

Local Plan Review, Emerging Strategy Paper
The Planning Strategy Team
Stroud District Council
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Comments on Local Plan Review Emerging Strategy Paper – Location LEO 004

We attended the public exhibition at Stonehouse on 13th December and spoke with several members of the planning team. We live in Seven Waters, Leonard Stanley and are writing to express concerns about the selection on p 65 of the two fields behind Seven Waters (LEO004) as sites with some future potential for housing.

We strongly disagree with the choice of Location LEO004 and believe it should be removed from the review for the following reasons:

- The recent planning application (S.15/1417/OUT) for 44 houses on the land parcel to the east of Seven Waters was refused and the subsequent appeal (APP/C1625/W/16/3150621) dismissed. On balance, the inspector concluded that development would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area and would not be a sustainable form of development. He said that the development would represent a noticeable and jarring encroachment into countryside that would materially harm the existing pleasant and distinctive degree of openness associated with this site and the contribution it makes to the setting of the village. His conclusions, although addressed at the planning application for the west field of LEO004, are equally valid for the adjacent site in the east field.
- There are factual errors in the p 65 map. These errors were present and pointed out in the previous review in October 2017, but have still not been corrected. The current houses being built on Mankley Field/Saxon Gate and Woodside Field are not shown on the map. This distorts the view of the size of the village of Leonard Stanley, especially when you consider how many extra houses have already been accommodated there and on the recent Mankley Road development.
- The p 65 map does not show contours. The field behind Seven Waters has a steep slope and is not suitable for building houses. It would also contribute to the visual prominence of any development there from Seven Waters and beyond.
- Seven Waters comprises an historic ribbon development of houses along Bath Road. The proposed development is outside the settlement boundary and is an important green space with a very well-used footpath in the east field and impressive views. With the proposed Mankley Field and Mankley Road developments (199 extra houses), Leonard Stanley already has more than its fair share of new houses allocated for a Tier 3 settlement with 600 current houses and few amenities. Existing settlement boundaries should not be altered as they define the character of small settlements.
- The proposed development is not sustainable. Leonard Stanley has no shops, doctors or dentists. The local school is already full and will not even be able to accommodate the new Mankley Field demand. The nearest shops are in Kings Stanley (1 mile away) and most people would require a bus or car journey to use them. Stonehouse shops and railway station are even further away (2 miles). The footpath to Stonehouse through the fields is lovely but also rough and muddy. It is at least a 30 minute walk for an average person and is not suitable for a family shopping trip.
- The local bus service is only hourly and does not pass the proposed development. The buses are already crowded at certain times of the day, even before the Mankley developments are built.

- Seven Waters is part of the historic heart of Leonard Stanley. The village was mentioned in the Domesday Book. Greenstiles is near to Leonard Stanley's Norman Church (1131), Saxon Church (about 900) and Tithe Barn. Seven Waters has a rich history including a tannery, mills and old buildings. Many of the older existing buildings are listed, particularly the Old Post Office, the Grange, Brookside and Tannery House. The setting of these adjacent listed buildings will be affected by the proposed development.
- These fields provide the only immediate access from the village to a tranquil countryside environment. The noise from the houses and traffic in this new development would severely impact on this tranquillity and reduce the quality of life for local residents.
- The Biton brook running through the development site supplied the original seven ponds from which the Seven Waters name originated. An 1884 map of the area shows a mill pond located in the lower area of the fields where the brook has its flood plain. It has regularly flooded in recent years with a deep pond returning for several months at a time.
- A large range of wildlife species and birds currently enjoy these fields and hedgerows. Our garden lies on the southern boundary of both fields and we have several years of wildlife camera video and photos of foxes, badgers, roe deer, hedgehogs, bats and an otter accessing our garden from the stream. Foxes and badgers are recorded most nights. We have recorded over 40 species of birds using our garden. Many nest in the hedges and brambles in the fields. Grass snakes have also been seen in and passing through our garden and adders in the brook. Water vole holes can be seen on the banks and we have even seen kingfishers by the brook.
- The sewer passing through the eastern field has a history of blocking, particularly in 2016 when a water tanker being used to clear the sewer became stuck in the field for about a week. The sewer will not be able to cope with extra load imposed by further development. There are overhead power cables running across both fields.
- Leonard Stanley is incorrectly identified as a Tier 3A settlement. It is more suited to Tier 5. The village is in danger of being over-developed with few facilities to sustain such development. As there is no work, it will simply become a dormitory settlement for Bristol and Gloucester and further afield, resulting in vast numbers of car journeys and a decline in the community of the village.
- Access to the western field is from a fast road with no pavement. The roads through and around the village are narrow and also lacking pavements in places. The eastern field is located between two dangerous bends with fast moving traffic, particularly approaching Seven Waters where traffic is usually reduced to single file due to parked vehicles. A traffic survey carried out by local residents between 7 and 9am on 15/7/15 showed an average of 200 vehicles per hour using Bath Road, with a peak flow of 250 per hour. Village roads will be unable to cope with any increased demand, especially after the extra flow that has been produced from the Mankley and Woodside developments.
- The character of Leonard Stanley derives from the open spaces currently in and around the village and developments such as this would contribute to the erosion of this character. We do not want to lose any more valuable green areas. Green spaces are important for the mental health and physical wellbeing of the residents. The proposed developments should not be inflicted upon small villages with no infrastructure and facilities. They should be located near to sources of employment, doctors' surgeries, supermarkets and other amenities.

Villages with no sustainability should not be turned into dormitory settlements just to make up numbers. The roads simply cannot cope and the peace, wellbeing and tranquillity of the inhabitants should not be sacrificed.

