

What is a Local Plan?

Every Planning Authority must have a Local Plan that sets out what can be built and where building should take place over a period of at least 15 years.

Local Plans hold important policies to support environmental protection, jobs and the economy. They also help to decide where investment is needed for infrastructure like roads, schools and health services.

The Local Plan should:

- Include land for housing and employment development
- Ensure an appropriate range of house types
- Support the economy and create employment opportunities
- Identify necessary infrastructure improvements to support the development proposed
- Safeguard heritage, culture, recreation and environmental assets

Why does the Council need a Local Plan at all?

It is a legal requirement for councils to have an up-to-date Local Plan for their area. The local plan should cover at least 15 years and be in accordance with national planning policy. The Plan should set out what we want our local area to look like at the end of this period. That might include things like:

- Encouraging economic growth by identifying enough land for new businesses
- Improving the quality and quantity of parks and play space
- Delivering new roads

A central part of the Local Plan is setting out how many new homes are needed and exactly where they should be built.

How will the Local Plan affect me?

In short, if you live, work or visit Rutland, the Local Plan is relevant to you.

The Local Plan guides where and how changes to our towns, villages and countryside may happen over the next 15-20 years. This means that the Local Plan is likely to impact you at some point in the future. For example, over the next 15 years you or a family member may need to buy or rent a house in Rutland. You may work locally or want to set up a business here. You may simply want to be able to shop locally or make sure that our landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage is protected.

Changes which might affect you now or in the future include:

- The building of new homes; offices; industrial units and shops
- The creation of new jobs
- The building of community facilities
- The location of our parks and play spaces
- Routes for walking and cycling paths

The Local Plan also identifies the places and features which are important to us because of what they look like, their history or the sense of place or tranquillity they provide us.

What is the Issues and Options consultation?

This consultation document is the first stage of public consultation for the preparation of the Rutland Local Plan. It seeks views on a range of planning issues and proposed options for the future development of the County. The Local Plan will set out the strategy for the amount, location and design of new development. At the same time, the Plan is an opportunity to progress our ambitions and aspirations on matters such as climate change, meeting affordable housing needs and promoting biodiversity.

When does the Issues and Options consultation take place?

This consultation will begin on Thursday 30 June and closes on Friday 16 September 2022.

What does this consultation document include?

The Issues and Options document gives an overview of the 12 key issues which we think needs to be addressed in the new Local Plan. The consultation will also set out questions around the possible options for addressing each issue.

At this early stage, we want to gauge people's views on the big issues around scale and location of development. We're also asking how we might contribute towards carbon reduction, increased biodiversity and provide for infrastructure to support development.

Alongside the Issues and Options consultation, we are also inviting comment on the following documents:

- The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Scoping Report
- The Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) Scoping Report
- Methodology for Assessing potential Sites (Update Dec 2019)
- The Sustainability of Settlements Assessment Update (2019)

Are future housing sites shown in this consultation document?

No. The Issues and Options consultation does not identify new sites for housing, employment, mineral and waste and other developments. This will be included in the next consultation stage in summer 2023, called Regulation 18.

Can I submit a site for development?

Landowners, developers and other interested parties have been able to suggest sites for possible development through the Call for Sites, which has been running since January. The Call for Sites officially ended on 30

June. However, we will continue to accept site submissions throughout the Issues and Options consultation stage. Please see our [Call for Sites](#) page for further details.

Where will future development go?

That's what we need to decide. This initial stage of the plan-making process does not identify sites for development, but it does propose options for the distribution of development around the county, as well as options for the scale of development needed. Following on from the Issues and Options stage, the Regulation 18 stage in summer 2023 will see us publish a draft version of the Local Plan which indicates the preferred options for growth, supported by evidence.

Will housing be allocated at Stamford North?

An allocation for housing development at Stamford North is included in the adopted Local Plan for South Kesteven District Council. This has been done on the basis that any development in Rutland as part of a wider comprehensive urban extension to the north of Stamford would count towards South Kesteven's housing needs, rather than Rutland's.

The later stages of the Local Plan process will determine appropriate allocations in the County, although an outline planning application for this site has been submitted. We are now working on the basis that any housing development that is permitted or allocated on the Rutland element of the Stamford North development would count towards meeting Rutland's housing needs. This would reduce the requirement for new housing elsewhere in the County.

