

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 18 January 2019 13:09
To: _WEB_Local Plan; [REDACTED]
Subject: Emerging Strategy Consultation - Berkeley Cluster

Categories: Consultation response

Dear Sir

I have attempted to respond using your online survey but the densely written document to which it refers does not lend itself to easy cross reference and comment. Therefore please document my response below with the related development on the Berkeley cluster as a frequent visitor and part-time volunteer worker.

EMERGING STRATEGY CONSULTATION

1.0 Stroud wants to extend the Cotswold ANOB but has not given the same consideration to the Berkeley cluster, the Vale of Berkeley and the Severn estuary through Sharpness and Berkeley. SDC does not have the same understanding or knowledge of the estuary villages as the Cotswold ANOB and this plan does not include adequate protection for rural life style, culture and ecology which is a key aspect of our area. This is evidenced in lack of responses from many rural areas in previous consultations. Only a narrow strip of ground close to the estuary has any type of protection this should be reconsidered.

Green links and corridors as specified in the 'garden village' plan should not replace expanses of open countryside this will alter the character and nature of the county this does not tie in with Key issues solutions.

2.2 Not enough consideration given to ensuring the larger towns population are sustainable in view of changing retail patterns and demographics. People should be brought into these places through more infill building as the infrastructure is already in place.

Options 3 and 4 of this plan in scale and density are in no way equitable answer to the housing requirement for Gloucestershire or for this cluster. Previous views in the area objected to the building of 350 houses at Sharpness in one of the key green spaces of the village, the density of building does not fit with Key issue 4.

2.3. The plan does not solve an integrated transport system for the county or make transport for smaller hamlets and villages more viable ie Tier 4/5 and above could be included in housing expansion to ensure affordable housing can be built so there is no generational fade out in the villages which eventually make even the facilities that are there, such as community shops unviable, which would lead to more car journeys. This is addressed in your key issues but not delivered in the growth pattern options.

There have already been instances of poor planning decisions which ruin local aspects of the vale and estuary such as the food waste digester built at Haresfield. Employment options in options 3 and 4 appear to turn part of the Severn Way close to Sharpness into a mini Avonmouth. The type of build is unclear and possibly without understanding the future economy and even impacts of Brexit. Employment should emphasise and encourage innovative technology to take advantage of the educational facilities at SGS Berkeley technology site to bring high value jobs. The SGS site should grow to produce a centre of local educational excellence which would naturally lead to local business growth. Such dense growth needs more accessible secondary education for the cluster which is not currently available, this affects the carbon footprint. Employment is key to change and surely this should be the leader of housing requirement in the cluster or a dormitory town will be unavoidable which will have a negative impact on carbon footprint in the area.

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Option 3 does not go far enough in dispersal as it places the burden of growth around Berkeley and does not place growth in other villages to ensure future sustainable lifestyle, livelihood and sustainable transport for

those Tier 5 villages. SDC needs to face this issue as set out in 4.3 it knows the solution so should not side step it by placing the majority of growth in one zone.

SDC must consider a more equitable pattern of growth so that the whole region can benefit from the housing expansion. SDC must ensure it actually delivers on its solutions to the key issues and strategy if it actually want to protect its ethos and the culture of the district. SDC must ensure that whole district contributes to the housing plan, there is a wide gap between plans for the towns which mentions new street furniture and justifying the building of a cluster of 2000 houses in a very rural setting by calling it a 'green village'.

4.3. SDC have not addressed the Tier 4 site at the former Newport Towers surely this site is large enough to be considered for housing and/or small scale employment and is actually close to Berkeley to feed into its services with easy access to A38 and is an optional direction of growth.

The growth plan at Brookthorpe and Whaddon should be resolved as soon as possible to feed into the strategy.

5 see comments at 1.0. Also, the requirements for significant new infrastructure, the flood risk and landscape impacts which were formerly issues and reflected in the key issues do not tie in with the resultant strategy. It is not at all transparent how settlement limits have been utilised in this plan. The solution seems to be driven by acceptance of a consultant document from a developer rather than SCD solutions to key issues.

In summary SDC must take responsibility to produce a more equitable growth plan for the Berkeley cluster which considers the whole district and does not entirely alter its character.

