

Steve Reed OBE  
Secretary of State for the  
Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

**Date:** 23 April 2025  
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Dear Secretary of State,

Dorset Council is pleased to have submitted a response to the strategically significant Land Use consultation. As a council committed to responding to the climate and nature crisis, supporting sustainable food security and the delivery of affordable homes, we believe that the development of an appropriate and effective Land Use Framework is crucial for integrating policies related to agriculture, housing, energy, infrastructure, nature recovery, and climate action.

Greater alignment on strategic and policy thinking is crucial. How we utilise our precious land assets during the coming years will be critical to deliver on security in its wider sense, including energy and food production. The importance of greater integration in policy and funding support for land use across sectors such as energy, food, and nature is critical, as these combined areas, working together, can support growth and not hinder it if they are viewed as part of a unified national mission.

Additionally, I believe that a more detailed and joined-up approach is required for climate adaptation. There are real opportunities to create strong links between natural flood management solutions, nature recovery and the greater resilience of food production in ways that can be far more cost effective than large scale civic engineering projects.

I would also like to highlight the importance of Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) and their influence on land use. As the responsible authority for delivering our LNRS in Dorset, I hold the view that these strategies can be an influential tool for identifying and coordinating information and opportunities locally. Tools such as LNRS ensure that we are working *with* our agricultural sector and our farmers, and as part of our land use strategy moving forwards, they must be at the forefront of our strategic thinking.

Considering the consultation, I would also like to raise the significance of developing and encouraging sustainable farming methods and emphasise our support of sustainable and resilient food production. The use of agritech and developing learning around sustainable practice will be influential in achieving our nature recovery goals by 2030. While food production is critical, support should also be put into place to increase productivity and measure non-food outcomes including those linked to environmental impact.

As an organisation, Dorset Council is committed to responding to the climate and nature crisis. This is a priority for our administration. We feel that by combining efforts across sectors, growth can be supported without hindering our climate goals.

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I strongly believe that Dorset, through its place leadership and partnership working, is developing an approach that at a local level is bringing together our strategic thinking on land use, underpinning our approach to large-scale clean energy, economic regeneration, nature recovery, housing provision and how we can increase the resilience of our communities. I would welcome the opportunity to host you in Dorset to see how we are bringing these initiatives together to underpin the need for growth while also delivery against our environmental, social and economic priorities.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Ireland'.

Councillor Nick Ireland  
**Leader Dorset Council**