

NORTH LUFFENHAM PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER – SEPTEMBER 2018

Consultation – Local Plan.

Rutland County Council are currently carrying out a consultation on their proposals to revise the Local Plan. The plan is a statutory document which must reflect the views of local people as to how they wish their community to develop. The Parish Council will submit a formal response, but we have been advised that “numbers count”, so we urge you to take part in the consultation, by one of the methods set out overleaf. The full consultation document (36 Pages) can be downloaded or viewed at the Rutland County Council website:

<https://www.rutland.gov.uk/my-services/planning-and-building-control/planning/planning-policy/local-plan-review/>

The consultation document can additionally be downloaded from the Village Website.

This revision and consultation was deemed necessary because the previous version (still in draft form but produced in 2017) did not include any development proposals for the St George’s Barracks (SGB) site. If and when finally agreed by RCC, the Local Plan will set the framework for development in the County until 2036, and is being prepared for submission to the Secretary of State for approval in 2019. If it is approved, planning applications will be submitted for St George’s Barracks, with very little chance of them being refused. The Plan includes the proposal to build 1,200 new homes at St George’s by 2036, building up eventually to up to 3,000 new homes on the site. This would equate to an eventual development the size of Uppingham. In addition it is proposed to enable substantial quarrying over an extended period on the Eastern side of the site.

Context

Government objectives for housing nationally include:

- Building more houses. (The recent Government White Paper proposes -1 million new homes in the next 4 years)
- Using ‘brownfield’ sites before greenfield. The whole of SGB is currently designated brownfield (although much is actually green space between runways)
- Raising money from selling surplus MoD sites

This leads to pressure on the County Council to use SGB to build houses, which is probably not preventable (given the above objectives) - the issue is scale and timing of any development.

The 2017 draft local plan was based on an expected need for 160 new homes to be required each year in Rutland up to 2036 (a total of 3,200 new homes over 20 years). These would be built mainly in Oakham, Uppingham, and the larger Rutland villages. The proposed revision retains the 3,200 total, but “transfers” 1,200 new homes from other sites, mainly Oakham and Uppingham to SGB. The retention of the figure of 160 homes per year is questionable, given that recent government advice recommends using an assessment method which supports a lower figure of 130 per annum, a reduction of some 600 new homes in the period of the plan.

Infrastructure is another concern, as is what the ‘critical mass’ of a development on SGB should be to justify putting in all of the necessary infrastructure (a school, creation of industrial capacity, roads improvements, a medical centre, etc). If the development is too small, then it risks being an ‘unserved and unsustainable community’. Finally, any development will normally be undertaken by private developers, who will only build houses at a rate they can manage and houses that they can sell profitably. Ultimately this will determine what gets built.

Proposed Response to the Consultation Document

The proposal made in the Consultation Document is that 100 homes/year would be built on the SGB site over a 12 year period 2024 – 2036. Thereafter, expansion might continue to complete up to 3,000 on the site. It is the view of the Parish Council that the need for a development of this size is simply not proven. Had St George’s not been available, the draft 2017 Local Plan would have met the future

needs of the County for the next 20 years in full. We estimate that if the proposals for St George's within the document are accepted, the County Council are proposing to build substantially more new homes than are actually needed. They are choosing to ignore the Government's guidelines for growth. The Parish Council contend that Rutland simply does not need such a massive development, and there is a widespread view that a huge modern housing estate in such an isolated location in the heart of this beautiful rural county is simply not necessary or acceptable and carries significant risk.

The consultation document is complex and does require detailed analysis. A steering group set up by the Parish Council has reviewed the document, identified a number of key issues arising from it, and prepared a pro-forma (attached) to simplify the response process. If you wish to take advantage of this, please look at the comments on the attached pro-forma and indicate clearly each individual comment that you agree with, ensuring that you provide your name and address. (RCC have now agreed that responses can be submitted in any format.) Then place it in an envelope in the Red Box in The Fox or return to 11 Digby Drive or to any Parish Councillor. All returns are requested by Friday 21st Sep 18, after which they will be taken to Rutland County Council. Alternatively, RCC's formal Consultation Response Form, this pro-forma or free-form comments can be submitted directly to RCC at: localplan@rutland.gov.uk. **RCC require the consultation to be completed by 24th Sep. To count, all responses must contain the name and address of the individual concerned.**

Drop In Session. To give you a chance to review a hard copy of the Local Plan document, to ask questions about it and should you wish, to have an opportunity to complete the attached survey form, we are holding a 'Drop In' session from 7pm – 9pm on Friday 14th Sep 18 in the School Hall.

PARISH MATTERS

Parish Councillor Vacancy.

A vacancy currently exists for a new Parish Councillor, if you might be interested in taking up this rewarding appointment, please contact the Parish Clerk: nlparishclerk@outlook.com. Further details will shortly be posted on the Parish Notice Board and on the website.

Bonfire Night.

The Parish Council will again be hosting the annual bonfire night event on Monday 5th November. We need to start to find volunteers now to assist with stewarding and bucket collecting for the event, we need a strong team of volunteers to ensure the safety and success of the event. Can you help ??? If so – please contact Paul Cummings Tel: 720124 or pbgcummings@gmail.com. This year the Parish Council have agreed that the Cricket Club should host the BBQ and hot drinks to help raise funds to ensure the future of the Club.

Welcome Pack.

Last year a new 'Welcome Pack' was distributed throughout the village, if you don't have a copy please contact the Parish Clerk 01780 408288; or email: nlparishclerk@outlook.com

Good Neighbour Scheme.

The North Luffenham Good Neighbour Scheme (NLGNS) has been in operation for four years and over that time has been able to help villagers who have requested help. The majority of requests have been for lifts for G.P. and Outpatient appointments but the scheme has also been able to help with one-off tidying up of gardens and dog walking. NLGNS would like to remind the villagers of North Luffenham that it is there to help young and old should the need arise. The scheme would also like to hear from anybody who is interested in becoming a volunteer; this is not onerous as requests for help are on average at the rate of one per week and volunteers usually have no trouble in fitting it in to their daily routine. To Contact NLGNS: 07825 697841.

For information on volunteering: Contact Tim Smith on 01780 360083 or timwestonsmith@gmail.com

Speed Limits.

The new 40MPH speed limits on Station Road have been put in place. We anticipate the work to reduce the speed limit on Edith Weston Road from 40mph to 30mph to be completed in the coming weeks.