

# Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan



2013 –2026



Final Edition  
prepared by  
Uppingham Town Council

January 2016



## Forewords

The Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan gives a unique opportunity for residents and businesses to influence the development of the town over the next ten years. The Task Group has consulted widely to ensure that the views expressed are incorporated in the Plan.

Residential development is a key aspect of the Plan but is only one component of the overall scheme. Our hope is that the traditional values of a market town which has developed over the centuries will be reflected in these 21st century proposals. This delicate balance is hard to reach but, with your help, your vision for the future of Uppingham is achievable.

### County Cllr Edward Baines - Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Task Group

Welcome to this final edition of the Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan prepared following extensive public consultation. It includes the modifications required by its External Examiner which allowed it to proceed to a referendum on July 10th 2014. The Town Council wishes to thank everyone who responded and commented upon its various drafts and helped produce this final version. This is possibly the most important document prepared by the Town Council and its partners since its formation. Now that it has been approved at a referendum, it gives clear guidance to Rutland County Council on the local community's decisions regarding the future development of Uppingham. It is an 'enabling plan' that determines the way Uppingham can develop should private enterprise or public bodies have the funds and desire to invest in the town.

The Town Council is grateful for the huge amount of work carried out by the Neighbourhood Plan Task Group, and in particular its Chair Edward Baines, and its hard working Officer Ron Simpson without whose tireless effort this plan would not be the quality document that is presented to you. The document also shows the benefits of collaborative working between local organisations and the value of constant consultation with its community.

### Cllr David Ainslie - Uppingham Town Mayor

## During a Visit to Uppingham in February 2013

“Voting *'no'* for a neighbourhood plan does not mean a vote for no development, but for *no control* over development”

Nicholas Boles MP  
Planning Minister

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# What is the Plan Trying to Achieve?

## The Vision

The aim of the Plan is to retain and enhance the traditional values of a small market town ensuring that future development in Uppingham reflects the community's needs and aspirations incorporating new technology where appropriate. The built environment should be compatible with local and national policies, but above all should enable all sections of the community to enjoy a sustainable way of life.

## Key Objectives

- Protect the town's heritage assets while modernising its infrastructure
- Affirm which areas of the town should remain as open space
- Strengthen community spirit, community health and community safety
- Improve community life with particular regard for the vulnerable, disadvantaged and disabled by strengthening community services
- Improve the sustainability of the town's retail centre
- Attract public and private sector investment
- Attract new employers and help create local jobs
- Increase housing by at least 170 dwellings with approximately 35% of them being 'affordable properties' and an estimated six being single dwelling sites
- New housing developments to be designed as clusters incorporating green space
- New developments to comply with the Design Statement on page 26
- To enhance the visitor offer and attract the next generation of tourists

## The Legal Position

As it was supported by a majority of the community in the public referendum, this Plan will have a legal status in the county's planning framework. It will:-

- Ensure the community's views on the future of the town, and in particular planning matters, are material planning considerations
- Ensure that new housing is primarily built in the agreed places and to approved standards
- Indicate where further commercial development is appropriate
- Form part of the strategic development plan against which planning applications will be assessed.

# What Area Does the Plan Cover?

The Parish of Uppingham and a small part of Ayston. See map at page 31

## Action Themes

Further to reviewing the Plan's key objectives and the ideas contributed by the community and the Task Group, the Plan identifies the following areas for action:-

- Protection of the town's character and heritage
- Further development of community facilities and services
- Public Information Signage
- Technology & Infrastructure
- Tourism
- Housing
- Industry and Employment
- Transport
- Retail Development
- Design
- The Environment and Preservation of Open Space
- Tod's Piece

Each of these identified areas for action are addressed by the policies and proposals of this Plan

## Sustainability and Relevance to Existing Policies

In line with requirements, the policies of this Plan have been produced to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of Rutland's development plan and to have regard to national policy. Also in line with requirements, the Plan's policies are sustainable and compliant with European Union legislation.

In examining the sustainability of the policies proposed within the Plan, the Task Group has had regard to a Sustainability Assessment/Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report (SA/SEA Screening Report) specifically prepared by Rutland County Council to support the Neighbourhood Plan process. The Task Group has also made use of the County Council's site appraisal criteria (colour coded) which scores development sites green, amber or red on a range of criteria including Topography, Biodiversity, Cultural Heritage, Townscape, Public Open Space, Proximity to Services, Access to Public Transport and Available Infrastructure.

*Due to the National Planning Policy Framework and the intention of Rutland County Council to review and take forward a complete local plan to 2036, this plan will also be reviewed at the same time to reflect any potential changes in strategic policy. The Plan will then continue to be reviewed on a similar cycle to the County Council's Local Plan, that is every three to five years or when particular circumstances arise, to ensure it continues to reflect the concerns of the local population and that it still accords with Rutland County Council's strategic objectives and policies.*

## How Has the Plan Been Created?

Community and business groups in the town have worked together to prepare the Plan. A Task Group, operating under the auspices of Uppingham Town Council and chaired by local businessman Edward Baines, has undertaken most of the work.

As the qualifying body under Neighbourhood Planning legislation, Uppingham Town Council is legally responsible for producing the Plan which must be approved in a public referendum of the town's registered voters. This vote took place in July 2014 and was administered by Rutland County Council.

Prior to the public referendum, the Plan will have been subject to approval by Uppingham Town Council and Rutland County Council as well as an independent external examiner. The Plan has also been subject to statutory public consultation and amended in the light of community responses and the results of much informal consultation via community groups and local businesses.

The cost of preparing the Plan has been subsidised by a government grant of £50k to Rutland County Council, approximately £15k of which has been used by the Town Council to draft and publish the Plan. Because of this, much of the work has been undertaken by unpaid volunteers who live in and care for the town.

The Plan includes proposals for future action and new policies. The latter are binding now the Plan has been approved by a referendum.

### Key Steps

- Task Group formed late 2011 and Neighbourhood Plan area defined
- Community Workshop held to collect community ideas and priorities
- Developer Workshop held to share Developers' initial ideas with community
- Theme groups developed to work on community ideas
- Business and Community surveys undertaken
- Briefing newsletters circulated
- Task Group prepares 'long list' of housing development sites
- Community invited to vote on 'long list' via a newsletter
- Results fed back through Neighbourhood Forum
- Business Forum consulted and briefed on employment issues
- Draft Plan prepared and presented to Neighbourhood & Business Forums
- Draft Plan presented to Town Council May 2013
- First draft published for public consultation ending July 26th 2013
- Revised plan published for second public consultation November 2013

## Who Has Been Consulted?

The Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan has taken two years to prepare. The Task Group has met on over 30 occasions and a large number of residents and businesses have contributed their ideas. The Town Council has organised consultative workshops, discussions, questionnaires and newsletters. The Uppingham Neighbourhood Forum has prepared and distributed newsletters, hosted consultative events and published web-based information. The Town's Business Forum has undertaken surveys and hosted business debates. Residents' Associations have held their own meetings to look at particular aspects of the Plan. Interested developers have contributed their ideas at a public Developer Day and in discussion with the Neighbourhood Plan Task Group. All of



the ideas and proposals in the Plan have come from these meetings and consultations to build upon the suggestions already published in the Parish Plan and the publication 'Uppingham 2025'.

Conversations have revolved around what needs to be done to comply with the new housing requirements specified in Rutland's development plan, what the town's

employment needs are, what modern infrastructure is needed and what changes should be made to ensure the economic vibrancy and sustainability of the town. There has been much talk of growth, increased amenity, history and heritage. The effective use of land and the preservation of green space have been central to many of the discussions. Quality of environment and the desire to vary housing density, size and design have been regular topics of debate. A sensible balance of affordable and executive homes, housing in clusters rather than in large estates and the wish to retain a rural perspective shine through the discussions.

