

November 2017

Dear Constituent

Thank you for contacting me about housing and the Green Belt.

As you may be aware, the Government recently completed a consultation on changes to planning policy.

Following this, a new 'housing delivery test' will be put in place to hold local authorities to account. I understand that this will show whether the number of homes being built is below target, help to establish the reasons why, and where necessary trigger responses to ensure that further land becomes available.

I would emphasise that the Housing White Paper, which announced these plans, maintains the existing strong protections for the Green Belt. It clarifies that Green Belt boundaries should be amended only in exceptional circumstances, when local authorities show that they have fully examined all other reasonable options for meeting housing requirements.

Of course, using brownfield land and increasing density are very important, and these should be prioritised. Indeed, the Government will make it clear that plans and development proposals should make efficient use of land, and avoid building homes at low densities where appropriate. Other changes will show that great weight should be attached to using suitable brownfield land within existing settlements.

Yours sincerely



Richard Benyon