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Dear MHCLG Planning Policy Consultation Team,

National Planning Policy Framework: proposed reforms and other changes to the planning system

By way of response to the consultation we contribute our article published in early-November, with subsequent comments, which followed the government's announcement in late-September confirming that "it will progress work on the next generation of new towns across England":

[Railfuture | Strategic plan for homes](#)

We warmly welcome the intended alignment of investment decisions on the location of new homes with the location of rail stations, existing and planned, recognising that these are cross-departmental matters. We would strongly encourage the extension of this sustainable place-making principle to embrace expanding and new communities within the catchment of potential new rail stations to be served by upgraded existing and new rail lines.

Two examples familiar to us, both in the South East where land values are high and therefore bring the potential for Land Value Capture, as pioneered for the Northumberland Line, to make significant third-party contributions to financing upgraded or new rail infrastructure, are in East Sussex and Kent.

Medway's Hoo Peninsula has, like Northumberland had, an existing freight-only line (serving the Isle of Grain). The area is planned for the development of significant volumes of homes and jobs, which could be served by one new rail station at Hoo St. Werburgh after just the first few miles of the branch line being upgraded for passenger services.

Lewes District, as neighbouring Wealden District, faces very significant housing growth pressures, compounded by the South Downs National Park very strictly limiting such growth within its part of the district. In parallel, both district communities and others have long-favoured the restoration of passenger rail services between them, reconnecting Lewes and Uckfield. Alternative perspectives favour a focus first on the spatial distribution of Lewes District's long-term housing growth (outside the National Park), and whether a policy of agglomeration is to become the favoured approach to emerge. Were it to do so, and Ringmer / Broyle Side to become the focus of that agglomeration, a new rail station serving it on a new line linking north to Uckfield and south to Lewes, and potentially Eastbourne too, while avoiding the National Park, would also demonstrate the extension of the above principle, co-locating homes growth with rail infrastructure provision, both upgraded and new.

We therefore advocate for the National Planning Policy Framework to embrace the concept of guiding the growth of new homes and jobs towards locations which reasonably could be, as well as already are or planned to be, served by upgraded and new rail lines and stations.

www.railfuture.org.uk www.railfuture.org.uk/Devon+and+Cornwall+Branch
www.railwatch.org.uk



Railfuture is Britain's leading and longest-established, independent national voluntary organisation campaigning for a better railway across a bigger network for passenger and freight users, to support sustainable economic growth, environmental improvement and better-connected communities. We seek to influence policy and decision makers at local, regional and national levels to implement pro-rail policies in development and transport planning.

Yours faithfully,

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How we spell Railfuture - singular, one word, one capital letter (can be abbreviated to Rf)

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