

Like many people, I was pleased to see that PS29 was removed from the draft Local Plan, for very good reasons. However, strong concern remains that the developer will again try to put forward a modified scheme, arguing to mitigate impact and losses. If such a proposal found its way into the final Local Plan, people would feel lulled into a false sense of security and tricked, particularly after receiving reassurances from local councillors.

We want to trust that the officers and councillors will adhere to the conclusion that this site (or similar) is unsuitable for inclusion. The location to the south-east of Dursley (with inevitable commuter traffic adding to the pinch-point problems at Silver Street) and the sensitive nature of the valued countryside, makes it a very poor candidate for housing, especially as the analysis rightly states that there are plenty of better places to build houses within the district. It is certainly not 'preferred' for development by those who know and understand the functioning of Dursley and the significance of this area of countryside.

The reasons for prohibiting the loss of this site should be strengthened, rather than weakened. It is concerning that the latest report from White Consultants still contains factual errors regarding, for instance, number of hedgerows and the quality of the farmland. Government classification (and the raw data) shows that it is not just 'useable' poor to moderate agricultural land, but actually grade 3b, 3a (good, BMV) and some evidence of grade 2. In the NPPF (Para 170 (a)) it states that these soils need to be protected, particularly as we now need to meet both national and SDC 2030 Carbon Targets which includes the need to grow local food and therefore retain our most fertile soils.

I am also unconvinced that White's assertion that the 2015 court judgement between Stroud DC and Gladman (Summer St) is directly applicable to this area with regard to views in, out and across the site. D03 is surrounded on three sides by distinctive AONB landscapes in a materially different way than Str11 – which is surrounded on three sides by dense town housing.

The area is part of the Green Infrastructure Strategic Area (and Nature Improvement) with a specific network corridor identified: Dovey Brook linking coastal flood plains in Berkeley to woodlands south of Dursley. It is surrounded on three sides by the Cotswolds AONB. With this protection already in place, it appears obvious that the area should be handled with great sensitivity to avoid harm to the existing GI and the valued Cotswold Secluded Valley landscape. The notion of carving a new road directly through the middle of the site, right across an important mature outgrown hedge line and natural watercourse is absolutely crazy and in conflict with national and district policy. The watercourse holds the run-off from surrounding springs and regularly floods. Heavy engineering to corral the stream and build a road above it would be highly destructive to the established natural systems and accompanying wildlife.

Disrupting the integrity of the edges of the AONB is also contrary to the aims of promoting green tourism, which is acknowledged as potentially providing more local employment and trade, acutely needed in Dursley.

Development in this location would ignore the knowledge and wishes of the local people, not only expressed in multiple campaigns, petitions and feedback but also within their NDP.

With proposed extra households at the northern side of Dursley (Cam, Wisloe) relying on the facilities and services within Dursley, the increased traffic with associated pollution and congestion will add to the existing problems. Many people are moving here from Bristol, encouraged by relatively lower pricing and yet continuing to commute back out via the A4135. This is simply not sustainable, particularly from the south east side of Dursley. Congestion and pollution is already a problem for Cam High Street as well as into the centre of Dursley.

In conclusion, this location is not 'preferred' or suitable for housing development, even if the promoters promise to 'enhance' this existing countryside – a concept which would be fundamentally flawed here, for all the important reasons being repeatedly highlighted by residents and their representatives.