



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

[REDACTED]  
Keele  
Newcastle-under-Lyme  
ST5 5AH

18<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Dear Mr Wright

**Re: Green Belt protection**

**My ref. AB4139**

Thank you for contacting me about the Joint Local Plan and the importance of protecting our Green Belt.

I am a strong advocate for protection for the Green Belt that checks urban sprawl, preserves the character of historic towns and safeguards our countryside from encroachment. I am glad that radical and necessary reforms are being brought in to cut arbitrary red tape while maintaining standards and protecting our Green Belt and greenfield sites. Under new proposals, our heritage sites and green spaces will continue to be protected and preserved for the enjoyment of local communities and future generations.

I am pleased that the National Planning Policy Framework gives strong protections for the Green Belt, and £2 million is being provided to councils to crackdown on illegal building on the Green Belt. The revised framework sets out steps that a local planning authority must take before concluding such exceptional circumstances exist, including the consideration of suitable brownfield sites.

However, I do believe that it is wrong that there is brownfield land within Green Belt boundaries which is often left unused. That is why I welcome that the revised framework and proposals under the new planning reform allows brownfield land in the Green Belt to be used for development, provided that this does not impact the openness of the Green Belt.

Greater use of brownfield sites will reduce the need for development on greenfield sites, protecting previously undeveloped land outside of the Green Belt and reducing pressure on the undeveloped Green Belt land we value.

Planning applications are generally determined in accordance with the development plan for the area unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Government's expectations of how the planning system should be operated are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

I am confident that our Green Belt land will continue to have robust protections for years to come, building on a strong record over the last decade.

Keele Village is within the Green Belt as indicated on the current Local Development Framework Proposals Map so Green Belt policies also apply.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Aaron Bell'.

**Aaron Bell MP**  
Member of Parliament for Newcastle-under-Lyme