TO:

Choose an item.

From:

INSERT OWN NAME AND ADDRESS HERE

NAME

ADDRESS

Dear Choose an item.

Re: The Forest of Dean Local Plan Preferred Option

I am writing to highlight my response to the above Local Plan Preferred Option, in particular my concerns for the proposed development plans for Churcham, Huntley and the surrounding areas.

My particular concerns are:

**Economic impacts:**

* Settlement on the boundary of Forest of Dean and Tewkesbury Districts will feed into Gloucester and Cheltenham, and starve the Forest of Dean District of investment and footfall
* Any development or investment - whether housing, businesses or infrastructure - in Forest towns and on brownfield land deemed economically unviable by Council’s Economic Viability Assessment – a death knell to our Forest communities
* Will businesses be attracted to invest in towns and villages which the local council does not appear to deem worthy of investment?

**Social Impacts:**

* Development of a new town of 4,000+ houses will not be in keeping with the scale and character of existing local communities
* Viability assessments point towards a deliberate dismissal of the potential and value of Forest of Dean towns and communities, whose future, growth and prosperity are being disregarded in favour of housing developers’ profits.
* Can development that ignores Forest towns and villages be justified against the subsequent lack of support for young people who seek to build their lives here?

**Environmental impacts:**

* Flood risk: Churcham is the lowest-lying point in the Forest of Dean District
* Land Plan proposal to build on swathes of Green land contradicts *Local Plan Issues and Options Document (*[*https://www.fdean.gov.uk/media/metf0tlh/issue-and-options-document.pdf*](https://www.fdean.gov.uk/media/metf0tlh/issue-and-options-document.pdf)*)* where it states “Previously developed land- make best use of ; Policies to support and bring forward previously developed land”
* Light pollution, traffic pollution, and just the actual property development process of noise, waste generation and machinery outputs (noise, disturbing the soil/land, pollution etc)

**Impact to wildlife and animals:**

* Settlement of 4,000+ houses just metres from the RSPB Highnam Woods Reserve will inflict unsustainable levels of light pollution and disturbance on protected species
* Development on greenfield land will necessitate destruction of habitats that cannot be replicated elsewhere
* This area of proposed development will increase traffic which runs directly alongside Highnam Woods, increasing noise, pollution and increasing the chances that more wildlife will be in danger of being hit by passing vehicles.

**Infrastructure:**

* This proposal will require extensive infrastructure that will impose irrevocable changes to the landscape stretching within and beyond Highnam, Minsterworth and Churcham

**Transportation and Employment:**

* Questionable viability of a cycle lane to compensate for the influx of 8,000+ cars on the A40/A48 if the development of a new settlement goes ahead.
* Creation of a Park and Ride will simply serve to carry those in a settlement on the cusp of the Forest of Dean out of the District, into Gloucester. No provision has been made to induce prospective communities to engage with, and invest in, Forest business.
* These suggestions of a cycle lane and a park and ride scheme assume that people will work in Gloucester or the close local areas. This poses the question where these people in this large development will work as Gloucester and the Forest already show growing rates of unemployment based on figures pre-Covid-19 pandemic (May 2019). <https://inform.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/2090094/unemployment-bulletin_-may-19.pdf>
* There are already known issues on the roads leading into Gloucester from the Forest of Dean, specifically the A40 and A38, Highnam roundabout and ahead to Over and beyond. These roads struggle to cope with the volume of existing traffic let alone the volume of traffic that this prosed development will create. The statement in the proposal that people will travel by park and ride, bike is unrealistic due to above employment comment mentioned and many other considerations such weather conditions, getting children to and from locations, some people needing to transport equipment for work, some people working on different sites for work within a working day etc.

**Lack of consultation from the district council:**

* We feel that there has been a lack of consultation from the district council in this matter and a lack of transparency leading up to this decision. Few people have been made aware of this proposal and the information available, heavily relies on people being connect to the internet (something in which our area struggles with and is a known issue) and social media. Properties that directly neighbour the proposed development sites have not even been made aware specifically, let alone the rest of the villagers who this will directly impact severely.

I urge you to consider these points very carefully in the decision-making process.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Title