

January 21st 2020

Dear Sir / Madam,

Please note my following objections to the proposed 2400 houses and further 2600 houses that you plan to build between Sharpness and Berkeley as a garden village in your draft plan.

I have lived in this area for 60 years, brought up my family here and am lucky that most of my family still live in the area. I am not able to use the internet but have been shown where you plan to build and details of the plans. I am shocked and dismayed at the extent of the area you want to build on. My understanding was that **the government wanted brown field sites used rather than greenbelt**. From what I have seen nearly all of this enormous building plan is covering greenfields.

There has been talk of houses being built on some of this land for many years and it has not happened, presumably because the council did not allow it. I have seen the study done in 2011 about potential areas for strategic growth. Originally you were looking at 3 areas and you added Sharpness because it was promoted by a developer as an eco town. Of course a developer with his own agenda will want Sharpness because he has probably been working on his plan for years and see this area as rich pickings now and in the future. It seems that the developer has sold his plan to Stroud council to make life easy for them in the future and **"thus removing future development pressure from other towns and villages"**. This seems grossly unfair on the villages that you plan to utterly change by swamping them in a huge development ie Wanswell, Brookend, Newtown, Sharpness, Hinton. This is without considering the detrimental impact this would have on Breadstone, Newport, Berkeley Heath, Stone for instance that would also suffer from the enormous number of cars that would use the lanes to access the A38. You state that the impact on the chosen area will be profound. That is an understatement.

In your own words you say that Sharpness is not a preferred area because the area is remote from any other major employment, retail or leisure hubs; the in and out commuting is more of an issue than the other 3 areas because of its remoteness; that there is very little market demand for employment in this location – land has been allocated for 30 years and development has yet to happen. I know there has been some more employment at the old power station site and there is a warehouse at Sharpness but this won't employ the huge number of people that you want to house here. I know the planners say they will allocate land for employment but there is nothing to say this will actually happen or how many people it might employ.

You comment on the **risk factors of flooding** and the unique landscape of the estuary which you recognise is both nationally and internationally important and presumably protected by SSSI, SPA, SAC and RAMSAR. The planners would have us believe that a strip of land by the river that will act as a nature reserve and farmland (we know it is farmland – how ironic to put a farm where there is a farm already!) will protect this area. The reality would seem that the houses would have to be built in a small area because of the flood zone and there would not be a lot of open space near the houses. Of course there will be "green corridors" which we are meant to believe will mitigate against all the damage this development would do.

The government has said that inappropriate development in vulnerable areas or adding to the impacts of physical change to the coast should be avoided. The developers say this can all be sorted out and is so in their plan. Once the fields are built on there is less places for the rain to go – rain

does not soak into concrete and roads. Climate change is a huge issue and the risks of building this many houses so close to the river cannot be overemphasised in my opinion, not only for the new houses but also for the existing villages which may well suffer more with less land to take up the current rain and potential floodwater. The fields are saturated now in the local area without 5000 more houses. I fail to see how a strip of land alleviates this.

You talk about protecting other villages from development but don't seem to mind that this development does so little to protect the villages you are going to build right up to, never mind their development limit. I see the council can call this whole scheme a separate development in its own right. Is this why the developers plan talks about nurturing neighbourhoods - the houses that abut Wanswell are now Wanswell village; the houses abutting Brookend are Brookend village. The council already decided the limit of the old villages and has it seems for years wanted to protect them from growth. Now, I feel that because it is an easy option you can move the goal posts and ignore your planning rules by letting an already huge plan in 2018 for 2400 houses become enormous and gobble up 4 villages so you can protect other places that are probably prettier and have a higher profile in the area.

Ripping out hedges of which there are many, no doubt taking out trees of which there are already too few will be aiding biodiversity! Saying that people will not use cars so there is no need to do anything to the roads.. The developers have great aspirations and have obviously spent a fortune on marketing by showing Sharpness as it is now ie finding some litter and then showing how marvellous their development will look. **Not everyone wants a costa coffee on their doorstep. Not everyone will want their children to have to travel miles to a secondary school wherever it will be until one materialises after 2040.**

If there were no other areas in the Stroud district perhaps it would be appropriate to put some houses here but I truly believe there are other areas that would not be better suited without risking damaging such a precious environment as the Severn estuary. I beg the Council to really consider just how much damage could be done to this unique landscape. **We should be planting our own Forest of Dean on this side of the river rather than a forest of houses.**

Thank you for your consideration.

Assuming that this plan goes to an inspection I would like you to bring this letter to the attention of the inspectorate that detail my objections.

Yours faithfully,

