

1028

14 JAN 2019



Local Plan Review
Planning Strategy Team
Stroud District Council
Ebley Mill
Stroud
Gloucestershire GL5 4UB

DEVELOPMENT SITE

7th January 2019

Dear Sirs,

Re: Stroud District Local Plan Review

I am writing to express my concern at the proposal to consider land to the south of Hardwicke as a possible site to construct housing to meet Gloucester's long term housing needs.

I believe it is totally inappropriate for the rural character of Hardwicke to be compromised in order to support the housing needs of Gloucester. These needs should be met by building within the boundary of Gloucester City Council. Various areas of Hardwicke have already been covered with high density housing and enough is enough. Hardwicke cannot sustain and support any further development. Thankfully, so far the historic character of the core of old Hardwicke village has been preserved. It would be scandalous for this to be spoilt by the building of houses close by. Additional housing on the site being proposed would lead to additional heavy duty construction traffic during the construction period and subsequently additional traffic consisting not just of domestic vehicles but, in these days of increased internet shopping, vans and lorries doing endless deliveries. All this would be very detrimental to the area, would make the roads extremely dangerous and destroy the rural character of the old village core of Hardwicke.

I own the field next to the potential development site. I keep horses in this field. Construction in the field directly next to my horses would cause a huge amount of stress to these animals. There would be a lot of noise from machinery over a long period of time. This will not only cause stress to the horses but could possibly result in them causing injury to themselves. Horses are flight animals and are therefore likely to try to run away from the source of noise and while doing so they are likely to get injured. I am also concerned about my safety and the safety of the horses when out riding, both while construction is underway and afterwards. Church Lane is a narrow road with several blind corners. It is already busy enough for a road of its size and people often drive too fast down it. Any further development in the area will inevitably increase the amount of traffic on this road making both driving and riding down it even more dangerous.

The fields in the proposed development site are popular for walkers both with and without dogs. I regularly walk through these fields and meet many other walkers on a daily basis. The loss of this amenity would be detrimental to a lot of people in the area and have an adverse effect on their quality of life. Open spaces for walking are a precious asset – many people already live in and around Hardwicke and the loss of such an amenity would be felt by all of them. In many cases it would mean that they would have to drive to find somewhere open to walk, which is a highly unsustainable option. It is far more environmentally friendly to maintain open spaces close to

people's homes. Moreover, if you live in a rural village it is only reasonable to expect to be able to walk close by.

The area around the core of Hardwicke has open aspects as one would expect in a rural village. Another consequence of any development around the core would be the loss of this which would be detrimental to the quality of life of many residents in the area.

The core of Hardwicke is still a beautiful rural village and it is this that attracted me to it when I moved here in 2017. It has a unique character which would be destroyed by being engulfed by large housing developments and the adverse consequences of such developments. It would be an act of vandalism for the Council to allow this character to be destroyed and to deprive future generations of an experience of old England. I am saddened at the prospect that something very special might be destroyed and astonished that the Council would be so irresponsible as to consider doing something which would amount to the destruction of a part of the local heritage. Once lost, this heritage is lost for ever and can never be recreated. Future generations would deeply regret such a loss and would be mystified as to how the Council allowed this to happen.

Yours faithfully,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.