



STROUD DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN REVIEW

**Written Statement**

*In response to the Matter 3 of the Matters, Issues and Questions*

*On behalf of Mrs R. Bish and Mr F. Russell*

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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 SF Planning have prepared this written statement in response to the Inspectors Matters, Issues and Questions produced to guide the Examination in Public into the Review of the Stroud Local Plan.
- 1.2 The following written statement has been prepared on behalf of our clients Mrs R. Bish and Mr F. Russell and comments on the soundness of the plan, particularly in relation to the settlement of Minchinhampton and level of proposed allocations for development.
- 1.3 Our clients own a site that lies adjacent to the safeguarded site PS05a at Woefulthane Bottom, Minchinhampton see figure 1 below, but is not currently included within any allocation.



**Figure 1 The Site**

- 1.4 It is our position that this site should be allocated, either as part of a wider allocation PS05 or PS05a; or as a small site stand-alone allocation for residential use.

## 2.0 Question 2

2.1 Question 2 of Matter 3, Issue 3 asks:

**The PPG advises that 'The cap reduces the minimum number generated by the standard method but does not reduce housing need itself. Therefore, strategic policies adopted with a cap applied may require an early review and updating to ensure that any housing need above the capped level is planned for as soon as is reasonably possible.'**

- a. **As the LHNA identifies a higher housing need above the capped level, what arrangements do the Council have for ensuring that this is planned for as soon as is reasonable? Is this clearly set out in the Plan?**
  
- b. **Whilst our queries on housing provision are set out under a later matter, we note that the evidence suggests that housing supply, as at 2020, equates to 14,935 dwellings. On this basis, has consideration been given to a higher level of housing need being set out in the Plan and could this realistically be delivered during the plan period?**

2.2 A higher level of housing development should be fully considered by the Council, and all needs should be planned for in order to be met. This is the socially responsible thing to do and would align with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which aims to boost the supply of housing to deliver 300,000 homes a year nationally.

- 2.3 There are sites such as my clients that hold potential as a small site to deliver further housing in a sustainable location, adjoining a larger settlement. This has not been allocated or identified for future growth options. Therefore, with opportunities to help meet housing needs in full, this matter should be reconsidered by the Council.
- 2.4 Allocation of smaller sites, such as my clients land, means that delivery can come forwards sooner, than larger sites, often with less concerns over deliverability. The Land at Woefulthane Bottom is available for development, and would help to address housing need within Stroud District.
- 2.5 Furthermore, meeting the full housing requirement over the plan period would help to address the issue of affordability, most especially in settlements such as Minchinhampton, where owing to its location and sense of place, this is a much sought after location, and consequently the affordability of housing can be a barrier especially to first time buyers. Evidence base document EB72 (electronic page 23) identifies that average house prices in Minchinhampton were £470,000 when the work was undertaken in 2018. This compared to the average house price in the UK at that time of £226,000. It is unlikely this situation will have drastically improved since.
- 2.6 Evidence base document (reference: EB72) the Stroud District Settlement Role and Function Study (Update 2018) highlights that  
*“Minchinhampton and Painswick are amongst the district’s most vulnerable large settlements in terms of ageing population and socio-economic trends. Both are highly constrained, and both have experienced low rates of growth”.*
- 2.7 A lack of growth has led to Minchinhampton being identified as a vulnerable settlement. It should be an aim of the Council to remedy this, through allowing growth to take place in this location, which would also boost the local economy.

## 3.0 Summary and Conclusion

- 3.1 In conclusion, we feel that housing needs should be met in full through this plan review, and not left to be addressed at a later date. Especially when there are opportunities for allocating further sites for development.
- 3.2 Taking account of evidence that Minchinhampton is a vulnerable settlement, that has suffered from constrained growth in the past, and that Minchinhampton is identified as a sustainable settlement for development, we feel housing needs can be addressed further through the wider allocation for sites PS05a and our clients land.

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