



Mr [REDACTED]
Stroud District Council,
Ebley Mill,
Stroud

21st January 2020

Dear [REDACTED]

Local Plan

This Plan for a major development of a Garden Village of up to 6000 dwellings, plus commercial and industrial sites, in the Berkeley Vale is fundamentally flawed for the following main reasons:-

1. **Communications.** The road and rail connections are poor. The majority of traffic from the Berkeley Vale area will go south towards Bristol and the the junction of the M5 through which it would travel, Junction 14, is already at capacity. Furthermore the minor roads and the B4066 over which the traffic would have to go are inadequate for the volume, thus a new road and new motorway junction would be necessary.
There is a railway line near the proposed development, but it is single track and is not signalled, further more it only connects to the Northbound track at Berkeley Road, thus would be unable to easily meet the needs of most commuters. In addition it is understood that there is little capacity on the lines for additional trains, especially in the rush hours. To enable commuters to readily access Southbound services the existing line would need to be extended to rum parallel to the main line from Berkeley Road to terminate at Cam and Dursley the other side of the West platform. This would enable a shuttle service to be provided. However this would be a very expensive option as the line would need to pass under both the A38 and M5 roads.
Therefore, in order for this proposal to be acceptable large investments would need to be made in both the road and rail infrastructures, which would probably make it unviable.
2. **Employment.** The main employment areas are Gloucester and Bristol; this proposal is sited as far away from these as is possible to get within the Stroud District. The developers are proposing to allocate some 10 hectares of land for commercial purposes, but give no indication of any interest by potential employers willing to move there. Much land has been made available in nearby Sharpness for employment use for many years with little take up and that which has happened, provided mainly low skilled and thus lower paid jobs.

3. **Position.** The proposed site is bordered by the River Severn and therefore access is constrained to a 180 degree arc, whereas most development sites have a full 360 degree arc of access. This, therefore reduces the attractiveness of the site to many potential employers and home owners.
4. **Impact on Berkeley.** Clearly this proposal would have a massive impact on Berkeley as it would change a rural area into an urban one. The centre of gravity would move Northwards towards the new development and its commercial area, severely damaging the retail outlets in Berkeley.
5. **Strategy.** The Plan proposes to put around 80% of all of the housing in the Southern part of the Stroud District, whereas most of the employment is in the Northern half. This appears to be perverse as it would be a better strategy to put the housing nearer to the employment opportunities.
6. **Land Use.** The development will use good quality agriculture land, whereas the use of brownfield sites would be less detrimental, has this option been fully explored?

I would be grateful if you would bring this letter to the attention of the inspector at the appropriate time

Yours sincerely

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