

Please consider these comments provided in relation to the Additional Housing Options Consultation

Summary Review (see narrative below for detail):

Consultation Questions

- 1) I support option E – a hybrid combination.
- 2) I support combining options A (Intensify), B (Towns & Villages), C (Additional Growth Point) and F (Alternative priority).
- 3) I do not support identifying a reserve site. Detail below.
- 4) I do not support identifying a reserve site therefore no response.
- 5) I do not support identifying a reserve site therefore no response.
- 6) I do not support identifying a reserve site. Detail below.
- 7) I support all the small sites.
- 8) I do not have any new sites to suggest.
- 9) I support a new strategic site at Whitminster. I conditionally support a new strategic site at Moreton Valance.
- 10) I do not have any other sites I wish to be considered as future growth point.
- 11) Please see comments below.

Question 1.

Option E. I support a hybrid of the potential options A,B,C & F.

Question 2.

Option A. Review and identify opportunities for moderate intensification to the urban extension sites, where this can be accommodated without impinging unreasonably on the quality of living environment and existing community. The mix of housing could provide an opportunity in these more urban areas to include flats, apartments and naturally less space intensive built form to increase density whilst adding interest to development and a greater volume of real affordable market housing.

Option B. Reconsider previously rejected sites and identify those that can meet objectives in light of new requirements without impinging unreasonably on quality of living environment and existing community.

Option C. The potential additional growth point at Whitminster (PGP1) offers a significant opportunity to develop a highly sustainable extension to the existing community. It would combine excellent east west road infrastructure with access to the strategic motorway network via a junction with existing capacity. The site is also directly adjacent to the sustainable walking and cycling route along the restored Stroudwater Canal. Growth at this point could balance pressure across the district and add to the potential customer base for a restored new railway station at Bristol Road, Stonehouse, Stroudwater.

The potential additional growth point at Moreton Valance was originally discussed some time ago. I understand some is previously developed land in the form of a WW2 airfield etc. With this in mind it offers the opportunity to explore restoration of building over greenfield development. Proximity to the motorway network could offer transport links but poses a challenge in terms of acoustics and pollution. The nearby energy from waste plant could offer sustainable district heating system.

Option F. The priority should be refocussed directly on a 'brownfield first' strategy. NPPF paragraph 117 stipulates a need to maximise previously developed land. The plan should be reviewed in light of this requirement.

Question 3.

I do not support identifying a reserve site. The Local Plan should offer only suitable, sustainable, viable and deliverable sites. The current plan relies too heavily on major new developments primarily within the Berkeley Cluster plus Cam and Dursley. All these are located in or towards the south of the district. This is not only bad for Stroud District more generally it would, when combined with other proposals south of the Stroud border, completely overload local infrastructure, create an incongruous continuous built urban form in the currently valued rural Severn Vale, coalesce the Cotswold escarpment, Dursley and Cam with the Severn Vale and miss the opportunity to deliver a suitable, sustainable, viable, deliverable and sound Local Plan. Proposing two major new developments in such close proximity would inevitably create market absorption issues that an inspector would recognise and refuse due to the negative impact on viability and deliverability.

Question 4.

I do not support identifying a reserve site. See Question 3.

Question 5.

I do not support identifying a reserve site. See Question 3.

Question 6.

I do not support identifying a reserve site. See Question 3. If a Local Plan containing only sustainable, suitable, deliverable sites is offered there will be no need to trigger any alternative.

Question 7.

The council is under an obligation to provide a good mix of sites and accommodate at least 10% of its identified housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare. It is questionable whether this requirement is currently satisfied. Subject to usual planning requirements, I support all the sites identified in question 7.

Question 8.

I have no new sites to propose.

Question 9.

- Whitminster (PGP1) is an opportunity to rebalance current proposals in SDC's Draft Plan.
- The current focus of development in the Berkeley Cluster is unbalanced, unsustainable, unviable and undeliverable.
- Whitminster (PGP1) is well connected to the road network including the strategic motorway via a junction that is recognised, uniquely in the Stroud District, as having significant capacity. Recent highway modelling has also confirmed that a mitigated strategy would deliver a largely uncongested local road network in marked contrast to the congestion demonstrated in and around the A38 in the Berkeley Vale, including Junction 14 of the M5 just beyond the Stroud District boundary, if both proposed developments PS37 and PS36 go ahead as currently proposed.
- The Whitminster (PGP1) site would benefit from two existing substantial access bridges across the M5 at Junction 13 and at Grove Lane. Both these access points offer high grade existing vehicular access eastwards and potential to provide easy and convenient pedestrian and cycle access to Stonehouse and its existing facilities including public transport and railway station. These add to the viability and deliverability of the site in contrast to the challenge of creating viable crossings of the M5 motorway and mainline railway at, for instance PS37, which have not been addressed.
- The west/east road connection from and to the proposed Whitminster (PGP1) site is routed to avoid settlements through the 'engine room' of the Stroud District providing quick and easy access to a range of employment opportunities, retail and entertainment offerings. The road network is well developed and plans for further improvement are already in place and financed. This is in marked contrast to the west/east connection from PS37 which goes directly through highly constrained roads in Cam and Dursley including through built form in both that restricts traffic to such an extent that vehicles cannot pass each other at the same time in some locations. Similarly, the road network in the south of the District and beyond at M5 junction 14 is already over capacity. Adding proposed developments both at PS36 and PS37 to plans already being developed in South Gloucestershire cannot be accommodated.
- Development at Whitminster (PGP1) could help to promote the restoration of another railway station at Bristol Road, Stonehouse, Stroudwater which is supported by SDC, Siobhan Baillie MP, the local and wider community.
- The M5 motorway adjoining some of the Whitminster (PGP1) site is largely sunk into a cutting below the proposed site. This has the benefit of providing existing protection from most damaging effects of noise and pollution helping to add to the site viability which present an insurmountable challenge to proposals at PS37 where the M5 is on a raised causeway with the mainline railway at its base adjoining the proposed PS37 site.
- The Stroudwater Canal project adjoins the southern part of the proposed Whitminster (PGP1) site. This asset not only provides recreational opportunities for potential future residents it encompasses a sustainable commuting, walking and cycling route to Stonehouse, Ebley, Stroud and beyond.
- Moreton Valance offers potential and was considered early in the Local Plan process.
- Moreton Valance encompasses some significant previously developed land. It should be a priority to develop these areas before green fields.
- There is the potential to develop connectivity improvement to the nearby M5 junction 12.
- Potential exists to harness excess heat from the nearby Energy from Waste plant in order to provide a sustainable district heating system.
- Noise and pollution from the motorway network could present a significant challenge that would need to be properly addressed.

Question 10.

There are no other sites that I would like considered as a growth point.

Question 11.

The Sustainability Appraisal indicates that Whitminster (PGP1) and Hardwicke (PGP2), when compared with PS37, contain more very positive scorings. There does appear however to be an anomaly with air quality SA10. PS37 appears to have a marginally better rating than both Whitminster (PGP1) and Hardwicke (PGP2). Put simply, this cannot be possible. Could you please review the results for the air quality assessment and confirm the correct detail.

The sustainability appraisal needs to properly recognise the CN2030 commitment. Potential new strategic sites, in particular, present the opportunity to reshape and rebalance the current draft local plan proposals across the district and create genuinely sustainable communities along the A419 engine room of the Stroud District.

Haydn Jones

District Councillor - Berkeley Vale Ward