



The countryside charity

Essex

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November 2020

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Dear MP

Whilst CPRE-Essex has formally responded to the White Paper, we felt that we should also write to you as a representative of an Essex constituency to emphasise the grave consequences of the proposals for our county. As you know well, Essex is a very diverse county: in part urban and in part very rural, with both prosperous and deprived areas and therefore, with complex and varied needs. It has a long coastline, a rich heritage and wonderful countryside that need to be protected.

Points to consider:

- ***Local democracy would be impaired at a time when voters want more say over what happens in their neighbourhood and not less.*** Local involvement will be replaced by a deeply flawed algorithm and a structure that will transfer even more power to developers.
- ***The Affordability Adjustment is a nonsense.*** The whole premise that house prices will fall as more are built is fundamentally wrong, as was concluded in the Letwin review, because housebuilders control build-out rates to maintain prices. In addition, it will concentrate new building in areas where prices are high, leading to more migration into those areas and the building of less genuinely affordable housing.
 - *All Essex districts will have an upward affordability adjustment factor which for the county as a whole would result in **2.25 times more houses being built** than the latest 10-year projections estimated by the ONS.*
 - *Local examples of resultant increase in housing requirement:*
 - *Tendring 721 new dwellings per annum to **1,154***
 - *Epping Forest 289 to **833 per annum.***
 - *Braintree 374 to **796 per annum***
 - *Uttlesford 505 to **1,298 per annum***
- ***The proposed zoning is dangerously simplistic.*** *The mechanistic use of three zones is wholly inadequate compared with the current more nuanced and iterative planning process, which is better able to respond to the diversity of issues in the county of Essex.*

- **Unconstrained automatic outline planning permission in Growth areas** will inevitably lead to conflict across communities because they will have no involvement in decision-making.
- **Renewal and Protected areas.** Under the proposals, areas that are outside the green belt, like much of rural Essex, will be afforded **less** protection and existing green belt areas **no more** protection than at present.

In conclusion, the huge uplift in housebuilding in Essex that would result from the adoption of the White Paper proposals would place impossible demands on the county's infrastructure, endanger the countryside and coastal fringes and encroach on valuable farmland. The adoption of the White Paper would not be in the best interest of the Essex communities that you serve and will damage local democracy.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Knight', with a stylized flourish above the name.

David N Knight

Chairman CPRE-Essex