

Proposals for ex - RAF Newton

Over the years we have seen many proposals for this site, all of which have been seen off. But we have always known that something would happen eventually. Sure enough the developers are back. This time the owner of the central core of the base is making proposals. Their consultants (Hunter Page) have formed a Community Liaison Group made up of Newton residents, Shelford Parish Councillors plus representatives from Bingham, Radcliffe and EB Parish Councils. I represent East Bridgford.

The proposal involves creating a new settlement on the "core" of the old base. There is currently permission to build 165 houses on the A46 side of the hangers, adding to the existing 160 houses. The scheme would replace all the old buildings, including the hangers, with three more areas of housing, and a live/ work area (still to be defined). Facilities to be provided include a Village Centre (probably a few shops and a pub by an open space, kiddies play areas, and a playing field. They plan a two form entry Primary School (St. Peters is one form entry), but no new Medical Centre. Proposals for both school and Medical Centre have implications for East Bridgford.

The actual number of houses is still imprecise, but the developers are clearly hoping for about 1000. The Community Group has consulted the local Parish Councils, and the acceptable numbers quoted ranged from 325 to 1000, with a majority in the 500-600 range. It is inevitable that the smaller the number of houses, the fewer facilities that will be provided. However, we have asked them to prepare an alternative proposal that is sustainable based on a one form entry primary school and more employment.

The new community is intended to be very environmentally sensitive with a network of cycle/ footpaths and a road system unfriendly to local car journeys. The houses will be built to a high standard of energy efficiency (at least level 4) but some would say "not high enough". Another potentially "interesting" proposal is to have two large (100m column, 80 metre blade, approx 600ft high) wind turbines on the Trent Valley side of the site.

There will be a new access to the A46 at the new roundabout, a foot & cycle bridge over the A46 to connect with paths to Bingham, and a local bus service connecting the development to Bingham and the railway station. There remains real concern about the impact of the inevitable extra commuter traffic on the A52 and on Shelford Road, Radcliffe.

A lot of issues remain to be discussed. We are making progress persuading them the buildings should have a rural feel and create a community. Points of concern remain such as the impact of traffic on the surrounding villages; the actual number of houses; the wind turbines (not to everyone's taste); the danger of coalescing with Bingham and more.

If you have any opinions on any of this, please let me know.

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