

Proposals

PSB3 - Employment Land

This proposed 33 acre employment site sits in undeveloped greenbelt land and amounts to some 30% of the employment land proposed by the plan.

Para 145 of the national planning policy framework provides that green belt boundaries can be reviewed in strategic plans where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified. The draft local plan appears to seek to vary the green belt but it is not clear that exceptional circumstances are evidenced and justified. The parish council would highlight the fact that there is no shortage of employment land within the parish with some 300 acres of greenfield land allocated for employment use with an extant planning consent for both warehousing and office development along with other commercial uses and over 100 acres of brownfield (previously developed) land within the safeguarded employment area and the parish.

In addition the draft local plan advises that there is an imbalance of employment with very high levels of employment (labour index indicates more than full employment) on Severnside and the North fringe of Bristol (3b3) and also an overreliance on two locations, one of which is Severnside (3b9). Additional provision on Severnside would worsen these problems rather than address them.

The site is accessed via a B-Class road which is subject to weight restrictions in all directions for the protection of infrastructure and residential amenity. The proposed development would substantially erode this protection as the weight limit would not apply to the potentially very large number of vehicles accessing the site. Further the site is not well served by public transport with only a single hourly bus provision from Cribbs Causeway and no weekday trains at the nearby Pilning station so is not a sustainable proposal.

In summary the proposed allocation is unsuitable as it contravenes national planning policy, fails to respond to the key issues identified within the plan and would not be sufficiently accessible to be considered sustainable.

Residential provision

The parish council note the plan's objective to provide some 9,653 new homes across the District. Whilst the parish's neighbourhood plan housing needs assessment has identified a need for homes in our parish it is recognised that there are significant constraints on allocation via the local plan due to the sequential test. The parish council are pleased to see reference to the Pilning and Severn Beach Neighbourhood Plan and hope that the progress that is being made with the Neighbourhood Plan will be reflected in later iterations of the draft local plan including appropriate policy hooks for the small changes to the green belt that are required for the delivery of new homes to keep our communities sustainable.

Planning for Traveller Communities

The Parish Council recognise and support the need to allocate sites for the traveller community in the same way that sites are allocated for housing.

The proposal to safeguard existing authorized sites and in particular the proposal to remove existing sites from the green belt is noted. Whilst the intention of the proposal is understood there is a high probability that sites that are no longer in the green belt will be made available to the market for other forms of development of higher value as the restrictions of the green belt will have been lost. As such the policy proposed is at risk of reducing the number of available traveler sites rather than increasing them.

The parish of Pilning and Severn Beach is dominated by flood zone 3 and the National planning policy framework is clear that caravan sites for permanent residence are not permissible in this zone. Where time limited consents have been granted for traveller site development the removal of the time restriction coupled with our understanding of the increased risk of flooding due to climate change would result in the introduction of unacceptable levels of risk to members of the traveller community from flooding. It is important that the allocation of sites including the removal of restrictions from existing sites undergoes the sequential test to ensure that inhabitants are safe.

Omissions

Truck stop

Sevenside is dominated by a concentration of large distribution warehouses and consequently generates a very high volume of heavy goods vehicle trips. The welfare of the vehicle drivers must be considered and adequate facilities provided for them where occupiers fail to meet their statutory obligations in this respect. A truck stop with parking provisions and welfare facilities is long overdue and it is disappointing that the draft local plan does not make a proposed allocation for this use. Sites within the enterprise area are suitable for this purpose without imposing any detrimental impact on or conflict with residential amenity and the parish council would urge South Gloucestershire Council to consider the sustainability and suitability of a safeguarded employment area that consistently fails to make provision for welfare.

Spine Road

A new spine road connecting Severn Road with the new M49 motorway junction was a commitment in the previous local plan and it is disappointing to note that this has not been delivered. The new draft local plan does not make reference to a new road and the Parish Council would urge South Gloucestershire to consider incorporation of this much needed road.

Daycare

It is understood that the Severnside enterprise area could provide some 20,000 new jobs but these are unlikely to appeal unless adequate services are provided to workers. With some 50% of the workforce traveling from Wales to Severnside on a daily basis it is important that daycare facilities are provided close to jobs otherwise staff are required to pay for approximately 3 extra hours of daycare each day whilst they are commuting. This is not sustainable. Proper local provision of daycare would also benefit our communities.

Severn Beach station

Due to its proximity to the motorways Severn Beach station has become a commuter terminal for workers accessing central and suburban Bristol yet it is understood that it remains the only station in South Gloucestershire with no car park. In addition the station has no proper transport hub which would allow workers to access the abundant jobs on Western Approach and Severnside. The local plan should provide sustainable transport infrastructure.

Severn Beach Seafront

Severn Beach is South Gloucestershire's premier seaside destination drawing large numbers of visitors to the King Charles III coastal path, sights of the iconic bridges, the internationally significant migratory bird population and the fascinating history, both ancient and modern. The draft local plan fails to address the need for tourism and leisure facilities outside of town centres. Unlike many sectors day tourism expenditure has increased in spite of the cost of living crisis and this oversight in provision will harm the economic fortunes of the district. Rural leisure activities tend to be good for health so if the plan's objective to impact quality of life is to be achieved there should be a focus on delivering the infrastructure needed for this and in turn to allow the rural and seaside economies to prosper.