



# STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

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## Members of the Public's Questions to Council.

Questions from Steve Willetts
<b>Question 1</b>
Has the action plan changed in terms of timings and substance and what can the public expect to happen in the coming months specifically: when can the public expect consultation to start on any proposed changes assuming a pause is agreed; what notice will be given for the actual start of consultation; how and over what timescale is consultation expected to take place; what areas of the DLP are likely to change and hence require consultation?
<b>Reply 1</b>
<p>The September Action Plan to which you refer was an action plan sent to the Inspectors at that point in time, setting out what we would do in the 6 month pause we requested from the Inspectors. They have not yet granted a 6 month pause and so no action plan has been implemented. The 6 month period requested for the action plan to be implemented would start running from the time a pause is agreed.</p> <p>However, the September action plan has been superseded by a Joint Action Plan, as requested by the Inspectors, that concentrates on further work on M5 junction capacity with National Highways (NH) Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) and South Gloucestershire Council (SGC). The Joint Action Plan was published by the Programme Officer 8<sup>th</sup> December in the Examination Library. The Council is now waiting to hear back from the Inspectors regarding the 6 month pause and the Joint Action Plan.</p> <p>The Council is not currently proposing any changes to the draft Local Plan, any future consultation will be at the discretion of the Inspectors and is not in the control of the Council.</p>
<b>Question 2</b>
<p>With respect to housing supply, actions within the plan included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assessing the potential for additional housing supply from existing allocated sites not impacting on M5 junctions 12 or 14 (i.e. increasing densities)</li><li>• Assessing the potential from other sites already taken through the Sustainability Appraisal process, and not impacting on M5 junctions 12 or 14, but not included in the final draft Plan SDC NH GCC September – October 2023</li><li>• Discussions with site promoters of other potential sites re: deliverability</li></ul> <p>Has potential to increase densities on existing allocations been identified and are other sites likely to be proposed for inclusion in a updated draft plan that were either identified but not included in the final draft or are now newly identified and deliverable?</p>
<b>Reply 2</b>
<p>The Joint Action plan requested by the Inspectors focuses on delivering the current draft Local Plan and does not include looking to increase housing densities on identified sites or including new sites.</p>
<b>Question 3</b>
<p>Are lessons being learnt from other Draft Local Plans that are currently going through the regulatory process that would help ensure a sound plan especially from surrounding Councils where there will be common issues and stakeholder and partner overlaps? If so, what are these lessons?</p>
<b>Reply 3</b>
<p>There are no two Local Plans which are exactly the same and each examination is unique, although Stroud is not the only district to have issues with the Strategic Road Network and like</p>



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others, is reliant on statutory partners responsible for the highway network as recognised by the Inspectors. SDC has worked and is working very closely with its neighbouring councils and relevant statutory consultees such as National Highways to understand and resolve any issues with the draft Local Plan.

SDC monitors and discusses other Local Plan progress across the country and although, as already mentioned, no local plan or examination is the same, SDC looks to learn lessons and understand best practice. Currently, it is clear from a number of other examinations where the Government has intervened and advised against withdrawing draft Local Plans, that the examination process should be used to deliver Local Plans by resolving issues and working to make them sound through the examination process.

It is now important we work with the Inspectors to address the issues they have raised and deliver the Local Plan, taking into account any modifications the Inspectors believe are required to make the draft Local Plan sound.