

**RT HON GILLIAN KEEGAN MP**  
**Member of Parliament for Chichester**



**HOUSE OF COMMONS**

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Cllr Adrian Moss  
Chichester District Council  
Chichester  
West Sussex  
PO19 1TY

22 August 2023

Dear Adrian,

In light of the extremely concerning speculative planning applications made in Birdham, we write to you as a matter of urgency to reiterate the need for us to move swiftly on advancing the proposed Chichester Local Plan to its final stages. The vast majority of the work to prepare the plan for submission to the Planning Inspector has already been completed - there can be no cause for delay.

As you are aware, the application in Birdham proposes to build 150 houses on agricultural land off the main road (A286), outside of the villages' settlement boundary and directly bordering the Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). This site is not one that has been deemed suitable for housing in any part of the proposed local plan. It has prompted significant concern from a large number of local residents, many of whom have raised serious questions over the potential impact that these unplanned houses could have on the natural landscape, road congestion and flooding risk. We share these concerns.

We cannot afford to wait for an additional 'review' process like that set out in your party's campaign literature, earlier this year. We also cannot afford to wait for any potential 'new powers' to be introduced as part of the Government's ongoing consultation into the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which we understand have previously been referenced by members of the current administration. The most effective action the District Council can take to prevent further speculative development is to progress the proposed Chichester Local Plan, which is already at a highly advanced stage. Despite this, the Plan has unfortunately yet to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. We urge the District Council to take immediate steps to implement the new Chichester Local Plan.

As Chichester's MP, I have also written to Rachel Maclean, the Minister for Housing, to share our concerns and make clear the real risk posed by delays to the advancement of the new Chichester Local Plan, particularly to communities like Birdham.

We look forward to hearing from you soon on when you will be moving the Local Plan to its final stages.

Regards,

**Gillian Keegan**  
**Member of Parliament for Chichester**

**Clive Bush**  
**Birdham Village Residents' Association**

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