



Department for  
Communities and  
Local Government

11 APR 2014

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Our Ref: ER/NB/007940/14 03 APR 2014

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*Nick Boles*

Thank you for your letter of 14 March to the Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP, enclosing correspondence from your constituent, [REDACTED] Sheffield, S36 [REDACTED] concerning neighbourhood plans. I am replying as the Minister responsible for planning.

Your constituent's letter asks about the rate of adoption of neighbourhood plans. As of 26 March, nine draft neighbourhood plans had been submitted to referendum. All have been successful. Seven of these plans have also now been 'made' by the local planning authority (the equivalent of being adopted). At this point, the neighbourhood plan becomes part of the statutory development plan. Applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

If the majority of those who vote in a referendum are in favour of the neighbourhood plan, then the neighbourhood plan must be made by the local planning authority. Local planning authorities should do this promptly following the announcement of the referendum result. There are narrow circumstances where the local planning authority is not required to make the neighbourhood plan following a successful referendum. These are where it considers that the making of the neighbourhood plan would breach, or otherwise be incompatible with, any

EU or human rights obligations (see section 61E(8) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 Act as amended).

We are also encouraging all local councils to ensure that they have an up-to-date Local Plan in place, prepared through engagement with the community. Neighbourhood development plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area. In turn, Local Plans must be consistent with national policy.

Neighbourhood planning continues to provide a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of sustainable development for their community. Around 1,000 communities have taken the first formal steps towards producing a plan. 80 draft neighbourhood plans have been produced. I was pleased to read that your constituent is convinced that his neighbourhood should embark on producing a plan and wish him and his fellow residents the best of luck.

*Nick Boles*

NICK BOLES MP