

President: Rt.Hon. the Lord Randall of Uxbridge Kt.PC.

The Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and
Communities
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA



16th December 2022

Re: Green Belt and planning reform

You may recall my letter to you just over a year ago (19th November 2021) in my role as President of the Colne Valley Regional Park. I only received an acknowledgment to my letter and our seven suggestions for improving the NPPF.

As you know, the Green Belt is a vital resource for people and the environment, but the planning system needs to work better to realise its potential. I re-attach our 'seven suggestions' document - even more relevant now as, a year on, we have seen an increasing onslaught of development proposals – interestingly most are not housing.

We look forward to better Green Belt protection in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill currently going through Parliament and to engaging with the expected consultation on changes to the NPPF. Our experience in the Colne Valley Regional Park offers a most illuminating case study:

- The first large taste of countryside to the west of London, with potential to benefit the millions of people who live nearby with access to a multifunctional Green Belt for their physical and mental health well-being
- An area spanning five counties and multiple planning authorities
- An area at the epicentre of development pressure in the Green Belt which current planning policy does not sufficiently address
- With an organisation (the Colne Valley Park Trust) working hard, against the odds, to improve the Green Belt for people and its environmental quality

The challenges in our case study chime with those considered in the recent cross-party "Making the most out of England's land" report and we will be hosting a conference late in March 2023 to progress the debate.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss with you our case study and policy suggestions, and to also speak at our Conference. Please contact our Managing Agent, Stewart Pomeroy, on spomeroy@groundwork.org.uk

Yours ever

John Randall
Rt.Hon. the Lord Randall of Uxbridge Kt.PC.

Cc The Rt Hon Lucy Frazer KC MP, Minister of State (Housing & Planning)

Colne Valley Park Trust
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Colne Valley Park Community Interest Company
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