



Department for Levelling Up,  
Housing & Communities

Greg Smith MP  
House of Commons  
London  
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**Felicity Buchan MP**  
*Minister for Housing and  
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***Department for Levelling Up,  
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8 December 2022

Dear Greg,

**The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill**

I wanted to thank you for taking the time to discuss the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill with me, and in particular to discuss your thoughts on national planning policy relating to protecting farmland for food security. Having listened to your concerns, this letter sets out our proposed way forward to ensure we continue to protect the important role that this land has in our food production and food security.

The Government's food strategy highlights that the UK maintains a high degree of food security. The strategy sets out an aim to maintain domestic production at current levels to build the UK's resilience to future crisis and shocks. The National Planning Policy Framework currently expects that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by recognising the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services, including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land.

To emphasise the important role that our farms have on food security, building on what the National Planning Policy Framework already expects, we will make clear that the availability of land used for food production should be carefully considered when deciding what sites are most appropriate for development. In consulting on this change, we will make clear the importance that Government places on food security and the critical role of planning in maintaining it.

Our intention is to consult on the basis of further protection in national policy for our important agricultural land used for food production, making it harder for developers to build on it and ensuring the importance of food security is recognised alongside imperatives such as energy security.

Thank you for raising these important issues, which we have reflected on as we have considered how to reform the system. I hope that this information is useful but please let me know if I can help you further.

Yours ever,

**Felicity Buchan MP**  
Minister for Housing and Homelessness