The preparation of the new Local Plan for Rutland provides the opportunity to resolve this situation through the development plan system. The Issues and Options consultation includes a question about this to seek public views before preparing the next stage of the Local Plan.

Why do we need to keep building houses in Rutland?

As our population continues to grow, we need to build more houses of different sizes to meet the varied needs of local people. National Government has committed to building 300,000 houses each year and has a prescribed methodology for calculating a minimum target for the number of houses each local authority in England has to provide land for.

Our housing need continues to grow as a result of smaller households, an ageing population (which reduces the turnover of available homes), inward migration, and local population growth.

How many new houses need to be built in Rutland?

The latest (March 2022) calculation of Rutland's Local Housing Need (LHN) says that the County should be aiming build 142 new dwellings per year. This target is calculated based on household formation projections and the affordability of local housing and is updated on an annual basis.

This is the minimum number of houses we can use as the basis of preparing the Local Plan. On top of this, it is expected that Local Plans provide a 'contingency buffer' to the minimum requirement. This buffer is different to that which is prescribed in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) when calculating five-year housing supply. Inspectors will generally expect a buffer of at least 10%. This future-proofs the plan – making it more robust and consistent with national policy.

The Issues and Options consultation provides three options for the number of houses we should be planning for. The two higher growth options would

ensure that more affordable housing is built to help meet a growing need within Rutland.

Is ‘no development’ an option?

No. The Government has said very clearly that housing is fundamental to revitalising the economy, particularly after the COVID-19 pandemic. National Planning Policy requires councils to support economic growth and productivity and to meet the assessed housing requirements of their local area.

If we do not plan to meet Rutland’s employment and housing requirements, we will lose significant control over where development might go and the county’s development requirements will be determined by Central Government.

What happens if you don’t provide enough land for housing or refuse to build the minimum number of new homes specified by Local Housing Need calculations?

If we don’t allocate enough land for the number of houses that the national formula requires us to build, the Local Plan would be found “Unsound” when examined by the Independent Inspector.

In addition, the absence of an up-to-date Local Plan would lead to the pressure to allow development on sites that are not allocated for development in a Local or Neighbourhood Plan. Even if we refused planning permission, there is a high likelihood that developers would win planning appeals because we would not have enough sites to meet our housing need.

How will you choose the sites that will be allocated for development in the final version of the Local Plan?

We developed a site appraisal methodology in 2019. This applies a consistent and robust method for assessing whether development sites are suitable and deliverable. The Methodology for Assessing Potential Sites Update (2019) is available for comment alongside the Issues and options consultation.

Site assessments must consider the following questions:

- Is the site suitable for development? For example, is the site in a location that relates well to existing housing and are there local services that the new residents can use? The question of suitability also considers factors like flood risk, ecology, traffic issues and heritage designations.
- Is development of the site achievable? This considers technical matters. For example, can access be provided to the site and are there any issues caused by contamination, drainage and topography.
- Is the site available for development? If a site owner won't make a site available for development, there is no point allocating it for new homes. Demonstrating the involvement of a developer or land promoter, promoting the site through the Call for Sites process, or preparing a planning application shows a willingness for the site to be developed.

Will there be any opportunity to make comments on the sites that are chosen for the final Local Plan?

Yes – absolutely. The next stage in the Local Plan process will be a public consultation around a draft version of the Local Plan which will include “preferred” sites for allocation. This Regulation 18 stage consultation stage will take place in summer 2023.

How will the Local Plan create and support more jobs?

The Local Plan cannot directly supply jobs. However, it can make land available for new uses that generate employment, protect existing employment sites and support business development.

How do you make sure the Local Plan doesn't have a negative impact on the environment?

It is a legal requirement that all Local Plans be scrutinised through environmental reports, called the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). These reports consider the Plan's impact on our environment, wildlife, people and the economy. They also set out how any negative impacts will be addressed.

Both the SA and HRA Scoping Reports are available for comment alongside the Issues and Options Consultation document.

What is being done to tackle the current climate emergency?

In January 2021, we formally acknowledged the climate crisis and set out a series of actions which we are taking to make sure Council activities are net-zero by the year 2050. The Local Plan is an opportunity to roll out measures aimed at carbon reduction, while making sure the county is resilient to the effects of climate change. This will support our wider climate crisis goals.

