



27<sup>th</sup> January 2012

Rt Hon Michael Gove MP  
Secretary of State  
Department for Education  
Sanctuary Buildings  
Great Smith Street  
London SW1P 3BT

Dear Secretary of State

We write in support of a letter to you from the UK Green Building Council and the Aldersgate Group, dated 23rd January, expressing deep concern at the proposed dropping of the requirement for schools to be assessed for and to meet the BREEAM standard of very good or above when being built or refurbished.

The Edge is a cross-industry group of building design professionals and others, many of whom have long and recognised experience in school design. While many of us are seeking improvements to the BREEAM system it remains the only broad measure of sustainability including energy consumption used across the industry and is highly effective at delivering high performing buildings at little additional cost. The UKGBC/Aldersgate letter quotes a capital cost uplift of 0.7% to achieve an 'Excellent' BREEAM rating that delivers a potential yield of 25% in annual energy use, with associated revenue cost savings. This is the kind of value for money efficiency that the government is seeking across all public spending, including education.

Until and unless a better method to predict sustainability is developed and widely trialled and adopted by the construction industry, BREEAM is an essential tool in helping to reduce energy demand from buildings, and essential if the UK is to meet The Carbon Plan put into legislation in December. The feed back to the industry from BREEAM implementation is also critical for helping the industry to improve its product and make it ever more competitive in the global market place for low-carbon skills and products.

The aims of balancing regulatory burden and achieving energy efficiency will be best achieved by improving BREEAM not dropping it. We very much hope that you will reconsider this matter and we would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further with you and your officials.

Yours sincerely

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