

### **Q1.0 a)**

I think all the issues presented as priority ones are important, particularly Issue 3: *Maximising the potential of brownfield and underused sites to contribute to housing supply*

For me, two of the top five issues, which I would want to see as high priority, perhaps would be Issue 21 in Appendix B - *Protecting and enhancing our historic environment whilst adapting to modern demands* and issue 22 - *Promoting high quality and locally distinctive design, incorporating where possible, innovative, space efficient and flexible forms for modern living and working.*

(To incorporate issues 21 and 22 into the top 5 I might reword Issue 4 to :*Developing strategies to avoid, reduce and mitigate the direct and indirect impacts of development on the natural and historic built environment.* Amongst ways to do this would then be by protecting and enhancing our historic environment ..... and by promoting high quality and distinctive design.....)

I feel these are issues which need to be addressed if the distinctive character of many of the towns, villages and landscape of the area is to be maintained, and ideally, enhanced. Raising these high on the agenda means that i) it shows the Council cares about and understands the importance of a visually attractive urban and rural environment, in terms of its impact upon: residents' and workers' well-being; civic pride; inward investment; tourism.

In other words, beauty is important in our buildings as well as in our natural landscape if we are not only to protect and appreciate what we have, but to leave a legacy of good, well-designed buildings for the future.

### **Q1.0b**

I agree with the ways you will address the issues you put as the top 5, particularly for issue 3

**Issue 1.** I especially agree with prioritising building on brownfield and infill sites, which apparently was a top suggestion by respondents but which does not appear in your proposals.

**Issue 2.** I agree with respondent suggestions to establish green links along river/canal corridors and like the idea of expanding the boundaries of the AONB (although see that this might be difficult), again neither of which appear in your own proposals which, although sensible, seem a little general. I would be cautious about farm diversification and rural business growth, especially in the AONB, which might be counterproductive.

**Issue 3.** I agree wholeheartedly with all the proposals, both by respondents and your own, especially the phrase 'building on derelict land and regenerating areas to make them more attractive and vibrant, creating more sustainable patterns of living.'

**Issue 4.** I agree with respondent suggestions to protect greenfield land from unnecessary development, which again does not appear in your proposals.

### **Issue 5.**

I do not agree with building more council houses; I agree with your proposals of ensuring a proportion of affordable homes but it is unclear what percentages you are proposing.

My suggestions would be to build well-designed, noise-insulated terrace houses rather than detached or semi-detached houses when considering schemes for brownfield or infill sites, or development in general - as the Victorian and Georgian terraced houses demonstrate these can be very attractive places to live and to look at, creating community and being space efficient. Terraced houses should be less expensive to buy and to run so would by definition be more affordable as well as more sustainable.

I also would like to see more incentives for landlords to charge reasonable rents and a council-endorsed good landlord scheme so that private landlords are seen as part of the solution not part of the problem. Also less planning permission given to those wanting to build big detached houses out in the countryside and more schemes to encourage downsizing so that existing bigger houses become available. It seems a shame to be blighting the countryside with lots of new houses when there is plenty of capacity already if people could accept living in accommodation proportionate to their needs.

In terms of **Issues 21 and 22** my proposals include:

**Issue 21:** encourage adaptive re-use of listed and historic buildings where appropriate; involve outside agencies such as Historic England where there is likely to be a change in setting to a historic building; provide a robust policy framework for protecting not just listed buildings but those which are on local lists or contribute to the aesthetic and historical character of a town or village; promote the value of looking after and using historic buildings in terms of sustainability, aesthetics, character and tourism; be robust in minimising development in conservation areas; ensure that all new development is designed to sit well with existing buildings in terms of mass, materials and detailing.

