



CAM PARISH COUNCIL

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Open letter regards Stroud District Councils Local Plan Review

To whom it may concern

Our parish will be significantly affected by the recent planning reforms aimed at accelerating housing development near commuter train stations. It is essential that the district has a robust strategy to manage the impacts on our community in the face of this inevitable surge. Cam Parish Council has, therefore, been following the progress of the draft local plan with great anticipation.

The examiner's decision to recommend rejection of the draft local plan was not unexpected. The undeliverable large-scale development at Sharpness, combined with the lack of sustainable and viable transport infrastructure, has been the primary cause of the plan's failure. The parish remains unconvinced by the evidence presented for Wisloe and still has concerns about the deliverability of the pedestrian bridge to the station.

Cam Parish Council has serious concerns about Stroud's approach to delaying a resolution by challenging the examiner's conclusions further. Resistance to accommodate the examiner's concerns will only lead to more frustration and delay, leaving parishes surrounding villages with a station like Cam and Stonehouse vulnerable to speculative applications. Any further spending of taxpayers' money should be opposed given the intractable issues highlighted by national highways (ref 3rd Feb 2025) and South Gloucestershire Unitary Authority who are only considering modifications to Junction 14 to suit their own local plan.

However, the examiners' conclusions present a valuable opportunity to re-evaluate the district-wide development strategy and align it with the updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Every month of delay brings us closer to the adopted local plan's end date in 2031 and reduces the opportunity to explore a more relevant new draft local plan.

Much has changed since the draft local plan was first conceived. Stroud now benefits from newly appointed officers with the technical, analytical, and interpersonal skills needed to navigate the complex demands of shaping communities. Additionally, political motivations have shifted. The devolution of responsibilities will create further challenges and future changes.

Cam is working on its own development strategy to create a sense of place within an expanding community and evolving landscape. This builds on the foundation laid in the adopted local plan and our own Neighbourhood Development Plan. It offers an ambitious yet pragmatic approach to development. We urge Stroud to adopt a similar approach, moving away from the attitudes of past administrations.

We need a strong and acceptable local plan that provides some level of certainty in these otherwise very uncertain times.

Yours sincerely

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