



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Cllr Sue Cooper
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Luke Hall MP
Minister for Rough Sleeping and Housing

**Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local
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Dear Cllr Cooper,

Thank you for your letter dated 14 July to the Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP regarding the five-year housing land supply in South Oxfordshire. I appreciate how important this matter is to you and I am grateful to you for contacting this department with your concerns. I have been asked to reply on behalf of the Secretary of State.

The five-year housing land supply process exists to ensure that sufficient sites are identified to meet the supply of homes required in the next five years, acting as an incentive to ensure that local authorities are proactive in allocating and approving sufficient deliverable housing sites to meet identified need. For authorities that have a recently adopted local plan, the revised National Planning Policy Framework offers plan-makers the opportunity to confirm their 5-year land supply through plan preparation, and annually thereafter through an annual position statement. This gives local authorities greater certainty and reduces costly appeals involving speculative applications.

Building the homes that the country needs is central to our plans to recover from the impact of the coronavirus. This is why we are supporting local authorities through measures in the Business and Planning Act, allowing more flexible working hours of construction sites and extending the duration of certain planning permissions to ensure that they don't lapse unnecessarily as a result of disruption caused by the pandemic.

With regard to your final point about the primacy of residents, the revised Framework includes the important protection for designated neighbourhood areas from speculative development introduced in December 2016. This applies to neighbourhood plans which plan for housing where the local authority can demonstrate a 3-year land supply and where other criteria are met.

In a wider sense, we are aware of concerns over demonstrating a five-year housing land supply and the Housing Delivery Test under the current circumstances. However, it is important to keep the planning system moving so it can play its full part in the economic recovery to come.

Once again, I appreciate how important this matter is to you and I am grateful to you for writing in with your concerns.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'L Hall', written in a cursive style.

LUKE HALL MP