What about infrastructure like new GP surgeries, schools, public transport, power supplies, drainage and internet?

The Local Plan is not just about new homes and jobs. We also need infrastructure including schools, healthcare, public transport, roads, utilities, parks and leisure facilities. These are all important to support growth. The plan will set out clearly what infrastructure provision is needed when new homes and businesses are being built.

Development will be carefully controlled to ensure that the necessary infrastructure is provided. This is most likely to be possible when larger numbers of homes are being built together, as these infrastructure requirements can be planned and delivered as part of the overall development.

We are currently preparing an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). This will include an assessment of the current provision within the area and, over time, will be extended to provide a fuller assessment of the infrastructure needed to support the development suggested. The IDP will make certain that infrastructure requirements are fully considered in preparing the Local Plan. It will also ensure all the necessary infrastructure providers are involved in the Plan making process.

What is the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)?

Rutland County Council is a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging authority and all new development which meets our requirement will be charged a levy per new floorspace developed. The CIL money will be used by us to support the provision and improvement of infrastructure to meet the needs of the proposed development. However, it's important to note that the CIL funds alone will not be sufficient to meet the full cost of infrastructure requirements and we will need to prioritise what we spend CIL on.

Infrastructure which can be funded by the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) includes schools, transport, flood defences, hospitals, community facilities and other health and social care facilities. This definition allows

the levy to be used to fund a very broad range of facilities such as play areas, parks and cultural and sports facilities and gives us the flexibility to choose what infrastructure is needed.

The Levy can be spent on 'the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure'. It can be used to increase the capacity of existing infrastructure that is necessary to support development. CIL cannot be used to fund solutions to existing problems i.e. traffic calming/management or on repairs to existing infrastructure in an area that hasn't experienced housing growth.

Why is there an option for a new sustainable community or communities?

We have to consider every option at this stage of the Plan-making process and might need to look at areas beyond existing towns and villages if we are to deliver all the homes, jobs and services that people need in Rutland. An advantage of this approach would be to help protect the character and appearance of our towns and villages from development on their edges.

Another significant advantage of providing some of the new development needed in this way is that the infrastructure required – including education, healthcare, open space and transport facilities – can be planned and funded as part of the development as a whole. So, a new settlement may provide an opportunity to create an attractive, sustainable new community within Rutland.

While St Georges Barracks was allocated as a new community in the withdrawn Local Plan and an alternative proposal was submitted at Woolfox in the north of the county, neither of these specific proposals are included in the current consultation. This is because we are starting again with a blank sheet of paper. We will need to consider the responses to this consultation and also see what sites have been put forward through the Call for Sites process. We will also need to carefully assess the suitability and deliverability of each potential site.

Any areas proposed as a new community or urban extension will need to be capable of supplying attractive, sustainable development, without impacting negatively on neighbouring areas. We will look in more detail at these issues when analysing responses to the consultation and considering what would be needed if a new sustainable community was considered to be an appropriate way to meet Rutland's future development needs.

My community is currently preparing or has a Neighbourhood Plan. How will the new Local Plan affect it?

We fully support Neighbourhood Plans. This includes existing and proposed development allocations in Neighbourhood Plans. Made Neighbourhood Plans and those which are approved before the Local Plan is in place will continue to carry full weight in decision making. However, where a Neighbourhood Plan conflicts with the Local Plan, the most recently adopted plan will take precedence – whether that is the Local Plan or a Neighbourhood Plan.

Where can I find more information about the Local Plan?

Our new Local Plan webpage has more detailed information about the Local Plan process and each of the various stages we will go through: www.rutland.gov.uk/localplan.

This will be kept updated and will include links to evidence reports, consultation feedback and the consultation documents. This information is to help you make informed choices and provide relevant comments.

If you have any questions that are not covered by the information on our website, we ask that you email them to: localplan@rutland.gov.uk. We will

then add these questions and the answers to our dedicated Local Plan FAQ, for all to see.

Why is it important to take part in the Issues and Options consultation?