The Task Group has tried to consult as many people as possible. This includes classroom conversations with primary school pupils and telephone conversations with the housebound. Every household in the town has had a number of newsletters, either inviting them to participate, or comment on some proposals. There has been dialogue with the Trustees of Uppingham School and regular updates provided to Uppingham Town Councillors. In addition to talking to the community, the Task Group has also benefitted from advice and support given by a wide range of external agencies. These are listed in Appendix B.

## Uppingham - A Brief History

The 6<sup>th</sup> century Anglo - Saxon farmstead that came to be known as the *settlement of the people on the hill*, otherwise *Uppingas*, developed where the ancient track from Oakham to Rockingham crossed the ridge. In Saxon and Norman times Uppingham was one of the seven small hamlets included in the King's Manor of Ridlington. The town gained its Market Charter in 1281, although a market had existed long before this date. The Market Place is the focus of the town and reflects a long history of Uppingham as a place to trade as well as a place to reside. This partnership between business and the residents is still a key feature of the town today.

Opening from the Market Place, St Peters & St Pauls church forms an integral part of the town. In Anglo - Saxon times it was one of the three attached to the Royal Manor of Ridlington. The church was rebuilt and enlarged early in the 14<sup>th</sup> century and its tower built several decades later. The early 1300s were prosperous times for Uppingham until the Black Death ravaged the town in 1348-9 AD.

In 1584 Robert Johnson, Rector of North Luffenham, founded two grammar schools, one each at Oakham and Uppingham, to provide free education for the sons of local people. The Elizabethan Schoolroom, built in 1584, is one of the three oldest buildings in Uppingham. Owned by Uppingham School, it is listed as a Grade I building of architectural and historic interest deserving of protection and preservation.

During the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, Uppingham was an important stop for coaches on the route between Stamford and Leicester. When the North/South route was opened in 1754-55 the London Mail coaches would stop at Uppingham and it was during this period that some fine coaching inns were built in the town. Two of them, the recently renovated Falcon Hotel and the Crown, are still in existence to this day and feature in the town's Heritage Trail, acting as vibrant destinations for visitors and locals alike.

Uppingham experienced a period of major expansion during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Firstly Uppingham School attracted a very influential Headmaster, Edward Thring, who oversaw a significant expansion of the school, both in terms of pupil numbers and buildings. Secondly, the people of Uppingham wanted to embrace the new technologies available to them at the time and, in 1894, after a lot of pressure and subsidy by the townsfolk, a railway station was built. This serviced a branch line between Seaton and Uppingham for both goods and passenger traffic. For many years the line was an essential element in the social and economic framework of the town but the increasing popularity of the motor car and the decline in freight traffic meant that closure in 1964 under the Beeching axe was inevitable.

The station buildings were demolished and the area is now the town's Industrial Estate.

The motor car is still a vital part of daily life in Uppingham and key to its social and economic development. Yet every November it gives up its market place parking to host a Fatstock Show, the only one of its kind in the UK.

Uppingham has many residents who live in the town centre, the central part of which is a conservation area.

Community and business services provided in the town support the many villages in its hinterland with elderly residents tending to relocate to the town once they are unable, for reasons of age or health, to drive.



In the 1980s the A47 bypass was built and over the last 30 years the town has expanded its housing stock to reach a total of around 1800 properties occupied by a population of approximately 4500.

In March 2013 The Times newspaper listed Uppingham as 18th in the UK's fifty most desirable places to visit. In April of the same year it joined the top 1% of communities in the world for broadband speed with phase 1 of its 1Gb 'fibre to the premise' (FTTP) network.

This brief history sums up what Uppingham is all about. It is a town that is passionately proud of its heritage whilst always looking forward. Today it continues to reflect the spirit of its forefathers, who welcomed new innovations such as stage coaches and railways, as it strives to bring 21<sup>st</sup> Century technologies such as low carbon vehicles and superfast fibre optic broadband to the town. Uppingham has a proud history of being proactive and the Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan continues this 1500 year legacy that can be traced back to those first Saxon settlers.

*The contributions of members of the local history study group to this section of the Plan are acknowledged*

## Protection of the Town's Character and Heritage

### Rationale

The growth of Uppingham from an agricultural settlement to a market town of around 4500 people, and its rise as a place of manufacturing and trading, has helped define its unique character and heritage. Many of its more substantial properties were erected in the 18th century creating its Georgian look. The ironstone from which many of them are built was quarried locally. The founding of Uppingham School by Archdeacon Robert Johnson in 1584 and its subsequent development into today's centre of learning excellence cemented the town's economic prospects, resulting in its large number of well preserved listed buildings and the vibrant community it is today.



It is not surprising that preservation of the town's heritage appearance and conservation area was considered very important by many respondents to the Task Group's consultations. There is a strong expectation that the Neighbourhood Plan will have this objective at its heart.

### Policy 1 - Protect Central Conservation Area

All future development in the town centre conservation area should comply with the County Council's conservation and heritage policies including those for listed buildings. Wherever possible, construction materials and finishes should complement the surrounding area and the character and heritage of the immediate environment. Where approved, modern replacement/new build materials should also visually complement the immediate environment.

Commercial property alterations and frontages should complement the heritage of the immediate environment with suitable wall mounted signage.

Any enhancement of the street furniture, signage and street lighting should have a heritage appearance but also regard for energy conservation and public safety.

Any modernisation of the Market Place and High Street should complement their heritage with the installation of new infrastructure being as unobtrusive as possible. Such development should not hinder their community use for events.

### Proposal 1 - Protect Central Conservation Area

The Community Right to Bid gives community groups the opportunity to bid for and buy community buildings and facilities that are important to them. The Town Council should explore the case for public acquisition of any significant community asset that comes onto the market for disposal.

## Development of Community Facilities & Services

### Rationale

As Uppingham is not the county town of Rutland it has often not been the choice of the county council or the county's voluntary sector infrastructure organisation when it comes to the location of a new community service or building. The town does not have a volunteer centre, nor a hopper bus. The County Council does not have a customer service desk in town and the library requires updating. Uppingham Town Hall is operating at near capacity and recently became the home of the local police. The town has a vibrant community sector with many of the community services that are accessible in the town being provided by local voluntary groups in a variety of premises. The town does not have its own youth centre but does have excellent school based facilities and independent sports clubs.



Uppingham is to have a new health centre by the end of the year. It also has a good post office, although its 'listed' status creates some access issues. Banking facilities are limited to one high street bank but a new cash machine has been installed in the Market Place.

Respondents to the Task Group have sent out a clear message on what is required. New community facilities were envisaged in 'Uppingham 2025' and have now received additional support. These could provide a new focus for community service provision. One or more suitably located buildings could also host a new library and/or the additional public toilets called for in consultation replies. To help achieve this objective the case for public acquisition of any existing community asset should be explored.

### Proposal 2 - Create Additional Community Service Facilities

The Plan notes that a feasibility study of four possible locations for additional community service facilities was received by the Town Council in September 2013. The work was undertaken by 'Locality'. The sites considered were the present library site, the old doctors surgery site, the Town Hall (mezzanine floor or extension) and finally the open space at the rear of Tods Piece. The Plan supports the proposal that the Town's Council and its Voluntary Sector work together to achieve the desired outcome, additional community service facilities here in Uppingham.

The design and location of such buildings could be the subject of Neighbourhood Development Orders. This would mean that the Uppingham community would have the final say on their construction and character.

