

The Planning Strategy Team  
Stroud District Council  
Ebley Mill  
Stroud GL5 4UB

Dear Sir/Madam

## **Local Plan: Publication Stage Representation**

### **My representation relates to Paragraphs 3.1.8 to 3.1.10, Policy Number PS05, Policy Map PS05 (including land PS05a)**

I consider that the Plan is NOT sound for the following reasons:

1. There has been no consultation of Minchinhampton residents for the proposed changes to Minchinhampton.
2. The proposal for large-scale building on green field sites in Minchinhampton will change the character of the eastern section of town and those fields will be lost forever. This is not acceptable when brownfield sites, with better transport links, are available, e.g. Dark Mills.
3. Minchinhampton town centre cannot absorb the amount of additional traffic which will be generated by a large number of new houses:
  - Minchinhampton town centre's roads are already at capacity and there are frequent traffic jams. Well Hill, West End, Windmill Road, High Street, Tetbury Street and Butt Street all have lengthy sections which are single track only, either because the roads are just one car wide, or because there are parked cars reducing the available road width to one car wide. It doesn't take much to go from free flowing traffic to a traffic jam – all it needs is a bus or a few cars in one direction and the same in the opposite direction. Visibility is poor at various points, such as the Butt Street Narrows and at the cross roads at the centre of town, as well as several blind entrances, so there are already safety concerns as well as congestion problems. Car drivers need to negotiate with other drivers and road users e.g. horse riders and to cope with free roaming animals (horses and cows).
  - Building a large number of new houses in Minchinhampton town will inevitably increase the traffic through this central bottleneck of roads, and it is not sustainable. If the planners decide to permit a large number of additional houses, they will also have to re-design the road traffic flow, parking etc to relieve the traffic congestion and traffic safety issues. The main problems are within the conservation area, and most of the buildings are listed, so it is not feasible to widen any of the roads.

- An outline of the current road problems is below:
  - Well Hill has parked cars on one or both sides from The Shard up to the cross roads with Tetbury Street. It has additional problems with steep gradients and various adjacent or protruding stone obstacles, so that if two cars meet, it can be very difficult to back up to a suitable location for the other car to pass. Visibility is almost nil at the cross roads.
  - West End has one passing place, and a couple of driveways provide additional unofficial passing places. Visibility of oncoming traffic is poor.
  - Windmill Road has parked cars, frequently on both sides of the road, so that negotiating a way along the road is a zigzag route between the parked cars.
  - The High Street has parked cars along most of the street, and frequently also large vans and post vans parked near the cross roads, delivering to local businesses. Generally the available road space is only one car wide. It is further complicated by the Bell Lane junction and the war memorial, which result in random road priorities and unpredictable traffic flow.
  - The Butt Street Narrows has a blind corner mirror, however, it is very difficult to determine whether what is visible in the mirror is a parked car or a moving car, and there is frequently a need for cars to back up or mount pavements for vehicles to pass each other. The parked cars, and therefore similar traffic issues, extend up Butt Street for most of its length.
  - Tetbury Street has road markings at the cross roads which imply that the road has space for 2 vehicles to pass each other. It does not. Cars frequently come right up to the junction, which means that a vehicle wanting to go the other way either has to go sideways across the end of the High Street or has to mount the pavement. The available road width is generally one car wide from the cross roads right up to the allotments, due to actual road width and parked cars.
  - Through traffic is not sufficiently discouraged at Hampton Fields, due to poor road layout.
- If the planners decide to allow large scale development in the town, they must first address the problems outlined above.

I think the Plan should be modified as follows:

- Use brownfield sites for new housing.
- Do not add significant quantities of housing to Minchinhampton town before addressing the current traffic volume, flow and safety issues.

I would like to attend the hearing session but unfortunately am not able to as I have caring responsibilities.

Yours faithfully

