

[REDACTED]

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 16 January 2019 18:02  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** \_WEB\_Local Plan  
**Subject:** Stroud District Council Local Plan: Feedback for 18th January 2019

Dear [REDACTED]

I am writing to provide feedback on the Local Plan and in particular around the **Berkeley/Sharpness/Newtown Cluster**.

### **Disproportionate Development**

There is little doubt that additional housing is needed in the area and in particular low cost housing for young and old. However the scale and location of the planned developments seem to be completely disproportionate to the needs of local people. Why would and how can the area support a two-threefold increase in population?

### **Employment**

My understanding is that not long ago an assessment was made that 300 extra houses were needed for this area. How could it be that a few years later 2,500-5,000 are appropriate? There has been little increase in employment and a reduction in facilities and services. Were a further 2,200-4,700 houses to be built, where would the employment to support such a population boost come from? In reality, if this were to happen and if people were persuaded to buy the houses, they would be commuting to Bristol, Gloucester or Cheltenham. Consequently with an average of 2 cars per household between 4,000-10,000 extra cars could be on the roads which barely support the current community and which would cause chaos and congestion for the A38, Junction 14 of the M5 and minor country roads and 'rat runs'. It would make such more sense to develop housing near the centres of employment and access to main arterial roads.

### **Services**

Local services are inadequate to support such an influx. I note that page 80 of the report suggests Berkeley offers a **very good** range of services and facilities. I suggest that these are adequate for the current population, but could not sustain a two to threefold increase. Berkeley has suffered the closure of hospital, library and police station and the town and surrounding area has extremely poor mobile reception and very poor internet and broadband services. The paragraph on page 80 has an accurate list of existing facilities etc, but all of these are on a very modest scale and the inclusion of 'swimming pool' suggests a rather more grand backdrop than reality (Berkeley Primary school pool outdoor and open in school summer holidays only). The mobile bank is here one day a week for 90 minutes and the library is open part time staffed by volunteers. Few of these facilities are relevant to a working population as they only open for part of the working day and are therefore inaccessible.

It is more than likely that with the necessity to commute to major towns for employment, occupants of the new developments would use out of town shopping centres that they can make use of travelling to and from work; so this would have a negative impact on local retail and commerce.

### **Environment and Farming**

Even if a major development made sense in other respects there is also the matter of protecting the countryside and our farming community. This is an area of natural beauty and important wildlife as well as having commercial and heritage farming interests which provide local employment. Such a disproportionate development would destroy or reduce farmland and start to make business uneconomical, thereby undermining local employment and the very people whose interest the ideals of the Plan seek to support. In addition much of the area is low lying and subject to potential flooding.

### **Better options**

It seems that there are better options for providing the housing that local people need. Aiming for 300 houses in the Berkeley/Sharpness/Newtown area, using infill and regenerating empty buildings, together with a modest development around Sharpness and Newtown would fulfil local requirements and make a proportionate contribution to the new building needed in Gloucestershire.

Many thanks for including this feedback.

Yours sincerely,  
[REDACTED]