## Public Information Signage

### Rationale

As an attractive market town close to the major tourist attraction of Rutland Water, it has not escaped respondents' attention that public information signs are in short supply. There is an identified need for signs to guide pedestrians to a variety of locations and motorists to the various car parks and updated information points.

The town centre tourism information boards are in a poor state of repair and need replacement. There are a number of on-line portals to Uppingham information including a site prepared for the town's Heritage Trail.

The principal responses from respondents call for new heritage signage in the town centre to direct visitors to a variety of locations including businesses in Queen Street, Orange Street, Ayston Road and High Street West. The town also needs signs pointing to the Town Hall, the library and the car parks.



The Town Council secured a grant to create a Heritage Trail. This has funded information boards on the town's history and interesting buildings.

Pedestrian signage is required in the Market Place, in the North Street car parks, at the Queen Street junction and at the entrance to High Street

West. Highway signs are required at the garage junction and in North Street West, North Street East and London Road directing motorists to parking areas including Leicester Road.

### Policy 2 - Public Information Signage

The Plan supports the installation of additional pedestrian and parking signage in the town.

Signage should be of heritage appearance and may be wall or column mounted.

The existing signage policy of Rutland County Council is supported with a view to a coordinated approach, particularly in the conservation area.

Highway signs must comply with County Council Highways policies with regard to size, height, materials and location.

Opportunities should be taken to reduce street clutter when new signage and public realm schemes are undertaken.

## Technology and Infrastructure

### Rationale

As an attractive market town with a heritage appearance to its town centre it is important that essential infrastructure development does not detract from the town's charms. Technological innovation, although essential to its future sustainability should also, wherever possible, observe this principle.

The town has an effective East/West bypass in the A47 and logically this should remain as its northern boundary for development purposes. 'Uppingham 2025', the Parish Plan and some respondents raise the argument for a North/South bypass to the west of the Town. Funds for a feasibility study of such a project are not currently available and the business and social benefits to the town have not yet been demonstrated other than the diversion of heavy traffic. This issue is considered further in the Transport section of the Plan.



Other proposed highways works reflected in the Plan are to increase public safety and reduce traffic speeds by creating small roundabouts at the southern entrance of the town, near Uppingham Community College, in Leicester Road at the entrance to the new housing developments proposed elsewhere in this plan and at other sites as required.

Ideas for improving the bus interchange in North Street East are captured in the Plan's Transport proposals.

More work is required to reduce traffic speeds in the dip of London Road where large numbers of school pupils move about during term time. The current speed humps appear ineffective and there is a strong case for more effective speed enforcement. The Plan supports further action to control speed.

New technology will be a vital part of Uppingham's future with the ability to attract new employers and promote economic growth, dependent upon the community embracing next generation technology: for example our aging population will need access to Tele-healthcare. Homeworking is increasingly popular. Community services will be often offered on-line. Our hotels, factories, galleries, shops and schools will need the very best IT infrastructure the town can secure. The County Council's Digital Rutland project will offer broadband speeds up to 80Mbps by the end of 2014 and the Digital Uppingham Fibre Project now offers a 1Gb 'fibre to the premise' service.

The town is fortunate to have such a choice. The Neighbourhood Plan supports both these developments to ensure Uppingham has the very best technology to help it thrive. Proposals have been made in the Design section of the Plan to make the installation of next generation technology easier in new homes.

National statistics confirm the rapid growth and importance of wireless technology but suggest that rural areas such as Rutland will lag behind in the provision of 4G and other modern services. Mobile communication is patchy in some parts of town, partly due to the poor location of the existing mast. Uppingham Town Council and Rutland County Council have agreed that a new broadband mast may be erected in a remote location in the grounds of Welland Vale Nurseries at the edge of the town. There were no public objections to this proposal and the Plan therefore supports this site for telecommunication purposes. This is in line with the County Council's emerging policy hoping to limit the number of additional masts built in the county.

The Plan supports the installation of community wifi in the town centre area and in public buildings.

Finally, the Plan supports the view that all new multiple housing developments should make a financial contribution to infrastructure. Developers should, in particular, be asked to contribute to the items listed in the Plan's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) schedule.

### **Proposal 3 - Technology and Infrastructure - Community Safety**

As funds become available, the Plan supports creating new roundabouts at the southern entrance to the town near Uppingham Community College (UCC) and part way down Leicester Road at the entrance of the new housing developments. It also supports further action to control speed in London Road and other suitable sites.

### **Proposal 4 - Technology and Infrastructure - Communications**

The Plan supports the location of the Uppingham Mast at Welland Vale Nurseries and the installation of community wifi across the town centre and in principal public buildings.

### **Proposal 5 - Technology and Infrastructure - CIL Contributions**

Further to the adoption of a CIL Policy, the Town Council will prioritise CIL funding it receives to those items listed in the Plan's CIL Schedule on page 29.

## Tourism

### Rationale

In March 2013 The Times newspaper reported on a survey identifying the top 50 towns to visit. Uppingham came 18th, thereby setting a target for improvement for future surveys.

As a visitor centre Uppingham has much to offer including Uppingham School, but no full time tourist office. Some tourism literature is held by the major hotels and restaurants. The staff of Uppingham School Bookshop in the High Street act as unofficial agents for the town selling a wide range of local tourism literature and maps. There should be more opportunity to promote Uppingham on a county wide basis. This is a situation that needs to be addressed.



The town is promoted by means of a range of successful websites but there is the need to ensure effective linkage between them.

In the absence of a full time tourist office much could be gained from a centralised information point, perhaps supported by trained volunteers.

A new town map and guide has been printed and this will link with a newly developed Heritage Trail.

The county's new tourism bus, an hourly, seven day a week, service should aid tourist mobility and attract new visitors. The town's two partnerships mount a wide range of initiatives and events to increase footfall and attract more tourists. However, it is the town's reputation for being a 'quality' destination that has most significance for any marketing initiative. The town's approach to promoting tourism must recognise its unique character and heritage.

### Proposal 6 - Tourism

The Town Council should work with its partners to help promote Uppingham as a unique visitor experience with quality at its heart, and take the lead in establishing a centralised information presence at an appropriate central location.

# Housing

## Rationale

Rutland County Council's (RCC) Core Strategy sets out the overall housing target for Uppingham up to 2026. The Plan has taken into account evidence supporting emerging policy. It also takes into account completions, commitments, and allowances for future rates of development on small windfall sites that are not specifically identified in the Plan but can be expected to come forward. This Plan therefore supports the construction of at least 170 additional homes in Uppingham over the next 13 years. During the consultation process the community were asked to consider a list of potentially viable development sites and invited, via a Neighbourhood Forum newsletter delivered to every household, to indicate their preferences. The responses helped guide the Town Council to its final choice of three sites for future housing development in the west of the town. These are sites A, B and C. The Plan supports the concept of housing built in 'clusters' around adequate green and open space. It is a requirement of the Core Strategy that approximately 35% of the homes to be built in Uppingham by 2026 will be 'affordable' homes. The RCC Core Strategy normally looks to deliver a density of 40 dwellings per hectare. However, given that the Plan and community's view that new housing should be built in clusters, a figure of 25-30 dwellings per hectare is considered to be appropriate for Uppingham.

The Plan acknowledges the County Council's calculations on windfall sites, which could be anywhere in the town. It also acknowledges the need for occasional, self build, custom built, single dwelling developments. The Plan therefore sets out a policy of allowing up to six such homes to be built during the period up to 2026.

