

Rodborough response to Stroud District Local Plan Review

Rodborough Parish Council would like to see Option E progressed, with intensification within the existing settlement areas, a coordinated approach to bringing Brownfield sites into use and a new and determined effort to reflect the acknowledged Climate Emergency by insisting on housing with fewer (or no) car spaces and a strategic plan for fully separated cycle paths to connect all intended new housing, community facilities and commercial sites. Taken together, this would allow a greater density of housing, with more of it being affordable. Recent permitted developments have poor connectivity to sustainable transport modes e.g. Rooksmoor Mill (two flights of stairs to access the adjacent cycle path) and Aldi (no access at all to this path).

Rationale: developers have been extraordinarily reluctant to develop difficult Brownfield sites in Rodborough, such as the Daniels site (BR019), site on the north side of Dudbridge Hill (BR074) and the two sites at the top of Dudbridge Hill (BR050 and BR052) or those immediately adjacent to our parish like Cheapside (BR056) or Ham Mill (BR071). Many of these featured in SDC's last Local Plan as sites with permission for housing but have remained undeveloped since. These all have established community and transport infrastructure, and many are close to the centre of Stroud or easily reached by sustainable transport means. They are far more suited to a higher density of housing with a greater proportion of energy-efficient social housing, which Rodborough needs in order to address diminished council house stock due to 'Right-To-Buy' losses in Lightpill and Kingscourt since the 1980s. Without any element of compulsion or central direction, we will continue to see Greenfield land such as at Grove End Farm, Whitminster and at Morton Valence/Hardwicke, being consumed at the expense of available Brownfield and an ever greater urban sprawl making residents more reluctant to switch from private cars to sustainable transport.

Furthermore, Rodborough's Climate Change Working Group has noted that sections of the proposed Hardwicke growth point (HAR015/016/006) would seem to be directly in line with the fall-out from the incinerator chimney as identified in wind-direction research prior to its construction.