



### *What can you do to help?*

The Government's consultation period runs until 30th June 2008 and we must make our objections known by then. Make your opinions heard – local views matter!

- 1 **Respond to Caroline Flint MP, Minister for Housing**  
either online via email ([ecotowns@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ecotowns@communities.gsi.gov.uk)) or via letter:  
**Caroline Flint MP, Eco-towns Team**, Housing and Growth Programmes,  
Communities and Local Government, Eland House, Bressenden Place, London SW1E 5DU
- 2 **Sign the Downing Street petition**  
<http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/Eco-townsites> or go to [www.BARDcampaign.org](http://www.BARDcampaign.org)  
and click on "How can I help" to obtain a link directly to the Downing Street petition.

If you feel really strongly about this campaign you could also:

- 3 **Write to the Minister responsible for the West Midlands**  
**Liam Byrne MP, Minister for the West Midlands**, Home Office,  
1 Horse Guards Road, London SW1A 2HQ
- 4 **Write to your local MP**  
Visit [www.BARDcampaign.org](http://www.BARDcampaign.org) for the email address of your local or national representative
- 5 **Write short and concise letters (no more than 100 words) to local and national newspapers stating your opposition to the New Town**
- 6 **Put up a "Stop the New Town" poster in your garden, in your window, or on your car!**
- 7 **Wear the "Stop the New Town" badge**

Always remember to send a blind copy of all your letters and emails to the BARD Campaign as we are collecting your views along with documented evidence of the problems with the Long Marston proposal to produce a comprehensive report which will be sent to the eco-town panel.

**BARD Campaign, c/o Colletts Farm, Dorsington,  
Stratford-upon-Avon C37 8AU  
Email – [info@BARDcampaign.org](mailto:info@BARDcampaign.org) Tel – 01789 491391**

# IS THIS THE FUTURE...



# ...OF LONG MARSTON?

## From William to Whitehall

Sonnet for Bard Campaign.org

(a warning to St Modwen)

This quiet realm of peace, this rural isle,  
This other Eden, demi-paradise  
Which you and those you serve would now defile  
Against all common sense and sage advice,  
This isolated prick upon the map,  
This precious plot whose narrow, may-hedged lanes  
You seek to feed to carrion Birds of scrap  
And so convert to cursed, ill-gotten gains,  
This little world, unsuited to your need,  
This vale the Bard made sacred with his pen  
That you would sacrifice to bloated greed  
With Flint-knapped words to trick the minds of men –  
Heed now the bell, long silent in its tower:  
It speaks of England's wrath, late tho' the hour.

Felix Dennis



### Dame Judi Dench

“Stratford is a jewel in the crown of the nation's heritage. There can be very few places in the world of such cultural significance as the town in which the world's greatest dramatist lived and worked. It is folly to put this at risk.”



### John Nettles

“Why doesn't the government incentivise people up and down the country to improve the eco-friendliness of existing homes, whilst building new sustainable homes in well-linked areas that need them, rather than foster Milton Keynes Mark II on rural communities by way of experiment?”



### Simon Jenkins

(Media Commentator)

“Eco-Towns are the greatest try-on in the history of property speculation.....The way to preserve the green of the countryside and maximise carbon efficiency of human habitation is to make today's cities work better. They are full of usable land. They have suffered enough insults from politicians for the past Century. Cities are the new green.”



### Peter Luff MP

“These eco-towns are a bright idea of Gordon Brown's but I'm very sceptical as to whether or not they will be genuinely environmentally friendly, or just a way of dumping more houses on rural England.”



### Rynd Smith

(Royal Town Planning Institute):

“If carbon-neutral developments are in areas where there are no public transport links, no jobs or services and nothing to do, however eco-friendly the buildings are everyone who lives there will spend most of their time behind the wheel of a car.”



### Mark Sullivan

(Campaign to Protect Rural England):

“Eco-towns are supposed to be new forms of development which minimise consumption of natural resources, including fuel and power, and thus carbon dioxide emissions. But they will never be self-sustaining, effective communities if they are sited in the wrong places.”



### John Maples MP

“I just don't think the proposed site is appropriate. It has terrible transport links and I don't believe it is environmentally-friendly in the way the Government claims. If the aim is to provide homes for Stratford residents, these will be people with jobs in Stratford who will end up driving to work and back from the new town.”

**Q. *What are these so-called Eco-Towns?***

- A. Eco-towns are a new Central Government initiative which 'are intended to be a combined response to three challenges: climate change, the need for more sustainable living and the need to increase housing supply.' 'Eco-towns must be new settlements, separate and distinct from existing towns, but well linked to them. They need to be additional to existing plans, with a minimum target of 5,000 homes.'

**Q. *How many Eco-Towns does the Government want to build and how are the sites chosen?***

- A. In April 2008 The Government announced a shortlist of 15 sites situated throughout the country, which included Long Marston (Middle Quinton). It is now calling for consultation responses on each of these sites by 30th June 2008, so that it can arrive at a final list of 10 locations. These ten 'successful' sites are likely to be announced in Autumn 2008. Given that the government has indicated that local residents' views are being sought, one inevitable factor in the selection process should be the perceived strength of local feeling.

