



Department for Levelling Up,  
Housing & Communities

**Rachel Maclean MP**

*Minister of State for Housing and Planning*

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[www.gov.uk/dluhc](http://www.gov.uk/dluhc)

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Our reference:25530600

Caroline Lucas MP  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

13 April 2023

Dear Caroline,

Thank you for your email of 7 March to the Rt Hon Michael Gove MP about the Government's planning policies for mitigating light pollution and for the introduction of minimum standards for the management of external lighting. I am replying as the minister responsible for this matter.

I appreciate how important this matter is to you and your constituents. I am grateful to them for taking part in the star count led by the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE), who have also set out their considered proposals for changes to the planning system, and other measures, to reduce and mitigate the effects of light pollution.

The Government welcomes any action by individual developers who wish to mitigate the effects of light pollution but has no plans to legislate on this matter.

Government policy is that, by encouraging good design, planning policies and decisions should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation. The character of the area and the surrounding environment may affect what will be considered an appropriate level of lighting for a development. In particular, lighting schemes for developments in protected areas of dark sky or intrinsically dark landscapes should be carefully assessed as to their necessity and degree.

The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that policies and decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location, taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions, and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so, they should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes, and nature conservation.

As with all our policies, this area continues to evolve and develop, balancing the very laudable different priorities of supporting people into home ownership with protecting and enhancing our natural environment – both of which we want to achieve. The Government will continue to review and bring forward proposals in this policy area, and there will be opportunities in future for residents to contribute through consultation.

The recent consultation on a revised National Planning Policy Framework prospectus is now closed, and we are currently analysing the responses received before publishing a formal response.

Thank you again for writing in to share your and your constituents' concerns about this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Maclean', with a small dot at the end.

**RACHEL MACLEAN MP**  
Minister of State for Housing and Planning