



Department for  
Communities and  
Local Government

Sir William Cash MP  
House of Commons  
London  
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**Gavin Barwell MP**  
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Dear Bill,

Thank you for your letter of 11 November to the Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP on behalf of your constituent Mrs Wendy Kinson regarding neighbourhood planning.

I hope you will understand that I am not in a position to comment on individual plans or provide legal advice. The documents referred to by Mrs Kinson (Housing Needs Assessment and Character and Heritage Assessment) are products from our support provider Locality and subcontractor AECOM. There is no requirement from the Borough Council to send us this information.

Our Guidance is clear that the local planning authority should take a proactive and positive approach, working collaboratively with a qualifying body particularly sharing evidence and seeking to resolve any issues to ensure the draft neighbourhood plan has the greatest chance of success at independent examination.

The local planning authority should work with the qualifying body to produce complementary neighbourhood and Local Plans. It is important to minimise any conflicts between policies in the neighbourhood plan and those in the emerging Local Plan, including housing supply policies.

The Government places communities at the heart of the planning system. We have recently introduced regulations that speed up and simplify the process, and the Neighbourhood Planning Bill which was introduced in September contains important measures which will further strengthen neighbourhood planning and give even more power to local communities. The new requirements for Statements of Community Involvement in the Neighbourhood Planning Bill underline the importance of the role of the local planning authority in advising and assisting their communities.

*Yours sincerely*  
*Gavin*

**GAVIN BARWELL MP**