**Issue 22:** Insisting that all development through all stages of the planning application, (and ensuring that changes cannot be made down the line), puts 'beauty' and good, considered design as a priority; promote the value of good design and attractive housing as being of wider benefit to the community in terms of mental and emotional well-being as well as a factor in encouraging tourism and inward investment; work with and encourage organisations equivalent to the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust in the north east which has created attractive, eco-friendly housing developments (see <https://www.jrht.org.uk/community/derwenthorpe-york>); avoid the Taylor Wimpey approach of buying designs off the shelf so that all housing developments everywhere look the same. This is what scares people about the idea of more and more houses being constructed and unfortunately, the proof is all around us in the developments being planned and executed.

### **Q2.1a**

I generally agree with the way that the emerging Strategy intends to support the local economy and the creation of jobs, and particularly with more support for co-working facilities in town centres and creating sustainable communities to reduce commuting needs. I am wary of farm diversification and encouraging tourism businesses without stringent planning controls because of the impact on the landscape and environment. Your proposals give little detail on what this means. I also think there needs to be active co-operation with the AONB and need to work with their policies on development within the Area.

### **Q2.2a**

I agree that an overall strategy for town centres needs to be implemented but taking account of the different characters of the District's towns.

Re Stroud: I agree with the broad proposals for what you hope to deliver, but would also like to support what other respondents said regarding housing for the whole community, stricter planning controls on shopfronts and signs, upgrade street furniture. further pedestrianisation, promote Stroud arts and attract food retailers although I recognise that some of these can be developed outside the planning system. In terms of improvements to the Merrywalks shopping centre and retail and leisure offer I mostly agree but Stroud's character and distinctiveness and comes from a more quirky and individualistic approach so I would like to see support and encouragement of independent shops and businesses coming into the town centre,

I would like to see improvement to the area around the Subscription Rooms to provide a central heart for the town, which currently has a lot of long streets but nowhere to pause.

### **Q2.3a**

My overall concern is that the requirement to build more homes will mean that developers and self-build will see this as justification for building wherever they can get away with it - they will feel that they have government on their side, and that there will not be robust enough policies in place to resist this potential irreversible blight to our very special, vulnerable and ever shrinking natural landscape and our characterful and historic towns, villages and hamlets. This is true whether it be one large self-build on a sensitive rural spot or a development of 1000 houses and everything in between. I hope SDC will have the courage and support among its councillors to stand firm on this matter.

I do not think your proposals show sufficient commitment to using mainly brownfield and infill sites for housing and I believe this should be a priority. I do not think there is enough weight given to AONB considerations . I do not think that sufficient priority is given to good design, as outlined above.

I am unclear as to what is meant by exception sites so cannot comment, but if it means that they are excepted from normal planning restrictions, then I would not be in favour. I also would like to see clear design and scale control on self and custom built houses.

### **Q2.4a/b**

I agree with the strategy proposed.

### **Q3.1a/b**

I agree with the vision and would like even more mention of protecting our landscape and heritage as assets for the future, and the acknowledgement of the responsibility the Council has in this area.

### **Q3.2a**

I agree with the strategic objectives as drafted. I would like to see much more detail on SO3 and SO6.

The award winning Ham Mill project is fantastic, exciting and vibrant and gives much needed hope and positivity around the possibilities of regeneration along with housing development. I hope more like this will be seen in Stroud. I also hope that the Council will use architects such as these to deliver their housing schemes.

#### **Q4.2a**

The strategy proposed seems to be a combination of everything in the spirit of 'we can't decide which option so lets have them all'. However, given the sensitivity of the AONB which constitutes much of Stroud District, then I think there needs to be as little development as possible within the AONB region.

#### **Q4.2b**

I would favour a strategy that concentrated development on the two new garden villages and the main towns of Stroud, Stonehouse and Cam and Dursley. ie a combination of option 1 and 4, with a small amount of wider distribution. I do not favour Option 3 at all, ie dispersal, especially as so much of Stroud District is AONB.

#### **Q4.2c**

I agree with concentrating housing growth in Stroud, (particularly on brownfield sites and old mill sites along the valleys as I think there is potential for some really exciting regeneration), Cam and Dursley and Stonehouse.

