



Stroud District Council is starting the process of reviewing the current Local Plan. This consultation is seeking views about the range of issues that the next Local Plan will need to tackle, and options for addressing them. This includes the identification of potential areas for growth and development. We ask a series of questions throughout the consultation document (each of which is numbered). Please refer to the question number and/or topic in your response, where relevant.

You can download a PDF or an editable electronic copy of this form from our website www.stroud.gov.uk/localplanreview. You will also find the main consultation document on this web page, as well as some supporting material and further reading. **Please note: there is a separate form for you to fill out if your comment relates specifically to a site submission / proposed alternative site (Local Plan Review: Call for Sites).**

The consultation closes on Tuesday 5th December 2017. Please email completed electronic responses to local.plan@stroud.gov.uk or post paper copies to **Local Plan Review, The Planning Strategy Team, Stroud District Council, Ebley Mill, Westward Road, Stroud, GL5 4UB**. Should you have any queries, the Planning Strategy Team can be contacted on 01453 754143.

Consultation response form PART A

Your details

Thank you for taking part. Please fill out your personal information in PART A. Your contact details will not be made public and won't be used for any purpose other than this consultation. We will not accept anonymous responses. Your comments may be summarised when we report the findings of this consultation.

Your name

(title): <input type="text"/>	name: <input type="text"/>
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Your company name or organisation (if applicable)

Your address (optional)

Your email address *

Your phone number (optional)

If you are acting on behalf of a client, please supply the following details:

Your client's name

(title): <input type="text"/>	name: <input type="text"/>
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Your client's company or organisation (if applicable)

Keeping you updated:

Would you like to be notified of future progress on the Local Plan review? (* we will do this via email)

- | | | | | | |
|------|--|------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|
| i) | When the findings from this consultation are made public | Yes please | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No thanks | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ii) | The next formal round of public consultation | Yes please | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No thanks | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| iii) | No further contact please | | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

Consultation response form PART B:

If you have several different comments to make, you may wish to use a separate PART B sheet for each one (although you do not have to). If you use multiple PART B sheets, please make sure you fill in your name on each of them (you only have to fill out PART A once, as long as it is clearly attached to your PART B sheets when you submit the forms to us).

Your name

Your organisation or company

Your client's name/organisation
(if applicable)

The consultation is seeking views about whether the big issues identified within this paper are the right things to focus on and what options exist for tackling them. Are there other issues, options or opportunities that have been missed? **Please note: there is a separate form for you to fill out if your comment relates specifically to a site submission / proposed alternative site (download a copy of the sites form at www.stroud.gov.uk/localplanreview).**

We ask a series of questions (highlighted in pink boxes) throughout the consultation paper. Each of the questions is numbered. Please can you reference the question number(s) and/or the topic here:

Question number:

Please use this box to set out your comments:

(Attach additional sheets of paper or expand this box if you need to)

Please see response and copy of Stonehouse Neighbourhood Plan Vision and Objectives attached.

Stonehouse Town Council response to Stroud District Local plan review: Issues and Options 2017

Which issues relating to the places you live, work or visit in Stroud District are of particular concern to you today?

The five themes of Stonehouse Neighbourhood Plan (amenities and facilities, travel and transport, housing, employment and environment) reflect the concerns of Stonehouse residents as raised during consultation for the Neighbourhood Plan. The Vision and Objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan (attached) give an overall aim and detailed objectives for each theme.

Are there matters that are likely to grow in importance over the next 20 years?

- Pressure on infrastructure and facilities from West of Stonehouse.
- Lack of easy links between West of Stonehouse and existing town.
- Traffic and transport: need for modal shift in transport, need for new station at Bristol Road Stonehouse.
- Pressures threatening High Street vitality.
- Ageing population.
- Affordability of service provision within a constrained development parish boundary which is largely given over to employment land

What are the options for addressing them?

The planning policies in Stonehouse Neighbourhood Plan attempt to address some of the issues of current and future concern to residents. It is important that the District Council takes account of Stonehouse Neighbourhood Plan and the other emerging and made Plans in the District when carrying out the local plan review.

The re-opening of Bristol Road Station was the most popular suggestion during consultation for the Stonehouse Neighbourhood Plan and is supported by Stonehouse Town Council. A new station in Stonehouse on the Bristol to Gloucester line would help achieve a modal shift in transport, ease congestion, be popular with existing employers and employees in the area, have a positive impact on the environment and assist with the economic viability of the town. The Local Plan could contribute to achieving this aim by safeguarding land for railway use and taking account of the need for developer contributions to this project.

There should be a parish boundary review prior to a new Local Plan.

1. Key Issues

Question 1.0a

What are your priorities for Stroud District? Can you list your top 5 issues, challenges or concerns for the next Local Plan? You could pick five from our list of 40... Or tell us if we have missed something.

Priorities for Stonehouse are summarised in the Vision and Objectives for the Stonehouse Neighbourhood Plan (copy attached).

Question 1.0b

Do you have ideas and suggestions for how the Local Plan might tackle particular issues?

Stonehouse Neighbourhood Plan has 29 detailed planning policies based on issues raised during public consultation which if implemented during the planning process could tackle some issues.

