

Of the top 5 key issues quoted in the emerging strategy paper , the first states:

Ensuring that new housing development is located in the right place, supported by the right services and infrastructure to create sustainable development.

I fail to see how the Berkeley cluster plan meets any of these issues.

Conserving and enhancing Stroud District's countryside and biodiversity, including maximising the potential for a green infrastructure network across the District.

Building 2400 houses in one area that is currently green fields cannot meet this second key issue. Rather than enhance the countryside and biodiversity I can only surmise that building this enormous quantity of houses will destroy what is currently undisturbed farmland that has supported a wide range of flora and fauna through centuries. The pure scale of this development no matter what "green networks" might be envisaged by planners cannot possibly *enhance* the countryside. Destroying hedgerows, chopping down trees and covering over land with concrete and tarmac will destroy habitat for thousands of animals and invertebrates and have a detrimental effect on biodiversity

Maximising the potential of brownfield and underused sites to contribute to housing supply.

I think that the vast majority if not all of the identified area in the Berkeley cluster is virgin green fields...Another key issue not met.

Developing strategies to avoid, reduce and mitigate the indirect impacts of development on the natural environment.

With a planned development of this scale it would be impossible to meet this key issue in any significant manner. I am sure that there may be included in plans *green corridors* and *green areas* but the reality of this huge development would see an equally if not disproportionately huge decline in the natural environment.

Tackling the acute lack of affordable housing in the District

As far as I am aware the proposed plan is for 1500 houses to be affordable. I am not exactly sure what is meant by affordable but one definition I have heard is that it is 80% of market value. If this is the case there will be very few young local people who would stand a chance of being able to afford any of the current new development 3 bedroom houses being marketed in Berkeley. I believe that it is frequently the case that the developer may say they will provide a set number of "affordable " houses but that this number is often reduced as the developer will say they cannot afford to provide the total agreed number of houses unless they reduce the number of affordable homes.

New garden village community proposed would in effect join Sharpness and Berkeley. In my view this 20 year project would undo the thousands of years of cultural identity that has existed in the area. The peace and tranquillity of the area would be lost. There are various references to the increase in leisure and tourism for the area. I wonder how many people will want to visit an enormous housing estate because that is what is envisaged under the guise of a "garden village community". Newtown, Brookend and Sharpness may be considered villages . I find calling a 2400 housing development a village disingenuous.

I do not feel that there is adequate infrastructure. There is very little employment currently and I do not envisage a large increase in employment in the future that could in any way meet the needs of this planned "village" . Most people would be commuting to the larger urban areas of Gloucester

and Bristol. How the junctions on to the motorway would cope does not bear thinking about, let alone the few local roads in and out of the area. There is the added issue of the bottleneck at Almondsbury with the expected increase in traffic coming from Wales since the tolls on the Severn bridge have been abolished.

Access to key services and facilities in both Berkeley and Sharpness/Newtown are described as good. I have heard that up to 2017 access in Berkeley was rated as poor and in Sharpness/Newtown as very poor. If I am correct in this I can find no justification for the change in rating.

I do not believe that this level of housing is proportionate to the needs of the area. I do not feel that an enormous housing estate joining Berkeley and Sharpness together has really considered interests of the current populations in these areas and villages. I think it will be detrimental to the current population, I do not think it meets any of the key issues stated above. I do not think it is sustainable. I think that this scale of development may have a negative impact of the local businesses in Berkeley. It is highly likely that the planned estate would serve as commuter land and people would shop elsewhere. The air quality would worsen due to traffic; potential carbon neutral homes – a good selling point – can hardly be considered beneficial for the environment when people are commuting long distances to work in ever increasing traffic jams.

Then there is the flood plain. I am aware of the government's dedication to building houses . Of course the area can cope with some building and it has already begun. This proposal is not proportionate or sustainable . This plan is wanting to change the essence of the area completely into another Quedgeley. Berkeley is a small market town. Sharpness is a dock area with a small community of locals; Brookend is a village. I do not feel it is possible to increase the number of houses threefold without causing untold damage to its current inhabitants. The good access to facilities A GP surgery that recently had only one GP and now advises people who need urgent attention to go to Dursley, no secondary school, primary schools that are full; KLB school saying it won't accept pupils from Berkeley in a couple of years as it will have no room, no hospital..... How this "good" access to facilities would cope with a further 3000 houses in the area is not easy to imagine. I really hope that the council reconsiders this strategy and takes into account this proud area and can make a plan that is more in keeping and proportionate to the area, its current infrastructure and the needs of the present community.