



**Dawn Primarolo**  
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**DP//CAMP01003/01080364**

17 October 2008

Hilary Severn  
Campaign to Protect Rural England - Avonside  
The Countryside Room  
Poole Court  
Yate  
BS37 5PP

Dear Hilary Severn

Thank you for your letter dated 14 August in connection with the Draft Revised Regional Spatial Strategy. Please accept my apologies for the delay in my response; it has taken me some time to study the revised strategy documents and to consider the implications for the Bristol area and my constituency of Bristol South in particular.

I understand from your letter that Avonside CPRE is particularly concerned about the revised figures for housing allocation and the proposals to build new homes on the green belt.

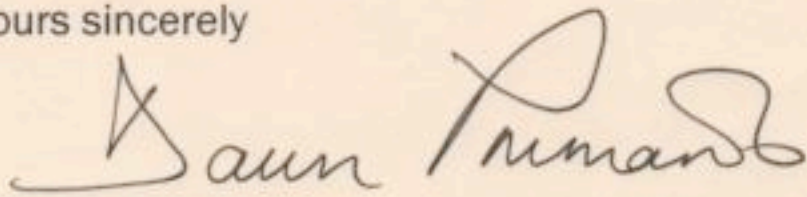
I think it is important for us to acknowledge the pressing need for more homes in our area, especially as demand for housing is predicted to rise in future years due to more people moving into the region and demographic and social trends meaning there are many more single person households. I have lost track of the number of times my constituents have told me that they can't afford to buy a house in their local area, or that their children can't get on the property ladder because of high house prices. Clearly the housing shortage needs to be addressed.

I understand that local authorities will try to maximise use of previously developed land for the new homes, but unfortunately the amount of land required for the additional housing simply cannot be met within the existing urban areas (especially if we retain some of this land for employment use which is necessary if we are to ensure diverse and sustainable communities). Given this, it does seem that the most sustainable solution is to provide for new developments on the edge of existing cities and towns. I believe these 'urban extensions' need to be suitably located and supported by good public transport links and other community facilities to ensure they are truly sustainable.

Finally, I would like to confirm that I do share your concerns about the revised figures for housing growth and particularly that Bristol City Council has been asked to accommodate 36,500 new houses within its boundaries - 8,500 more than in the 2006 Draft Regional Spatial Strategy. I will be requesting more detail about how this new figure has been reached. For your information, I enclose a copy of a statement I submitted to the South West Regional Assembly about this matter.

I hope this letter helps to clarify my position with regard to the proposed new developments, but please do not hesitate to contact me again if you have any further questions.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dawn Primarolo". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'D'.

**Dawn Primarolo**  
**Labour MP for Bristol South**

*I may contact you with further information on this and other issues. If you would prefer not to receive these updates, please write to me at the above address.*



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**DP//CAMP01003/01080364**

4 September 2008

Hilary Severn  
Campaign to Protect Rural England  
The Countryside Room  
Poole Court  
Yate  
BS37 5PP

Dear Hilary Severn

Thank you for your letter in connection with your concerns about the Draft Revised Regional Spatial Strategy.

Please accept my apologies for the delay in acknowledging your letter due to staff holidays in my constituency office last month.

I am currently considering the revised strategy and will contact you again soon with a fuller reply.

Yours sincerely

**Dawn Primarolo**

**Labour MP for Bristol South**

## **Statement from Dawn Primarolo, MP for Bristol South**

### **South West Regional Assembly Meeting – 10 October 2008**

#### **Item no. 7: Regional Spatial Strategy: Regional Assembly response to Secretary of State's Proposed Changes**

I am sorry that I am not able to attend today's meeting due to other commitments in my constituency.

I am aware that the Assembly will be discussing the Regional Spatial Strategy and the Proposed Changes document. While I am not able to contribute to the discussion in person, I thought it might be helpful if the Assembly was aware of my views on the revised strategy.

When reading and considering the revised documents, I paid particular attention to the proposals for the West of England sub-region, with my main focus naturally being implications for my constituents in Bristol South.

I welcome many of the proposals outlined in the documents, for example the strengthened requirement for additional and improved public transport provision and the commitment to regeneration of South Bristol, however, I have some particular comments to make around the revised proposals for housing growth.

I fully appreciate the high demand for housing in our region and the need for more homes, but I am concerned that Bristol is now being asked to accommodate 36,500 new dwellings – 8,500 more than featured in the 2006 draft strategy. This new figure will present a significant challenge to the local authority and I would be very concerned if land which is currently earmarked for employment use needed to be re-designated for new housing as fear this could result in insufficient employment opportunities and therefore would not support the concept of balanced and diverse communities.

I will need to be convinced that the case has been adequately made for the suggested number of additional houses and I will be asking questions about the revised figures.

Dawn Primarolo  
Labour MP for Bristol South  
08.10.08