



Ministry of Housing,
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Thank you for your letter of 28 January following my appearance before the Committee and please accept my sincere apologies for the time it has taken me to respond. You asked for further information about the interaction between local development plans and the 5-year housing land supply policy, which I am pleased to set out below.

I was correct when I stated that the government has no plans to *override* LPAs with up-to-date plans. To avoid this, we added specific text into paragraph 232 of the NPPF to make clear that an increased Local Housing Need figure is not on its own a reason to consider a plan out of date, where it would otherwise be considered up to date. I would not expect Ministers to use their intervention powers in these circumstances.

The government have been clear that the best way to get new homes delivered is through a plan-led system. We believe that the plan-led approach is, and must remain, the cornerstone of the planning system. Those authorities with up-to-date plans who can demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply, and who have a good track record of delivery as determined by their most recent Housing Delivery Test results, will continue to benefit from protection from speculative development. However, where this is not the case, it is right that local authorities take the steps necessary to increase housing delivery.

The 5-year housing land supply policy is a crucial mechanism in the planning system that ensures local authorities maintain a pipeline of sites for housing. The changes made by the previous government in December 2023 weakened this mechanism, by disapplying it when a plan is up-to-date or in the final stages of development. We have restored the requirement for all local authorities to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply in order to safeguard the delivery of homes.

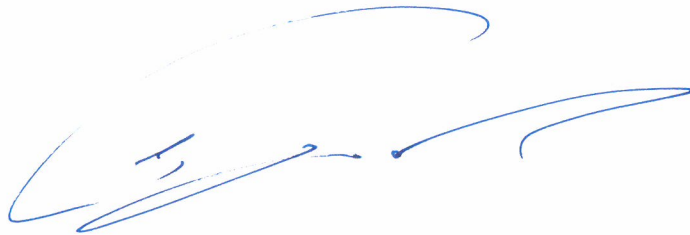
However, we have also gone further by ensuring that authorities who adopted plans under the old standard method provide an extra year's worth of homes in their 5-year housing pipeline, if their numbers are below the new Local Housing Need. More specifically, this requirement will kick in

from July 2026 for all local planning authorities with up-to-date plans and a housing requirement of 80% or less than the new local housing need. Authorities meeting these criteria will need to demonstrate an additional 20% of housing supply, on top of their 5-year housing land supply requirement, helping to deliver the government's ambitious Plan for Change milestone of building 1.5 million safe and decent homes in this parliament.

We have also made clear that existing local plan policies should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted or made prior to the publication of this Framework. Due weight should be given to them, according to their degree of consistency with the Framework.

I hope this clarifies the points you raised.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Matthew Pennycook', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

MATTHEW PENNYCOOK MP
Minister of State for Housing and Planning