Croydon Conservatives

Sarah Jones MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Cllr Jeet Bains
Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services

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Dear Sarah,

Croydon's Green Belt: will you stand with residents or Sadiq Khan?

In 2014 you told a packed Croydon public meeting:

"We need to be brave and build in places people might not want us to."

"Brave" is certainly one way of putting it. It also rather neatly revealed the regard you had for the views of the residents you were asking to represent – that their opposition to development was something politicians should simply be brave enough to disregard.

Those words were controversial at the time. They take on a very different meaning now that Mayor of London Sadiq Khan is proposing to open the door to development on Croydon's Green Belt.
The question is simple: **do you still believe what you said then?**

Sadiq Khan's Draft London Plan gives Croydon a housing target of **21,544 homes**, including **5,600 homes on greenfield land**. The Plan also designates Croydon–New Addington as a Green Belt Residential-led Mixed Use Broad Location for Growth.

At the same time, City Hall identifies capacity for 15,944 homes on brownfield land in Croydon.
So Croydon is being asked to accommodate substantial growth on previously developed land, while the Mayor of London is simultaneously putting Green Belt release into the strategic planning framework.

And this is not an abstract exercise taking place somewhere else in London.

The Croydon–New Addington growth location encompasses communities and transport corridors including **Sandilands, Addiscombe, Coombe Lane, Gravel Hill, Addington Village, Fieldway, King Henry's Drive and New Addington**.

These are places you represented for much of your parliamentary career.

You know these communities. You know the green spaces. You know what they mean to residents.
You therefore have a particularly straightforward choice.

Will you oppose Mayor Sadiq Khan's plan to release Croydon's Green Belt, or will you defend him?

Mayor of Croydon Jason Perry and Croydon Conservatives have made our position clear: Croydon's Green Belt is not a convenient land bank for City Hall.

We support building homes. We support affordable homes. We support regeneration.

But we believe brownfield land should come first.

That means unlocking stalled schemes, making existing planning permissions viable, regenerating Croydon town centre and removing the barriers that prevent homes from actually being built.

What we do not accept is the proposition that when development is difficult, the answer should simply be to expand the development footprint into protected countryside.

And that brings us back to your words.

In 2015 you argued that politicians needed to be "brave" enough to build in places where people might not want development.

- Did you mean Croydon's Green Belt?
- Did you mean the green spaces around New Addington?
- Did you mean the land around Gravel Hill and Addington Village?
- Did you mean the countryside around the Coombe corridor?

Because your former constituents now have a very good reason to ask.

You cannot spend years representing these communities and then refuse to take a position when their green spaces are placed under strategic development pressure by your own party's Mayor of London.

So I am asking you for five straightforward answers:

- **Do you oppose the 5,600-home greenfield element of Croydon's housing target where this requires Green Belt release?**
- **Do you oppose the designation of Croydon–New Addington as a Green Belt Residential-led Mixed Use Broad Location for Growth?**
- **Will you publicly call on Mayor Sadiq Khan to remove Croydon's Green Belt growth allocation from the Draft London Plan?**
- **Will you support Croydon Council's objection to these proposals?**
- **Will you join Mayor Jason Perry and Croydon Conservatives in campaigning to protect Croydon's Green Belt?**

These are simple questions, and Croydon residents deserve simple answers.

If you oppose the proposals, say so. If you support them, say so.

And if you still believe politicians should be "brave" enough to build in places residents do not want them to, then tell your former constituents whether their green spaces are among those places.

Will you stand with Croydon's residents, or will you stand with Sadiq Khan?

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Jeet Bains

Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services
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