

Written questions, answers and statements

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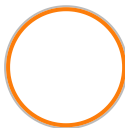
Urban Areas: Planning

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Question for Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

UIN 68562, tabled on 16 July 2025

Question



Victoria Collins

Liberal Democrat

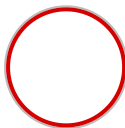
Harpenden and Berkhamsted

Commons

>

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether her Department plans to issue a formal definition of a Large Built-Up Area for the purposes of planning decisions.

Answer



Matthew Pennycook

Labour

Greenwich and Woolwich

Commons

>

Answered on

24 July 2025

Local planning authorities (LPAs) must necessarily exercise judgement to interpret and apply national planning policy to their particular local circumstances.

The government published revised Green Belt guidance on 27 February 2025, to help LPAs review their Green Belt and identify grey belt land. This guidance sets out key considerations for informing judgements on the contribution land makes to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Answered by

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government



Written questions, answers and statements

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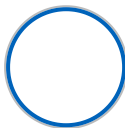
Green Belt

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Question for Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

UIN 111727, tabled on 9 February 2026

Question



Sir Oliver Dowden

Conservative

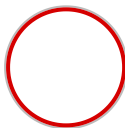
Hertsmere

Commons

>

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the Planning Practice Guidance on the Green Belt, how the Department defines (a) large built-up areas, (b) towns and (c) historic towns.

Answer



Matthew Pennycook

Labour

Greenwich and Woolwich

Commons

>

Answered on

24 February 2026

The revised National Planning Policy Framework published on 12 December 2024 and the Green Belt guidance updated on 27 February 2025 do not introduce a definition of large-built up area, town, historic town or village.

In the absence of an up-to-date local plan, there is a high likelihood that development will come forward on a piecemeal and speculative basis, with reduced public engagement and fewer guarantees that it will make the most of an area's potential. It is for these reasons that the government has been clear that we intend to drive local plans to adoption as quickly as possible with a view to achieving universal local plan coverage.

My Department does not collect data on the number of grey belt planning applications approved on appeal. The amount of land designated as Green Belt in England can be found on gov.uk [here](#) and the proportion of new homes built on Green Belt land can be found on gov.uk [here](#).

Answered by

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government



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