet the requirement of the Environment Act.**

**NLPC response:**

- *Option A: Review and update existing Local Plan policies to take full account of national planning policy and guidance, and the Environment Act, (this would include a clear statement of the mitigation hierarchy; the requirement for 10% net gain in biodiversity; and support for the development of a Local Nature Recovery Strategy covering Rutland as it relates to requirements from new development.)*

**Question 54 Managing the impact of mineral development**

**Which option do you consider to be most appropriate to include in the Rutland Local Plan?.**

**Option A: Set out specific policies in the Local Plan for managing the impacts of mineral development on the wider environment and the restoration/after-use of mineral workings.**

**Option B: Set out general policies in the Local Plan for managing the impacts of all forms of development, that proposals for mineral extraction would also need to address, with separate policies to address matters such as restoration which are specific to minerals development.**

**Option C: Do not include specific policies on managing the impacts of mineral development on the wider environment and the restoration/after-use of mineral workings. This would result in us relying on higher-level national planning policy.**

**NLPC response:**

- Option B: Set out general policies in the Local Plan for managing the impacts of all forms of development, that proposals for mineral extraction would also need to address, with separate policies to address matters such as restoration which are specific to mineral development. There should be firm policies on monitoring of mineral extraction according to the Local Aggregate Assessment.

### **Question 59 Options for funding Infrastructure improvements**

**Which option do you consider to be most appropriate to include in the Rutland Local Plan?.**

**Option A: Continue with a dispersed strategy for new development and allocate CIL funding to projects across the County. This will spread the available funding to more places but will spread it more thinly meaning that there may not be sufficient funds to fund everything. It will also make it more difficult to deliver a strategic approach to infrastructure investment.**

**Option B: focus new development in a single location where the benefits of infrastructure investment can be concentrated. Economies of scale would mean that new/improved education, healthcare and utility infrastructure could be provided as part of a major development concentrating funds in a single location and reducing pressure on existing infrastructure elsewhere in the county.**

**Option C: focuses new development on areas where there is existing capacity or certainty about the delivery of infrastructure improvements. This would result in an infrastructure-led approach to the selection of development sites and settlement hierarchy.**

**Option D: Develop a priority plan for new /improved infrastructure based on an assessment of need (critical, necessary, and desirable) and timing. This would recognise that CIL funding alone is not sufficient to deliver all infrastructure improvements and will help to focus the investment plans of other agencies and support funding bids to government and other agencies.**

**NLPC response:**

- Option D: this could potentially lead to greater investment in infrastructure.

### **Question 60: Prioritisation of Infrastructure**

**If the Council has to prioritise its spending on infrastructure, which of the following requirements should be given priority?**

- Affordable Housing
- Schools
- Healthcare

- **Open space**
- **Leisure facilities**
- **Cultural facilities**
- **Road improvements**
- **Public transport**

**NLPC response:**

*Our discussions suggest the following priorities are appropriate:*

1. *Housing (the issue here is that it should be social housing)*
2. *Healthcare*
3. *Transport.*

**Once again, we remind you that these responses are the ones considered by NLPC to be the most appropriate. You may have different opinions and comments.**

**PLEASE DO MAKE A RESPONSE, using the links at the top of this post to access the online questionnaire or download a copy; YOUR OPINION REALLY DOES MATTER.**