

Dear Prime Minister,

We urge you to announce that the Government will reconsider the proposed planning reforms as currently published.

Whilst the presumption for brownfield development is to be welcomed, in order to preserve the environment and character of local areas, especially in terms of the protection of countryside, top down targets must be abandoned in favour of genuine local place making and decision taking. At the very least it is essential local communities continue to have the ability to object to planning applications.

Land banking is a major issue in reducing the number of new houses delivered, and therefore must be penalised as other measures have failed. In parallel the provision of a genuine mix of tenure types, including houses for social rent and intermediate home ownership must be prioritised and increased.

The proposals must be further amended to force the planning system properly to manage flood risks, including restoring the right of the Environment Agency to veto developments, and requiring guarantees on new houses to include flood risks.

We believe that these amendments would have widespread support across Parliament and the country, and we ask you to act decisively and confirm the necessary changes to these damaging proposals as a matter of urgency.

Regarding the Oxford to Cambridge Arc, we urge you to confirm that these principles will also apply to it, that there are no centrally imposed housing targets for the Arc and that housing will continue to be determined by local authorities for local communities, whilst committing to fully fund infrastructure for homes already being built in the area.

We urge you to act decisively.

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