



Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

**Matthew Pennycook MP**

Minister of State for Housing and Planning

***Ministry of Housing, Communities &  
Local Government***

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Lewis Cocking  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

Alberto Costa  
House of Commons  
London  
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9 June 2025

Dear Lewis and Alberto,

I am grateful for your continued engagement with the Planning and Infrastructure Bill. As promised in the Bill's final Commons Committee session, I am writing to you both regarding Alberto's proposed New Clause 16, which would require local planning authorities to refuse applications for large scale housing development where they are close to electrical pylons in the countryside.

As I expect you are both aware, the proposed amendment deviates significantly from the approach taken by successive governments to set national planning policy outside of legislation – allowing decision-makers flexibility to take appropriate decisions depending on the specifics of each case.

Its effect would be to place unnecessary restrictions on the decision-making powers of local planning authorities, and, as I set out during the debate in Committee, there are existing mechanisms within the planning system that ensure decision-makers are aware of, and take into account, potential safety or other issues of situating development, including social housing, near overhead lines.

It is the government's considered view these existing processes and safeguards are sufficient. Furthermore, National Grid have published guidance which ensures decision-makers are aware of safety and amenity issues that may arise from development within close proximity of electricity pylons and overhead lines, citing statutory safety clearances. They also encourage early and proactive engagement on plans and individual schemes which are brought forward within proximity of their infrastructure. This ensures such matters can be considered and addressed at the outset.

Finally, in practical terms, developers are more likely to position fewer sensitive elements of their development under overhead lines – such as roads rather than homes – which can further minimise any impact.

I am copying this letter to all members of the Public Bill Committee.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matthew Pennycook', with a large, stylized initial 'M'.

**MATTHEW PENNYCOOK MP**

Minister of State for Housing and Planning