

For the attention of [REDACTED]

### The proposed development for Berkeley Cluster

Having very little opportunity to address the colossal housing project that SDC is presently proposing due to its poor management of notifying local residents, and finding the online survey very user unfriendly and impossible to complete, I would like to respond by email regarding the development proposed for the Berkeley cluster area, which includes large parts of the Newtown, Brookend and Sharpness landscape.

1. Let's start with the proposal that Sharpness/Berkeley has, according to Stroud District Council, **current services and leisure facilities** to sustain a huge garden city –type development:

Sharpness has one shop and the Dockers Club.

Newtown is, according to Stroud District Council, a 'medium to large sized village'. I have to politely disagree. It consists of one shop, one pub, a church and one Primary school. It has a sporadic bus service.

Brookend has no shops, and one pub.

Wanswell has no shops, one pub and a secondary school owned by the Plymouth Brethren. As they run this school as a Private enterprise, it offers no facilities for leisure.

Berkeley has a number of charity shops, 2 small 'supermarkets' and a Pharmacy. It has 2 pubs. It has a very busy Health centre that has to serve a vast area. The bank is closed and Berkeley receives a mobile bank for a few hours on a Friday, which is inaccessible to anyone who is disabled and anyone pushing a pram or pushchair.

2. **Infrastructure** is also identified as a reason for building in this area:

There are B roads and C roads leading out of Brookend and Wanswell, which eventually lead onto the A38.

There is an incomplete by-pass from Sharpness to Berkeley Heath, then a B road leading to A38, but traffic, including lorries still use Alkington Lane, which, I believe, is a C road, and unsuitable to heavy vehicles.

Once on the A38, there are already bottle-necks at Falfield, turning left onto the road to M5. The A38 northbound becomes busier at Junction 13 and at Quedgley. Therefore with a huge housing development existing in Sharpness/Berkeley area, this congestion can only get worse.

The bus services are limiting and have been recently reduced. The rail service from Cam and Dursley is a resounding success, and is a victim of its success. The carpark is too small and the carriages often overcrowded. A surge of commuters from a big housing estate would make the station too busy for its size. The likelihood of extending the rail-line to Berkeley Heath appears no more than a pipedream. It is very unlikely that Network Rail would fund it or consider it a priority.

Creating cycle lanes and pedestrian walkways is crucial, but this will not help the vast majority of workforce that have to work outside of the area and commute to work. Considering the amount of

traffic that would result from this housing development, wider roads, with bus lanes (there would have to be significantly more bus routes available), would have to be built and maintained.

3. Careful development of the **natural environment**. How carving up a beautiful part of Gloucestershire could ever be justified as helping to preserve the natural environment simply cannot be explained or justified. I have walked through the fields from Newtown to Wanswell, then onto Berkeley and marvel at its natural beauty. We are lucky to enjoy wildlife, landscapes and horticulture that has defined this area for centuries.

I believe many people appreciate that our area, along with the rest of the county, must take its brunt of housing to meet national targets, but to place so many houses in such a small area will leave a cluttered mess. To decimate such a wide area that has wonderful views, history and geographical significance seems ruthless and wrong. Once an area like this is destroyed, its close community lost, it's gone forever.

Government house building targets should be more equally distributed in smaller scale amongst existing towns and villages throughout the county. It appears that the infrastructure promised by both councils and developers such as schools, health centres, employment, transport etc are only ever promises at best and rarely delivered as promised at the time of planning and approval.

Therefore please consider at least reducing the number of houses and make further consideration into viewing other potential areas of beauty, such as the Cotswolds, which, if it were to also take its share of housing, would also have limiting effect of its natural beauty. What about other areas nearer to Gloucester so commuting is easier?

Gloucestershire has always attracted visitors because of its beautiful landscape and its peacefulness. Surely it has to be our legacy to preserve that for future generations, not be seen as the generation that destroyed it.

Yours sincerely,

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