



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

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Government**

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Our reference: TO2024/14223

Dr Peter King
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6 August 2024

Dear Dr King,

Thank you for your email to the Department dated 10 July 2024 and attached letter regarding the National Planning Policy Framework.

We are grateful to you for sharing with us your thoughts and experiences regarding the NPPF. The Department welcomes your input on this important matter. Below I have included some information which I hope you find helpful.

The Government's manifesto set out a commitment to restore mandatory housing targets. We will reverse the damaging changes introduced in December 2023 that undermine our growth ambitions and commitment to delivering 1.5m homes. We will set out more detail in the forthcoming National Planning Policy Framework update.

We are working at pace on various revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework, and will launch a public consultation before the end of July. However, the Government has already made clear its commitment to preserving the Green Belt and to taking a brownfield-first approach, meaning that local authorities should look to build on previously developed land before building on the Green Belt. Any release of Green Belt land will be locally led and will prioritise the release of lower quality 'grey belt' land. We will also introduce golden rules to ensure that development benefits communities and nature - including a target of 50% affordable housing, and ensuring that appropriate infrastructure and green infrastructure are available. We note the points that you have made, and of course CPRE's comments in response to the consultation document will be most welcome.

Thank you for your comments on 5-year housing land supply policy. We have just launched a consultation which proposes several changes to this. We would welcome your comments as part of this. The deadline to respond is 24 September 2024 and the consultation can be accessed here: [Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/proposed-reforms-to-the-national-planning-policy-framework-and-other-changes-to-the-planning-system)

The Government is committed to the biggest growth in social and affordable housebuilding in a generation. We know that, particularly outside London, almost all of the funding for the 2021 to 2026 Programme is contractually committed. We have asked Homes England and the Greater London Authority to maximise the number of Social Rent homes in allocating the remaining funding. We have agreed with the Greater London Authority new flexibilities to the existing Programme so that they can unlock delivery in London, with changes to deadlines for homes completing and tenure mix to enable some intermediate rent homes.

In addition, we are committed to setting out details of future Government investment in social and affordable housing at the Spending Review, so that social housing providers can plan for the future and help deliver the biggest increase in affordable housebuilding in a generation.

We will work with Mayors and local areas to consider how funding can be used in their areas and support devolution.

Up to date local plans are critical to achieving high quality, sustainable developments with local buy in. Currently it takes too long for local authorities to get plans in place, creating uncertainty for communities, businesses and developers, and our proposed reforms aim to tackle this in several ways. As the Chancellor set out in her speech on the 8 July 2024, the Government expects universal coverage of Local Plans. Having an effective up to date plan in place is essential to planning for and meeting development needs.

As set out in the manifesto, the Government intends to reverse damaging policy changes introduced in December 2023 that undermine our growth ambitions and commitment to delivering 1.5m homes. We will therefore publish an updated growth-focused version of the NPPF shortly.

We recognise the importance of minimising disruption to plan-making in the short term.□ Authorities that have an up-to-date plan in place will be in the best possible position to meet this Government's aims. We would therefore strongly encourage councils, including those in Worcestershire, to progress plan preparation at pace, to address local needs and provide certainty to communities.

This Government places great importance upon our agricultural land and food production. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out how the best and most versatile agricultural land should be reflected in planning policies and decisions. We are maintaining the existing strong protection for the best and most versatile agricultural land - the land which is most important for food production. The Framework is clear that where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of a higher quality.

To support the generation of renewable energy, national permitted development rights enable the installation of renewable energy equipment without the need to apply for planning application. The rights, in England, are set out in Part 14 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, as amended at The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 ([legislation.gov.uk](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)). The rights enable the installation of microgeneration solar equipment on dwellinghouses and on commercial buildings. The rights also allow the installation of solar canopies in car parks.

The Government remains committed to meeting its target of net zero emissions by 2050 and recognises the important contribution that the energy efficiency of buildings□has to□make in meeting it. Future standards will set our new homes on a path that moves away from relying on volatile fossil fuels and towards more secure, clean energy. As part of that, we will take the opportunity, where appropriate, to encourage the fitting of solar panels on new homes and buildings.

Thank you for taking the time to write to us.

Yours sincerely,

Jonathan
Correspondence Unit