

Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan



2013 –2026



Statement of Public Consultation
December 2013

Consulting and Engaging with the Community

Introduction

This statement summarises the process by which Uppingham Town Council and its Neighbourhood Plan Task Group engaged and consulted with its local community in preparing the Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan.

Key Stages

- Consulted with and secured support from Rutland County Council to bid for and secure Front Runner status - Autumn 2011
- Consulted with key community groups and Town Council to form Task Group November 2011 to Jan 2012
- Task Group adopted as working group of Uppingham Town Council. Members sign 'Declaration of Interest' document
- Neighbouring Parish Meeting consulted and boundary of Plan agreed
- Task Group reviews previous community and business consultations including Parish Plan and Uppingham 2025
- Letter to schools and other bodies inviting participation - January 2012
- Town Council hosts Public Participation Workshop Feb 2012 - 50+ attendees
- Task Group forms Theme Groups founded on data collected and consults County Council on housing and employment land requirements to 2026
- Theme groups discussions and data collection begins - Business opinion survey conducted April 2012. Tods Piece user survey - September 2012 - Schoolchildren engaged via classroom visits to acquire youth perspective
- Town Council hosts public Developer Workshop June 2012 - 30+ attendees
- Plan Vision Statement drafted - July 2012
- Public consultation and housing site preference vote conducted via Neighbourhood Forum Newsletter delivered to every household - July 2012
- First working draft of Plan prepared - August 2012
- Subsequent drafts of Plan modified following ongoing consultations via newsletters, public meetings, business forums, community group meetings Neighbourhood Forum and Town Council meetings September 2012 – March 2013. Task Group met on over 30 occasions - See Databook for detail.
- SEA and Independent Peer Review of SEA - May 2013
- First public consultation draft of Plan published - June/July 2013
- Revised draft published for second public consultation November/December 2013
- Final Draft approved by Uppingham Town Council on December 23rd 2013

Who was Consulted?

National Bodies

- Natural England
- English Heritage
- Environment Agency
- Design Council
- Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG)
- Locality

Local Government

- Rutland County Council
- Ayston Parish Meeting
- Other Parishes preparing a Neighbourhood Plan

Local Businesses & Local Schools

Local Partnerships

- Uppingham Town Partnership
- Uppingham First

Local Forums and Community Groups

- Uppingham Neighbourhood Forum
- Uppingham Business Forum
- Residents Groups

See Appendix A for consultation graphic

How Were They Consulted?

Letters, presentations, public meetings, questionnaires, surveys, telephone conversations (with house bound), newsletters (Town Council and Neighbourhood Forum), newspaper items, school visits, Residents' Association meetings, Interim voting on housing sites via special edition of Neighbourhood Forum newsletter, Business Forums in May, October & November 2012 and January, April & September 2013, standing monthly items on the agenda of Uppingham Town Council (each with a public participation opportunity) and peer group visits.

Websites www.uppinghamfirst.co.uk & www.uppinghamneighbourhoodplan.info

See Databook for evidence and detail of consultations

Principal Themes Raised During Consultation

These are reflected in the structure and content of the Plan. They include:-

- What is the Plan trying to achieve?
- What area should the Plan cover?
- Protection of the town's character and heritage
- The need for more community services and facilities
- Community Safety
- The town's technological and infrastructure requirements
- What additional housing is required and where should it be?
- Industry and employment
- Transport, pedestrian and signage issues
- Tourism, retail development and the sustainability of the High Street
- Environment and the preservation of important open space
- The need for a community hub
- Housing Design and Access issues

How the Issues were Addressed

In addition to organising a regular pattern of group meetings, the Task Group organised itself into Theme Groups, each of which explored a topic in greater detail. Theme groups undertook individual research and prepared summary evidence for the main Task Group. Where necessary, the Task Group commissioned additional data collection and statistical analysis. On fundamental issues, e.g. housing site allocation, a full survey of electorate opinion was gathered and an interim vote taken. The progress and methodology of the Task Group was regularly monitored via quarterly Board meetings of Uppingham First and monthly meetings of the Planning Committee and full council of Uppingham Town Council.

As issues and potential actions were raised, debated and agreed, early versions of the Draft Plan were modified at full Task Group meetings. The Group worked through over 20 drafts/updates of the Plan during the 18 months leading up to the first public draft which was delivered to every household and business in Uppingham as part of a two stage formal consultation. Following feedback from this, and a second round of public consultation on a modified draft, the final version of the Draft Plan was approved in December 2013.

