

# MINERALS POSITION STATEMENT

## WOOLFOX GARDEN VILLAGE

### Pegasus Group

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**PLANNING** | **DESIGN** | **ENVIRONMENT** | **ECONOMICS**

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## **Executive Summary**

- The proposed Woolfox site falls within an area identified as a mineral safeguarding zone by Rutland County Council.
- Publicly available data confirms that the Woolfox site is underlain by Lincolnshire Limestone across the majority of the site. This same data also confirms that the thickness of overburden varies across the Woolfox site.
- Discussions with the County Council have identified that the primary area of concern remains the potential presence of Clipsham Stone, a nationally important resource for building stone.
- Discussions with the operators of the nearby Clipsham Quarry indicate that reserves of this stone are likely to be confined to the area around the existing quarry, this is confirmed by a recent EIA Screening Request submitted on behalf of the operators of Clipsham Quarries which confirms that reserves have been proven to the south.
- -The emerging masterplan is only indicative at this stage – but any ‘safeguarding area’ could be accommodated within the proposed development without the loss of any of the proposed dwellings
- Further investigation will be undertaken to formally confirm the presence and quality of Lincolnshire Limestone in due course
- However, the presence of minerals is unlikely to prohibit the development of the site as a proposed Garden Community.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### **Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 This Position Statement has been prepared by Pegasus Group in respect of the proposed submission of proposals to create Woolfox Garden Village for consideration by Rutland County Council for allocation in the Rutland Local Plan.
- 1.2 The report considers the current planning policy framework with regard to the supply of minerals, the geology of the proposed site, the supply of minerals in Rutland and, briefly, a summary of the potential impacts of the potential allocation of the site on the supply of minerals in Rutland and surrounding areas.
- 1.3 In order to prepare this report, the following publicly available sources of information have been consulted:
- Rutland Local Aggregate Assessment (reporting 2015 data); November 2017;
  - Rutland Minerals Core Strategy and Development Management Policies; 2010;
  - British Geological Survey, GeoRecords Plus+ website;
  - British Geological Survey, OpenGeoscience website; and
  - The MAGIC website.
  - The Coal Authority Interactive Map
- 1.4 Furthermore, discussions have been held with Mr Dan Szymanski of Northamptonshire County Council, acting on behalf of Rutland County Council, which have identified that the principal area of concern is the potential sterilisation of reserves of Clipsham Building Stone.

### **Limitations**

- 1.5 This assessment and report have been prepared purely to accompany a submission for allocation in the Rutland Local Plan. The report does not comprise a site investigation or technical evaluation of any identified mineral reserves. The report is prepared in accordance with a scope of works and for the purposes previously agreed with the client. It should not be relied upon by third parties for decision making except in respect of allocation of the proposed site within the local plan.
- 1.6 In preparing this report, consideration has been given to the emerging, indicative, masterplan prepared to support the potential allocation of the site. At this point in time the masterplan remains indicative, the further development of the masterplan will continue to be informed by assessments of mineral quantity and quality. Should

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it prove necessary, appropriate areas of mineral safeguarding can be included within future iterations of the masterplan.

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## **2. SITE AND DEVELOPMENT**

### **Site Location**

- 2.1 The proposed Woolfox Garden Village is situated between the villages of Stretton and Clipsham, located approximately 6 miles from the closest large settlement-centre of Stamford which is outside Rutland Council, in the district of South Kesteven.

### **Site Description**

- 2.2 The disused Royal Air Force Woolfox Airbase is located within the southern extent of the site, areas of hardstanding and derelict buildings associated with the former airfield still remain in the southern part of the site. The current land use across the remainder of the site is predominately medium scale arable farmland with field boundaries defined by well established hedgerows which include hedgerow trees; blocks of woodland; tree belts; ditches and; post and wire fencing.
- 2.3 The site is located within the gently sloping transitional landscape situated between an area of open plateau to the west and the undulating valley landscape to the east. Across the southern extent of the site there is little topographic variation, between 100m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) and 90m AOD. In comparison, the landform in the far northern extent of the site is more varied with rounded hills and shallow valleys situated between 100m AOD and 80m AOD.

#### 4. SITE GEOLOGY

##### **Superficial Deposits**

- 4.1 Superficial deposits are the youngest geological deposits formed during the most recent period of geological time, the Quaternary, which extends back about 2.6 million years from the present. They rest on older deposits or rocks referred to as bedrock.
- 4.2 Figure 3.1 below is taken from The British Geological Survey, OpenGeoscience website which records that the site either has no superficial deposits, more common in the northern part of the site or is overlain by Glacial Till.



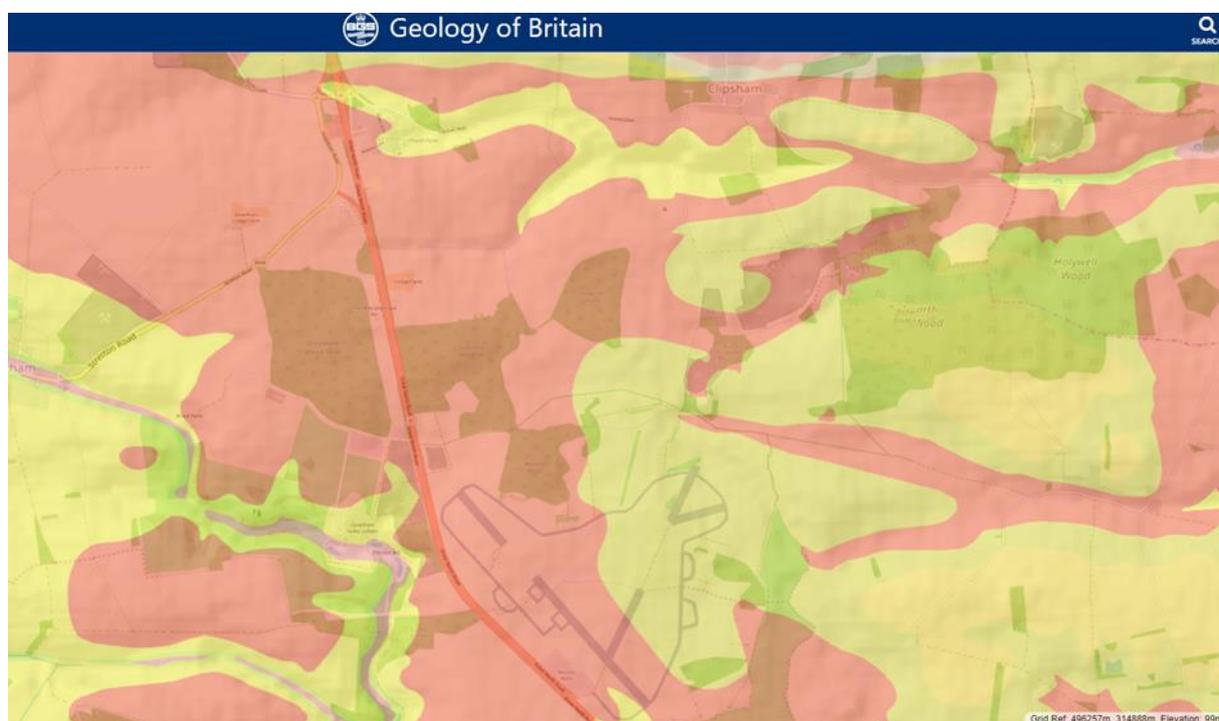
*Figure 3.1 – Surface Geology*

- 4.3 This is confirmed by publicly available borehole records which demonstrate that, in the north of the site, thin soils overlay bedrock, whereas within the centre of the site varying depths of “boulder clay” are found overlaying bedrock beneath.

##### **Solid Geology**

- 4.4 The British Geological Survey (BGS), OpenGeoscience website records indicates that the bedrock geology of the site comprises the Upper Lincolnshire Limestone Member of the Lincolnshire Limestone Formations and sandstones and mudstones of the Rutland Formation. Lincolnshire Limestone Formations form part of the Inferior Oolite Group.

- 4.5 Publicly available borehole data confirms that the proposed site is underlain by Lincolnshire Limestone and mudstones and sandstones of the Rutland Formation across a large part and to depths of up to 25m.



*Figure 3.2 – Bedrock Geology*

- 4.6 The BGS GeoRecords Plus+ website identifies that there are a large number of historic borehole records both within and immediately adjacent to the site. These historic records confirm the description set out above
- 4.7 Limestones such as those found at the site have historically been utilised as aggregates, bulk fill, agricultural limes and as a building stone.
- 4.8 Informal discussions with operators of Clipsham Quarry indicate that reserves of high quality Clipsham Limestone are likely to be present around the current quarry area. However, it is considered that these reserves are likely to be concentrated within the vicinity of the quarry. This is confirmed by reference to a recent Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Request submitted on behalf of the quarry operators which proves the presence of Clipsham Limestone immediately to the south of the existing quarry operations.

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**Mining**

- 4.9 Consultation with the Coal Authority interactive map indicates that there are no records of underground or surface coal mining in the vicinity of the site.

## 6. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

6.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a key material consideration in the determination of planning applications and also sets out the framework of policies with which up-to-date development plans must be in accordance.

### Mineral Planning Policy

6.2 The NPPF sets out a broad framework for plan making and decision taking at the local level. It must be taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans and is a key material consideration in planning decisions.