If the new towns proposed at Sharpness and Wisloe are truly well-designed (I do not believe Littlecombe to be an example) and have the potential to be garden villages then I support the strategy of focusing housing and employment growth here, and would suggest having more houses here to take the strain off other greenfield sites.

I do not support modest levels of growth in Painswick as I do not believe it should have been moved into Tier 2, given the character of the village, the restricted street layouts in the village, the fact that it is one of the key historic villages in the District and is in a conservation area. Some infill development might be possible but I do not believe there is capacity for any more growth. To support growth here would jeopardise its character. It does not compare to a settlement like Nailsworth in its layout or its services so am unclear why it is in Tier 3 at all.

I think allowing development outside settlement limits is not advisable, given that this encourages slow sprawl.

#### **Q4.2d**

I support the approach to addressing Gloucester's housing needs but I feel that Gloucester must provide evidence that it is also considering its brownfield and infill sites. I think it is right that all alternative sites are assessed. I think the Whaddon site in particular, should not be developed at all, even if it is not used to fulfil Gloucester's needs. It provides a significant green belt barrier between Gloucester and the Cotswold escarpment, adding to the sense of space both for the city of Gloucester, and the already sprawling estates of Tuffley, and if built on, would inevitably merge almost physically with Brookthorpe as well as conceptually. In terms of views from the escarpment, filling in this green area would have a detrimental

impact on the setting of the Cotswold escarpment. It acts as a containment to Gloucester a breathing space for Gloucester.

#### **Q4.2e**

I would consider whether this site should even be made available for Gloucester's housing needs.

#### **Q4.3a**

I believe Painswick is in the wrong tier, for the reasons given above in the answer to Q4.2c, and should be moved back to Tier 3.

#### **Q4.3b**

I support defining settlement development limits but for the smaller and more rural settlements like Miserden which are in the AONB, I think they should also be treated as open countryside, assuming that there are sufficient controls to development in open countryside. In this way development is managed at both levels and is necessarily cautious.

#### **Q4.4a**

Yes, I do support the approach towards maintaining settlement development limits

#### **Q4.4c**

No, I do not support the proposals to allow some limited development beyond settlement development limits. This would make undermine the policy, it would make the idea of a settlement development limit redundant and would create precedent meaning that there was more likelihood that settlements grow by stealth. 'Limited' is a subjective term open to interpretation.

#### **Q4.4e**

It is not totally clear why, for example, Miserden now has a settlement development limit as this implies that development is an option within that limit. Given the nature of the settlement and its location this would likely have a negative impact on the character. If it is specifically to protect its setting then I understand it is a good idea with the proviso suggested in Q4.3b.

I would like to see changes in settlement development limits over time to see if the boundaries are being changed to justify development that has happened beyond the limit, and whether this is resulting in a gradual increase in the size of settlements that still seems to be within planning policy.

#### **Q5.0a**

Re Cotswold Cluster. This vision, compared with say the one for Stroud, sounds as if there is resentment towards the fact that SDC have to even consider the AONB and the fact that this is a place where there is a lot of wealth.

I would like to see more emphasis on the AONB and the beauty of the landscape, and for it to take heed of the Cotswold AONB vision:

'By 2043 the Cotswold AONB will be a distinctive, unique, accessible living landscape treasured for its diversity which is recognised by all for its wide open views, dry stone walls, intimate valleys, flower rich grasslands, ancient woodlands, dark skies, tranquillity, archaeology, historic and cultural heritage and distinctive Cotswold stone architecture.'

**Q5.0b**

In the vision you have said 'a key goal for the future' but goals are not visions so I would take that out and say something along the lines of:

'By 2040 The Cotswold AONB will be a place where the distinctive beauty of the landscape and built heritage is protected and enjoyed by both visitors and all those who live and work here'... and so on

**Q5.0c.**

I support the identified key issues and priorities for action.

**Q6.1**

Possibly Conservation Area Appraisals for those conservation areas that do not have one; annual statistics on the rate of development in the Stroud District section of the AONB and its setting; joined