**Q. *Why has Long Marston been chosen as a site for a possible Eco-Town?***

- A. We don't know why this site has been chosen. Development at this location will certainly be lucrative for St. Modwen, who own the ex - Ministry of Defence Central Engineer's Depot and local property developer Anthony Bird, who owns adjoining land, which would form a third of the new town. Central Government will also receive £millions as a result of claw-back clauses in the sales agreement with St Modwen. We fear this will be a flawed, but nonetheless compelling motivating factor for the government in its decision of preferred sites.

**Q. *Why is it being called Middle Quinton?***

- A. The site lies between Long Marston and Lower Quinton, south west of Stratford-Upon-Avon. The name 'Middle Quinton' appears to have come from a tongue in cheek remark, which seems to have stuck – there is no such place!

**Q. *Now that Stratford District and Wychavon District Councils have come out against the proposal won't that stop the development?***

- A. NO! The planning process once the 10 sites have been selected will be against the backdrop of a national policy statement specifically identifying the sites as eco-towns. It has also been suggested that the responsibility for scrutinising individual eco-town proposals will be taken away from local authorities and given to a national statutory body.



**Q. *What exactly is being proposed for the site?***

- A. On this mere 600-acre site, the current proposal is for at least 6,000 homes (the developers have indicated at least 40% of which will be 'affordable housing'). Developers have also promised schools, retail outlets, health care facilities, leisure facilities and public transport links. The Bard Campaign commissioned an urban designer who believes that the site is simply too small for all this development. It is the smallest of the 15 short-listed sites and under the developers' current plans would require 75 homes per hectare (akin to city centre density) compared to a current development average of 35 homes per hectare.

**Q. *What would the New Town do to local house prices?***

- A. We don't really know long term – but currently the housing market is slow and there are many new homes that have been built around Stratford that developers cannot sell. In the short term (15 - 20 years) we believe that the sheer volume of construction proposed will result in significantly increased volumes of HGV traffic delivering building materials. Some estimates are as high as 300,000 lorry journeys over the possible 10 year building phase. This is bound to depress house prices and wreck the quality of life in the neighbouring villages and surrounding area.

**Q. *Won't 40% affordable housing be good for the area?***

- A. Yes, the area does need more housing that young people can more readily purchase, but 2,400 'affordable' houses in one location is not the answer. A more appropriate solution would be to locate a few properties in each village throughout the district. This would mean that local young people could afford to live near their social and family network rather than having to relocate thousands of people from other districts - with no guarantee of employment and miles away from their family and friends.

**Q. *Where would the residents of 'Middle Quinton' work?***

- A. Despite claiming employment exemplar status, the developers seem to have overlooked the fact that the spatial constraints of a 600-acre site will directly impact on the number of intra-new town job opportunities. Common sense tells us that jobs will be found in the major employment centres of the region; Birmingham, Coventry, Leamington, Warwick or perhaps south to Oxford and London, most of which are more readily accessible by car.

**Q. *What about traffic chaos?***

- A. The construction of over 6,000 houses, schools, amenities etc will go on for years, causing significant congestion through the narrow streets of neighbouring towns and over the river crossings at Bidford upon Avon, Welford upon Avon and the vulnerable Clopton Bridge in Stratford as well as in the narrow country lanes closer to the site. Once the new town has been built there may be as many as 12,000 extra cars from new town residents travelling around the area. Although there have been suggestions that the new town will be largely car-free, previous experiments in car-free living suggest that this aim is doomed to failure as public transport is an inadequate alternative in rural areas. The road network surrounding this site in whichever direction you travel, whether it is to Stratford, Evesham, Birmingham or Oxford, is simply not good enough for this volume of additional traffic.

**Q. *We need new schools and more local public services – don't we?***

- A. The developers have stated that they will allocate £100 million to fund amenities and services, but there is no apparent guarantee from government that facilities will be built as promised. What's more, the £100 million figure is far too little to pay for all the developers' promises and there has been no indication of where additional money may be found. What is guaranteed is total disruption to our already overstretched schools, health centres etc as they try to cope with increased demand until any new facilities are built. Even a few years' disruption can have a huge impact on a generation's schooling and medical care for those in need. This site is made even more complex since it straddles two counties and abuts a third, thereby requiring local services administration by at least six local authorities.

**Q. *What will the development do to the local flooding risk?***

- A. In the past year the area has already been cut off due to local flooding – a 6,000+ housing development and accompanying facilities will significantly reduce the run-off capability of the surrounding area.

**Q. *If 6,000 homes are built at Long Marston won't that mean people in Stratford and elsewhere in the District will be safe from future development?***

- A. No! The Government is looking to place a great deal more housing in the West Midlands Region, although it has been reluctant to confirm exact figures. Local authorities like Stratford say the new development should be focussed in the urban conurbations like Birmingham and Solihull.

This has been the plan for many years and almost everyone agrees it is the right approach, as that is where the majority of jobs are located. However, local government also warns that there is a limit to how much new housing the conurbations can sustain.

It is clear that the New Town's 6,000+ houses would be in addition to the allocation of houses proposed for the District by government. So, if the new town is built, and the suggested bypass goes ahead, there is a significant possibility of development in the Shottery region of Stratford, as well as in the area directly surrounding the new town.

'Middle Quinton' may set in motion Stratford's submersion into a soulless urban sprawl. Other landowners are already getting 'in on the act' and have submitted proposals for a further 2,500 homes on the Long Marston Airfield.

**This new town could be just the thin end of the wedge.**

