

(i) The National Planning Policy Framework is making it difficult for councils to resist the pressure from developers who will profit from the erosion of our countryside. Only a change of policy at national level is going to stop the destruction of the greenbelt. We hope David Rutley's contribution to the All Party Parliamentary Group on protection of the greenbelt will actively support and work towards this necessary policy change.

(ii) The government is currently presenting a mixed message – whilst it professes to support localism, Eric Pickles (DCLG) is dictating from the centre and forcing councils to develop greenbelt. All planning inspectors report to Eric Pickles. As a result, when local plans are challenged at enquiries it is apparent that the inspectors no longer exercise the independence that is expected of them.

(iii) Developers already hold massive land banks (with planning permission to build) but they are not building on them. A recent estimate is that 400,000 houses could be built now on these land banks. If allowed, developers prefer to acquire more land from the greenbelt and build on that instead - it's easier and more lucrative for them.

(iv) Mr Rutley, should ask the council to properly investigate the extent of land banks already held by developers in Cheshire East. The council should then assess how many affordable houses for first time buyers these land banks could accommodate. Developers should not be allowed more planning permission until they have built on the land banks they already have. Councillors should be asked to vote against the local plan on Thursday night and bring back a revised version after the necessary homework has been done by the planning department.