

I would like to register my support for the 'hybrid model' of distribution, which seems most appropriate and sustainable where housing concentrations are centred around the M5 corridor, close to important transport links and workplaces.

Where there would be a small number of social housing units (i.e. under 4), on a given site via conventional distribution, a policy of pooling the allocation into an alternative larger site at a more appropriate sustainable location should be considered to avoid social exclusion and isolation. For example, if a site has limited access to local services, and is remote and would require owning a car to get anywhere, it would be better to re-site the social housing in a location with better public transport provision and local shops (like close to or in Town Centres). This would make the housing more liveable and may help revive struggling Town Centres.

I also approve of having accommodation above shops, and even reconsidering the usage mix of centrally located areas. For example, it may no longer be possible to fill all shops in a Town Centre with retail units given changing customer demands, so it should be made possible for a change of use to allow residential areas of whole former-shop units to be converted to residential use. In areas such as Stroud Town Centre, this would allow a very dynamic and sustainable community, with housing potentially in very desirable locations close to the train station, shops and entertainment areas, while also fitting with the wider vision to rejuvenate the Town Centre.

I would further like to add comments relating to AONB status. I believe that the entire point of AONB status is that an area is, by definition, "Outstanding" as it currently is. Any suggestion that this status could be somehow weakened would be a perversion of the planning system which is supposed to protect such areas from exploitation. Clearly, damaging an AONB area in order to fulfil relatively short-term goals which we may be prioritising today fails to consider the principle of stewardship and long term sustainability, which we ought to be thinking about carefully when making decisions about sustainable development. It would be entirely inappropriate to somehow weaken the AONB protection for the sake of promoting renewable energy. It is obvious that renewable energy will be an important piece of the picture in tackling the undeniable Climate Crisis that we all face. However, what is the point of trying to take action to save the Climate if we are also, in the pursuit of that noble aim, destroying or damaging the landscape of our most sensitive and precious areas with these designations. These designations should always be considered as of utmost importance in planning terms.

I would like to also add that by far the most practical and successful renewable resource for generating renewable electricity at the current time is offshore wind power. This is because wind is much more consistent offshore, cost has come down exponentially in recent years and while it is still slightly more expensive when compared with onshore wind, it is also materially better given the increased output and relative lack of negative impacts such as local visibility concerns. The slightly increased cost is, given this, more than justified. Therefore, I believe that SDC should be lobbying the Government to promote offshore wind, helping to solve this issue at a national level rather than looking too closely towards trying to solve it locally. Locally, there is much that has been and is being done outside of the

planning system, and the support for making more new homes Carbon Neutral in the Local Plan is something which I support.

I would also like to make some comments regarding Core Policy CP3, the “Settlement Hierarchy”. I believe that this is well-structured and sensible, with a logic in its approach which is to be applauded; however, I disagree with the categorisation of where I live. Horsley is currently in Tier 3b: “Settlements with Local Facilities”. I really feel that Tier 4b, described as settlements with “Basic Facilities” is far more appropriate. I suggest this because I do not believe that we have significant facilities, and those which we do have are basic and minimal (which fits the description of Tier 4b). The Horsley Shop, for example, is volunteer run and has limited stock. It cannot be considered analogous to a full-service retail chain, such as a Tesco Express, when it provides a far more limited service. Other village services, too, are run on a limited basis by volunteers. The local Playgroup is volunteer-run, and the Church and Village Hall are largely supported by volunteers.

Indeed, as someone who cannot yet drive myself, I find that the facilities we do have don't meet all day to day requirements, and there is a frequent need to travel to Nailsworth to do things like visit a Post Office, go to the library or visit the GP surgery. Most other Tier 3b settlements do have a Post Office and a library, for example, which shows how Horsley is not comparable with other settlements in its current Tier. The Draft Local Plan itself also states that we have one of the smallest populations of any Tier 3 settlement, which further shows how inappropriate this categorisation is. I believe we have more in common with a place like Sheepscombe, which is in Tier 4b. I also believe that there is an extremely limited scope for new development of any types in Horsley, for the following reasons: its high degree of environmental sensitivity and location within the AONB; the rural character and disparate nature of hamlet areas which make up the village, showing how the overall size of Horsley is really not representative of how remote and rural it actually is; the lack of accessibility given that the main road into and through the village is winding, narrow and frequently cut off by flooding making it impassable at times of heavy rainfall. Aspects of the village are also highly visible from nearby locations such as Kingscote, making them inappropriate for development. I therefore reject the idea that there is “scope for some development” (Tier3b), and instead believe that there is only “scope for very limited development to meet specific local [needs]” – Tier 4b. There is also a lack of need for employment growth in the village, as most villagers actually work from home – allowing them to work for any large company and still enjoy the peace and tranquillity of working in a remote countryside area. I consider our village to be very remote, as travelling out of the village towards Nympsfield is travelling into wall-to-wall countryside, and travelling towards Nailsworth is difficult due to the road being extremely winding, narrow (too narrow to meet road standards in places, so there is not a centre-line) and busy due to traffic volumes travelling between Nailsworth and Dursley, plus additional traffic travelling to Pyke Quarry Recycling Centre. This makes it a highly dangerous road where it would be inappropriate to add additional traffic volume through further development. We have also already had a substantial amount of development recently at Sealey Wood, which more than met local demand for new homes.

I have some further comments regarding Horsley. The Draft Local Plan incorrectly refers to the road through the village as the B4056 - it is actually the B4058. It also indicates that

there is "limited opportunity for housing" along this road, due to landscape sensitivity. I would argue that it is precisely because of the high level of landscape sensitivity, high level of visibility of this area and associated visual impact of any development, and the history of the site as a valued Green Space and unimproved ancient pasture land that any development at all in this area would be inappropriate. Virtually any development elsewhere in the village would be outside the settlement boundary, making it too inappropriate. Therefore, I believe that development in this village is simply not suitable and am pleased to see that no site allocation has been made in the Draft Plan. Indeed, I am pleased that Horsley was recognised as a small village, and consequently as not suitable for development, in order to maintain its unique character and sense of place by maintaining the dispersal of unique hamlets across a large geographic area.

Finally, although not strictly a planning matter, I would like to add that the current site of Pyke Quarry Recycling Centre is blatantly unsustainable and inappropriate from an environmental standpoint. It is an extremely remote location, on the edge of the District, so residents have to travel for miles in order to visit it, creating a large amount of CO₂ and pollutants in the process, which is damaging to air quality. It would be far more sensible to re-site this in a location adjacent to the new Javelin Park incinerator, so that waste could be taken more directly to the incinerator from the site where needed, and the majority of residents in the District would be far closer the site. Additionally, I believe it would be beneficial to bring back the mini recycling centres at supermarkets in the District, so residents could simply drop off their old recycling on the way to the supermarket. This would reduce unnecessary journeys and help reduce CO₂ output and air pollution across the District.

Thank you for considering my comments.