

21st Jan 2020



Ref: Stroud District Local Plan review:

I would like to comment and provide feedback on the Stroud District Local Plan.

Firstly I **do not** support the Wisloe Development and the councils preferred strategy for meeting the districts future growth and development needs. Whilst understanding the requirements and issues that need to be addressed, not least to provide additional housing, the approach seems only to make life simpler for the council planners, opportunistic for landowners and a mass production approach for developers through larger, sprawling and inappropriate developments that will spoil the area for those who live, work and visit it.

The fad of “Garden Villages” is misleading by name and seem to be being proven to be misguided and rejected already in other areas / by other councils (recent news articles). In reality the Wisloe and Sharpness developments are far too large and dwarf existing communities and merge current separate communities into large sprawling and characterless settlements.

The council must not enforce a disproportionate amount of development in one area i.e. the south of their district (Wisloe and Sharpness) but honour the previous views from feedback from consultations that the preferred way to achieve the housing requirements is through fairly apportioned dispersal across the whole of the council district.

I would also add the following additional comments focusing on the Wisloe development:

1. The land proposed for development has for many years been high quality agricultural land and as such is currently used by local farmers. This land is not unproductive and should not be considered for development, likely against the wishes of the current tenant farmers. I would also question the integrity of the recent downgrading of this land requesting additional further independent assessments are undertaken.
2. There is also lot of wild life whose habitat is this land, in particular a number of rare species. This habitat must not be destroyed. A further impact would also be on the views, including from the key local AONB across the Severn Vale.
3. The area is also currently designated as a rural district and a development of this size and scale will destroy this, the current local communities and those that live here.
4. Local residents already have high levels of noise levels from a combination of the M5, A38 and railway and further development, with associated traffic, particularly of this size will significantly increase this noise pollution. Additionally there will be significant increases in air pollution levels, with increased traffic along with the impact on the traffic congestion levels that are already high in peak periods.
5. Building a large new development increases the need for significant new infrastructure, where as a disbursement approach will enable much more utilisation of existing infrastructure already in place across the full council area. The only main argument in favour is the existing Cam & Dursley rail station, however, as we know a very small percentage of commuters use the railway. Recognising that a development of this size will mean insufficient local jobs, most will need to commute to cities like Bristol, Cheltenham or Stroud

and therefore significant congestion and pollution through increased and slow moving traffic.

6. The area is subject to drainage issues and flood risks. Any further major development would significantly increase these issues and risks to all.

With Wisloe a new proposal from the original Local Plan consultation in 2017, it would suggest that the council has not approached its selection in a full and proper process. This is evident by the level and number of serious and genuine concerns.

I therefore hope the council takes note of the comments and concerns detailed here, that it listens to those who live and know the area well and acts to rethink completely this inappropriate Local Plan.

Please do not spoil our area and our existing communities.

Yours sincerely

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