



Department for
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Dear Mr Hogan

Thank you for your letter of 27 November to the Secretary of State, the Rt. Hon Greg Clark MP about neighbourhood planning. I am responding as Minister for Housing and Planning.

Our Government remains committed to neighbourhood planning, and wants to support communities' aspirations to meet local housing and development needs through neighbourhood planning. The Housing and Planning Bill we have introduced contains measures to speed up and simplify the neighbourhood planning process. We believe this will ensure neighbourhood planning remains straightforward and attractive for communities like Congleton. We are also funding a £22.5 million support programme for neighbourhood planning for 2015-18. All groups can apply for a grant of up to £8,000. Further information is available from www.mycommunity.org.uk.

With regard to your query on the weight given to emerging Local and neighbourhood plans, this would depend on a range of factors including the stage of preparation of the emerging plans, the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies and consistency of policies in the emerging plan with policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Decision-makers are guided in these matters in the first instance by the NPPF (especially paragraphs 16 and 183-185) and the planning practice guidance on neighbourhood plans.

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BRANDON LEWIS MP

SIGNED ON BEHALF
OF MINISTER IN
HIS/HER
ABSENCE