The Local Plan will affect everyone who lives works in Rutland or visits the County. The preparation of a new Local Plan and this first consultation are an opportunity for local people and all other interested parties to help shape what the County will look like over at least the next 15 years. This input is vital to create the policy framework that will help guide investment and development decisions over the plan period. In essence, it looks to establish the right amount and locations for future growth, and then guide the form, scale, and type of any future developments.

How do I comment or share feedback as part of the consultation?

Ideally, we want as many people as possible to use the dedicated online consultation platform to engage with the new Local Plan as it develops. The online platform is quick and easy to use. Once you've registered and made comments, you will be kept informed about future consultations and other Local Plan updates. The online platform will also allow you to see what other comments have been made about each part of the document.

You can access the online consultation platform. We have prepared a separate user guide which explains how to register and then use the consultation platform.

The questions we are asking can be found in the purple boxes. To give us your feedback, simply click on the blue pen icon beside each question box. This will take you to the online question form. We strongly encourage you

to read the section of the Issues and Options document that you would like to comment on before answering the consultation questions.

Can I send my comments and feedback in a letter?

We're asking that all representations be made via our dedicated website or by using an official paper form that can be requested by emailing: localplan@rutland.gov.uk.

How can people without a computer get involved?

We have considered how people without computer access can be made aware of the consultation and how they can access a paper copy of the Issues and Options Consultation.

We will send a paper copy of the Issues and Options document to each Town Council, Parish Council and Parish Meeting, asking that these be made available to residents.

A reference copy will also be available at local libraries during normal opening hours. For more information about locations and opening hours:

Oakham Library

Phone: [01572 722918](tel:01572722918)

Monday	9am to 5pm
Tuesday	9am to 5pm
Wednesday	9am to 5pm
Thursday	9am to 5pm

Friday	9am to 5pm
Saturday	9am to 1pm

Uppingham Library

Phone: [01572 823218](tel:01572823218)

Monday	CLOSED
Tuesday	9am to 1pm 1.30pm to 5pm
Wednesday	1.30pm to 5pm
Thursday	CLOSED
Friday	9am to 1pm 1.30pm to 5pm
Saturday	9am to 1pm

Ketton Library

Phone: [01780 720580](tel:01780720580)

Monday	CLOSED
Tuesday	CLOSED
Wednesday	9am to 1pm 1.30pm to 5pm
Thursday	CLOSED
Friday	9am to 1pm 1.30pm to 5pm
Saturday	9am to 1pm

Ryhall Library

Phone: [01780 751726](tel:01780751726)

Monday	9am to 1pm 1.30pm to 5pm
Tuesday	CLOSED
Wednesday	CLOSED
Thursday	9am to 1pm 1.30pm to 5pm
Friday	CLOSED
Saturday	9am – 1pm

A reference copy of the Issues and Options document will be available to view in the customer self-serve area at our Oakham offices, during normal opening hours. You can also contact our customer services team who will arrange for a member of the Local Plan team to contact you to supply any information you require in an alternative format. [01572 722 577](tel:01572722577).

Do I have to provide my contact information as part of my representation?

Yes. We do ask for your contact details. However, these are kept safe, secure and private. All consultation responses must be made publicly available and published on our website. Only names are published alongside responses. We do not publish contact details. We are legally required to collect and hold this information in order that the Planning Inspector, who will hold the Public Examination, can contact those who've made representations, if needed. All data is processed and held in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

What role do County Councillors have in developing and approving the Local Plan?

In line with our governance processes, Councillors will have the final say on how to take the new Local Plan forward to public examination. This is known as the Pre-Submission or 'Publication' stage and will be a full draft plan, complete with policies and further detail on the preferred development sites.

What happens next?

After this consultation closes, we will look carefully at all the feedback received and summarise this in a consultation report. This consultation report will set out the key findings from the consultation, along with our response to them.

Responding to this consultation will help us to understand your priorities when it comes to the key issues, as well as more specific or localised comments. All of this will help inform and shape the new Local Plan.

It is important to note that consultation responses are only one part of the plan making process. The Local Plan must be supported by robust and up-to-date evidence. The Local Plan cannot therefore include things which are not supported by evidence, regardless of the strength of public feeling. A Consultation Statement will be published to explain how the feedback received has been considered.

After the Issues and Options consultation, we then move on to the Regulation 18 stage of Plan making in 2023.