2. Needs

Local Economy and jobs

Question 2.1b

Do you think there is a need for further employment land allocations? If yes what types of premises are required and where should they be located?

Consultation and research undertaken for the Neighbourhood Plan indicated that there is a need for employment space for small and start-up businesses.

Question 2.1d

Should there be increased flexibility to allow other job generating uses on all employment sites or would this limit the options for those companies operating in the B classes? Should increased flexibility be allowed only on some sites? Please specify any sites where a more flexible approach could be taken. Alternatively, a percentage threshold, in terms of units or site floorspace, could be identified for non B class employment uses, which might help to provide services to other businesses?

As Stonehouse has a large amount of employment sites, there is room for some flexibility to allow “job generating” uses and to ensure re-use of empty buildings. There should be some limit to this flexibility which could be partly based on occupancy rates on an employment site and the length and results of attempts to market a property for Class B use.

2.2 Our Town Centres

Question 2.2

Do you agree with the options set out for improving our town centres? Have we missed any important options? What do you consider to be the most important actions to undertake?

We support the options for improving town centres outlined on p14 of the Issues and Options Consultation paper and the specific options for Stonehouse outlined on p.16 of the paper. In addition, Stonehouse Town Council suggest the appointment of a Town Centre Manager/Marketing Officer, possibly jointly funded, with a District wide remit. The establishment of Chambers of Trade/Commerce should be supported.

2.3 A Local need for housing

Question 2.3a

Tell us about housing needs and opportunities in your area:

Does your neighbourhood provide opportunities for local people to access the housing market, bearing in mind the growing gap between local incomes and house prices?

Are there opportunities in your area for households to rent reasonably-priced properties?

Are younger people in your neighbourhood able to access housing without moving elsewhere?

If older people in your neighbourhood wished to downsize to smaller, more suitable properties in the area, are these opportunities likely to exist?

Would individuals or small groups be able to locate suitable land for self-build projects in the neighbourhood?

Do you know of other unmet housing needs in your neighbourhood?

Research undertaken for the Stonehouse Neighbourhood Plan showed that there is a particular need for housing for the elderly in Stonehouse and for affordable housing. Stonehouse Neighbourhood Plan Policy H1: Local Needs Housing (Dwelling Size and Type) reflects these identified housing needs. Stonehouse Town Council suggest that the review of the Local Plan is an opportunity to require developers to provide a higher percentage of affordable housing given the need throughout the district.

Stonehouse's retirement age adults are predicted to have by far the largest increase in population of any age group up until 2031 (from 1,281 at the 2011 census projected to rise by 848 to around 2,129 by 2031) ([Stroud District Settlement Role and Function Study December 2014](#)). Therefore there is likely to be a need for additional housing that meets the needs of this population group. Stonehouse

is an attractive location for elderly people or people with disabilities as the Parish is mainly level with a comprehensive range of services and shops.

Although Stonehouse has a higher proportion of social housing than the District as a whole, there is still a need for affordable housing given the limited availability of rented property and the high affordability ratio for those looking to buy property.

Affordability is an issue for people looking to buy or rent in Stonehouse. Research carried out to inform the development of the Neighbourhood Plan showed that there was a limited availability of properties to rent privately and to afford the cheapest property available a tenant would need to have an above average salary. For people looking to buy a property, despite a relatively wide availability the affordability ratio was still extremely high requiring above average salaries plus a considerable deposit ([Stonehouse Housing Report, Gloucestershire Rural Community Council \(GRCC\), July 2015](#))

Demand for affordable housing was identified during consultation for the Plan.

Evidence relating to housing is summarised in [Stonehouse NDP housing and population evidence \(May 2016\)](#).

Question 2.3b

Do you think that local housing need surveys should also be used to influence the housing mix on local for-sale housing sites?

Yes.

Question 2.3c

Do you know of any suitable land for development to meet the housing needs of your neighbourhood, or do you have suggestions about how or where these needs might be met?

Stonehouse Town Council submitted two sites to the recent SALA.

2.4 Local green spaces and community facilities

Question 2.4a

Does your neighbourhood lack a particular form of community facility, open space or sports facility? If so we would like to know about that need.

The need for larger community space for local events, celebrations etc was identified during Neighbourhood Plan consultation. Additional sporting facilities would also be welcomed by residents of Stonehouse.

Question 2.4b

Are there existing facilities or local spaces that you consider important for protection? If so please tell us and explain why they are of particular importance.

Five Local Green Space sites set to be designated by Stonehouse Neighbourhood Plan. Green recreation spaces within the town, its rural setting and easy access to countryside and canal were all identified as positive attributes of Stonehouse which should be maintained and enhanced during NP consultation.

3. Future Growth Strategy

Question 3.1

How should we meet future development needs?

Option 1: Continue to concentrate housing and employment development at a few large sites

located adjacent to the main towns in the district

Option 2: Take a more dispersed approach with some medium sized housing and employment sites on the edge of the larger villages, as well as towns

Option 3: Disperse development across the district with most villages including at least one small to medium site allocated to meet local needs

Option 4: Identify a growth point in the district to include significant growth, either as an expansion of an existing settlement, or to create a new settlement

Option 5: Do you have an alternative strategy option that you would like us to consider?

