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Stroud District Local Plan Review Emerging Strategy Paper

Representations

On behalf of **Gloucestershire County Council and The Ernest Cook Trust**

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Peter Brett Associates LLP (PBA), now part of Stantec, is instructed by Gloucestershire County Council Asset Management and Property Services (GCC AMPS) and The Ernest Cook Trust (ECT) to submit representations to Stroud District Council (SDC) on the Emerging Strategy Paper that has been prepared for the Stroud Local Plan Review and published for consultation until 18 January 2019. The comments are made on behalf of GCC AMPS and ECT in their capacity as landowner.
- 1.1.2 The purpose of the Emerging Strategy consultation is to establish whether SDC have identified the main issues and needs in the District up until 2031.
- 1.1.3 These representations are made in relation to land at Wisloe, owned jointly by GCC AMPS and The Ernest Cook Trust. The representations cover the relevant sections of the consultation document, with particular focus on the identified Potential Site - Land at Wisloe (PS37).
- 1.1.4 The site is located adjacent to the M5 and A38 and approximately 10km from the banks of the River Severn at Sharpness to the west, and 15km from Stroud to the east. The site presents a significant opportunity to form a new, self-contained mid-sized settlement with a mix of uses, which support a diverse community and sustainable living. In collaboration our clients' partnership is capable of delivering, amongst other things, housing that addresses some of Stroud District's need in conjunction with a range of other sites.

2 Key Issues

1.0a Have we identified the top 5 issues for you?

GCC AMPS and The Ernest Cook Trust (ECT) note the relevance of a plan-led system as a means of delivering housing, employment and infrastructure to meet local needs.

Key Issue 1

GCC AMPS and ECT consider that the Wisloe site provides good access to existing services and infrastructure and sustainable development could be achieved there.

1.0b Do you agree with the ways we intend to tackle them?

A new settlement at Wisloe will serve to deliver the outcomes set out in Issue 1.

The NPPF addresses (at paragraph 72) that the supply of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for large scale developments which includes new settlements and goes on to say; *'Working with the support of their communities, and with other authorities if appropriate, strategic policy-making authorities should identify suitable locations for such development where this can help to meet identified needs in a sustainable way.'* (NPPF July 2018, para 72).

The NPPF supports planning for sufficient development now through the Local Plan process (with some flexibility) rather than risk unplanned and un-coordinated development in the future. The new settlement at Wisloe accords with the aims of NPPF and from a local perspective represents positive planning to meet local needs.

3 Issue Topics

2.1a Do you agree with the ways in which the emerging Strategy intends to support the Local economy and the creation of jobs?

A new settlement at Wisloe provides the opportunity to deliver the aims of the emerging strategy in respect of the local economy and the creation of jobs.

Often larger sites are able to deliver necessary service infrastructure to pump-prime the delivery of employment as part of mixed and balanced communities. However, they must be in the right locations and Wisloe is one such location that would be attractive to commercial business, given the excellent transport links.

Not everyone will live and work in the same settlement/location, so access to a range of travel modes is important to support the economy. Wisloe is well placed, with access to bus and existing rail, with the potential to contribute towards station improvements at Cam.

Homebuilding makes a major contribution to the economy and in this case, over the lifetime of the plan, the development of Wisloe would create significant employment for at least 20 years, contributing significantly to the local GVA as well as to national GDP.

2.3a Do you agree with the ways in which the emerging Strategy intends to meet local housing need?

There is a clear emphasis in the NPPF to deliver efficient housing development where there are sustainable reasons to do so. Throughout the NPPF, there is a consistent theme of flexibility in both plan making and during the application stage. This will allow development coming forward to adjust to changes in market conditions and to prevent sustainable development being stalled.

Wisloe is not a constrained site and is deliverable from the outset of the plan period to ensure that by the end of the period it has provided what the plan set out to achieve.

Wisloe has the potential to deliver wider social and environmental objectives and consequently there are opportunities to deliver a greater variety of housing solutions and tenures.

There is a need for a proportion of allocated sites to be smaller (as per the NPPF), these, along with any windfall allowance will deliver a significant number of self or custom build dwellings. The decision to deliver further custom or self-build dwellings on larger sites should be a choice for the developer to support timely delivery of housing on these particular sites.

We support a mix of dwelling types but policy should recognise that over the lifetime of the plan, the housing market will alter and a prescribed mix in one part of the district may not match need in another part of the District. Policy should be mindful of this and the need to allow the latest housing evidence to determine mix, at the time applications are made.

2.4a Do you agree with the ways in which the emerging Strategy intends to protect existing or deliver new local green spaces and community facilities?

Green infrastructure will underpin the proposed Wisloe settlement and serve a wide variety of environmental purposes, including high quality open space, biodiversity and community activity space. A robust green infrastructure framework for Wisloe will contribute to enhancing the existing landscape character of the local area.

3.2a Do you agree with the strategic objectives as drafted?

The strategic objectives positively align with the ambitions for the new settlement at Wisloe. In particular, it will have good access to services and deliver affordable housing to meet local needs. The structure of the settlement, based around a strong green infrastructure will deliver a sustainable pattern of living, including promoting walkable communities.

4.2a Do you support the broad approach of the emerging growth strategy in terms of distributing the growth required by national policy for Stroud District?

GCC AMPS and ECT support the new settlement at Wisloe along garden community principles, as envisaged through the Local Plan.

Wisloe sits at the heart of a network of small rural villages and the historic industrial settlements of Cam and Dursley. Those settlements have seen significant change in their employment structure as well as some transformational development which has provided high quality social and housing infrastructure. The scale of the proposed community at Wisloe is intended to complement the pattern of existing settlements by delivering exceptional quality and innovation within a green setting.

5.0a Do you support the proposed mini-vision for your area(s)?

GCC AMPS and ECT support the inclusion of Wisloe as a potential new settlement within the The Berkeley Cluster.

4 Land at Wisloe PS37

4.1 Do you support development at Wisloe in the following location? PS37 Land at Wisloe.

- 4.1.1 PS37 Land at Wisloe presents an opportunity to form a new, self-contained mid-sized settlement. GCC AMPS and ECT jointly own the land which comprises the area for the new settlement. This presents a significant opportunity to undertake a comprehensive approach to development with the joint owners working in partnership for the long term.
- 4.1.2 A new settlement at Wisloe allows GCC AMPS and ECT to facilitate a sustainable and high quality development through a partnership approach and to provide a positive legacy for Gloucestershire.
- 4.1.3 The new settlement at Wisloe will be distinct and separate from surrounding communities but will include facilities and benefits which will be accessible to neighbouring communities: employment, green space and community facilities.