



Lindfield Preservation Society

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Mims Davies MP
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

Dear Ms Davies,

**An open letter concerning
the continuing threat of housing legislation to the character of Mid Sussex**

We wrote to you on 8 October 2020 expressing our concerns about the government's White Paper, "Planning for the Future" (August 2020). You will no doubt recall that resistance to its proposals became so strong that they were quietly paused for further consideration. Subsequently, there have been warm words from government about prioritising the development of brownfield land instead. The Prime Minister, for example, called at the October party conference for new homes, but "not on green fields, not just jammed into the South East, but beautiful homes on brownfield sites in places where homes make sense".

Six months later, government planning legislation continues to pose the single greatest threat to the integrity of our countryside. Nationally and despite Mr Johnson's pledge, the proportion of sites with planning permission that are brownfield has fallen to the lowest since records began: 44% in November 2021, vs 53% the year before (CPRE report, Nov 2021). Centrally dictated, unachievable housing targets continue to offer speculative developers an open goal in the countryside – even as open land becomes more crucial to addressing the crises of climate change and loss of biodiversity.

More than a million homes for which planning permission has been granted in England over the last decade remain unbuilt. No rational case can therefore be made that the current developers' free-for-all has anything to do with housing need.

Planning law must be reformed genuinely to put pragmatic decisions into the hands of local councils, who know their localities best. We would appreciate learning your position on this matter and what action you propose to take.

Yours sincerely,

Gil Kennedy

Chairman