



Ref: TD / LS 008406 TD / 00204670

Date: 27th October 2020

The Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP

Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
3rd Floor, Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

Dear Mr Jenrick,

Planning for the Future' Consultation

I am writing to draw your attention to Folkestone & Hythe District Council's comments to the planning White Paper, 'Planning for the Future', attached with this letter.

While the council sees some advantages with simplifying the system, particularly removing some of its costly and time-consuming procedural and legal burdens, we have serious concerns about many of the proposals.

Proposals for speeding up the local plan process and granting fast-track planning permissions would greatly reduce democratic input into the process and risk alienating local people, so creating more opposition to new development.

Proposals for a binding, nationally-set housing requirement appear to increase Folkestone & Hythe's housing target to more than a thousand homes a year, although there is no information in the consultation to show how the district's constraints would be taken into account.

This council has long been committed to providing the new houses that local people need. Around 90 per cent of the district is covered by areas of high flood risk, internationally protected habitats, parts of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the



built-up areas of towns and villages; despite these constraints, the council is bringing forward ambitious plans for a new garden town of up to 10,000 new homes at Otterpool Park. Yet proposals for nationally-binding housing targets risk penalising heavily constrained districts such as ours.

We have been active in setting up a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for the district, working with Kent County Council and our town and parish councils, so that new developments properly contribute to new infrastructure, and CIL funds are now starting to come in.

However, proposals in the White Paper threaten to scrap this system and replace it with an untested, nationally-set scheme that cannot reflect the different land values operating within different parts of the district, introducing further uncertainty and risking delays to much-needed infrastructure schemes.

You will find our detailed comments attached with this letter; I urge you to consider them carefully in deciding how to implement the proposed reforms.

Yours sincerely



Councillor David Monk

Leader, Folkestone & Hythe District Council