



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

16th October 2020

Dear Constance,

RE: PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE.

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of the recently announced planning reforms; your comments upon which I have read with great interest.

As I am sure you are aware, many areas of my constituency around Corby, and in parts of East Northamptonshire, are areas of exciting new development and growth. They are areas which are providing fantastic new homes and high quality new jobs, and will, I believe, create future prosperity for our area. I believe it is essential that to help create an exciting future and to best seize that opportunity, we must have a robust and modern planning system underpinning development.

Our planning system needs to work for those who use it to make sure new homes, businesses and vital infrastructure are not held back by outdated, complicated and time-consuming bureaucracy. Currently, it takes an average of five years for an application for residential development to go through the planning system before building can even begin. This cannot be right for our communities who want homes to live in, places to work, and schools and hospitals built - and particularly the best possible future opportunities for the next generation.

That is why I broadly welcome that radical and necessary reforms are being brought in to cut arbitrary red tape, while maintaining standards and protecting our 'Green Belt' and greenfield sites. As I understand it, under the new proposals and through local democratic agreement, land will be designated under the categories of growth, renewal, or protection. Every area will also need to have a local plan in place for building more homes, helping local communities drive change and decide what gets built and where. Local housing plans should be developed and agreed in 30 months, rather than the seven years it often takes. A fast-track system for beautiful homes will also be created and new streets are to be lined with trees, helping make, and keep, places beautiful.

Land designated for growth will allow new homes, schools, shops and hospitals to be permitted as long as they meet local design and quality standards. Renewal areas will be provided with a 'permission in principle' approach subject to checks and balances, with an emphasis on high quality that meets design standards. Our heritage sites and green spaces will continue to be protected and preserved for the enjoyment of local communities and future generations, with development taking place on brownfield sites.

I also welcome that the new rule-based planning system will make the best use of technology to increase transparency and accessibility, and save taxpayer money being spent on outdated procedures. A new and simpler national levy will replace developer contributions, which are



often the source of major delays, and allow more funds to be raised for social infrastructure to the benefit of communities. The reforms will also make the construction sector more efficient, helping small and medium sized housebuilders compete with large developers. I have also been assured that key workers, local people and first-time buyers will be front and centre in the 'First Homes' scheme, which will provide a 30 percent discount on the purchase of a home.

The consultation on planning for the future has been launched and is now open to views from the public, businesses and local government. I can also assure you that Ministers are very much in listening mode in relation to these reforms and I am actively feeding in the views and concerns expressed to me locally - including those you mention in your correspondence.

It is encouraging that the new proposals will once again make our planning system work for our communities and create much-needed new jobs in construction. All new homes will need to be zero carbon ready, which will deliver on our net carbon zero commitment, improve on environmental and energy standards and avoid the need for retrofitting.

Ministers are confident that the reforms will deliver beautiful homes people want to live in, places where people want to work, and protect areas we as a nation need to safeguard for our children and for posterity.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

*With best wishes,
Tom*

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**