

Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee

House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

Tel 020 7219 4972 Email hclgcom@parliament.uk Website www.parliament.uk

Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP
Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

2 April 2019

Dear James,

Thank you for your letter of 25 March in response to my letter of 18 March following up on the Spring Statement and your Written Ministerial Statement, *Planning: independent report on build out rates and permitted development*.

The Committee has now considered your response and asked me to write back to follow-up on two of the key points that were not addressed from my preceding letter:

- When the Government plans to formally respond to its consultation *Planning reform: supporting the high street and increasing the delivery of new homes*.
- For what reasons you have decided to proceed with the proposed extension of permitted development rights outlined in that consultation, despite the Committee's very clear recommendation to the contrary in its recent report, *High streets and town centres in 2030*.

Regarding the second point above, the relevant conclusion and recommendation in the Committee's report is as follows:

- **We believe that permitted development rights (PDRs) risk undermining the strategic vision that a community has developed for its high street or town centre. While we understand that PDRs provide much needed housing—which we see as a key aspect of high street and town centre sustainability—a planned approach, with Local Plans identifying where housing should be situated, is far preferable.**
- ***The Government should suspend any further extension of PDRs, pending an evaluation of their impact on the high street. Policies should reflect the wide variety of local circumstances. Councils should be actively encouraged to develop town centre masterplans and use their powers positively to renew their town centres. Where PDRs conflict with particular designations in the Local Plan or other established planning documents, councils should be given greater freedom to suspend PDRs in the affected area. As they currently operate, Article 4 Directions do not give councils adequate ability to remove PDRs quickly and without liability to pay developers compensation.***

I look forward to your response.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Clive Betts'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'C' and a period at the end.

Clive Betts MP
Chair, Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee