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14th January 2019

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Development Services
Stroud District Council
Ebley Mill
Stroud
Gloucestershire
GL5 4UB

Dear [REDACTED]

I write to give my views as part of the current consultation regarding the **Stroud District Local Plan Review Emerging Strategy** Paper November 2018, with particular objections regarding the proposal for the **Berkeley Cluster**.

Looking at the options outlined for the Stroud district, which has a diverse range of settlements, each with their own communities which have own identity, which local people would like to maintain and enhance through sustainable and proportionate growth, I therefore express my support for **Option 2**, with some smaller dispersal sites in other tier 3,4 & 5 settlements.

With regards to the proposed plan for the **Berkeley Cluster**, I object to this proposal firstly as it is hugely disproportionate to the current settlements, and would have a negative impact on the character of this beautiful area and the communities within it, and secondly it would seem the this plan goes against 4, if not 5, of the Key issues raised, as I will outline below:

Key issue 1: Ensuring that new housing development is located in the right place, supported by the right services and infrastructure to create sustainable development.

The services and infrastructure in the Berkeley cluster are currently limited and struggling to support the existing community , and I would therefore question whether Berkeley should be classed as a Tier 2 settlement, when we have limited core services; no bank, a struggling GP practice, limited bus services and the swimming pool mentioned is an outdoor pool run by volunteers within the school grounds, which therefore limits it use to 4-5 months of the year, dependant on weather and hours outside the school day/term., subject to local support and volunteer availability. The road access to and from the cluster to

the A38, are limited to 3 points, all of which have difficult junctions, particular southbound at peak times. This proposal would increase the cluster as a dormitory area, as local employment is limited and could by no means support the additional numbers of houses outlined. Even the 300 homes in the current local plan at the Sharpness Dock sites are unlikely to be occupied by people who are employed within the cluster. I therefore state that it is neither the right place, nor does the Berkeley cluster have the necessary services and infrastructure to support development beyond what is within the current local plan.

Key issue 2: Conserving and enhancing Stroud District's countryside and biodiversity, including maximising the potential for a green infrastructure network across the District.

The Berkeley Vale and the areas covered by the Berkeley Cluster plan are currently predominantly greenfield sites, (the brownfield site area at the docks being the key exception) with healthy biodiversity, therefore any development of these areas would destroy rather than conserve and enhance. Previous planning applications in the area have been rejected with this being cited as one of the reasons.

Key issue 3: Maximising the potential of brownfield and underused sites to contribute to housing supply.

The proposed development of Sharpness docks supports this key issue, but the rest of the proposed development does not, as it is proposing the destruction of agricultural and greenfield sites. There are further brownfield sites outside this cluster identified through the paper, that should be prioritised over and above development in this area.

Key issue 4: Developing strategies to avoid, reduce and mitigate the indirect impacts of development on the natural environment.

The impact of building houses on the scale being proposed for the Berkeley Cluster, will impact directly the natural environment, and indirectly will due to the high volume of people who will have to commute out of the area for employment. Pollution, noise, light levels would all rise as a result of a development of the scale being proposed in the Berkeley cluster. There would be limited need for 'avoid, reduce and mitigation strategies' if the proposed development was proportionate with the existing settlements, as they would be sustainable and more easily absorbed into the existing communities.

Key issue 5: Tackling the acute lack of affordable housing in the District.

Affordable housing in the Berkeley cluster is needed, however it firstly needs to be affordable to people who currently live in the area, which based on what is currently been classed as affordable in the new Canonbury Rise development is not. Putting a large number of affordable homes in a single area be it this area or another area would not tackle the need for the district, affordable housing needs to be in every community/settlement so that people can live close to their families, workplaces, and support networks, having to travel to access these reduces the affordability of the housing.

I trust you will consider my comments and objections as you continue to develop and revise this local plan.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted Signature]