



STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Public Questions to Housing Committee.

Question from Becky Sage

Question 1 :

It's understood that should planning be sought for the proposed site at The Knoll, Uley the proposal could include an increase from 8 current dwellings to 18. Please could you confirm how this is considered viable given the narrow access, dangerously sharp bend at the entrance/exit of the site, poor visibility, proximity to the primary school, existing parking problems and congestion as a result of school traffic, residents on-road vehicles and Prema Arts visitors.

In addition to this there is a stretch of road in the immediate proximity of the proposed site which isn't even served by a pavement, onto which residents have direct access, for some this is their only access to their homes. Considering increasing the volume of traffic here is preposterous.

The congestion in South Street already significantly impacts on the main highway (The Street) with an increasing number of vehicles over-flowing onto this road, on both sides, causing visibility issues for pedestrians (in particular children and the elderly) needing to cross a busy road, and drivers pulling out of South Street onto The Street.

We look forward to hearing your solution to what is clearly a significant challenge and a great concern to local residents.

Question from Jenny Atkins

Question 2 :

Could the Council explain how they can justify considering increasing the number of units on this site given the wholly unsuitable state of South Street:

- This is a narrow road, with sharp bends and in places, no pavement.
- The road is heavily utilised by parents dropping off to, and collecting from, the primary school.
- During peak times, cars often have to reverse to make way for other cars, children are walking in the road (as no pavement) and cars are parked up on verges.
- There are frequent occasions when parked cars would prevent an emergency vehicle accessing lower parts of the road.
- The entrance to South Street is narrow and has limited visibility for both exiting to, and entering from, The Street. This can result in cars backing up on The Street and also causes a safety issue at busy times when children are crossing over the street by this junction.
- The road continues to be in a poor state of repair due to the disproportionate number of vehicles using it already.

Uley is a rural village with limited amenities so any increase in housing units would naturally come with an increase in vehicles using the road.

Reply to Q1 and 2 combined

The Committee report sets out the reasons for considering the opportunity to redevelop at the Knoll. Redevelopment addresses the limitations of refurbishing the Swedish Timber houses and there are several benefits to redevelopment over refurbishment shown in Table 1. Both options are preferable to selling the Swedish Timber houses and losing council housing stock.

Redevelopment has the potential to significantly increase the number of affordable units in Uley and helps towards the increasing demand for affordable homes more generally. This also supports CW2.1 of the Council Plan and is in line with our Strategy for New Council Homes as set out in the report. As referenced in paragraph 2.6 delivery of any new homes will provide highly energy efficient properties resulting in lower running costs to our tenants. The homes would also be designed to Part M4(2) of the Building Regulations (Accessible and Adaptable dwellings) providing housing which is sustainable for the longer term.

Traffic surveys would be undertaken prior to submission of any planning application; to understand the likely increase in trip generation, the visibility splay requirements and other highway impacts. Officers also seek pre-app advice from GCC Highways and revise our proposals to reflect that advice and comments made, this may impact on the number of units on the site.

The majority of the properties at 1 to 8 the Knoll have no vehicular access and rely on the small residents-only car park for parking. This car park will remain. In any proposal coming forward all new homes will also benefit from the addition of their own off-road parking.

Officers are considering different layouts for the Knoll, hence these have not been included at this stage as numbers may change significantly.

The recommendation in the Committee report reflects the early stage of these proposals, with further work on layouts, financial and funding appraisals to be finalised. Further consultation and engagement with our tenants and private owners who are impacted will also take place before a final recommendation can be made.

A decision to approve the recommended options enables us to be clear and open about what the council is proposing and gives approval to commit further resources on progressing these options.

Should the final recommendation be to take forward this site for redevelopment, and if this is approved by Committee, I would like to assure local residents that prior to any planning application being submitted, a public consultation would be undertaken to provide them with an opportunity to review the proposals and make comments, that will then be taken into consideration.