



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Nusrat Ghani MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Jake Berry MP

Minister for the Northern Powerhouse and Local Growth

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Tel: 0303 444 3440

Email: jake.berry@communities.gsi.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/mhclg

Our Ref: 3802075

2 JUL 2018

Dear Nusrat

Thank you for your email of 11 June on behalf of your constituents Dr Roger Smith of the Campaign to Protect Rural England, Sussex Branch, Brownings Farm, Lewes Road, Blackboys, Uckfield, East Sussex, TN22 5HG, and David Johnson, Chair of CPRE Sussex, about our consultation on a draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The Prime Minister launched our package of planning reforms on 5 March, including a draft revised NPPF. As she said in her statement, to stop the seemingly endless rise in house prices, we simply have to build more homes, especially in the places where unaffordability is greatest. Making sure we plan for the right number of homes in the right places is the crucial first step.

The Government is clear that councils and their communities are best placed to take decisions on local planning issues. Our proposed reforms are designed to give local areas more options and as much freedom and flexibility as possible to make the most effective use of the land they have.

We also recognise the importance of protected areas, such as the Green Belt and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which will continue to be protected through the NPPF.

I understand your constituent's concern that housing delivery is not entirely within the council's control. However, tackling the challenges of housing delivery requires a partnership between all the actors in the market – including developers, local authorities, central government and its agencies, and utility providers. The Housing White Paper included a package of measures to tackle under-delivery. The Housing Delivery Test is about holding local authorities to account for their role and encouraging joint working to address the issues through the action plan.

We are reforming the existing system of developer contributions. The draft revised NPPF proposes setting a clearer policy requirement for affordable housing through Local Plans, informed by more transparent viability assessments. This will make it harder for developers with the know how to negotiate down their obligations. However, it is also necessary to allow sufficient flexibility to make sure sites can come forward in particular circumstances.

Our proposals address significant issues with the existing system of developer contributions. These reforms could provide a springboard for going further and we will continue to explore options to create a clearer and more robust developer contribution system.

The Government has also commissioned an independent review, chaired by Sir Oliver Letwin, of the causes of the gap between housing completions and the amount of land allocated or permitted in areas of high housing demand. Sir Oliver will be publishing a draft analysis towards the end of this month followed by a final report in the autumn.

The consultation on the draft revised Framework closed on 10 May and Ministers and officials are now considering all the comments received. We aim to publish the new version of the NPPF in the summer.

Yours sincerely

The signature is written in blue ink and consists of a large, stylized 'J' followed by the name 'Berry'.

JAKE BERRY MP