Summary of Databook

The Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan Databook details both the process and content of the community dialogue undertaken to prepare the Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan. The Databook evidences:-

- The issues raised, and the actions taken, from a variety of community engagement events
- Workshops and public meetings held
- Statistical data
- Public presentations



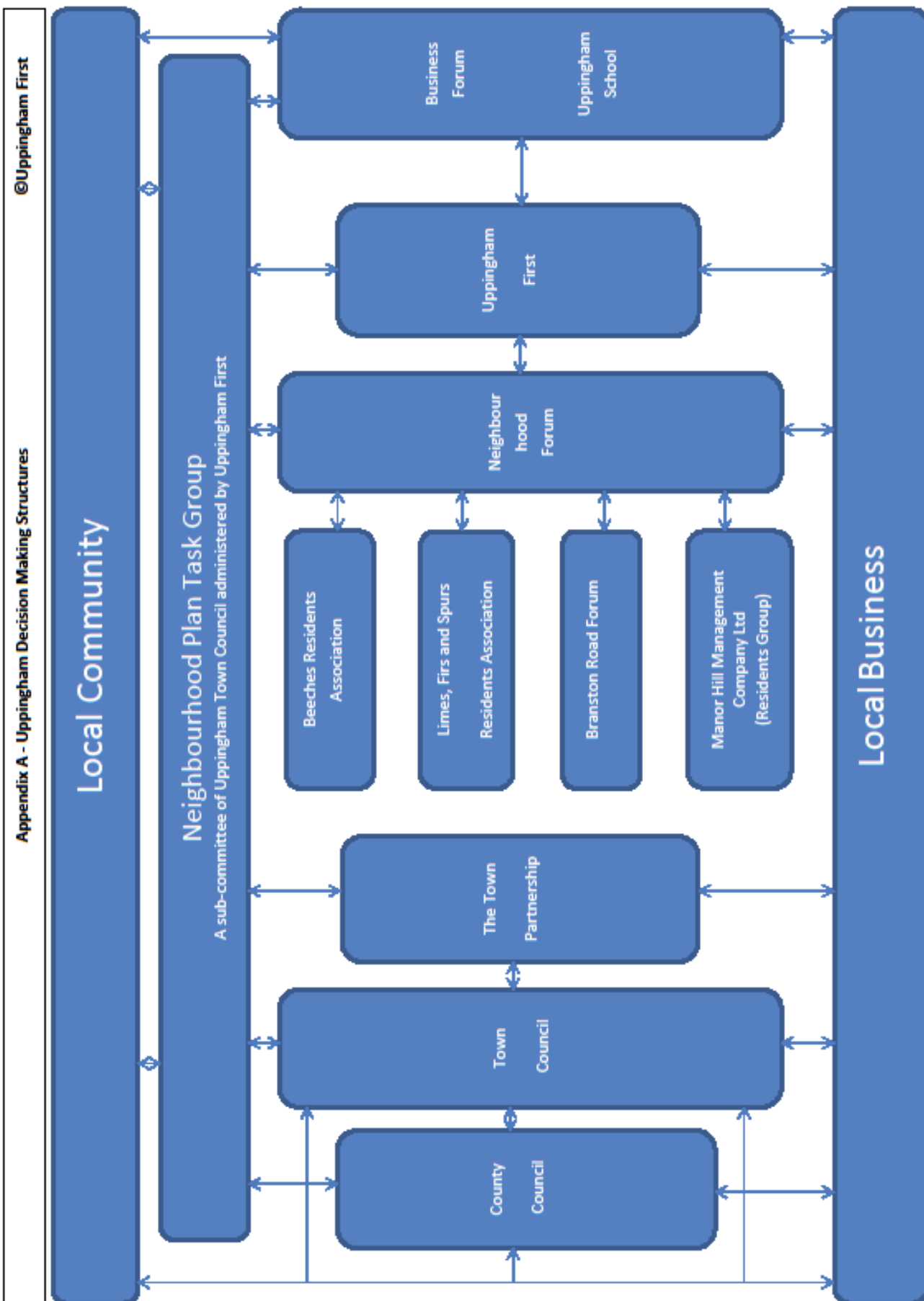
- All meetings of the Task Group and the decisions it made
 - All meetings of the Uppingham Neighbourhood Forum and the issues raised
 - All relevant meetings of the Uppingham Business Forum
 - Copy surveys and letters
- Housing site voting data
 - The issues raised and the action taken following the publication and distribution of two drafts of the Plan for formal public consultation.

