



HOUSE OF COMMONS

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(Please ensure that the letter reference is quoted on return correspondence).

12 February 2021

Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP
Secretary of State
Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government
2 Marsham Street
LONDON
SW1P 4DF

I have been meeting virtually with local town and parish councils in my constituency to identify local issues.

I would like to highlight two key concerns with DHCLG's white paper *Planning for the Future*.

Firstly, the issue of land banking - developers holding planning permission for plots but delaying development or choosing not to break ground before selling them on. My principal local authority and the parish and town councils agree that this is the main impediment to the integrity of the planning process and the construction of homes. However, the white paper overlooks land banking, despite its purpose being to 'streamline and modernise the planning process... and ensure more land is available for development where it is needed'. Whilst I am aware that the white paper is now closed for consultation, I agree with my constituents and look forward to land banking featuring in your department's response to the consultation.

The second issue relates to low cost housing. The white paper places emphasis on affordable housing, particularly First Homes, which is laudable. However, councils are concerned that not enough attention is given to low-cost rental housing and means of protecting a local supply of housing. On the first point, Tisbury Parish Council in their neighbourhood plan (TisPlan, 2018) found that low cost rental homes are in demand as much as affordable starter homes. On the second, TisPlan asserted that local people should take priority for the allocation of affordable housing, and that these properties should not then be sold on the open market. A common concern is that neighbourhood plans and their findings - such as Tisbury's - will be undermined by affordable starter homes being built at the expense of rental homes, and that people on low pay, notably those with genuine local connections, will then be unable to benefit from any form of housing. I seek your explanation on how this will not be the case and reassurance that local neighbourhood plans will retain an influential role in the future planning process.

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