

25 May 2018

DEVELOPMENT OF ST GEORGE'S BARRACKS HAVE YOUR SAY BECAUSE THIS WILL IMPACT UPON YOU

The County Council has now published the proposals for the future of St George's Barracks. However, it has done so without the matter being discussed at all in full Council. The Cabinet and Executive have decided that it isn't necessary to discuss their proposals through the normal democratic forum, until the decisions are all finalized and planning permission is sought. Indeed, only a limited few Councilors had sight of the proposals before they were presented to the public, in what looked remarkably like a fait-acompli. The future of the County has been sold-out, based on some very suspect assumptions and a need to reduce the current growing budget deficit. As has become clear in recent weeks we have been faced with a changing story of the scale of the development, which is likely to continue to grow unless the public raises its voice in a concerted way and says that enough is enough.

This public consultation is however hugely important because what is proposed will impact on every individual in the County. What is proposed is a new town in the heart of the county, directly on the edge of Rutland Water. The proposed development will dwarf Uppingham in scale and there are fears that the whole development could grow to the size of Oakham. This has been hidden under the sobriquet of a "Typical Rutland Garden Village". However, what is planned at present is : first 70 homes as soon as possible on the Officers' Mess site, then 3,000 on the main site within 10 years and finally a further 500 once the minerals have been extracted. And this new town won't even look like Rutland. The proposal includes terraced houses, 3 storey town houses, apartment blocks and properties without gardens. What impact will all this have on all future planning decisions in Rutland's villages and towns?

We would urge every Rutlander to take time to view the proposals in detail and look beyond the numerous platitudes and vague promises for a better future, to the reality, which will be a huge urban sprawl dumped in the centre of this rural community. The proposals will bring an estimated 7,000 cars onto our small roads with no extra roads to aid traffic flow. There is little in the report to address the County's transport problems, which include access to A1, A47, A606, A6003 let alone the choke points at the North Luffenham Rail Crossing, Manton Top, and Edith Weston village. Much is promised in respect of infrastructure funding, however the Government's money tree is unlikely to provide sufficient funding to do all that is required to deliver the promises made.

Though largely hidden in the glossy brochure, a huge quarry which will cover some 350 acres is proposed on almost half the site. This is euphemistically called a 'Country Park' which be a blight on the landscape and the environment for the next 30-40 years.

3,500 new jobs are promised, however to date Rutland's success in attracting high value employment to this rural county has been entirely ineffectual, and

the vast number of our qualified young people inevitably migrate to our cities and major industrial conurbations. Rutland is, what it is, a beautiful rural county whose major industries are tourism and agriculture. The proposal to build over a thousand 'affordable' homes sounds good, however the local authority cannot create jobs and it makes no sense to industry to create jobs in the heart of an industrial desert. There is a real danger that RCC will inadvertently create a dormitory town for commuters, or a sink estate with no hope for many of its largely imported residents.

It is time to "smell the coffee" and to force RCC to understand the real concerns of those that it represents. A development of this size will affect us all and needs to be rethought in every detail. Please take the time to read the presentations and make your view heard – it will affect you both directly and indirectly. Please respond to RCC's consultation by 14th June using the feedback form provided in the Consultation pack or on line at: <https://www.stgeorgesrutland.co.uk>.

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