Summary of Formal Consultation Responses

The Uppingham community, statutory agencies, local businesses and potential developers were formally consulted on a Draft Neighbourhood Plan on two occasions; in June/July 2013 (Draft 1) and November/December 2013 (Revised Draft).

In addition to the evidence in the Plan's supporting Databook, the responses received during both consultations, together with the action taken by the Task Group and Town Council, are appended to this statement.

This Statement of Consultation and the final draft of the Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan were adopted and approved by Uppingham Town Council on Monday December 23rd 2013. The Town Council commends the Plan to Rutland County Council for submission to an External Examiner.



Resident Responses

- A Morse - 'Excellent Plan' comment noted. Doctors surgery capability noted
- C Hodgkin – Comments ref Station Road noted – Issues include ownership, gritting. Car parking still under active consideration by Town Council. **Add parking provision to CIL list in Plan**
- M & D Demaine – Bypass debate noted – Realistic first step might be link road in N West quarter – Real issue is heavy lorries! Check with DCLG ref bypass point
- D Ford – Station Road issues noted, particularly safety. Agreed more work should be done
- E Speirs – School capacity checked by Cllr Stephenson. All ok according to RCC Study on Admissions policy. **Add Schools to CIL list as a safeguard**
- I Hay – Compliment on Plan noted. Parking concerns noted
- J Greenlaw - 'Thoughtful Plan' comment noted. Link Road possible solution to North of Leicester Road Bypass debate
- J Thompson – “Well presented and easy to read” comment noted. Speed issue noted. **Put 'play area' in site design requirement for UPP 05?**
- J & A Gough – Generous comment on “A job well done that deserve success” appreciated and particularly welcome from new residents
- J Portlock – Heritage and population comments noted. Plan must produce housing numbers required in county council strategy. Event and signage comments noted. No known evidence of Stockerston Road speed issue
- J Tookey – Negative comments noted. Task Group do not agree! RCC asked to check compliance with Town and County Planning issues. **Agreed that extension of retail shop front proposals pals in Plan be defined in detail by street and number (Orange Street to be excluded?)**
- L Cunnington – Excellent document comment noted. Traffic light possibility noted (legal in UK?) Speed on London Road issue noted
- J & M Bell – “Congratulations on producing a very informative plan” comment noted. Support for coach stop noted
- N Grindley – “A well-considered draft plan” comment noted. **Agreed to incorporate 'Antiques' in text**
- N Sudborough (2 responses) – “Congratulations to Authors on their detailed work” comment noted. Increased traffic environment comments noted. Parking, lorries and street furniture comments noted. **Agreed to comment in text on developments in neighbouring authorities and the need to have dialogue with them**
- P Green – “Well set out” comment noted. Picture comment noted but Task Group do not agree. Narrow street comment noted. Nearby residents do not want change
- P&M Ind – Location comment noted. Task Group acknowledged popularity of chosen sites in community survey. Noted that windfall sites could be anywhere in town. **Agreed that text in Plan be strengthened in this regard.** Call for housing detail noted.
- R Apel – Comment on “Clear and well-presented document” noted. Half bypass comment noted
- R Farmer – 24 hour operation concerns noted. **Agreed to note good vehicle access to site and acknowledge main concern is about overnight noise**
- R Seden – Argument on site locations and housing numbers noted. RCC Core strategy limits Task Group options. Task Group notes the significant community support for UPP 10. Amended site layouts and max housing numbers to be agreed later in meeting. By pass comments noted. **Agreed to address this in second draft**
- Rutland Access Group – Positive comment on proposed improvements to pedestrian environment noted. Access to historic buildings point noted but felt by Task Group to be outside its brief. However the Plan does aspire to improve accessibility
- S Durant - “Well done to all those involved” comment appreciated by Task Group. Station Road and signage comments noted
- S Taylor – “N Plan reads well and its broad scope is impressive” comment noted. **Proposals for change and amendments accepted and to be included in second draft**
- V Allen – Point about development in the West noted but Task Group limited by RCC strategy and local plan. Pressure on public services point noted.

