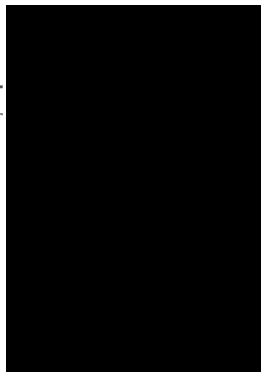


Stroud District Council
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21 JAN 2020
Development Services



Local Plan Review
Planning Strategy Team
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17 January 2020

Dear Sir / Madam

Proposed Planning - Berkeley Cluster – PS36 – Garden Village

I write in response to the above, having attended many of the meetings and the roadshow on Saturday 11th at Berkeley town Hall I have examined the plans and know much of the site well. I wish to object strongly to the development of the proposed 'villages' in this location.

Berkeley, Sharpness and its surrounding areas are a made up of peaceful semi-rural settlements where development proposals should be considered very carefully as a large development such as the one suggested would completely overwhelm and change the area.

The protection of the area's visual, historical, environmental and archaeological qualities is also at threat and permission for such a development should be refused.

I understand that pressure for development in the district is needed, it seems mainly for housing city commuters, but some for local affordable housing. However, I do not feel that there are sufficient claims or guarantees that these homes will benefit local people or that a development of this size is sympathetic to or even necessary in this location. I have listed below my concerns and would suggest that the development should be revoked.

Roads and Transportation

The lanes and main roads into Berkeley and Sharpness are inadequate and struggle to accommodate the traffic which travels in and out of the location, even small increases in traffic cause chaos. Parking in the area is insufficient and with the increase in traffic for the UTC SGS Berkeley Green College, it is a difficult to get in

and out of Berkeley at peak times. There is nothing in the plan to accommodate the 10,000+ cars that can be expected to transport the people living in 5000+ houses in and out of the area, indeed the outline plan suggests that the residents would travel mostly on foot, by bicycle or other means, which is absurd. People with families and small children require parking and elderly residents would require parking directly outside their homes for shopping needs.

Furthermore, the lighting on the public highways in and out of the location is inadequate and the roads are not sufficient and are poorly surfaced and therefore cannot safely accommodate the huge increase in vehicles that would be using them.

Road widening would destroy ancient field boundaries and effect the flora and fauna so how would the roads cope with the increase in trucks and vans, etc required to provide the transportation of goods which will deliver to the proposed new shopping areas to the neighbourhood in general.

There is a serious lack of public transport services currently running in the area and I do not believe that either the developer or Stroud/Gloucestershire/Bristol bus services propose to increase public bus services throughout the area. Although I can see there is a bus route proposed through part of the area, it does not filter into the neighbourhoods and would mean residents having to travel a considerable distance to get to the bus route, which is irrational especially for those with small children or the elderly. Opportunities for the residents of the new development to travel by public transport is therefore limited, further increasing the need for more cars per household.

The effect of this is a huge increase in the number of cars travelling on the A38 and commuting into Bristol or Gloucester would therefore also increase, further congestion on the already very busy junctions of 13 and 14 on the M5 and other roads into the city, without adding to this the traffic that will be using these roads when the new developments in Thornbury, Falfield, Dursley and Charfield are completed.

Schools/Education

I notice that there are no plans for a secondary school to accommodate the resident's children that will be living in 5000+ houses, which could easily become as many as 10,000+ children?! Although I see there is the possibility of a primary school after phase two, where will the children that move to the area attend school until this school is built? Surely, they cannot be expected to accommodate all of them at Berkeley Primary and Sharpness Primary? This would of course mean further commuting and an increase in traffic to transport these children to primary schools further afield! In the meantime, are you suggesting that no houses will be offered for sale to people with children of secondary school age? I know that the nearby school of Rednock will be oversubscribed in the next school year, due to considerable development in the Dursley and Cam. Also, KLB and Castle schools are no longer taking children from our area, due to development in their own catchment and they will therefore also be over-subscribed. Therefore, none of the secondary schools in a 10-mile radius will be able to take any children of secondary school age that move to the new development. If this is a village for the future

generation, surely it would be illogical and costly have to provide transport to take them to another area, they should be entitled to an education within the area in which they reside?

Fire Police Hospitals and Doctors Services

Has any thought been given to these services and the extra pressure it will have on them? There is no provision or mention of provision in the plan to increase any of them and they are already heavily oversubscribed. It is likely that the GP surgery in Berkeley is closing, meaning current residents will have to travel to see a GP. The extra houses being in Dursley built has already put pressure on the facilities in Dursley. Where will the 10,000+ new residents attend when they are unwell or in need of serious medical attention? The elderly will have to travel a considerable distance to their GP to be given medical attention, possibly putting a burden on other services and creating more home visits or adding pressure on ambulance services.

Flooding and Environmental Issues

The proposed siting of many of the phases of this development is particularly ill-considered and much of it is on a site which floods. Indeed, I have been walking in the areas this morning and I would estimate that as much as half of the area covered by the proposed sites that are planned in green fields near the estuary is currently either completely submerged under water or seriously waterlogged. Water levels are on the rise and the considerable increase in rainfall due to environmental issues makes this a nonsensical place to build. The added amount of concreted areas will only exaggerate the situation as cause further flooding due to the surplus water being unable to disperse naturally. I believe the new Persimmon site is already struggling with subsidence and flooding issues.

The area is used by many people both local and tourists for recreational purposes and walking the Severn Way, provides un-restricted walking for miles and miles. Building here would both diminish the striking views and take away many of these open spaces, having an impact of the much-loved Severn Way and its wildlife. The increase in light and noise pollution would without doubt effect the wildlife, the Seven Vale is on the flight path for many rare migrating birds travelling to and from Slimbridge Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust. The area is also home to many other creatures such as Badgers, Foxes and Deer which roam freely in the fields that will be decimated by this development, and there are Otters on Berkeley Pill and the surrounding banks of the River Severn, along the section which they propose to divert.

I can see that there are proposals for small areas of wetlands to be retained and areas for wildlife, but those that are there now possess a natural bio-diversity which are in themselves sustainable and appeal to a wide range of wildlife. The new measures put in place would not compensate for the loss in natural habitat that is to wiped out. New man-made habitats take many years to mature before creatures naturally move into them, having a detrimental effect on wildlife and taking many years to recover. Creating new artificial areas requires careful management, so where I ask, is the money going to come from to pay for the up-keep of these spaces? As all of the green walkways, pond areas, open spaces, cycle routes, etc

that are supposedly going to be integrated into the new 'Green Village' would require this, who is going to accept responsibility to keep them cultivated?

Design Proposals

The planned style and design of the 'villages' is out of keeping with the areas strong historical character – Berkeley Castle and its estate houses are of a particular style as are most of the houses in Berkeley, Sharpness and surrounding areas, whilst there are small pockets of more recent houses, they have been built in considerable numbers more sustainable to the area.

I can honestly say that should this development be accepted the whole nature of Berkeley, Sharpness and its immediate areas are not the only things to suffer the consequences, it will have a huge detrimental effect on many things within a large radius. I do not believe it to be beneficial to the people who live in the area currently, or suitably constructed for new residents. With the risk of flooding, no parking and transportation facilities, who should be interested in buying into such a poorly located and planned residential area? It seems the only people to benefit here are the landowners and the developers and it would be outrageous to accept this application.

Yours faithfully

