



**Levelling Up, Housing
and Communities
Committee**

**Rachel Maclean MP
Minister of State (Housing and Planning)
Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
4th Floor, Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF**

26 June 2023

Dear Rachel,

I am writing to you to follow up on some of the Government's recent communications to the Committee regarding Permitted Development Rights (PDRs) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

We thank the Government for the response to the Committee's [report into PDRs](#) (July 2021).

The response does not directly address the Committee's recommendation that the Government should undertake a review into the role of PDRs in the planning system¹ and does not indicate whether or not the Government will conduct such a review. The Committee therefore asks again whether there be any review of PDRs, and will it consider the points that the Committee has raised, including the long-term vision for change of use to residential and the burden on local authorities?

The Committee's report recommended that the Government allow councils to apply Article 4 directions more quickly without having to pay compensation to developers, however the Government has not indicated it will make any change to the current legislation. As a result, liability for compensation will continue to fall on increasingly under-resourced local authorities. Does the Government have any plans to review this position?

¹ Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee, Third Report of Session 2021–22, [Permitted Development Rights](#), HC 32, para 25



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Finally, there continues to be a conflict in practice between the NPPF's requirement for a sequential test for retail development² and the ability of PDR development to bypass this requirement, notably in the case of changes of use from warehousing to retail development. The response acknowledges this. Is the Department taking any steps to remedy this and to ensure that local planning authorities are still able to control local development as is required in the NPPF?

In addition, I also wished to follow up on the response in your [letter](#) of 6 June to Andrew Lewer MP's question about whether the Government had made any progress on the commitment it gave the House on the development of small sites. It is encouraging to hear that the consultation on the NPPF asks for views on how the existing small sites planning policy could be strengthened, but the Committee would also be keen to know what more immediate work has been undertaken or is planned within the Department to encourage development on small sites.

Best wishes,

Mr Clive Betts MP
Chair, Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee

² Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, [National Planning Policy Framework](#), July 2021, paras 87-91