

David Moore: the usual emotive claptrap from a minister



We know that the construction of new homes will continue to dominate the headlines everywhere in the country but it's places like Horsham District, which will come under the greatest pressure. The benefits of living in a desirable area mean that it is also extremely attractive to developers.

It was, therefore, horrifying to see the comments by Nick Boles, the planning minister,

recently when he classed anyone, who objected to a development, as a NIMBY.

He seems to believe that we should accept housebuilding by developers anywhere in the countryside and restrict ourselves to constructive comments about the design of the proposed developments.

His justification for this was the usual emotive claptrap; we all need development because we have kids and relatives, who desperately need somewhere to live.

The sad thing is that we do know people, who desperately need somewhere to live.

However, the reality is that the developers are not in general building homes for those people.

Too many of the new

homes in and around Horsham District are being built for people, who wish to move into the area.

Mind you, we shouldn't object to house building as a matter of course just because it's near us.

We ought to be sure that we're not being NIMBYs and objecting to suggested developments just because we've adopted an entrenched 'not in my back yard' position.

So let's look at developments that we would object to for very good reasons.

Clearly, we wouldn't want to see anything being built on Horsham's Chesworth Farm, owned by Horsham District Council, and the adjacent Mugeridge Field, owned by West Sussex County Council.

These are green spaces,

which we need to preserve for our enjoyment.

We also wouldn't want to see the creation of an orphan settlement north of Horsham on the other side of the A264.

Why destroy unnecessarily even more of our precious countryside?

So does that mean that there should be no more housebuilding in Horsham?

Of course it doesn't.

We have plenty of brownfield sites, which would be ideal for locating new homes, especially if they were specifically built for our children and relatives.

It's quite easy to identify some possible target sites, which have the added advantage of being within easy walking distance of the town centre.

For example, there's the Lifestyle Ford site, which is currently under consideration for retail units.

Wouldn't his make an ideal location for housing especially if it could be linked to the town centre by diverting Albion Way around the site?

Then there's Novartis, where a significant part of its site is no longer required for manufacturing.

Wouldn't this make a great place to build homes for our children and relatives?-

And not too far away is the very large brownfield site at the end of Parsonage Way.

Just think of how many new homes could be built there.

As we still have a number of brownfield sites available to us for the construction of

new homes, if they're needed, within Horsham's existing boundaries, we don't have to destroy the countryside and the green spaces that we value.

So why even consider it? It doesn't make any sense.

The Horsham Society is concerned about the past, present and future of the town.

It seeks to promote good planning and design for the built environment and open spaces.

Membership of the Horsham Society is open to anyone, who shares these concerns.

For more information, visit our website www.horshamsociety.org or telephone 01403 261640.