### Policy 3 - Housing - Numbers

The Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan supports sites A,B & C for housing in the west of the town and the construction of at least 170 homes (excluding windfalls but including the custom built single dwellings in Policy 4) during the period up to 2026. Site B - During the Plan period, only around 3 hectares within the allocated site (precise location a matter for the developer/landowner) at an average density of no less than 25 dwellings per hectare, providing about 75 dwellings, to be released for development. Site C - During the Plan period, only around 3 hectares within the allocated site (precise location a matter for the developer/landowner) at an average density of no less than 25 dwellings per hectare, providing about 75 dwellings, to be released for development.

### Policy 4 - Housing - Single Dwelling Developments

The Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan supports the construction of up to six custom built, self build, single dwellings in the period up to 2026.

### Policy 5 - Housing - Site C

The Plan allocates land at the rear of this site (as viewed from the Leicester Road and as indicated on the map on page 32) as recreation land. This recreation land will form part of any proposal brought forward on Site C, the whole of which will be subject to a masterplan.

## Site A - North Side of Leicester Road - See map at page 32

This small site lies on the north side of Leicester Road to the west of the bulk of present housing development. It is in the County Council's list of sites which received a positive sustainability appraisal for housing development. Its southern edge lies on a good transport route and can be linked easily to the town centre for vehicular traffic, cyclists and pedestrians. The RCC site appraisal which accompanies this Plan provides the evidence that this proposal is appropriate and sustainable. It is compliant with emerging planning policy in Rutland and the policies put forward in this Neighbourhood Plan. The site would lend itself to a joint



access with other sites onto Leicester Road, perhaps via a roundabout or other traffic intervention. This would enhance community safety on the Leicester Road and reduce traffic speeds, a long standing issue with local residents and the community speed watch team.

At its size of 0.46 hectares and a construction density of 30 homes per hectare, this site would accommodate up to 14 dwellings.

Consultation with the community on the suitability of this site for housing development and inclusion in the Plan resulted in 89% of respondents supporting the proposal.

## Site B - North Side of Leicester Road - See map at page 32

This large site also lies on the North side of Leicester Road and is adjacent to development site A. It is in the County Council's list of sites which received a positive sustainability appraisal for housing development. As with site A, its southern edge lies on a good transport route and can be linked easily to the town centre for vehicular traffic, cyclists and pedestrians. The RCC site appraisal which accompanies this Plan provides the evidence that this proposal is appropriate and sustainable. It is compliant with emerging planning policy in Rutland and the policies put forward in this Neighbourhood Plan. The site would lend itself to a joint access, with sites A and C, onto Leicester Road, perhaps via the same roundabout or highway intervention. Provision for part of a possible future link road between Leicester Road and the A47 could be part of the design considerations for this site.



This site (coloured pink and red on the map) is 5.45 hectares in size and is supported by the Plan, along with an adjacent small triangle of land, as being suitable for future housing. **However, for the period of the Plan, only 3 hectares (pink) within the 5.45 (precise location within the site to be a matter for the developer) at an average density of no less than 25 dwellings per hectare is supported providing 75 dwellings up to 2026.**

Consultation with the community on the suitability of this site for housing development and inclusion in the Plan resulted in 85% of respondents supporting the proposal.

## Site C—South Side of Leicester Road - See map at page 32

This is a site to the south of the Leicester Road part of which was originally designated as recreation land. Its area is 8 hectares. It will enable the construction of some badly needed large executive homes to the front of the site with other house types behind. To the rear of the homes, a boundary limiting further housing development has been agreed beyond which will be 'designated' recreation land. The position of this boundary is shown on the plan on page 32. Whilst the general position should reflect this plan, especially where there is an existing field boundary, the precise position of the boundary should also take into account the



detailed design process.

The site's northern edge lies on a good transport route and can be linked easily to the town centre for vehicular traffic, cyclists and pedestrians. The site is compliant with emerging planning policies of Rutland County Council and the policies in this Plan.

In keeping with the earlier mentioned average density target of no less than 25 dwellings per hectare, the whole of the front of the site (around 4.5 hectares shown illustratively marked pink and red on the map) is supported as suitable for housing in the long term. **For the period of the Plan, however, the development of around 3 hectares (pink on the map and its precise location within the housing part of the site to be a matter for the developer) is supported providing about 75 dwellings.**

The site lends itself to a joint access with sites A and B on the north side of Leicester Road, perhaps via the suggested roundabout or highway intervention. It is on a major bus route, and is well placed for safe cycling and walking routes to town.

Consultation with the community on the suitability of this site for housing development and inclusion in the Plan resulted in 70% of respondents supporting the proposal even though at that time up to 100 dwellings were envisaged.

A 2010 Landscape Study concluded that the site (previously proposed as the location for a new school) is the least sensitive of all sites in terms of landscape and the site with the greatest capacity (in terms of impact on landscape) to accommodate development. Studies done for the school proposal concluded that there were no physical or environmental constraints to the development of the site.

Using the County Council's own site appraisal criteria (colour coded) the site scored 'green' on Topography, Biodiversity, Cultural Heritage, Townscape, Public open space, Water Conservation, Contamination, Proximity to services, Access to public transport, availability, transport and available infrastructure.

## Housing Summary

The housing proposals supported in this Plan comply with the strategic direction of emerging RCC policy. An examination of the data in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment ( SMHA) 2010 and the 2011 Census indicates that the main market housing requirement in Uppingham is for 3 bedroom dwellings, with a smaller shortage for 2 bedroom and 5 bedroom or more dwellings. The data confirms there is little need for more four bedroomed dwellings. The data only covers the owner-occupied sector and some additional work will be needed to confirm the desired mix of market and affordable housing for each of the sites. The County Council's policy in the Core Strategy Policy CS11 aims for 35% affordable housing provision on all housing developments. The SHMA showed a significant shortage of all sizes of social rented housing and a shortfall of one, two and three bed intermediate affordable housing. This Plan, however, **does not support** the building of one bedroomed homes but does support the construction of some accessible bungalows and lifetime homes to provide a good mix and a sustainable community.

The Task Group notes the positive feedback on the proposals given by residents attending presentations on the Draft Plan at well attended meetings of the Neighbourhood Forum in April and September 2013. Similar positive feedback was given following presentations at Business Forum meetings in April and September 2013.

The Plan calls for new housing to reflect its Design and Access Policy and to acknowledge the landscape within which the town is set. The concept of building in 'clusters' surrounding green or open space, is thought to be key to the new developments enhancing the town's appearance. It also explains the need for a lower building density than that originally envisaged by RCC.

The work done by some residents on housing layout in partnership with the Design Council in August 2013 is acknowledged. The Plan expects developers to submit design proposals that reflect residents' calls for quality and adequate open space. Each site will require a separate design statement and a contribution to community infrastructure.

## Industry and Employment

### Rationale

Uppingham is a manufacturing town with a heritage appearance that attracts visitors from far and wide. Manufacturing industry is predominately located to the South of the town in Station Road. Detailed proposals for this site are documented overleaf. Employer discussions and subsequent public consultation have revealed that highway condition, public safety, lighting, drainage and signage are concerns. The main spatial issues discussed included, whether a new access into the site was thought appropriate and if a long term strategy should involve a migration of



industry to Uppingham Gate. Several employers indicated that they will need larger premises in next three to five years. No one thought the construction of a new entrance financially viable without state intervention. Investment in many of the present buildings is noted, as is the desire of many employers to stay in Station Road. The Plan therefore recommends a 'retention and improvement' strategy for the site.

To the East of the parish lies Welland Vale Nurseries which has planning permission to develop as a retail garden centre. This development is supported as it will provide a valuable local service and become another reason to visit Uppingham.

