

FIELDS

Nottingham County Council's plans to build on Regatta Way will tear the heart out of the Lady Bay Community

FIELDS is a group of local Lady Bay residents who, since 1989, have successfully opposed land development schemes by Nottingham County Council (NCC.) These have included a proposed leisure park and a fourth road bridge over the River Trent near Lady Bay, amongst others. If these plans had gone ahead, the green, open, low pollution area that is essential for everyone's mental and physical health, especially for children and young people, would have been lost, causing irreparable damage to the natural habitat and biodiversity that we all depend on.

We are now facing a new challenge to the community in an area of great importance to us. NCC is proposing to build a school campus along Regatta Way, West Bridgford NG2 5AT. This is designated green belt and flood plain land. It is an aggressive plan and is being rushed through by NCC in the absence of any consultation with local communities. NCC aims to submit the planning application in August 2021 to Rushcliffe Borough Council with a view to start building in January 2022, even though there is still extensive outstanding survey and design work to complete (to the tune of £980,000), let alone consultation with the affected communities. Despite this pre-emptive rush, however, this is by no means a done deal. We all have the opportunity to oppose the plan and there are many good reasons for doing so:



- The proposed site is currently open Green Belt. It needs to be protected, not nibbled away in the name of progress. This development is actually backward-looking to a previous era of new being seen as better. It goes against what we know to be good for us and for the environment. It will result in urban sprawl and the loss of distinctive local identities, and pose a risk to community cohesion because, once a single development has taken place on this land, NCC is likely to want to sell the adjacent land for development.
- The majority of the proposed site is within the functional flood plain of the River Trent. Flood plains protect the environment and local communities against river flooding, ground water and run off. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment suggests that up to 90% of the proposed site has a 1 in 20 annual chance of flooding. Indeed, the land on both sides of Regatta Way floods extensively, as do gardens and cellars in Lady Bay. Building, paving and tarmacking on this flood plan will significantly increase the risk of run off flooding to surrounding areas and houses.
- The current local access and transport infrastructure will not support the building of a school campus covering 7-10 hectares. It will result in diminished quality of life for residents, particularly children, due to increased traffic, noise, pollution and risk from cars. Trent Boulevard will no longer be quiet, pleasant and safe to cross. Lady Bay will likely become a "rat run" as drivers attempt to avoid the increase in traffic on the A52. Commuters will also be adversely affected by the presence of school transport getting the proposed 950 school children to the site (this represents a minimum 750 pupils plus 200 6th form pupils - the plans envisage expanding to 950 pupils and a 250 place 6th form).

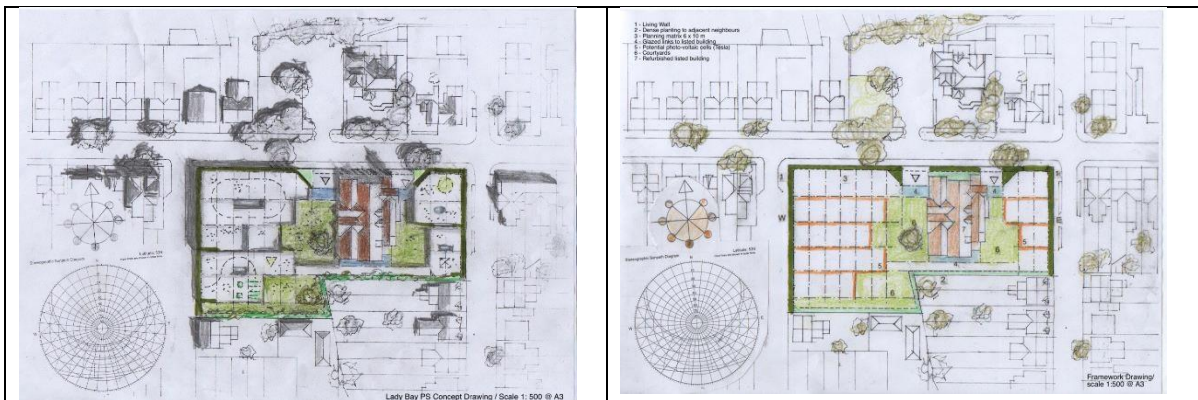
FIELDS wants all the land along Regatta Way to continue to be used for the well-being of everyone in the surrounding local communities. At present, land adjacent to the proposed site is used by Gedling Cricket Club, local riding stables and West Bridgford Colts (WBC). WBC is currently used by over 100 teams and

1,300 players of all ages and genders. The club has also been granted Asset of Community Value status following earlier threats of development in the immediate area.

We also believe that the NCC plans are simply not in the best interests of our children's education, and that Regatta Way is not the right location. We believe the NCC plans to be the easy, lazy option and an expression of same old thinking. The NCC already own the land so it requires no imagination and no new thinking. But we know that there are better, more creative and imaginative ways to provide the good schools we all want for our children in our post pandemic and climate threatened world.

For example, many Nottingham Council employees now work permanently from home so that office buildings and brown field sites can be repurposed and redeveloped for housing and secondary schools. There are many examples nationally of imaginative modifications to school buildings on urban sites, which provide high quality buildings and amenities for children.

And Lady Bay Primary School does not need to be relocated. It is at the heart of our community on its present site and must remain so. It is possible to maintain its listed status and still be re-imagined to create a truly sustainable group of buildings. We are imagining living walls and roofs and a series of stepped terraces facing south, on either side of the original building which would benefit from the sun and provide a protective frame to the Grade II listed building. FIELDS is developing this idea with the help of an architect member and we aim to be discussing this with the school governors and parents.



Concept drawings of modifications to Lady Bay School NB: These are not designs or plans

HAVE YOUR SAY about Nottingham County Council's proposals to build on green belt and flood plain. This is also your opportunity to KEEP LADY BAY PRIMARY SCHOOL AT THE HEART OF OUR COMMUNITY. Write to or email your councillors, MP Ruth Edwards and members of Nottingham County Council's Policy Committee (find it on Google) to express your views; keep checking Rushcliffe Borough Council's planning portal <https://planningon-line.rushcliffe.gov.uk/online-applications/> and also West Bridgford Wire for developments on this story. For more information on FIELDS, check out the FIELDS page on the Lady Bay website <https://www.ladybay.co.uk/fields.html>

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