

Written evidence submitted by Ms Sally Pannifex

I have grave concerns regarding proposed changes to the NPPF, and challenge the presumption that sustained growth is actually sustainable. The words sound similar but this is very misleading because their meaning in this context is actually quite different.

In an undisputed Climate Emergency with steel glass and concrete buildings being a key emitter of CO2 it would be irresponsible to rush through changes to the planning system without considering the environmental impact of proposals very carefully. Maybe wait for the Climate and Nature Bill to be heard and hopefully approved by parliament first.

Sir David Attenborough in his witness statement and vision for the future” [A life on our Planet](#) “highlights why biodiversity is key to survival of human life on our planet . It clearly links the loss of rainforests and exponential increase in CO2 in the atmosphere to the impact of capitalism’s fixation on endless growth as unsustainable . He emphasises why urgent government leadership and policy change now is essential.

Over the last 50 years this endless growth has shifted our planet from the Holocene(think garden of Eden) to Anthropocene(on a pathway towards mass extinction). In his words at the end of part 2”We must rewild the world “.

This underpins why I think focusing on building more homes to boost economic growth is flawed and am suggesting a more holistic alternative approach to address both issues.

Please see doughnut economics and the 9 planetary boundaries theory for key concepts that relate to this..

Notice how David Lammy recently referred to the climate crisis as the biggest threat we face shortly after meeting with Sir David Attenborough?

Please refer to his book as a succinct and accessible account of the scale and urgency of the climate crisis that cuts through all the green washing and points to the only sustainable way forward.

In my view anyone in parliament/or with power to influence policy should be climate literate and watching his film of the same name/reading this book should be the starting point:

The high court ruled that the governments climate policy is illegal because it is so inadequate so please ensure any revised planning laws are consistent with the current recommendations of the climate scientists.

Cities where buildings dominate the landscape and trees and nature are hard to spot are not sustainable. Compare the skyline in London now with how it was 50 years ago and the main culprit responsible for the climate crisis is plain to see. Carbon rich excessive building by wealthy developers with devastating consequences for the environment and communities.

Where is the evidence that developers ever deliver on biodiversity net gain promises? Experts who truly grasp the climate crisis suggest at least 20% net gain should be the aim. We need to be thinking about using our land efficiently + food security. The idea that asset rich cash poor farmers are making a fuss about new tax rules is shameful. They barely make 9p in the pound and are leaving in droves. How does the government plan to address food insecurity by ignoring the concerns of those who produce it? When they have all moved on it will be too late. Sadly the government seems beguiled by the influence of big Corporations (the only ones with any money or influence these days)with the public left to pay the price.

Where is the accountability regarding reduction of embodied carbon? Words lost in pages and pages of policy won’t save us. Certainly not when regulators are toothless and often

oblivious until a savvy journalist or film maker by chance manages to force the issue into the mainstream.

Why isn't there an allocated carbon budget to be shared amongst our citizens instead of most of it being gobbled up by big developers.?

Why are there no SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timebound) regarding these important issues in an undisputed climate emergency?!

There is much mention of more housing in this policy proposal , but not a word of social housing or genuinely affordable housing.

I put to you there is already an abundance of housing, but that most of it is unaffordable. A train ride from Clapham to Victoria or past Elephant and Castle reveals new luxury tower blocks growing like weeds but most of them remain empty and way beyond the reach of most people. No wonder we have a housing crisis!. The purpose of housing has been usurped by the greedy in the form of land banking and the public and nature are playing the price.

We have breached temperature rise threshold of 1.5 degrees this year and climate chaos is growing evermore frequent and severe.

The responsibility of averting mass extinction lies firmly on the shoulders of this government and there is not a moment to lose.

I suggest they start listening to the people, not the lobbyists and political paymasters. The solutions to the housing and climate crisis are very clear and available to us now.

The 1947 planning act(a piece of poetry if you ask a passionate experienced town planner) and the principles that underpin it should be your starting point.

Have a chat to Caroline Lucas and the Green Party MP's who have become MP's not for personal gain but to try to influence policy and avert mass extinction in our lifetime.

Rather than gambling more of our land and natural resources in hock to big developers a land value tax could provide much needed revenue to invest in council owned social housing. Right to buy should be halted and the funding should be allocated where there is most need. Council tax was never going to cover all the expenses/responsibilities dumped on local councils by the last government. It is grossly unfair to expect poorer councils with the most need but most meagre income to cover all these costs.

Council tax bands should be brought into the 21st century so that sites like 9 Elms pay council tax in line with current property values instead of how things were back in the 90'! The proceeds should then be directed to the areas of most need.

Humans are part of the ecosystem but the exorbitant power of corporations is growing like an aggressive cancer that needs to be excised urgently before it is too late.

A holistic joined up approach and focus on retrofit in line with the Sustainable development foundations 200page call to action " Retrofit at Scale "is a much better idea.

Written by experts so concerned by 2 decades of relative policy failure devoted hours of time and energy to collaborate on this document and show a better way forward.: VAT should be removed to incentivise retrofitting. Their well evidenced plan would provide all the health benefits of warm and comfortable homes and protect the poor from obscene inflation in energy costs and reduce peak demand on the grid by up to 50%. It provides huge potential

for real green jobs and sustainable development in a way that brings communities together and preserves biodiversity. What is not to love?

The obsession with demolition and estate regeneration that has been the dominant housing model for the last 20 years needs to stop because it is destroying communities and the environment. Truly affordable homes are replaced by often poorly built unaffordable homes and we end up with a net loss of social housing. No wonder the housing crisis keeps getting worse! Continuing with this approach is like trying to put out a fire by dousing it with kerosene!

Eastfields estate in Mitcham is a typical example of managed decline where council estates are starved of cash then gifted to the private sector.

Freeholders on this estate have maintained their homes so they remain perfectly liveable and not "at the end of their lives". And yet the council serves CPO's on its residents on behalf of Clarion then allows for temporarily housed families to be evicted during a child's GCSE's. They then pay a private landlord double the rent (housing benefit) whilst the home the family were evicted from is still empty 6 months later. That is utter madness!

No other options other than demolition were ever explored and 10 years on the first phase is still not complete...

There are loads of boarded up properties all over London matching the number of people homeless or in temporary/unsuitable housing. It is time to invest in community land trusts retrofitting and truly affordable social housing.

Policy is far too jargon heavy and dense contributing to delays and with little scope for meaningful input from local communities.

The legal system is so eroded it is beyond the reach of the public and is a tool for the hidden elite. As a freeholder on an ex council estate I have no way of holding Clarion to account. The toothless ombudsman is only available to tenants and residents. That just doesn't seem right in a democracy.

Building regulations are grossly inadequate and need to be made fit for purpose and the developers must be held to account.

And what of Grenfell tower + the numerous homes that are unliveable due to dangerous cladding is another example of how government policy is failing and communities pay the price.

Address the issues raised here instead of gobbling up the country side building more unaffordable homes that vastly exceed any viable carbon budget.

If you want truly sustainable growth stop listening to hungry developers and start listening to local people. Give local people agency and influence over their lives. Stop looking to Neocons who keep extracting wealth and destroying nature. Create transparent and simple policies informed by peer reviewed evidence that is immune to spinfluence and we might be able to make Britain great again.

A United Kingdom where working people can afford secure housing would be a huge boost to moral and productivity. Burden on mental health and NHS services would be reduced and people would not have to chose between heating or eating.

It took the bold vision of a labour government to create our NHS, the envy of the world from the rubble of World War 2.

We need bold vision and action of an even greater magnitude now to create the prosperity that is possible and certainly necessary for our survival.

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