



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Baroness Taylor of Stevenage

*Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Housing
and Local Government*

2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Your reference: JR07375

Our reference: MC2025/27789

Jack Rankin MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

31st October 2025

Dear *Jack*

Thank you for your letter of 7 October regarding neighbourhood plans. I have been asked to reply.

I appreciate the concern that your constituents in Ascot, Sunninghill and Sunningdale might feel over the future of neighbourhood planning. The Government continues to believe that neighbourhood planning is an important part of the planning system. Communities can continue to prepare neighbourhood plans where they consider that doing so is in their best interests.

The Spending Review has involved difficult decisions. Neighbourhood planning groups have received over £71 million since 2013. This support has created a network of planners and groups who have the skills and expertise to prepare neighbourhood plans and to help other communities to do so. As such, we do not consider further financial assistance by the Government should be required to sustain the neighbourhood planning system.

Regarding your query on how neighbourhood plans will interact with Local Plans, neighbourhood plans are a tier of the planning system and empower communities to shape local development. Adopted neighbourhood plans form part of the development plan for the area and will continue to carry significant weight in planning decisions. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) retains protections from speculative development for neighbourhood plans that are under five years old and contain policies and site allocations that meet identified housing requirements.

Over time, plans that are more than five years old will carry less weight. Policies in a neighbourhood plan may become out of date, including if they conflict with policies in a local plan adopted after the making of the neighbourhood plan. In such cases, the more recent plan policy takes precedence. Communities in areas where policies in a neighbourhood plan that is in force have become out of date may therefore decide to update their plan, or part of it. There may be instances where both a Local Plan and a neighbourhood plan are more than five years old and become out of date. In such cases, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and there is a presumption

in favour of such development. An up-to-date neighbourhood plan can help safeguard local sites and shape any development that then occurs.

Regarding Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), CIL receipts must be used for the purposes which are set out in section 216 of the Planning Act 2008 and Part 7 of the CIL regulations. Local authorities must spend the levy on infrastructure needed to support the development of their area. Where charging authorities collect the levy, they can use up to 5% of funds from the levy to recover the costs of administering the levy.

Where all or part of a chargeable development is within the area of a parish council, the charging authority must pass a proportion of the CIL receipts from the development to the parish council. The 'neighbourhood portion' of CIL can be spent on infrastructure or anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area.

Thank you for taking the time to write on this important issue.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Baroness Taylor'.

BARONESS TAYLOR OF STEVENAGE

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Housing and Local Government