



{{TO_TITLE}}
House of Lords,
London,
SW1A 0PW

{{DATE}}

Dear {{TO_SALUTATION}},

The Report Stage of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill (LURB) is a unique opportunity to reform the planning system to ensure that new development is in line with the UK's climate targets and carbon budgets and resilient to the impacts of climate change. Unfortunately, the Bill as it stands will not do this.

Please support Lord Ravensdale's Amendment 191 which would introduce a statutory climate change test for the Secretary of State and local planning authorities to apply to both planning decisions and plan making. The amendment is likely to be debated on 20 July 2023.

Most local authorities have declared climate emergencies and are now looking at how their role as planning authorities can contribute to meeting national and local climate targets at the same time as creating high-quality, healthy places to live. Some are developing strong net zero policies in their local plans, but this is despite of rather than facilitated by the existing regulatory framework and national policy.

Although a 'climate duty' has existed in relation to local plan making since 2008 it is not directly enough linked to climate targets and budgets, and the duty does not apply to decision making. The lack of clarity in the system has meant that there has not been enough progress in embedding climate targets or climate resilience in plan making and too many high carbon developments continue to be granted planning permission. Lack of clarity also risks delays, costs and legal challenges in decision making. In a clear illustration of how current requirements are not working, some local policies aimed at delivering the high quality zero carbon homes that local communities want are being challenged and even blocked by the Planning Inspectorate. This has happened in West Oxfordshire and Lancaster for example and is an untenable situation in a climate crisis. Without amendment to the LURB, there is a real risk that local planning authorities will continue to be challenged over strong climate policies or decisions.

It is not surprising then that the government's advisors, the Climate Change Committee, have recommended that a "net zero test" be applied to planning as did the recent [Independent Review of Net Zero](#) led by the Rt Hon Chris Skidmore MP which found that the current planning system is "undermining net zero and the economic opportunities that come with it" in the absence of such a test. Lord Ravensdale's amendment would provide this test. Of course, with the current under resourcing of planning departments,

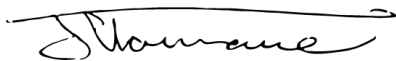
which is part of a [wider staffing crisis across local government](#), such a test must be backed by adequate resourcing.

During the Committee stage of the LURB the government referred to forthcoming changes to policy in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to introduce a form of carbon accounting to plan making. This proposal is welcome. But the changes we need cannot be achieved by planning policy alone. Meaningful action requires both the promised updates to the NPPF and a clear legal alignment with carbon targets and adaptation strategies. Planning policy can too easily go backwards. Lord Ravensdale's amendment would place a much more specific focus for the Secretary of State and local authority decision makers on compliance with carbon budgets rather than just on the general desirability of mitigating and adapting to climate change. By delivering a more consistent alignment of planning policy and decisions with the existing legislative framework for tackling climate change, the amendment would empower local authorities to insist on low or zero carbon development in their areas.

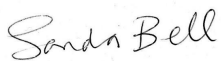
Please support Lord Ravensdale's Amendment 191 which would introduce a statutory climate change test for the Secretary of State and local planning authorities to apply to both planning decisions and plan making.

The wording of the amendment is below. Please feel free to get in touch with us with any further questions you may have.

Yours sincerely



Jason Torrance, Interim Chief Executive, UK100



Sandra Bell, Co-Chair, Blueprint Coalition

Report Stage Amendment 191

LORD RAVENSDALE BARONESS HAYMAN OF
ULLOCK LORD LANSLEY

After Clause 88, insert the following new Clause—

**“Duties in relation to mitigation of, and adaptation to,
climate change in relation to planning**

- (1) The Secretary of State must have special regard to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change in preparing—
 - (a) national policy, planning policy or advice relating to the development or use of land,
 - (b) a national development management policy pursuant to section 38ZA of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- (2) When making a planning decision relating to development arising from an application for planning permission, the making of a development order granting planning permission or an approval pursuant to a development order granting planning permission, a relevant planning authority (as defined in section 85 (interpretation of chapter 1)) must have special regard to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change.
- (3) For the purposes of interpretation of this section, Part 3 of this Act, and Schedules 7 and 12 to this Act—

“the mitigation of climate change” includes the achievement of—

- (a) the target for 2050 set out in section 1 of the Climate Change Act 2008,
- (b) applicable carbon budgets made pursuant to section 4 of the Climate Change Act 2008, and
- (c) sections 1 to 3 of the Environment Act 2021 (environmental targets) where applicable to the mitigation of climate change;

“adaptation to climate change” includes—

- (a) the mitigation of the risks identified in the latest climate change risk assessment conducted under section 56 of the Climate Change Act 2008, and
- (b) the achievement of the objectives of the latest flood and coastal erosion risk management strategy made pursuant to section 7 of the Flood and Coastal Water Management Act 2010.”

Member's explanatory statement

This new Clause places a duty on the Secretary of State and relevant planning authorities respectively to have special regard to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change with respect to national policy, local plan-making and planning decisions.

About UK100

UK100's primary purpose is to support a local-led rapid transition to Net Zero and Clean Air. We do this through collaboration. To accelerate action, we believe in bringing together the most influential leaders across the country to learn together and agree on legislative and regulatory change priorities while empowering them to engage with national decision-makers. We provide our network with the knowledge, tools and connections to make this happen.

[UK100.org](https://uk100.org) Contact: chiefexecutive@uk100.org

About the Blueprint Coalition

The Blueprint Coalition is a cross-sector coalition of local government organisations, civil society and environmental charities, and climate research institutions. We work together to highlight local government's potential and readiness to deliver climate action, to highlight the practical solutions that will help unlock action and to identify where national government can best support local authorities with that delivery.

[Blueprint Coalition](https://blueprintcoalition.org) Contact: sandra.bell@foe.co.uk