

**From:** [REDACTED]  
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**Subject:** Comments on proposals for the Berkeley Cluster and PS36 New Settlement at Sharpness

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## Comments on proposals for the Berkeley Cluster and PS36 New Settlement at Sharpness

I am attaching these points to the response that I have already made online.

I am a resident of Berkeley Heath, who lives alongside the B4066. As any one who has visited Berkeley, Sharpness and the surrounding hamlets will know, this is an extremely busy country road. I fully understand that there is a need for more housing, particularly affordable housing, within this [area.as](#) we are a relatively low wage local economy here, in Berkeley and Sharpness.. However, creating a new development, the size of Dursley seems totally unreasonable and out of all proportion to the area's needs. It will completely change the character and identity of what is essentially a rural area.

### Access by Road:

I live alongside the B4066. During Phase 1 of the proposed development of up to 2,400 dwellings, this appears to be the only route out of Sharpness and Berkeley on to the A38. After many years of campaigning, Alkington Lane, as an alternative exit route on to the A38 for south bound traffic, has still not been upgraded. Within the SDC High Level Transport Assessment Paper July 2018, **88 %** of journeys are expected to be by car or van, with Growth Point 4 generating a traffic flow of **1868 (AM)** and **2060 (PM) by peak hour trip**. This amount of traffic flow will be completely unsustainable along what I question to be a "suburban link" and yet is mentioned as "country lanes" in the planning application.(p.33). Berkeley Heath has been refused the status of a village, when our residents group applied for it, as a way of limiting the speed along the B4066, so it's laughable to think of it as a suburban link!!

I undertook my own B4066 traffic survey on Monday 13th January from 5.00 - 6.00 pm - . **389 cars and vans were counted, together with 13 lorries**. The 2nd survey was on Friday 17th January from 7.30 -8.30 am when **383 cars and vans, together with 26 lorries, plus 2 brave cyclists were counted**.. Rural roads saw a 2.6 per cent rise in traffic flow in 2015 ( Dept of Transport statistics 2017) but using the projected figure of SDC, this would be an increase of **567%** along the B4066!!! Lorry traffic can also only increase with the new warehousing facility of 1 million square feet at the Severnside Distribution Centre. Surely this is at odds with SDC's proud stated aspiration "To become a Carbon Neutral District by 2030, whilst an ambitious target, is technically possible, through working with a wide range of partners and all the residents of the area". (Councillor Simon Pickering 4.6.2019) Heavy lorry traffic is significantly damaging the verges along the B4066 already (witness the 2 foot ruts outside our property) and we wonder what has happened to the promise of a footpath and cycle way to be provided for students travelling to Berkeley Green???

It is acknowledged in the SDC High Level Transport Assessment Paper July 2018, that access onto the A38 is an issue - the thought of all of this huge volume of traffic trying to exit on to it, sounds a nightmare, both hazardous and polluting. Anyone who travels to the M5 J13 or 14 knows now, what the horrendous queues are like. I understand that 75% of current employees in this area work in Bristol, and this is a major draw for employment. It would be completely unrealistic to expect that the majority of people living in Sharpness Garden Village will work, within this development. We know that there has been a relatively slow take up of business development units at Berkeley Green with 31 hectares, currently available. It is worth noting that there are approx 2,500 car parking spaces at Berkeley Green, so ultimately, if business development grows there, this will only add to the traffic flow along the B4066. Is this going to be an incentive for new business?? Significantly, the RAG assessment for Growth Point 4 is RED.

Within the 2018 Settlement Role and Function Study Update, there are numerous findings, that appear to be at odds with what is being proposed at PS36.

- At p.201 paragraph 2.43 "Prioritise growth at District's larger and better resourced settlements".
- 2.46 "support growth that is sustainable and proportionate to each settlement's relative constraints and opportunities"
- p100 "Focusing significant amounts of new housing in the District's southern edge is likely to feed this trend ... (aka a significant proportion of commuters travelling south to Bristol and South Glos. Proximity of M5 J14 is a factor in drawing residents) At the moment 80% of the required housing is being proposed in the South of the District.

**Rail Link :** This is going to be an extremely expensive project, which will not include a direct link to Bristol. Considering the current debacle about HS2, is Network Rail or any other developer going to look favourably on, and fund this project? Cam and Dursley Railway station is already full to capacity and it appears that despite a new housing development on the doorstep, there will be no more parking spaces.

**Demand for Housing:** Uptake of new houses built on Canonbury Hill has been relatively poor. There is currently no usable footpath into Berkeley from this development , so how are residents expected to use a sustainable means of visiting it? Building development has now been halted, leaving an ugly eyesore on the approach to our town.

**Schools:** As a retired teacher, I am well aware how close our local secondary schools are, to being oversubscribed. No secondary school has been proposed until the second phase i.e. after 2040. Demolishing the existing school at Wanswell, to provide yet more housing, looks very short sighted.

**Flood risk :** We know that there are no national regulations to prevent building on flood plains The builders who put up new homes in these relatively cheap level lands bear none of the subsequent costs of flooding, They are long gone by the time the householders and their insurers are inundated. Although P&S36 is just outside a flood risk zone now, we know from the terrible events during 2019, how many areas of the UK were affected, that had never seen this amount of rainfall before. Have the effects of climate change been taken into account? Our water meadows,, just off the bypass, have been flooded to some of the highest depths in living memory this autumn and winter. , Concrete will not absorb rain water, as any child knows.

**Environment:** Apart from land at the Focus School, Wanswell , the whole development will be on green fields and no brownfield land will be used. This land has apparently been conveniently downgraded to Level 2 status, from Level 3. We know that grass land is a valuable absorber of CO2 . It could be used for rewilding as evidence shows that it can make a valuable contribution to restoring ecosystems, which are better at preventing floods and storing carbon.. Why is an urban farm being planned on what was real productive farmland???

There are many more points to be made, which I hope my fellow residents will cover. I am conscious that each comment must be read. What concerns me additionally is that so much of this Development Proposal is littered with

"woulds" and "coulds" . It all sounds idyllic, but who is going to actually fund a farm, railway station etc etc? How mandatory, will it be for developers to fund an adequate infrastructure? What kind of legacy will we be leaving for our grandchildren - an urban sprawl or a unique estuarine landscape? Does SDC have to be bullied into agreeing developments, that are wrong, by a bureaucratic central government? Can we question their figures - is our population projected to grow at the rate they say? Governments can get it wrong - we need you, as our Council ,to stand up for us please in Berkeley and Sharpness!

Thank you for reading my comments.

