



0 8 FEB 2012

The Rt Hon Greg Clark MP
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Dear Anna

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Thank you for your letter of 19 January about housing in Broxtowe.

Ministers are involved in the planning appeals process – so it would be inappropriate of me to comment on the specific situation you face in Broxtowe – or on the Council's approach. However, I hope that the following information is useful.

As you might be aware, the Government fully intends to use the powers in the Localism Act to abolish regional strategies so that local plans can better respond to locally assessed needs and circumstances rather than to imposed regional targets. However, this is subject to the outcomes of the process assessing the environmental impacts of abolition. Thus, at the present time, regional strategies remain a formal part of the development plan for both plan-making and development management.

Once regional strategies have been abolished, local authorities will be responsible for setting their own housing targets having regard to national planning policy and their own Strategic Housing Market Assessments. The evidence relied upon by local authorities to support their planning policies, including housing targets, must stand up to scrutiny by an independent Planning Inspector.

Furthermore, if the Government's draft National Planning Policy Framework were to be adopted as currently drafted it would provide strong protection to the Green Belt, and encourage land to be allocated of the least environmental or amenity value. Only in exceptional circumstances should Green Belt boundaries be amended through the development plan process, and only after robust public consultation and independent examination of the draft proposal. We intend to publish the final version of the Framework before 31 March.

Yours ever

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Greg Clark".

GREG CLARK MP