

Date: 22 Jan 2020
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Dear Sir or Madam,

**Representation for the Stroud District Draft Plan (November 2019)
Land to the North of Folly Lane, Stroud**

This representation has been put forward to illustrate why Land to the North of Folly Lane, Stroud should be included as a proposed housing allocation in the upcoming publication plan (Reg. 19 consultation), expected in Autumn 2020.

The site has previously been submitted to the SHLAA in 2010 however it was removed during the 2011 review by the submitter. It was therefore not assessed, and no comments were given on the potential suitability of the site.

The parcel of land measures circa 11.1 hectares (27.4 acres). At standard densities the site can accommodate 340 dwellings however, the site has some physical constraints which would reduce this number. The main physical constraint the site faces is its gradient which increases towards the north eastern corner. The site is also located within the Cotswold AONB and therefore the design and layout of the site would need to be sympathetic towards this. The site is completely located within flood zone 1 and therefore has a low probability of flooding.

Stroud District Local Plan Policies Map shows that the site is located directly adjacent to the Settlement Development Limit for circa 450m of its western and southern boundaries.

The Policies Map also shows the site is only circa 750m from the Principle Town Centre Boundary. This is classed as a walkable neighbourhood (10 mins or 800m) in Manual for Streets. There are several bus stops located directly adjacent to the site boundary which provide access to Stroud town centre in 4 minutes. This in turn provides access to the wider public transport network such as further buses to surrounding larger settlements such as Gloucester and Cheltenham and the train station which has a direct service to London Paddington. It is therefore considered that the site is



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located in a sustainable location which would allow residents of any potential development easy access to local facilities.

The adopted Stroud District Local Plan (2015) states the Stroud is a Tier 1 Settlement and therefore it should be a “primary focus for growth and development to safeguard and enhance their strategic roles as employment and service centres”. The site has been retained as a Tier 1 settlement in the Local Plan Review.

Stroud currently has only 265 dwellings allocated over four sites in the emerging plan. Given it is the largest settlement in the district and one of the principle settlements this is not considered to be sufficient. Cam, another Tier 1 settlement, has a total of 895 dwellings proposed in draft allocations and Stonehouse has a total of 700 dwellings in addition to 15ha of employment space.

It is noted that the topography and landscape constraints surrounding Stroud make it more difficult to accommodate very high numbers of dwellings, however 265 dwellings is a very low number for a settlement of this size and importance in the district.

All the allocated sites currently in Stroud are brownfield. This will mean that remediation costs for the sites will be much higher than if they were greenfield. This will therefore likely mean that the sites will potentially not be viable to provide the required percentage of affordable housing. As the subject site is greenfield with minimal constraints it would be able to provide a high percentage of affordable housing to contribute towards the need for the area. Stroud currently has one of the highest percentages of social rented homes in the district, at 18.6%, and therefore providing sufficient affordable housing on new sites is essential.

Stroud is one of the most affordable areas in the district with average housing prices of £245,034 compared to the average housing price for Gloucestershire of £298,441. It is therefore important to provide new development in this area to provide people who wish to live in the district an affordable choice.

Much of the housing which has been allocated within the emerging plan is at Sharpness, with circa 2770 dwellings proposed by 2031 and an additional 5000 dwelling proposed by 2050. This is likely to be unviable due to the current lack of infrastructure and facilities in this area. Allocating so many houses in one area will produce slow delivery and build out rates in comparison to allocations which are more spread out over various sites. There is also more of a risk, if the allocation were to fall out of the plan, the Council would be left with a large deficit of reserve housing sites to find.

The following desktop appraisal for Land to the North of Folly Road sets out any potential constraints to the site:

Heritage

The nearest heritage asset is Hawkwood College (1222649) which is Grade II listed and located circa 195 metres from the nearest point of the site's boundary. It is considered that a large buffer is in place between the asset and the site because of a woodland and the local topography separating the two and as a result the site is a satisfactory distance away not to impact this asset.

Landscape

The site is located within the Cotswold AONB and therefore a sensitive design would need to be [REDACTED] the site in order to not adversely affect the setting. Much of the higher land would [REDACTED] due to its steeper gradient. Therefore, the majority of the development would [REDACTED] line with the current built line of development.

Ecology

The majority of the site is grassland with limited ecological value. There is an area of woodland to the north of the site measuring 0.25 hectares which has the prospect to provide some ecological value and would be retained in the event of any development on site. There are also trees along the northern and eastern boundaries of the site and hedgerow along the southern boundary. Although a small area of hedgerow may need to be removed to provide a second access the remainder will be retained and the areas of trees along the borders enhanced to provide maximum ecological improvements.

Access

There is currently a wide gated access in the southern corner of the site. This access has good visibility in both directions. Dependent on the amount of development on site there is the potential to provide another access further along Folly Lane to the north.

There is a Public Right of Way, known as Stroud Footpath 43, which runs along the eastern boundary of the site.

Drainage

Environment Agency Flood Risk mapping for land-use planning, indicates that the site is located in a Flood Risk Zone 1. This indicates that the overall site has a low probability of flooding (less than 1 in 1,000 annual probability of river flooding) and can be developed.

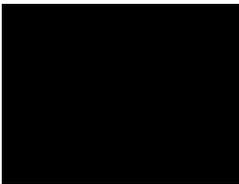
Miscellaneous

There is currently a power line crossing the site running from north to south. This could either be redirected or an easement left around it in the event the site was developed.

Summary

In considering the above, there would appear to be no overriding physical constraints or potential impacts preventing sensitively located development for a medium to large scale housing scheme. Bruton Knowles would like to express that the site is under single ownership and that it is immediately available and deliverable over the next 5 years.

Yours sincerely,



Planner