The principal development site offering new employment opportunities and business start up possibilities is at Uppingham Gate on the northern boundary of the town. It has good heavy vehicle access from the north. The site is adjacent to existing new office buildings and is the location agreed for the new doctors' surgery. An access point to the town's new broadband fibre network has been created at the site boundary.

The Plan supports an extension of the employment opportunities at Uppingham Gate and an enhancement of the site's viability to a prospective employer by approving an additional 3 hectares for employment purposes. This additional land is designated as Site D on the map at page 32. To alleviate any community concern about the site's proximity to existing housing, a schedule of the employment opportunities thought appropriate for the site are detailed overleaf.

It is noted that both Station Road and Uppingham Gate could be suitable for a bid for development support to the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). This will require the collective collaboration of property owners.

## Uppingham Gate



### **Policy 6 - Industry and Employment - Site D - Uppingham Gate**

This Plan supports the approval of Site D as an extension of the employment offer at Uppingham Gate. Development meeting use classes B1, B2 & B8 and waste related uses with these characteristics would be supported:

- A Data Centre, Techno Hub or other high tech employer (s)
- Light industry start up units
- A garage with fuel and a small shop
- Office units
- Light electrical
- Health Care Product related employment
- Environment friendly start ups
- Transport/coach interchange with public car parking

#### **The Plan does not support:**

- Heavy industry, housing, excessive noise overnight.

### **Proposal 7 - Industry and Employment - Uppingham Gate**

The Plan supports a bid to the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) for development funding for this site.

## Station Road Industrial Estate



### **Proposal 8 - Industry and Employment - Station Road**

The Plan supports the following changes and improvements for the Station Road Industrial Estate.

- Undertake a safety audit with emergency services
- Explore public ownership of all the highway and upgrade of road surface
- Modernise and increase quantity of street lighting
- Surface water drainage improvements
- Improved access by limiting car parking at the entrance to Station Road
- Introduction of a pressure pad/sensor warning light system at the junction with London Road
- Improved signage on the London Road and at the entrance to Station Road
- Fibre Broadband connections
- Securing winter salt/gritting status with County Council
- Better traffic management and improved parking

### **Proposal 9 - Industry and Employment - Station Road**

The Plan supports a bid to the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) for development funding for this site

## Transport

### Rationale

The town's history and future dictate the significance of Uppingham as a transport interchange and stopping place. The need for measures to mitigate heavy traffic in the centre of town has been a concern for years. A high number of responses to the consultation exercises refer to this in one form or another. The possibility of a bypass within the time frame of the Plan is remote. The suggestions therefore concentrate on two issues. First the need to alleviate the perceived nuisance of heavy traffic in the town and second the protection of a route to the West of the town for a notional bypass, however remote. The first of these involve:-



- a) Further investigation of local traffic management by way of weight restrictions and appropriate signage
- b) The exploration with neighbouring authorities to re-route as much commercial traffic as possible via the A43 given that distribution warehousing in Corby is exacerbating the problem
- c) The provision in the Plan for any new employment to be located on the Uppingham Gate site which has direct access to the A47.

The first possibility requires investigation in conjunction with the Highways Authority (RCC). The second is a regional, as well as a local, issue. Redirection of lorries to use the A43 would require cooperation from East Northants DC and possibly raises policy issues at regional and national level. The third could be reinforced by planning conditions permitting access only from the north of the site. All these are suggested as partial solutions and all have some caveats. The protection of the Western boundary of the town by reinforcing the existing planned limits of development and by emphasising the town's setting in the surrounding landscape addresses the second concern as far as is possible at this time.

Strategically, the quality of life for residents, as well as the commercial viability of the town centre, is crucially affected by these transport and infrastructure considerations. Therefore the aspirations, as well as the constraints, are recognised so that the character of the town is sustained for the lifetime of the Plan and well beyond.

Despite being on a major route, Uppingham has no officially designated coach stopping place. The Plan supports the idea of a long distance coach stop for Uppingham which could be integrated with the stopping place of scheduled bus services. Given that Uppingham Gate is the town's principal location for new employment, as well as the new health centre, scheduled bus services should stop both at Uppingham Gate and in the town centre.

Action to improve parking and reduce parking charges top the list of many respondents consulted on the Plan. The Plan supports the current efforts of the Town Council to improve the situation. Having successfully campaigned for more parking at the top of Seaton Road, the Town Council's has secured a strong community remit to pursue control of the town centre car parks and the introduction of a more appropriate system of enforcement. Signage to the town's car parks has also come in for criticism and is addressed in the signage section of the Plan. Resident parking is an issue in some parts of town. New housing development should link communal parking spaces to individual properties where appropriate.

A call for safer walking and cycling routes and improvement of the walking/cycling environment is clearly evident from the Plan's consultations. This issue is also of particular significance for the physically impaired, many of whom move about the town in disability scooters. Improvements are essential to the pedestrian crossing at the junction of the A6003 and North Street. Signage is poor for the North/South walk though the town with no mention of it in the town centre or at bus stops.

The town has no cycle paths into the town centre despite their obvious contribution to environmental and community safety targets. Possible courses of action include new cycle paths from the A47 roundabout to the town centre and along the A47 to the western end of Leicester Road and a third linking the town centre to the proposed new housing developments on Leicester Road. These could be part funded by developer contributions relating to new housing and employment development sites.

The oval shaped roundabout at the top of Seaton Road continues to cause problems for buses and long commercial vehicles trying to turn around it. The problem is exacerbated by the new hourly bus service. It could be replaced by a low profile roundabout of a different shape.

The town's present bus interchange between the Cooperative store car park and Tod's Piece is said by many to be inadequate and poorly located. An architectural review of the locality proposes one possible solution. Removal of the footpath on one side and a re-designation of the nearby Tod's Piece footpath as the main footpath. Such work would require the support of the 'Fields in Trust' Trustees.

A widening of the road then becomes possible with a new recess created to access buses and the town's heritage trail. Such work would create the beginning of a new attractive bus interchange which could be linked to new cycle parking and the proposed new cycle paths. An improved pedestrian crossing, perhaps a widened, raised table, could then provide a safer route for walkers and cyclists between the town centre and Tods Piece. Landscaping of the surrounding area including the boundary of the Coop car park could, with Coop cooperation, result in a safer and much better looking bus interchange.

#### **Proposal 10 - Transport - Coach Stop**

The Plan supports the siting of a long distance coach stop in the town.

#### **Proposal 11 - Transport - Car Parking Policy**

The Plan supports a move to local control or ownership of the town's main car parks with a view to implementing local parking policies appropriate to a small market town. New housing developments should link communal parking spaces to individual properties where appropriate.

#### **Proposal 12 - Transport - Safer Walking and Cycling Routes**

The Town Council should pursue the construction of appropriately signed safer walking and cycling routes in and out of the town centre linking them to the design requirements of new development sites. Such routes should reflect the additional needs of the physically disadvantaged.

#### **Proposal 13 - Transport - Seaton Road Roundabout**

The Plan supports a re-examination of the problems being caused by the present design of the roundabout at the top of Seaton Road.

