Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

Baroness Taylor of Stevenage
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Housing and Local Government
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Our reference: MC2025/36377

Roger Mortlock
Chief Executive
CPRE, the Campaign to Protect Rural England

Via email: chiefexecutive@cpre.org.uk

21st January 2026

Dear Roger

Thank you for your letter of 22 December regarding the Adlington New Town proposal.

On 28 September, the Government published the New Towns Taskforce report alongside its initial response. The independent New Towns Taskforce, appointed to identify opportunities for the next generation of new towns, recommended 12 potential locations to the Government as part of its final report.

In its initial response, the Government has welcomed all 12 of the Taskforce recommended locations, and indicated that Tempsford, Leeds South Bank and Crews Hill appear particularly promising as sites that might make significant contributions to unlocking economic growth and accelerating housing delivery. More information can be found here:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/new-towns-taskforce-report-to-government

The Government has now commenced a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) on recommended locations, as well as any reasonable alternatives, before confirming which places will be taken forward as new towns and how they will be delivered. In parallel, the Government continues to investigate each of the Taskforce's recommended locations and work with local partners to develop delivery plans for each place.

The Government has been clear that it will be more strategic in the approach to Green Belt land to build more homes in the right places, including any new towns. On 30 July 2024, the Government published for consultation its proposals for updates to the National Planning Policy Framework. These included its proposed reforms relating to the Green Belt.

I appreciate your concerns regarding environmental impact. The SEA process will assess the likely significant environmental impacts of the proposed New Towns programme, alongside reasonable

alternatives to the programme. It will ensure that these environmental impacts are known, publicised, consulted on, integrated into any decisions, and then monitored.

It is required by law that the decisions on which new towns to take forward are informed by the various statutory duties which apply to the Department. No decision will be made on which locations to name as new towns until the SEA, the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) and other required impact assessments have been completed and the evidence gathered through the assessments has been considered by Ministers.

We are currently anticipating that the SEA process will conclude in spring 2026, at which point Ministers will make a final decision on which locations will be taken forward, and the full Government response to the Taskforce's report will be published.

Finally, I also note your concerns regarding infrastructure provision. It is important that people have all the things they need within easy reach, including the necessary social infrastructure.

We would expect the delivery body and developers to proactively identify social infrastructure gaps both within and beyond town boundaries, to ensure provision is place based and well-suited to its local context.

We appreciate your offer of future assistance. The New Towns Unit will be in touch in due course when relevant opportunities arise.

Thank you again for writing on this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

BARONESS TAYLOR OF STEVENAGE
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Housing and Local Government