Do you have a preferred option? Or would some combination of these approaches be the best way to meet our future needs? Please explain why.

Existing Neighbourhood Plan policies across the district must be taken into account when drawing up a future growth strategy.

3.3 South of the District

Question 3.3a

We welcome views on whether there are opportunities to improve transport links between areas within Stroud District and South Gloucestershire, Bristol and beyond; or to provide new local services; and what development within the District might be appropriate to deliver these.

The Stonehouse area would also benefit from improved transport links to South Gloucestershire and Bristol; the re-opening of Bristol Road station in Stonehouse is supported by Stonehouse Town Council and was strongly supported during consultation for the Neighbourhood Plan.

3.4 Our towns and villages | Settlement boundaries

Question 3.5a

How should development proposals on the edges of our towns and villages be managed?

Option 1: Continue with existing settlement development limits amended as necessary

Option 2: Assess proposals on a case by case basis using broader criteria (e.g. landscape impact; form of settlement, proximity to services, etc.)

Option 3: Continue with settlement development limits but expand the types of development that are allowed beyond them in the countryside

Option 4: Do you have an alternative approach that you would like us to consider? You may have suggestions for minor changes to existing settlement development limits either to prevent unsuitable development or to allow for some limited development to create a better edge to a town or village.

Option 4: Boundary changes which offer scope for development will offer an opportunity for expansion and preservation of services and would avoid the development of important green spaces within the parish

3.5 Our towns and villages | Broad locations and potential sites

(Stonehouse Cluster is on p44-47 of Issues and Options paper)

Question 3.6

Read through the settlement summaries over the following pages and tell us whether you agree with the potential broad locations for growth, if future housing, employment or community facilities are needed. Where more than one location is identified you can tell us which is the best option.

You may identify an alternative or additional location or site by indicating so on a map.

You may also identify broad locations or sites at smaller villages that you think are appropriate for some development.

In all cases, please specify whether the site is appropriate for housing, employment, retail and/or community uses including open space.

It is important to safeguard land in the Local Plan to provide parking and other facilities for Bristol Road station.



Our Vision for Stonehouse

Over the next 15 years the strong, friendly community of Stonehouse will continue to develop as a distinctive, thriving town set in beautiful countryside with excellent transport links and employment opportunities.

Objectives:

Housing Development

In order to retain strong family and community ties we will support a mix of housing types to support our future requirement and meet the needs of all ages, income and varied needs.

In particular we will support:

- Housing appropriate for older people and those with accessibility issues
- Smaller units – catering for single people, single parents and those wishing to downsize
- Housing that is less expensive to buy/rent and to run
- Energy efficient buildings

Getting around

Our goal is an accessible Stonehouse where people can get around easily and conveniently by foot, mobility scooter, bicycle, public transport and private motorised transport, encouraging more sustainable travel and a consequent reduction in traffic congestion.

In order to achieve this goal we will need to:

- Support safe and convenient routes for pedestrians (including for the less able bodied), wheelchairs, pushchairs and mobility scooters.
- Support the extension of the network of safe and convenient cycle routes for all abilities.
- Support improved bus services
- Protect and improve the current railway station and support the re-opening of Bristol Road station.
- Only support major development where it is, or will be made, accessible to the town centre on foot and by cycle.
- Support improvements to on-street parking in Stonehouse, creating a safer environment for all road users.
- Increase the number of conveniently placed cycle racks as the opportunity arises.
- Support improvements to the links between the town and the canal.

Community, Facilities and Retail

Our goal is to meet the recreational aspirations, the health and wellbeing and the practical needs of our community, whilst retaining the distinctive character of Stonehouse.

In order to achieve this goal we will need to:

- Continue to grow as a thriving and diverse town centre with independent traders and businesses.
- Increase the range and improve the quality of meeting spaces and sporting facilities to meet the needs of all age groups.
- Increase the opportunities for formal and informal play and indoor and outdoor recreation within the town
- Support the retention and improvement of services that people rely on, for example: library, doctor, dentist, post office, banks, youth club, opticians
- Support the development of the night-time economy of Stonehouse to offer a range of social activities.



Environment (Green Space and Recreation)

Our goal is to protect and enhance access to green spaces both within the town and the surrounding countryside.

In order to achieve this goal we will need to:

- Minimise the visual impact of new development on views out of and views into the Stonehouse settlement.
- Support improvements to the links between the canal and Stonehouse town centre
- Protect and enhance green spaces and support their recreational use
- Protect and enhance the heritage and wildlife assets of Stonehouse, allowing them to be appreciated by residents and visitors.
- Move toward a greener Stonehouse.

Employment

Our goal is to support employment opportunities and secure a prosperous economic future for Stonehouse.

In order to achieve this goal we will:

- Protect, support and improve existing employment sites.
- Support improvements to the relationship and links between existing employment sites and the town centre.
- Support more high quality jobs accessible to Stonehouse residents.
- Seek new employment sites that support small and medium-sized businesses.