#### **Proposal 14 - Transport - New Bus Interchange**

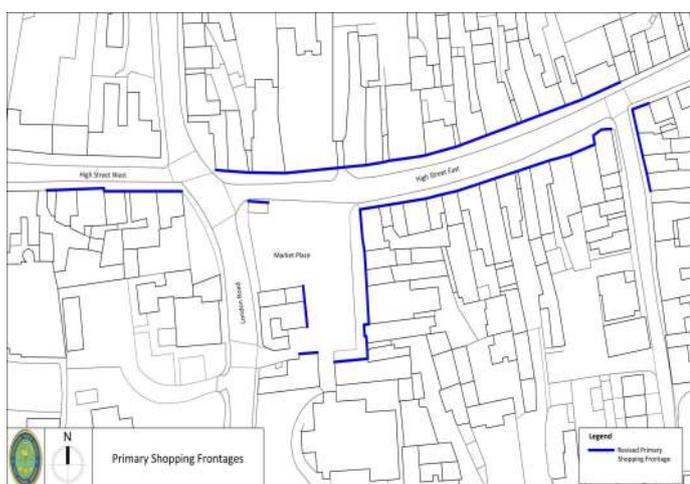
The Plan supports a major review and possible re-design of the present bus interchange with the aim of creating safer walking routes between the town centre and Tod's Piece, a safer highway and a more attractive landscape linking walking and cycling routes and the new Heritage Trail to improved access to buses.

## Retail Development

### Rationale

Uppingham has a vibrant town centre and is an important shopping hub for local villages. Small independent traders still predominate and the quality of life for those living here is enhanced by the presence of the butchers, hardware shops, baker, clothes shops, post office, bank, newsagents, food, furniture, takeaways, flower shop, cafes, licensed premises, the garage and the Co-op. The town is a quality visitor destination with its excellent hotels, pubs and restaurants and its jewels include its art and antique galleries, its book and gift shops and the School.

Respondents have made it clear that the Council should use the Neighbourhood Plan to sustain and support the trading efforts of local businesses while encouraging greater diversity in the town's offer.



Some towns have spoiled their centres by permitting inappropriate development or not encouraging an appropriate mix of quality businesses. To preserve the Uppingham shopping experience as one of 'quality', the Plan supports retail development policies that monitor and control change of use, shop frontages and temporary exterior signage.

As illustrated above the Plan also extends 'primary ground floor shopping frontage' into High Street West and Queen Street. Parking is considered in the Transport section of the Plan.

### Proposal 15 - Retail Development - Change of Use

The Plan supports a study of present RCC change of use policy SP11 to see if any strengthening or local control is required.

### Proposal 16 - Retail Development - Exterior Temporary Signage

The Plan supports an exploration of the case for limiting the size of temporary signage such as 'To Let' boards in the conservation area.

### Policy 7 - Retail Development - Shop Frontages

The Plan supports the extension of the town's primary shopping frontage retail area to cover additional ground floor shop frontages within the central conservation area namely High Street West Numbers 1,3,7,9,11,13 and Queen Street Numbers 3 and 5.

## Design and Access

### Rationale

Uppingham is a beautiful market town with many fine buildings. It was the strong view of the community that the Neighbourhood Plan should ensure the town's future development reflects its heritage and that any new development should acknowledge its character and environment. The Town Council acknowledges the duty this puts upon it and the expectation of quality and sustainability in any new build.

Dialogue with developers has revealed that there is joint benefit if the Neighbourhood Plan sets out community expectations. These are best defined in a design statement within a new local policy. This policy establishes a framework to guide all future development. Individual site design and access statements will be required from every developer proposing to build on the sites approved in this Neighbourhood Plan. Policy 8 on Design and Access is the foundation upon which these should be based.

### Policy 8 - Design and Access

Developers must demonstrate in a Design and Access Statement how their proposed development reinforces Uppingham's character and heritage. The statement must set out how the proposals follow the policies and guidance in relevant national and local documents as well as this Plan. The Design and Access Statement must address the following:

- Context and character
- Historic character
- Connection with the countryside
- Quality for pedestrians, cyclists and the physically disadvantaged
- Development density and build quality
- Car Parking
- Landscaping and access to open and green space
- Occupier controlled access to fibre, copper and other home office services
- Environmental footprint
- Play provision

The Town Council reserves the right to require an individual design review on any development of 25 houses or more or any single building of more than 3000sqm. Such reviews should be carried out by an appropriately qualified independent body and conducted within the design review guidelines established by RIBA or CABE. The Plan acknowledges existing policy guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the current and emerging policies of Rutland County Council.

## Environment and Preservation of Important Open Space

### Rationale

The Town Council is determined to preserve and enhance the town's local environment. A key principle of this plan is that no household should be more than a 20 minute walk from open countryside. While some development on greenfield sites is supported in the Plan, design statements for each approved development site will seek to maximise green and open space. The Plan favours a majority of new homes having a garden. Preferred designs will be those that present clusters of homes around open space.



Tod's Piece is the town's principal central open space asset. Its central area should be preserved as green space. The Plan's proposals for improvement are listed separately overleaf.

Acknowledging that the Plan enables house building on greenfield sites, the Plan proposes preventing further built up development to the south of Leicester Road by designating part of housing development site C as Recreation Land (See Policy 5)

The Uppingham Gate development site for new employment opportunities occupies the first view of town when approaching from the North and to a significant extent from the East when travelling along the A47. It is considered vital that the boundary design of this site create a positive image of the town and reflects its rural context.

### **Policy 9 - Environment and Preservation of Important Open Space**

Every household shall be within a 20 minute walk of open countryside.

### **Policy 10 - Environment and Preservation of Important Open Space**

In accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS23 no further development, apart from amenities, will be permitted on green space within the Plan boundary beyond that proposed in this Plan or acknowledged in its policies.

### **Policy 11 - Environment and Preservation of Important Open Space**

An appropriate landscape buffer zone to a standard in keeping with the town's rural setting will be enforced on the northern boundary of the Uppingham Gate development site (Site D)

## Tod's Piece

### Rationale

Tod's Piece is the town's principal central open space and is a Field in Trust. The Trust Deed now defines it as a playing field for the purpose of outdoor games, sports and pastimes. It has been criticised for lacking some community facilities. Over recent years the Town Council has made some progress in developing it as a



play area with two sets of playground equipment being installed and a skateboard ramp.

Respondents had a great deal to say about what should happen on Tod's Piece with the consensus being that its centre should be protected as open space, with a football pitch and perhaps improved drainage. Respondents confirmed that any future development should be around its edge.

The Uppingham in Bloom initiative replacing part of the old tennis courts with a 'sensory garden' has received widespread support and helped win awards. Respondents called for more landscaping and trees around the perimeter. Public toilets on Tod's Piece was the request from many families, particularly those with children. The Town Council is already exploring such a development. Safer access and a stronger pedestrian link with the town centre are seen as necessary, perhaps as part of an improved bus terminus.

In summary Tod's Piece is one of the possible locations for additional community facilities as is the Town Hall and present library site. The latter two are to be the subject of further research and perhaps a feasibility study.

### Proposal 17 - Tod's Piece

The Plan supports the development of the perimeter of Tod's Piece with relevant community facilities. Such development should address the creation of safer routes into the town centre, cycle parking, public information signage, improving drainage, the construction of public toilets and the case for an enhanced and landscaped transport hub within a road widening scheme.

## **A Word About Development Orders**

The 2011 Localism Act empowers the Town Council to require Rutland County Council to support it in the establishment of Neighbourhood Development Orders.

A Neighbourhood Development Order is an order which grants planning permission in relation to a particular Neighbourhood Area.

A Neighbourhood Development Order can enable the community to grant planning permission for new buildings they want to see go ahead and allow new homes and offices to be built without developers having to apply for separate planning permission.

These orders are subject to a community vote just like the Neighbourhood Plan ensuring that the local residents, rather than the County Council, determine whether a particular proposal goes ahead.

Uppingham Town Council intends to explore the potential contribution that such Development Orders might make to the implementation of this plan.

