



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Baroness Taylor of Stevenage

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Housing and Local Government
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Our reference: MC2024/22989

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18 December 2024

Dear Andrew,

Thank you for your letter of 25 September to the Deputy Prime Minister, the Rt Hon Angela Rayner MP, regarding the London Assembly Plenary meeting on 5 September. I have been asked to reply, and I would like to offer my apologies for the delay in doing so.

First, I will address concerns about the proposed 'grey belt' definition and impacts on Metropolitan Open Land. As I am sure you are aware, on 30 July, the Government published its consultation document, 'Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system', including reforms relating to Green Belt. This consultation closed on 24 September, and officials are now giving careful consideration to all the responses received before we publish a Government response, alongside a revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), later this year. Our response to the consultation and the revised NPPF have now been published: <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 a brownfield-first approach and to ensuring that the default answer to brownfield development proposals is 'yes'. However, in some areas, brownfield alone will not be enough. This is why our proposals made clear that local authorities otherwise unable to meet their development needs should review their Green Belt to identify opportunities to create affordable, sustainable, green, and well-designed developments. In doing so, low-quality brownfield and 'grey belt' sites in the Green Belt should be prioritised as opportunities for development. Valuable Green Belt land and land safeguarded for environmental reasons will still be protected and new 'golden rules' will ensure that development in Green Belt brings benefits not only for communities but for nature.

On the Grenfell Phase 2 Inquiry, it is of course important that the Government carefully considers the recommendations in the report. The Prime Minister has indicated that the Government will respond to the Inquiry's recommendations within six months, and update Parliament annually on progress against every commitment made. The systems we have today are not those of 2017, but it is also not yet the system we want to see. We will thoroughly examine this report and its recommendations and promise to act with urgency and speed to keep people safe in their homes.

The Government has set out a clear way forward on the outstanding Government-led recommendations from the Phase 1 Inquiry. A small number of Fire and Rescue Services (4) have yet to complete the final assurance stages in relation to their recommendations, but these are expected to complete by April 2025. We cannot speak for the previous administration, but we have made it a priority to ensure that all outstanding recommendations – which the previous government had already accepted but did not resolve – were considered and responded to.

Our thoughts remain with those who suffered through the Grenfell tragedy and the wider Grenfell community. As the Prime Minister has acknowledged the Grenfell community's tireless campaigning to drive forward change. The Government's promise to them is to work as tirelessly, with urgency and care, in delivering the further changes that are needed.

Thank you again for your letter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Taylor', is centered below the closing. The signature is fluid and cursive.

BARONESS TAYLOR OF STEVENAGE

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Housing and Local Government