6.3 Paragraph 203 recognises that *"It is essential that there is a sufficient supply of minerals to provide the infrastructure, buildings, energy and goods that the country needs. Since minerals are a finite natural resource, and can only be worked where they are found, best use needs to be made of them to secure their long-term conservation."*

6.4 Paragraph 204 requires that planning policies should:

*"safeguard mineral resources by defining Mineral Safeguarding Areas; and adopt appropriate policies so that known locations of specific minerals resources of local and national importance are not sterilised by non-mineral development where this should be avoided (whilst not creating a presumption that the resources defined will be worked);"* and

*"set out policies to encourage the prior extraction of minerals, where practical and environmentally feasible, if it is necessary for non-mineral development to take place;"*

6.5 Paragraph 207 requires minerals planning authorities to plan for a steady and adequate supply of aggregates by:

*"preparing an annual Local Aggregate Assessment, either individually or jointly, to forecast future demand, based on a rolling average of 10 years' sales data and other relevant local information, and an assessment of all supply options (including marine dredged, secondary and recycled sources);"* and

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*"maintaining landbanks of at least 7 years for sand and gravel and at least 10 years for crushed rock, whilst ensuring that the capacity of operations to supply a wide range of materials is not compromised;"*

- 6.6 Paragraph 145 requires mineral planning authorities to plan for a steady and adequate supply of minerals by, amongst other things *"making provision for the maintenance of landbanks of at least 7 years for sand and gravel and at least 10 years for crushed rock."*

### **Local Planning Policy**

- 6.7 The relevant minerals local policy can be found in the Rutland County Council Minerals Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document; September 2010.

- 6.8 MCS Policy 2 – The Supply of Minerals in Rutland stipulates that The County Council will *"Make provision for the production of limestone aggregate (crushed rock) until 2026 in accordance with the East Midlands Regional Plan together with the maintenance of a landbank in line with national and regional policy."*

- 6.9 MCS Policy 3 – General Locational Criteria states that *"Planning permission will only be granted for minerals development within the Areas for Future Mineral Extraction as shown on the Key Diagram where the proposal is an extension to an existing extraction site or is a small quarry for building or roofing stone."*

MCS Policy 10 – Minerals Safeguarding states that *"All deposits of limestone and clay that are considered to be of current or future economic importance and significant infrastructure such as rail linked facilities within the Minerals Safeguarding Areas shown on Figure 5 will be safeguarded from unnecessary sterilisation by surface development. The safeguarding of sources of building and roofing stone will be progressed through the establishment of a list of important sources of this resource."*

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## 8. SUPPLY OF MINERALS

### Local Area Aggregate Assessment

- 8.1 A Local Aggregate Assessment (LAA) is an annual assessment of the demand for and supply of aggregates in a mineral planning authority's area.
- 8.2 The most recent LAA for Rutland was published in November 2016 and covers the period January – December 2015. The LAA sets out the current supply and demand for aggregates in the County and indicates the provision that will be needed in order to ensure that Rutland continues to make an appropriate contribution to the steady and adequate supply of aggregates.
- 8.3 The LAA identifies that the rolling 3 and 10 year average sales for crushed rock aggregate for the period 2013-2015 and 2006-2015 were 0.19 million tonnes and 0.17 million tonnes respectively.
- 8.4 For reasons of confidentiality it is not possible to include remaining permitted reserves of crushed rock within Rutland in the LAA figures however, the LAA identifies that based upon the three and ten year rolling averages, there remains between 45 and 51 years of permitted reserves of crushed rock aggregate within the County.

### Need for Minerals

- 8.5 The LAA demonstrates that Rutland has a significant landbank of permitted reserves of crushed rock aggregate amounting to up to 51 years of production. It is therefore clear that there is no identified need for new crushed rock aggregate reserves over the current plan period and beyond.
- 8.6 Discussions with The County Council's advisors has identified that there is the potential for the site to provide a source of the nationally important Clipsham Stone.

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## **10. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 10.1 It is clear from the geological maps and borehole data that there exists beneath the site a resource of Lincolnshire Limestone. This assessment does not attempt to assess the viability of that resource, only that it lies, in part, within a designated mineral safeguarding area.
- 10.2 Publicly available geological records indicate that the bedrock of the site comprises Lincolnshire Limestone to some depth beneath the site with little in the way of superficial deposits other than glacial till. Policy MCS10 of the Rutland Minerals Core Strategy is therefore applicable and this report has been prepared to address the requirements of that policy.
- 10.3 The landbank of currently permitted crushed rock reserves in Rutland currently stands at approximately 50 years. As a result of the size of the landbank, Rutland County Council is making no provision for the release of additional crushed rock reserves over the current Minerals Local Plan Period (to 2026) and there are no proposals to allocate additional sites.
- 10.4 MCS Policy 3 requires proposals for crushed rock aggregate to comprise extensions to existing sites or to prove a need for the mineral. The development of the proposed Woolfox Garden Village site could not be undertaken as an extension to an existing site and there is clearly no current need for additional crushed rock reserves to maintain supply.
- 10.5 The proposed development would therefore have no impact upon the supply of aggregate over the design life and complies fully with the requirements of bullet point 2 of policy M11.
- 10.6 It is acknowledged that small parts of the overall site could include areas of Clipsham Limestone, a high quality building limestone regarded as being of national importance. However, it is likely that the Clipsham limestones would only be found in close proximity to the existing Clipsham Quarry and proposed southern extension.
- 10.7 Further investigation of the quantity and quality of the Limestones found at the site will be undertaken in due course. However, the likely relatively constrained occurrence of Clipsham Limestone would be easily accommodated in the emerging masterplan without requiring any reduction in the number of units proposed.

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10.8 On the basis of the foregoing, it is considered unlikely that the proposed development would have a significant effect upon the supply of minerals.