## **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**

**The Plan supports the following areas for CIL Expenditure (contributions from developers)**

- **Highway Infrastructure and parking provision**
- **Development of a Community Hub**
- **Acquisition and development of Community Assets**
- **Community Safety developments**
- **The further development of Tod's Piece**
- **Enhancement of community service provision**
- **Cycle paths and footpaths**
- **Technological developments**
- **School buildings**

# Summary

## What Happens Next?

The Plan has been approved by an External Examiner and a County Council organised referendum in July 2014. Following a successful defence of the Plan in the courts after a challenge from a local developer, Rutland County Council Cabinet is to consider a report recommending that the Plan be 'made' at its council meeting on January 11th 2016.

## Consultation and Organisation

The Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan has taken two years to prepare. The work was undertaken by a Town Council Task Group of volunteers. Many residents and businesses have contributed their ideas through a wide range consultative workshops, meetings, discussions and questionnaires. Throughout the process, regular newsletters, media articles and web site news items have kept the community informed. The Plan sets the development priorities for Uppingham in the period up to 2026. It indicates where new development should be permitted, what green space should be protected and what kind of new employers the town should seek to attract. It details many other improvements and how some of them might be paid for. Above all it seeks to protect Uppingham's heritage and history.

## Localism

The Localism Act has provided Uppingham with its first ever opportunity to be more than just a statutory consultee on planning matters. At times, in the past, the majority view in the town has been disregarded. The 'making' of Uppingham's first ever Neighbourhood Plan should ensure that the views of the local community prevail.

A Neighbourhood Plan once approved by its community and 'made' by its local planning authority becomes a statutory section of the Local Plan. Rutland County Council is supporting this plan and has agreed to recognise the proposals and local policies within it.

## Task Group Members

**David Ainslie (Town Mayor): Edward Baines (Chair): David Casewell (Former Town Mayor)**

**Andrew Dighton: Tony Fowell: Chris Merricks: Stephen Taylor**

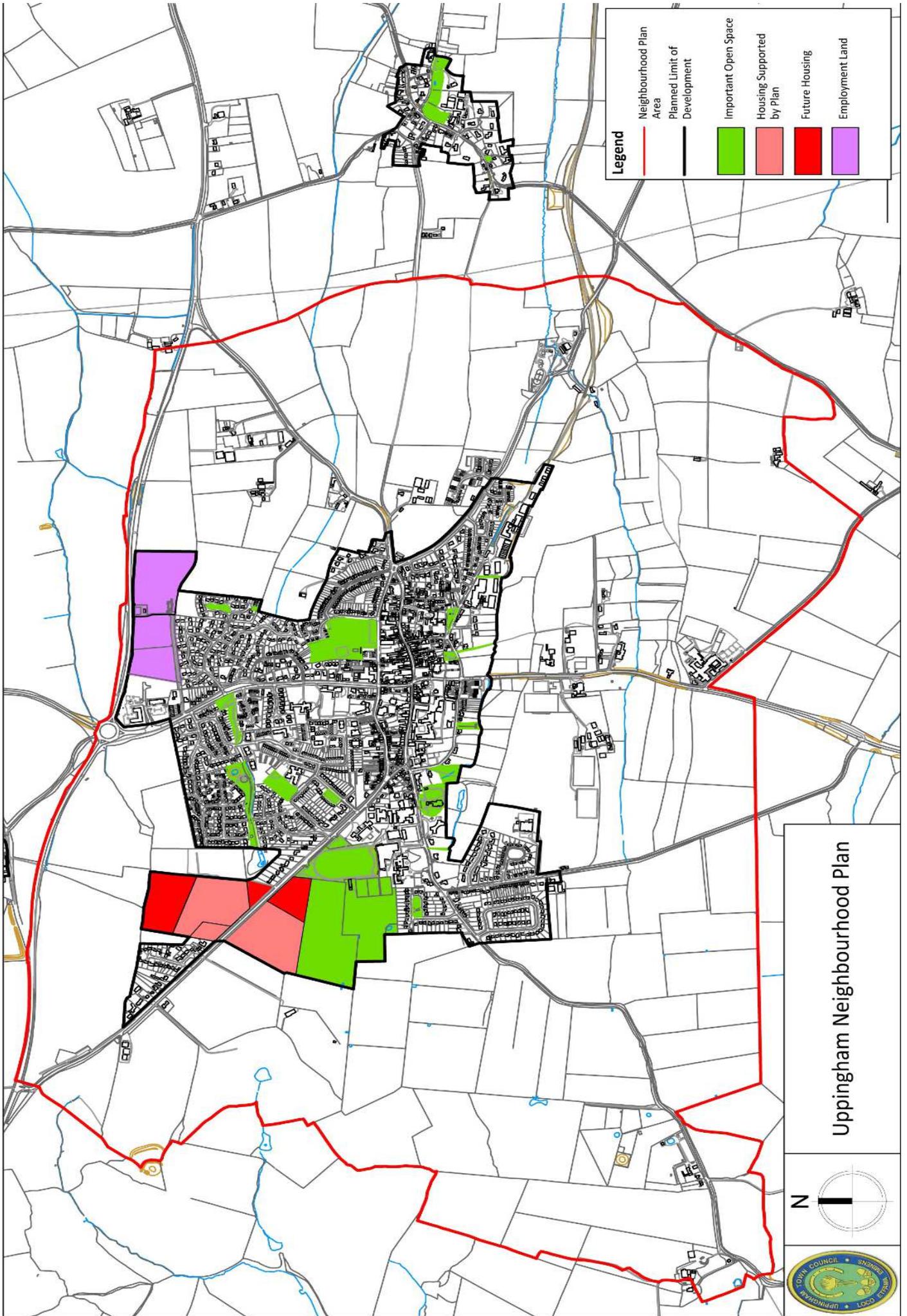
**Richard Reeve: Mark Shaw: Lucy Stephenson: Phil Wignell: Robert Wills**

