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Dear Sarah,

Neighbourhood Planning

I would like to draw your attention to a Written Ministerial Statement I laid in Parliament yesterday to offer more certainty to neighbourhood planning areas.

The Statement sets out that relevant policies for the supply of housing in a neighbourhood plan, that is part of the development plan, should not be deemed to be 'out-of-date' under paragraph 49 of the National Planning Policy Framework where all of the following circumstances arise at the time the decision is made:

- this written ministerial statement is less than 2 years old, or the neighbourhood plan has been part of the development plan for 2 years or less;
- the neighbourhood plan allocates sites for housing; and
- the local planning authority can demonstrate a three-year supply of deliverable housing sites.

The statement applies to decisions made on planning applications and appeals from the date it was laid. It should be read in conjunction with the National Planning Policy Framework and is a material consideration in relevant planning decisions.

I would be grateful if you could ensure Inspectors are made aware as a matter of urgency.

GAVIN BARWELL MP