Developer /Landowner Responses

Ancer Spa (Uppingham Gate) – Argument about housing noted by Task Group but decision to retain for employment purposes only is retained. While Task Group is supportive of an enhanced retail offer within the town centre it is believed it would be detrimental to the town sustainability to support a significant retail food store development at Uppingham Gate

Bidwells (Site off Branston Road) – After careful deliberation and receipt of RCC advice, the Task Group agreed to retain its present position with regard to the non-inclusion of the Branston Road site in the N Plan and continue to support the proposed green space as requested by residents

Marrons (North of Leicester Road) – Following further deliberation by the Task Group and advice received from RCC, it is proposed to amend the Plan so as to approve the whole site for housing development but limit development within the period of this Plan to an area of 3 hectares within the site boundary providing a total of 75 houses at a density of 25 houses per hectare

Marrons (East of The Beeches) - The Task Group noted the argument presented for increasing the total housing provision but on the advice of RCC rejected the proposal. Comments on the need to conform with the Local Plan reinforce the Task Group's decision not to support further development East of The Beeches. The Task Group further noted that in the event of the Branston Road site not being developed there remained sufficient capacity on the three recommended sites to make up the shortfall

Bloor Homes/Oxalis Planning (south of Leicester Road) – Following further deliberation by the Task Group and consideration of the points made in the submission, the Task Group agreed that the present location of the x-y line was correct and that land at the rear of the site should be designated as recreation land. The Group also agreed that four hectares between the x-y line and Leicester Road be approved for future housing development and that 3 hectares within that area be approved for the construction of up to 75 homes at a density of 25 homes per hectare within the period of the Plan

Larkfleet Homes (West of Ayston Road & North of Firs Avenue) – The Task Group considered this lengthy response carefully. It contains a number of untrue assertions. It suggests that no sustainability screening has taken place. This is not the case as the Task Group used a template process developed by RCC and commended by DCLG. It suggests that the Task Group are unaccountable. Not true as the Task Group is working group appointed by, and accountable to, the Town Council. It suggests a lack of transparency in the Task Group's activities yet all meetings are minuted and it has regularly reported in public. Concluding its deliberations and having regard for the public support for the draft plan and the limited housing needs of the town up to 2026, the Task Group could find no substantial reason to change its recommended sites for housing.

Note 1: In a number of the above submissions issue was taken with the methodology and calculations by which RCC arrived at its recommended housing figures. The Task Group is advised by RCC that there is no substance in the arguments put forward. The Task Group has therefore accepted RCC advice in this regard.

Note 2: It was agreed that all respondents would receive a written response from the Town Council and that all responding developers/landowner representatives would be offered the opportunity of a debriefing/progress meeting with the Task Group.

National Agency Responses

English Heritage – This positive and supportive response was welcomed by the Task Group

Other Agencies – No response yet received – **Agreed that these be chased up!**

Consultation Responses - Revised Draft Appendix C

Resident Responses

- Brett & Tania Durden - 'Professional and High Quality' comment noted. Comment about 'Sites A,B & C providing sensible options' noted, Concern about the limited number of sites chosen noted. Missed opportunity to spread sites comment noted. **Action – Explain limitation of sites choice available to comply with RCC strategic plan. Also limited number of houses required within life of Plan. Economy will determine pace of development**
- Mr & Mrs Ind – two letters – Concern about urban sprawl noted. Cllr Ind's declared interest noted. Concern about neighbours' views noted but not consistent with limited number of negative responses received or positive views repeatedly expressed at Neighbourhood Forum meetings. Concern about maintaining quality of approach to town noted. **Action - Write stating that Task Group does not accept that their proposals represent urban sprawl. Agree about need to ensure that any development enhances character of town and has regard for neighbours during construction phase. Advise that windfall housing allocations will help distribute development around town**
- L Fenelon - Comments about merit of bungalows noted and supported. **Action – Bring to attention of developers**
- N Sudborough – Job well done comment noted. Roundabout at south entrance of town still in Plan. Street furniture and traffic calming points noted. **Action – Write advising roundabout still in Plan. Other traffic calming measures on London Road still possible even if not detailed in Plan**
- Karen Mellor- Rutland Access Group – Support in Plan for people with disabilities comment noted. Disabled parking provision comment noted. **Action – Advise that Town Council will be asked to pursue this issue as part of its parking strategy**
- G Maskell – 'Congratulations to team who compiled document' comment noted. Heavy traffic comment noted but as stated in Plan requires collaboration with other authorities. **Action – Write confirming Plan has no specific policy but UTC intends to pursue heavy traffic issue in collaboration with Highways Authority**
- RC & J Fisher – Ayston Road speed comment noted. Branson Road traffic comments noted. **Action – Write confirming Ayston Road speed view supported and will be monitored during development of Uppingham Gate. Advise that Branston Road traffic issues are being addressed as part of the Spire Homes development**
- R Boston – Support for Plan noted. Concern about scale of any future development noted.
- A Haigh – 'Excellent work of all concerned in preparing Plan' comment noted. Observations about schools, youth, affordable housing noted. **Action - Advise that all schools invited to participate but not all responded. Advise that flexible facilities may be part of community hub proposals. Advise that Branston Road development is outside of Task Group remit, but more affordable housing very much part of Plan**
- S Forsyth - 'Congratulations to all who have been working on Neighbourhood Plan' comment noted. 'A clear and informative document' comment noted and appreciated
- Mrs Deveraux – Concern about adequacy of policing following development noted. **Action - Advise that this issue will be monitored by Town Council**
- M & M McWhinnie – Approval of N Plan noted. Pedestrianisation comment noted. **Action – Advise of debate about and decision taken around Pedestrianisation of Market Place. Proposal carried little support!**
- K & W Edmond – Support for revised draft of N Plan noted. Also removal of North/South bypass line
- L Bennett – Concern about housing proposals impacting on school place availability noted. **Action – Advise that RCC has reassured Task Group existing provision is adequate for current number of additional homes proposed**
- Roy Seden – 'Appreciation of work done and support for majority of Plan' comment noted. Support for deletion of bypass route noted. Support for dialogue with developers and landowners noted. Detail of objection 1 discussed and noted. Detail of Objection 2 noted including concern about Site C and surrounding landscape. Call for greater housing dispersal noted. **Action – Advise of limitations put upon Task Group re housing site dispersal, rational behind red/pink areas. Explain dispersal required use of south of Leicester Road, also shared aspirations for additional recreation space. Explain dialogue with landowners has limited their aspirations but demonstrated sustainability and deliverability of proposals including much needed affordable housing. Landscaping of developments will be a key design issue to address environmental concerns and protect town's heritage. Developers/ landowners have been made aware of this.**

