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To: [REDACTED]; _WEB_Local Plan
Subject: Stroud District Local Plan Review - Emerging Strategy (11/18)
Categories: Consultation response

I outline below my responses to the consultation on the review, particularly from the Berkeley/Sharpness perspectives.

I did start to complete your survey document but gave up due to it's complexity and the need for detailed understanding of many areas. I have to say as someone who has been involved in putting together surveys in the past that this did not seem very well designed and could be seen as a deliberate attempt to make things difficult and deter individuals making responses. The underlying Strategic Document itself is also very complex with the many many references and links to other/previous documents that need to be opened. Given the topic and importance of the issues I feel that greater thought needed to be given to enabling the Strategy document to be able to read and reviewed on a 'standalone' basis - again it could be construed as another deliberate attempt to make things difficult and deter individuals making responses.

Before providing my responses let me say that I fully recognise the need for housing development across the district and the challenges in determining how best to meet these against the many different and competing views. Having read and considered as best I can all the issues, at the same time as trying to be dispassionate, I believe:

1. That the emerging strategy should principally be based on a combination of Option 2 - medium sized housing/development sites on the edge of larger villages/towns and option 3 - disperse across district with most villages having at least one small/medium site.
 - The current proposals have too many large proposed developments that are based on areas with limited existing infrastructure and very limited local employment opportunities or transport facilities. So most of these houses would be for individuals who will commute for work via cars to Bristol, Stroud, Gloucester or Cheltenham etc.
 - In addition at the same time there are many large villages with some local infrastructure that are not designated for any housing development at all.
 - So a greater dispersal of necessary development would be appropriate, fair and beneficial.
2. There are significant disconnects with previous reviews. In prior reviews the infrastructure and facilities of Sharpness and Berkeley have been generally described as being poor. There has also been previous recognition of the substantive flooding risks. Despite there being no changes to either aspects since the last reviews they are now designated as being good. How can that be, given there have been no changes/improvements?
 - So the underlying premise for the very significant/large scale developments is flawed.
 - Although there is scope for some proportionate small/medium sized development providing there is also some additional infrastructure and facility development alongside it.
3. In addition to 2 above, the envisaged large scale developments will have a substantial negative impact on existing communities. In terms of utilisation of existing facilities and change in character. The proposed additional total housing development of in excess of 2500 units will be more than double the existing housing stock which already more than fully utilises current facilities, and which already has transport/traffic issues particularly with regard to access to and traffic on the A38 and M5 junctions.
4. The A38 and M5 access and increased amount of traffic issues from the proposed additional large scale developments in the Berkeley and Sharpness areas cannot be considered in isolation. They need to take into account the very significant aggregate effects of the other large scale developments at the 'new town' development at Buckover/Thornbury and Wisloe/Cam. It seems unrealistic and unreasonable to have all these large scale developments in the same transport corridor with their knock on impacts and affects to each other.

So focusing on my local area in aggregate I do accept that Sharpness and Berkeley areas can accommodate, and indeed would benefit from, additional new small/medium sized housing developments but not at the very large scale numbers envisaged in the Strategic document. With associated proviso's that:

- there are real infrastructure and facility enhancements built/put in place on a phased approach as the new builds take place - not deferred to the end.
- that significant numbers are really built for affordable houses to buy or rent.

I look forward to hearing the results of the consultation process.

