

Woodchester Parish Council

Clerk: [REDACTED]

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Local Plan Review,
The Planning Strategy Team,
Stroud District Council,
Ebley Mill,
Westward Road,
Stroud,
Gloucestershire
GL5 4UB

22 January 2020

Dear Sir/Madam,

At a recent meeting of Woodchester Parish Council, Stroud District Council's latest Local Plan Review was discussed in some detail. Parish Councillors were in general agreement with the Plan's aims, objectives and policies as laid out in the document with particular reference to the need to meet the anticipated increase up to 2040 in the number of houses (including affordable homes) throughout the district and their locations in the sites potentially earmarked for development. While these locations meet most of the local and NPPF planning criteria for sustainability (including access to jobs and local facilities) councillors felt that transport issues had not been dealt with adequately. Whilst we understand that overall transport policy lies with the County rather than the District and some lip service is paid to the need for more cycling and walking, insufficient detail is given on the need for better connectivity in particular in maintaining and enhancing existing bus services and transport hubs - including re-opening closed stations and ensuring bus and train services are better linked so as to minimise heavy dependency on car use which the proposed new settlements would inevitably generate.

Councillors also felt that the impact on the Cotswolds as an AONB with a number of SSSIs was but vaguely addressed in the Plan especially as the boundary of the existing AONB runs close to a large section of Stroud District (including Woodchester). No reference is made to the potential proposal to include the Cotswolds as a National Park which could draw parts of Stroud District within its boundaries and have considerable implications for housing and transport in the whole area.

We note and accept the designations in the plan of North and South Woodchester being classified as tiers 3a and 4a in respect of access to facilities generally. We would respectfully point out that the piece of land in North Woodchester west of Lawns Park has again been identified in the latest version of the plan as suitable for limited housing growth, which our Council thought had been eliminated from consideration following our response to the previous consultation in which we pointed out the land in question was owned by a number of residents who were opposed to any further developments on this site which is subject to a covenant restricting building and has accessibility and drainage problems.

Councillors, while agreeing the document to be well intentioned and thorough had not addressed those issues we mention above in a sufficiently detailed manner.

We look forward to receiving the finally agreed version of the plan when it is published later this year.

Yours faithfully,

