

CONSULTATION RESPONSE TO STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL'S DRAFT LOCAL PLAN  
CONSULTATION, NOVEMBER 2019, FROM HAMFALLOW PARISH COUNCIL

1. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on your latest version of the Stroud District Draft Local Plan. Hamfallow Councillors have attended the exhibitions and discussions that have been arranged by yourselves and by Ridge, the developer of the proposals for new housing in our area. We have also attended meetings of the local action group, BASRAG, to gauge public opinion on your Plan.
2. In this regard, we would also point out that in our last joint **Hamfallow/Hinton Parish Plan**, on which we consulted parishioners, **less than 2% of respondents favoured clusters of over 100 houses in their parish**. As a result, our parishes committed in that Plan to fight large scale developments and to push for sizeable starter/affordable home components in any developments that do take place.
3. Please note that we also commented on the earlier "Emerging Strategy" a year ago and we are very disappointed not to have received any response to the detailed comments we made (attached for ease of reference). None of the concerns we expressed have been addressed in the current draft Plan and so all our earlier comments still apply as comments on the current draft plan. **We would like to have proper responses to the issues raised below, and those in our previous response, within 28 days of the close of this consultation.**
4. We are very disappointed that the essentials of the new Plan seem almost the same as the previous version we criticised, as in point 3 above.
5. However, we now see that at this very late stage it is proposed to double the size of the development by 2050, to 5000 houses in total. This was not made clear in the previous "Emerging Strategy" and we believe it is an abuse of the planning and consultation process to introduce such a major extension to the proposals at this late stage.
6. We are concerned about the apparent willingness of the owners of the Focus School (PS 35) to sell this land for development. Many of our older local residents feel that this is a misuse of land that they were promised would either be a community school or be returned to agricultural use if no longer required. Please could you confirm the legal agreements at the time the original secondary school was built and at the time of sale to the Focus School.
7. We now understand from discussions with the developers that they do not intend to provide any additional capacity for cars and so they see no need for the Berkeley bypass to be completed. See points 7 and 8 of our previous response for our views and objections on this.
8. The developers have also stated that they do not intend to provide electric car charging points for every dwelling. However, we observe that in a recent consultation Government has proposed provision for charging points should be made in all future residential developments and this is likely to be a legal requirement in the near future. It seems to us short sighted not to plan for this now.

9. The developers have been talking about using the old railway line and providing bus services and this is mentioned in the draft Plan. How will these be guaranteed? We also note that rail services to Cam and Gloucester are mentioned, when the main target for commuters is, and is likely to remain, Bristol. How will this be facilitated? We would be interested to see some example timetables for the major routes.
10. We note that there is no mention of the interactions, in terms of the inevitably increased road traffic, with the plans of South Gloucestershire Council. What consideration has been given in general to interactions with neighbouring authorities development proposals and what and mitigation measures are being planned?
11. Another concern we have is for how this proposal will affect Berkeley town. Although outside our parish, it is the centre for many activities for Hamfallow parishioners. So we would like to know what plans there are to improve Berkeley town centre and integrate it with this development.
12. Regarding development of infrastructure generally, including schools and community facilities as well as transport, we are concerned about partial development going ahead without the corresponding and promised infrastructure. Therefore, we wish to see a detailed timetable of exactly when each element of infrastructure is to be provided, both in time and relative to number of houses built.
13. A major feature of your Plan is increased local employment, through which you appear to justify not providing sufficient infrastructure for cars. On page 39 of the development consortium's prospectus we see the statement: *'market signals have indicated that this is an attractive location for business growth due to its accessible location as well as being flat, serviceable land.'* We see no evidence of a significant demand from businesses to invest in the area, apart from large/ low employment warehousing at Sharpness. Indeed, we would point out that in your 2011 "Potential locations for strategic growth" document, you questioned the viability of increased employment in the Sharpness area, in the following words: *'Very little market demand for employment development in this location: land has been allocated here... for more than 30 years and development has yet to happen.'* That latter statement certainly reflects our local knowledge and experience. What do you feel has changed to justify the developer's optimism now?
14. In the draft Plan on page 119, you refer to the national "Garden City Principles." However, at all other points in the plan you describe the Berkeley/Sharpness proposals as a "garden community" or "garden village." This is an obviously and intentionally misleading description of a development of 5000 dwellings and is, in our view, a clear abuse of the public information and consultation process. We believe that you should issue a correction to the Plan and an apology to consultees.
15. **In summary, we believe that this draft Local Plan is intentionally misleading regarding the proposed development of Berkeley/Sharpness, that it has been produced by a flawed consultation process, which has not responded to points made by consultees throughout the process, has not justified the proposal and that the assumptions made on**

**employment and transport are plainly wrong.** That said, our Council remains willing to consider sensible, realistic and proportionate housing development in this area.

- 16.** We request that a copy of this and our earlier response are provided to any Planning Inspector that may be appointed to review the Plan.

Hamfallow Parish Council  
January 2020