

Response to Stroud District Councils Local Plan Review

Comments from Dursley Running Club and Dursley Rugby Club – 01/02/2019

2.4 Local green spaces and community facilities

The majority of comments identified a lack of sporting facilities, including sports fields with changing rooms, and children's play areas within neighbourhoods, together with a need to expand or improve existing facilities.

The clubs would agree with these sentiments. From a running and athletic perspective, the District as a whole has limited facilities and Dursley Running Club is of the view that better facilities are key to sustaining the interest and growth of running, triathlon and athletics in the community. Without investment, the ability to meet the needs of a diverse community are limited, for example training on road and pavement is extremely difficult for any disabled athlete. The lack of dedicated facilities creates a range of issues for the clubs trying to provide safe and inclusive training environment.

Dursley Rugby Club is also an extremely successful club in terms of numbers and participation levels – the Mini and Youth section (of around 400 members) plus 3 Senior Men's teams and a Senior Women's Team, plus a Cricket Club that runs Junior and Women's Cricket as well as playing in the local Men's league.

Providing increased space and improved surfaces (for example all weather surfaces) would mean more activity could be achieved and sustained.

From a running and athletics perspective the need to use facilities in Yate and or Gloucester means more time taken up in travel, greater costs and also Dursley Running Club finds difficulties in gaining access to the facilities as priority is given to local clubs. There is a distinct lack of a running, track and field facilities in the District. Various schools and clubs provide grass track facilities but these facilities tend to be limited to the summer period and poor weather can still impact on their use of these periods. Consideration need to be given not just to playing fields but also the provision of facilities that promote wider range of athletic activities.

Similarly, the rugby club sections make use of all weather surfaces elsewhere, at considerable cost in terms of travel and money, with some of these surfaces not being designed for rugby thereby making them less than ideal.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • policy protection for important open spaces within settlements, outdoor recreation facilities, playing fields or allotments within or relating to settlements 	<p>The clubs support this objective in particular the land around the clubs at Stinchcombe. Whilst currently agricultural it provides opportunities to enhance the offer for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • existing members of the clubs • those wanting take apart in activity and or sport <p>as well as enhancing green linkages to Cam and Dursley</p> <p>Allocation of these areas for sports and / or community activities, and protection of these spaces in future would be welcomed.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a set of standards for local open space, sport and recreation facility provision, to guide future development 	<p>Again, the clubs welcome this objective, and a wider understanding of the needs of communities beyond “playing pitches” is a key element of such standards. Dursley Running Club along with many other clubs has seen a large growth in “social runners” ensuring appropriate facilities are in place for these “athletes” as well as those engaged in competition is vitally important.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • site opportunities to address shortfalls in local open space, sport, recreation and community facility provision and to address gaps in the GI network and enhance the network function 	<p>The clubs again are supportive of this objective subject to earlier comments.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dursley and Uley Greenway and potential to deliver a Wotton under Edge, Kingswood and Charfield Greenway 	<p>The clubs would suggest that the Greenway should also consider linking Stinchcombe and Slimbridge as well as potential new developments. This is particularly important where existing footpaths are affected by development.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • opportunities to address identified community needs in association with new development through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and s106 agreements 	<p>Again the clubs are highly supportive of this and would highlight the opportunities the Sports Hub at Stinchcombe currently offers</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support for the planned provision of community facilities alongside housing growth, through master planning of strategic and other major developments 	<p>Whilst supporting the principle, the clubs would highlight the need for existing facilities to be enhanced and where possible assist in the integration of new developments into existing communities where this is appropriate.</p>

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Question 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?

Both clubs support this in broad terms - see comments above

Question 2.4b

The clubs would highlight the importance of enhancing or developing facilities within existing communities as well as considering the needs of new developments. This needs to be driven by an understanding of how to make improved facilities sustainable in terms of usage and also in terms of access. We would like to see a specific commitment to improve/provide facilities for healthy activity and sport in the Cam and Dursley area. Effectively master plans should consider the relationship of the new developments with the existing community and consider off site contributions where this would be of benefit.

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Broader issues:

Key Issue 1	
<p>Issue 1: Ensuring new housing development is located in the right place, supported by the right services and infrastructure to create sustainable development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creating new sustainable communities at locations where development can transform existing access to services and infrastructure; 	<p>The clubs are mindful of the potential growth in households in Cam and Dursley over the coming years and understand the need for more homes to meet the District needs. These households will require infrastructure to support healthy activity and sport and the Clubs believe the current “sports hub” at Stinchcombe is uniquely placed to assist in providing part of this offer for Cam and Dursley</p>
Key issue 2:	
<p>Conserving and enhancing Stroud District’s countryside and biodiversity, including maximising the potential for a green infrastructure network across the District.</p>	<p>Both clubs are very supportive of green links, and also think that consideration should be given to building these into residential developments in the area especially where such developments impact on existing public footpaths used by walkers and runners. Attractive and healthy linkages will encourage more activity and a healthier community.</p>
<p>Your top suggestions for tackling this issue:</p>	
<p>Establishing green links along river/canal corridors; and expanding the boundaries of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).</p> <p>Issue 2: Conserving and enhancing Stroud District’s countryside and biodiversity including maximising the potential for a green infrastructure network across the District</p>	
Key issue 4:	
<p>Developing strategies to avoid, reduce and mitigate the indirect impacts of development on the natural environment. Your top suggestions for tackling this issue: Protecting greenfield land from unnecessary development; conserving and enhancing open spaces and wildlife habitats</p>	<p>The clubs are again very supportive of reduction in and mitigation of the impact of development, accepting that development is needed to meet other priorities. Ensuring that a local sports hub (s) exists that allows residents of Cam and Dursley to access healthy activities and sport would help reduce the amount of vehicular travel and</p>

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	<p>would be of benefit. Again consideration should be given to the potential role of the area around the current sports hub at Stinchcombe to enhance the land available for activity and sport as well as promoting wildlife habitats</p>
<p>Qu1a Have we identified the top 5 issues for you?</p>	<p>The clubs are primarily interested in the issue of appropriate infrastructure and facilities that support healthy lifestyles and engagement with sport</p>
<p>Qu 1b Do you agree with the ways we intend to tackle these issues?</p>	<p>The plan is focused on the new developments planned, the clubs also feel that there is probably a deficit in infrastructure for sporting and healthy activities and that consideration needs to be given to ensuring the relevant amenities are in place for both existing and future households. As already mentioned green infrastructure within new developments and linking it to existing green infrastructure is not just an issue along canals and rivers but needs to take into account the rural setting of towns such as Dursley and Cam (and others in the district), and the surrounding villages. Mitigation is not only about protection of the existing environment but also addressed by ensuring high quality design of new developments</p>
<p>Question 2.2a Do you agree with the ways in which the emerging Strategy intends to support the District's town centres?</p>	<p>The clubs would support the objective of improved walking and cycling links connecting Dursley with Cam and Uley, and suggest finding ways to connect to surrounding villages is also of value.</p>
<p>Question 2.2b Do you support an alternative approach? Or have we missed anything?</p>	<p>Improved walking and cycling links to Stinchcombe, Slimbridge and new developments planned should also be considered. How the plan links to the County Council's Transport Strategies and plans is important, and the plan should ensure that walking and cycling can be carried out safely and in a pleasant and healthy environment.</p>

