



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

9 April 2021

THE PRIME MINISTER

Dear Richard,

Since 2010 there has been a considerable increase in housebuilding; and the number of homes being built since the lifting of the first period of national coronavirus restrictions continues to rise. But we need to do more, and be more dynamic, to continue this progress.

The way in which our housebuilding market operates constrains the supply of new homes because there is not enough competition and innovation. Unlike housing markets elsewhere in the world, there is a lack of consumer choice and diversity of supply.

Self-build and custom housebuilding can play a crucial role in increasing choice for consumers and ensuring people can live in the homes that they want, and that are designed to meet their needs. We know that self and custom builders deliver high quality, well-designed homes that are energy efficient, accessible, affordable, and welcomed by their communities.

The place for self and custom building has also been amplified by coronavirus. As we build back better and emerge from the pandemic, we need to push ahead with expanding access to opportunities in this market for more people. The Government has begun delivering policy interventions that help drive the required changes but we need to foster much wider awareness, capacity and delivery capability among consumers, landowners, planners, developers and among the providers of services and materials.

Working closely with Robert Jenrick MP, the Housing Secretary, I would like you to reach out nationally and internationally to consumers and stakeholders, to develop a plan for a major scaling up of self-commissioned new homes - across all tenures - to boost capacity and overall housing supply. This should include increasing the availability of serviced plots of land across England. This should be brought together into a report (Terms of Reference attached) that sets out up to 10 specific and implementable recommendations to inform Government policy.

Coronavirus has highlighted the importance of the places we all call home. Our homes should maximise our creativity, our productivity, and the quality of our lives. I am convinced, as I know you are, of the role of self-build in this ambition, and as such I look forward to your proposals. I would be grateful if you could report back to me by **Friday 23 July**.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Yours truly' followed by a stylized name, possibly 'Richard Bacon'.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Terms of Reference for the Report should be as follows:

- Outlining the **policy progress to date**. Ensuring appropriate conditions for the growth of the market have been created and they fit with wider housing policy;
- A review of **international self-commissioned new build markets in developed economies**, seeking to understand how the experience of the successful models in these markets could translate to inward investment and increased activity within the UK **this should include updated and robust data for international comparison**;
- A route map on how the different parts of the existing UK housing market, construction sectors and associated services can revisit their business models to benefit from the opportunities that exist, and how Homes England can support and champion this change;
- Investigating the **desire within the population** to self-commission a home of their own in a sustainable way and how this can best be unlocked and realised;
- The role that **information and exemplars** can play in spreading public knowledge;
- Opportunities for **more imaginative use of public land** to build more homes for those serving in the NHS and other public services, the armed forces and veterans, as well as helping to deliver housing for the poor, the homeless and the marginalised, including ex-offenders.

MHCLG will provide an official to provide a contact base in MHCLG and secretariat support. MHCLG will make a small RDEL budget up to £40,000 available to provide expert and technical support for the Report via the Right to Build Task Force. You should provide a breakdown of the resourcing requirement to MHCLG by return.

The Housing Minister will chair a fortnightly steering group with representatives from HM Treasury and No10 to provide you with appropriate support, including Emma Fraser as Senior Responsible Officer.