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BY EMAIL

**Planning Strategy Team
Local Plan Consultation
The Planning Strategy Team
Stroud District Council
Ebley Mill
Westward Road
Stroud
GL5 4UB**

11 December 2020

Dear Planning Strategy Team,

Stroud District Local Plan Review – Additional Housing Options Focused Consultation

I refer to the above and I write to you on behalf of the landowners of a site in Eastington.

We welcome the opportunity to respond to the Additional Housing Options focused consultation document issued in October 2020. We have read and carefully considered the additional housing options consultation document, which explains that the Council may have to find land for an additional 1,050 – 2,400 homes in the Plan period to 2040.

In terms of the spatial options, we support a hybrid approach of intensifying the use of existing and allocated sites (Option A) and promoting more growth within larger villages (Option B). We do not consider that the scale of the additional housing requirement is so great that it justifies an additional growth point (Option C), or an approach of 'wider dispersal' (Option D). These options (C and D) would be unsustainable and would have negative environmental consequences; they would also represent a major departure from the established growth strategy for the district.

With specific regard to Eastington, the landowners control the fields beyond the south-east edge of the existing Eastington village settlement. Two Title plans are enclosed to show the full extent of the landholdings. Part of the village edge is

formed by the Swallowcroft development, which was allowed on appeal in 2014 (APP/C1625/A/13/2201018) . The Draft Revised Local Plan proposes to include this development within a revised settlement development limit (Appendix A ref SDL-EAS01).

Given the size of Eastington, its good accessibility and wide range of services and facilities, it is unclear why the Draft Plan did not include any allocations for modest growth. However, given the need to consider additional housing options to meet the identified shortfall, we do think that Eastington should be reconsidered as a good candidate to accommodate some modest growth.

There is some Planning history on the southern part of the land controlled by the landowners. An application for 30 units was refused and an appeal dismissed in 2015 (LPA ref S.14/1049/OUT and PINS ref APP/C1625/W/14/3000677). The Inspector's reasoning, in our view, related to quite subjective 'character, appearance and landscape' reasons. At the time, we did consider a legal challenge as the Inspector appeared to apply disproportionate weight to undesignated landscape / countryside. We also considered that one of the main objections, concerning the gap between Eastington and the hamlet of Middle Street, could be addressed with a different layout design.

It should be noted that, since the appeal decision, we have not actively put this site forward. However, given the significant issues identified in the Focused Consultation, we consider that a modest village extension in this location could provide an appropriate and sustainable development. This would support 'Option B' as set out in the consultation document. It will also help to meet local housing needs, including 30% affordable homes, and contribute to maintaining the village's diversity and demographic vitality.

We therefore request that the Planning Strategy Team gives consideration to an allocation of circa 30 dwellings on the land to the south-east of the Eastington settlement boundary. My clients would be happy to undertake a masterplanning type exercise, and would also be supportive of a criteria based policy allocation which addressed landscape, access, open space and affordable housing matters.

If the Strategy Team wishes to have further discussions about this modest growth option, or requires any further information, please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted signature block]

Enclosures: Title Plans