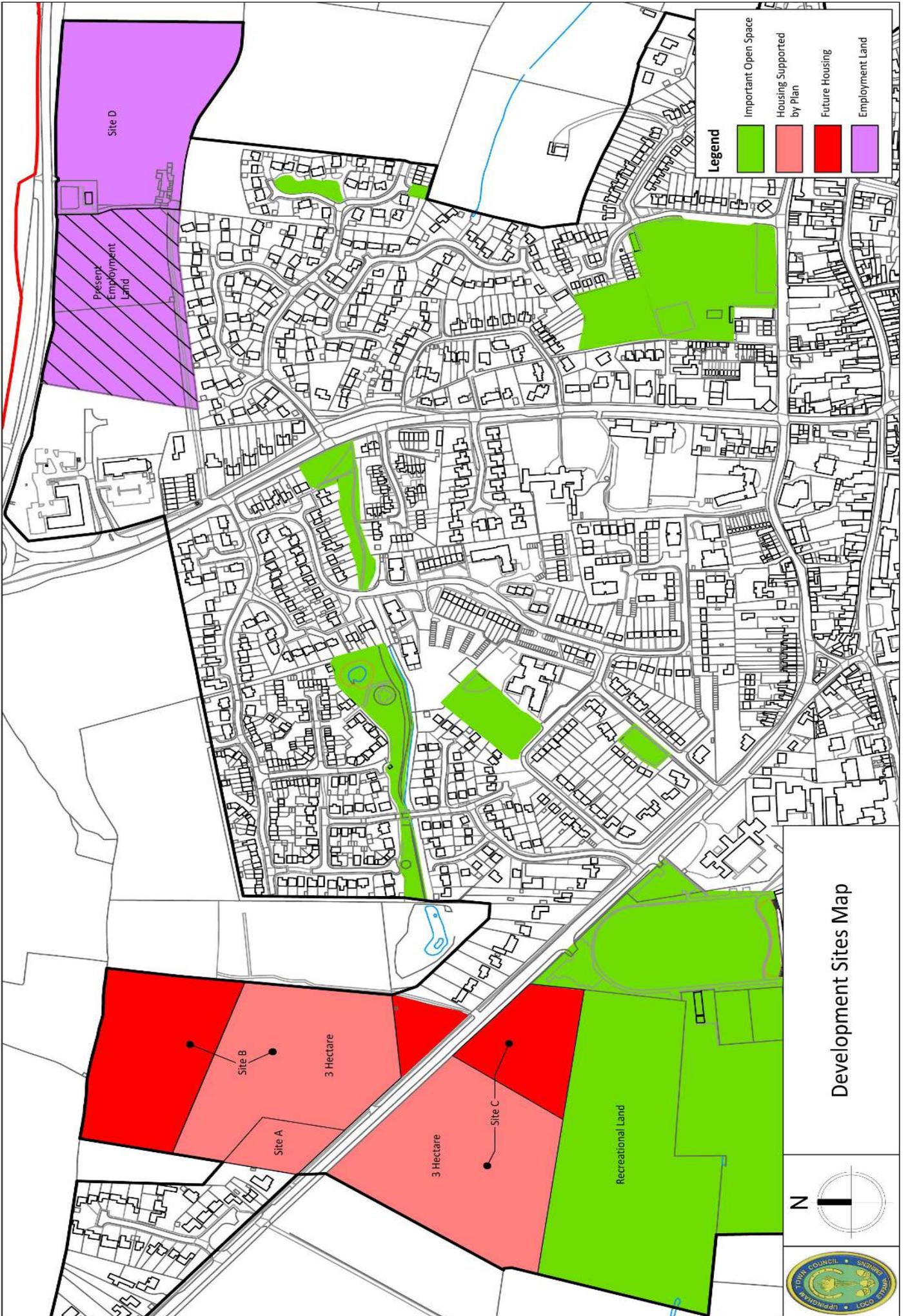
**RCC Liaison Officer - Brett Culpin**

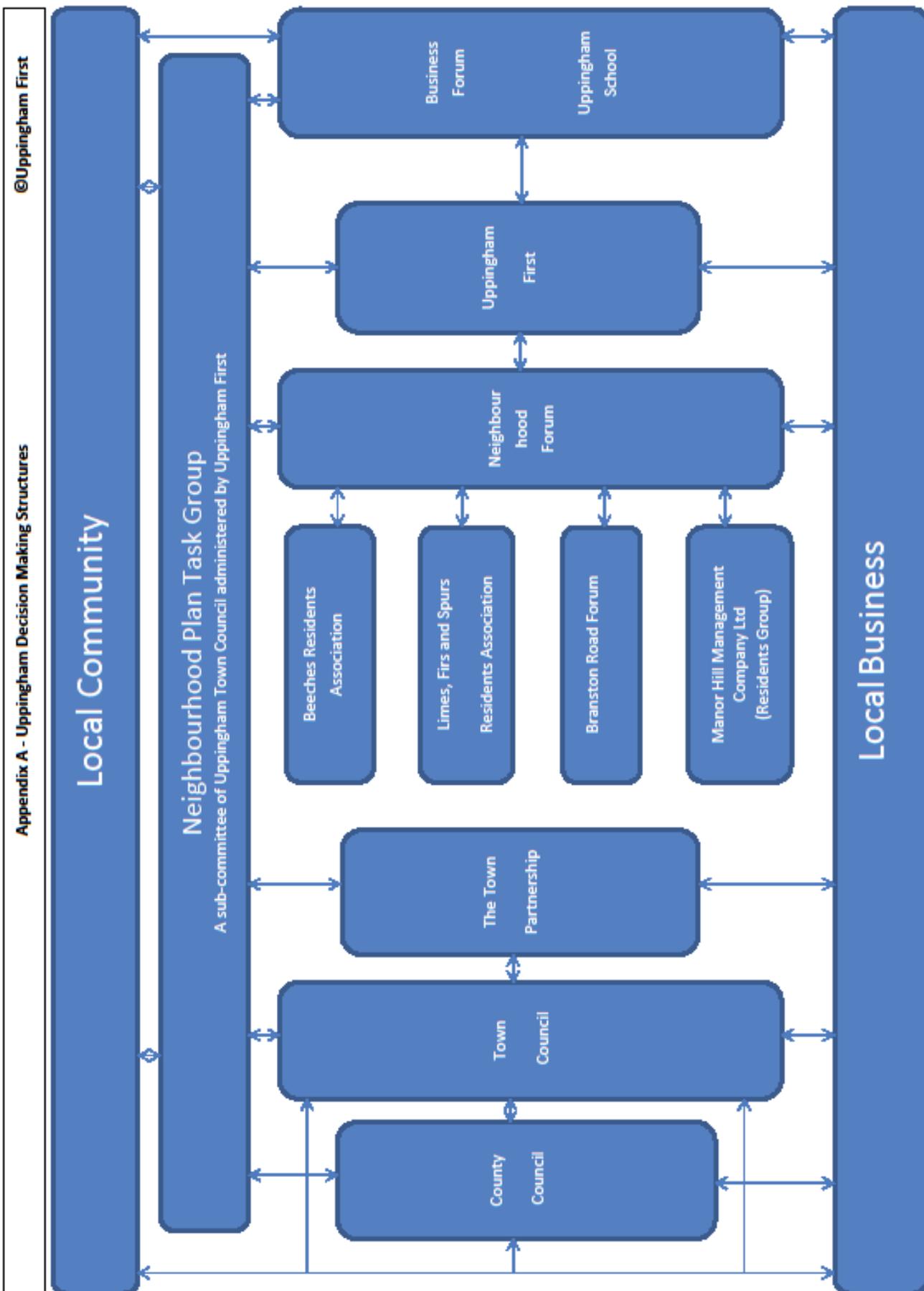
**Town Clerks - Susan Awcock (retired) : Neil Wedge Tel: 01572 822681**

**Lead Officer - Ron Simpson**

See Appendix A for the organisations involved in decision making on the Plan. See Appendix B for external sources of reference used in preparing the Plan. See Appendix C for a schedule of County Council policies relative to the Plan.







## Existing Literature and Sources of Reference

Localism Act 2011

National Planning Policy Framework

Rutland Local Plan and Core Strategy

RCC Sites Allocation and Policies Development Plan + supporting evidence base

Rutland Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study 2010+supporting evidence base

Rutland Strategic Transport Assessment 2010

Developer presentations and submissions

Sustainability Assessment/Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report  
(SA/SEA Screening Report)

Rutland Site Appraisals

Uppingham 2025

Uppingham Parish Plan

Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG)

Design Council

English Heritage

Leighfield School

Locality

Natural England

Rutland County Council

Uppingham Local History Study Group

Uppingham School

Uppingham Town Council

David Allsop - Architect

Ayston Parish Meeting

# Rutland Local Plan

## Rutland Core Strategy

**The following policies are impacted by the Neighbourhood Plan**

### **Adopted Core Strategy Policies**

Policy CS1 – Sustainable development principles

Policy CS2 – The spatial strategy

Policy CS7 – Delivering socially inclusive communities

Policy CS9 – Provision and distribution of new housing

Policy CS10 - Housing density and mix

Policy CS11 - Affordable housing

Policy CS13 – Employment and economic development

Policy CS17 - Town centres and retailing

Policy CS19 – Promoting good design

Policy CS22 – The historic and cultural environment

Policy CS23 – Green infrastructure, open space, sport and recreation

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