

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 January 2020 13:01
To: _WEB_Local Plan
Subject: SDC Local Plan Review 2019

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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I would like to express my concerns on a number of issues contained within the SDC Local Plan Review 2019.

I do **not** support the Council's preferred strategy for meeting Stroud District's future growth and development needs. In line with previous consultations I would support a policy of dispersal of housing across smaller sites, especially in rural areas where large developments are likely to change to whole character of the district. I do not support concentrating development in two main areas (Cam/Wisloe and Sharpness/Newtown). These are both in the south of the district and away from the main areas of employment in Stroud and Gloucester. Enormous pressure would be put on the existing Motorway junctions 13 & 14 and the A38, A4135 and B4066, which already reach capacity at peak times. Add to this the possible developments in South Gloucestershire and you have a recipe for disaster. They would also destroy the essentially rural nature of these areas.

Regarding the proposed site at Wisloe, in Slimbridge parish, I would like to make the following points:

Agricultural Land

The land at Wisloe is classified by Natural England as Grade 2 – very good agricultural land which should not be built upon. Annually substantial crops are grown on these fields, the cultivation of which provide local employment and reduce food miles. The loss of this land would be to the detriment of the district which has always been and should remain a farming area.

Coalescence

To allow Wisloe to go ahead, together with the proposals for Cam/Draycott, some of which already have planning permission, would result in one continuous urban area from the eastern side of Dursley right through to the west of Slimbridge. The villages of Slimbridge and Cambridge together with the hamlets of Gossington, Tumpy Green etc. would lose their separate identities, which goes against all good planning practice. They would cease to be separate rural villages/hamlets and the whole character of the area would be changed.

Transport

Planning permission is already in place for a further 600 houses to be built in Cam/Draycott. If you add to that the 880 proposed for Cam/Draycott, 1500 at Wisloe and further development at Sharpness and in South Gloucestershire the current infrastructure will not be able to cope. It is recognised that these areas are dormitory sites, even in the developer's literature, with the majority of employment being in Gloucester, Stroud, Bristol or even across the river in South Wales. There would need to be significant improvements to the existing road network, a much larger car park for the station and updating of the motorway junctions 13 and 14. A more dispersed method of development would go some way to alleviate this issue. Page 14 of the Local Plan states that one of the Priority Issues is "*Ensuring new housing development is located in the right place, supported by the right services and infrastructure*" and furthermore on Page 15 it states the need to address "*the high level of daily commuting out of and into the District, particularly out commuting to Bristol, Gloucester, Cheltenham and Swindon*" Neither of these aims would be fulfilled.

Conservation

The land at Wisloe is home to much flora and fauna – several birds on the British Trust or Ornithology's Red Data List have been seen, by me, on this land including Lapwing, Skylark, Song Thrush, Fieldfare, Redwing and House Sparrow. It is an important home for these birds and is also used by many en route for the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust at Slimbridge. This important habitat should be preserved by remaining as open fields and not be built upon.

Pollution and Noise

The impact of the vastly increased volume of traffic on the M5, A38 and A4135 will result high levels of both noise and pollution which are likely to be above the permitted levels – it is hard to see how this can be avoided. There will be queues of slow moving traffic at a number of key junctions both in the Slimbridge/Cam area and at Berkeley/Sharpness. This would be completely at odds with the Council's intention to be carbon neutral by 2030.

Flooding and Drainage

It is well known that Slimbridge has had major issues with sewage in recent years and whilst work has been done to improve this by Severn Trent Water, it would seem that significant investment would be needed to ensure that the additional houses would not have problems of their own or impact on the existing system. Furthermore the water table is very close to the surface here and persistent rainfall results in surface water and full ditches – where would all this go?

I feel that brown field sites should be used for development whenever possible together with a more dispersed approach, especially in rural areas. It would seem more appropriate to build houses nearer employment and existing urban areas such as those proposed for South of Hardwicke and Hunts Grove.

Consequently I object to the proposal to build at Wisloe and look forward to it being removed from the Local Plan.

