

Dear [MP name] – If you're unsure who your local MP is, you can find out here by entering your organisation's postcode: <https://members.parliament.uk/FindYourMP>

## **Re: Impacts of proposed Government planning reform on the value of neighbourhood plans**

I am writing on behalf of [name of your neighbourhood planning group] to express my concerns about the proposals within the government's Planning White Paper.

We are concerned that the [White Paper consultation document](#) on planning reform will likely lead to a slimmed down scope for neighbourhood plans. We feel that this means there will be less opportunity for our community to shape and have our say on local planning matters.

Neighbourhood planning has been one of the most transformative community powers introduced through the 2011 Localism Act. Not only do neighbourhood plans involve a local referendum, they are accompanied by significant community engagement and have statutory weighting within the development plan framework. They help shape places at the local level and bring forward development that the local community want to see. They do this through a range of mechanisms such as: allocating sites for development (.e.g. for housing); and including policies on a range of themes such as design, the economy, and environment, to help deliver sustainable development.

### **While there are a number of unknown factors within the White Paper, our interpretation is that these proposals could have the following implications for neighbourhood plans:**

- The scope of what neighbourhood plans can do may be reduced, with the focus largely on design.
- Neighbourhood plans may no longer be able to allocate sites for development (including housing) or have the opportunity to shape development and growth in the local area.
- Neighbourhood plans may largely no longer be able to include development management policies. These are the policies that planning officers normally take into account when deciding on planning applications.

These proposals have the potential to reduce the value of neighbourhood plan making and to lead to poorer quality places for us. In our community this will mean that...*[if you are able please provide a few details about what these changes might mean if the neighbourhood plan process is diluted. What have you achieved as a group so far, and what are you hoping to achieve in the future?]*

We would like you to raise our concerns with The Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, and raise questions in Parliament to request clarity about the implications on neighbourhood planning and reassurance that their current scope will be maintained.

This is essential so that neighbourhood plans can continue to have enough breadth to pack the punch they need to transform places for the better. Otherwise there is the risk that all the hard work of communities like ours will be undermined.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind Regards,

[XX]