



St Georges Project RUTLAND

Dear Councillor xxxxxxx,

St Georges Barracks Development

In the coming weeks you will be faced with the Master Plan which will highlight the proposals being put forward by the Cabinet and Executive of RCC for the wholesale redevelopment of the St George's Barracks site, creating a major new town of up to 3,000 homes, an industrial estate and a quarry.

We write to ask that when considering this huge development you really do take time to consider what is 'Right for Rutland' and how the proposals being put forward fit the well considered and researched current and revised draft Local Plans. As Parish Councils, we have tried to work closely with your Leader and Chief Executive to highlight our concerns and ideas for the development; however, we have been denied the opportunity to meet the Project Board or the authors of the Master Plan and have therefore been unable to meaningfully influence or inform its development. Our "Concerns Paper", which I hope you will have read, tried to lay out in some detail those issues that really do need to be addressed; however, the County Council's response was less than convincing. The anger felt locally really is palpable, as experienced at an Annual Parish Meeting in North Luffenham last week.

Most importantly, we have been given no real factual information on the need for a development of this scale, other than the fact that the alternative would be for the MOD to sell to a developer, which RCC could do nothing to influence. No evidence of the requirement for 3,000 new homes over and above those already identified in the local plan, has been forthcoming. We are advised by RCC that, "The Local Plan process will test the evidential base for the number of dwellings proposed and the supporting infrastructure." However, no additional resources were allocated by Cabinet at their meeting on 17th Apr to review the number of homes required. No evidence has been forthcoming of a local demand for a new industrial estate, let alone provision of the services and infrastructure needed to support it.

We are further advised that more than one third of the homes proposed will be 'affordable' homes and that we need this number to meet the demand for such not only by Rutland but also by both Leicester and Kesteven, who have not been able to satisfy demand for affordable homes themselves, albeit that this is outside our regional development area. Is this really 'Right for Rutland'? Surely 'localism' demands that a community should be represented by its Parish and County Councils and not be bullied by the Treasury driven requirements of the Ministry of Defence. Sadly, our County Council appears to have thrown in its lot with the Treasury and MOD and to be taking an arrogant and "we know best" approach to local communities, which is causing considerable upset amongst the communities affected.

Do you really believe that Edith Weston and North Luffenham are appropriate sites for such a development? RLP 3 of the draft local plan would suggest that it is not (stating that 70% of the County's residential development needs will be accommodated within and on the edge of the Main Towns (Oakham, Uppingham) and the remaining 30% through allocated sites, redevelopment and infill opportunities). The Council's response that the plan will be re-written to take account of the St George's development opportunity cannot be right. Should established policy really be abandoned to reflect opportunity? Rutland cannot absorb such an enlarged built area, larger than Uppingham, without clogging up local services, roads and parking facilities and irrevocably changing the rural nature of the County, which is its main attractiveness. There seems to be no recognition of what makes Rutland special. If the Council are unwilling to confront these concerns, I am sure that they will be considered in depth by the electorate.

In sum, the proposed huge development in the St George's Barracks site, which is contrary to many of the County's strategic aims for the development of the County, does not fit the Council's local plan, is not appropriate for the rural location for which it is intended and cannot be considered to be "Right for Rutland".

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