Business Response

a) Post Office – Concern about apparent downgrading of establishment in revised draft plan noted. **Action – Advise that change was no reflection on quality of staff, but reflected Access Group concerns about access for the disabled.**

Developer/Landowner Responses

Ancer Spa (Uppingham Gate) – The Task Group welcomes the positive comments on the revised draft of the N Plan and notes with interest the content of the possible master plan submitted. The support expressed for Proposal 6 concerning the Local Enterprise Partnership is welcomed. **Action - To assist this developer in their endeavours to attract employers to the site, the temporary amendment previously agreed to the list of prohibitions in Policy 7 on page 20 is now made permanent. The Task Group would welcome further dialogue with this developer.**

Bloor Homes/Oxalis Planning (south of Leicester Road) – The Task Group welcome the positive comment on the revised Plan and is pleased with the progress of the deliverability discussions for this site. The updated maps with the more accurate line of division between housing land and recreation are approved for inclusion in the Plan as is the minor change suggested for Policy 4 and the textual changes for page 17. **Action – Update plans on pages 31 & 32. Amend Policy 4. Amend text where requested on page 17.**

Larkfleet Homes (West of Ayston Road & North of Firs Avenue) – The Task Group considered this lengthy response carefully. It contains a number of untrue assertions and, in the opinion of some Task Group members, is potentially libellous. The Task Group notes the objections to Policies 1, 4, 9, and 11, but does not share the author's views. The Task Group notes the argument about the legality of the N Plan but takes the view that this is a matter for RCC, DCLG and the Eternal Examiner. **Action – That 1) The Chair of the N Plan Task Group write to Larkfleet's representative outlining the Task Group's arguments for not accepting Larkfleet's objections (Copy letter attached to these notes) 2) The Task Group urge the Town Council to consult with partners and DCLG to arrange appropriate legal representation to support the Plan in the event of a legal challenge to the Plan submitted by Larkfleet at the External Examination.**

Rutland County Council Responses

The Task Group notes that the RCC Scrutiny Panel of November 28th 2013 considered the revised Draft N Plan without proposing any change

The Task Group notes the helpful comments of the RCC Director of Places

The Task Group welcomes the detailed advice and comment made for the post plan period by the RCC Climate Change Coordinator

National Agency Responses

English Heritage – This positive and supportive response is welcomed by the Task Group

Environment Agency – This positive and supportive response is welcomed by the Task Group

Natural England – The comment that “Natural England welcomes the Draft Plan and considers that it provides a strong framework for achieving the sustainable development of Uppingham” is welcomed by the Task Group.

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