

P-05-844 Immediate review of the Neath Port Talbot LDP – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 04.12.18

Dear David,

The response from the Cabinet Secretary, Lesley Griffiths, serves to highlight my points that as a member of the public calling to make changes to a Local Development Plan, the only course of action is to appeal to our Local Planning Authority. In our case, on appealing to correct information in our LDP, we were told in no uncertain terms that this was not possible between the 4 year review periods – even with the full support of our locally elected Ward Member. For us, this meant that a questionably dangerous development was permitted to be built inside our settlement area because the information in the LDP to prevent this was missing. Unfortunately this omission was only found by residents on reviewing the development application.

This petition calls for a mechanism to be implemented to allow for ‘immediate’ amendments to be made to a Local Development Plan where omissions or errors have been discovered by affected residents. Currently, it could be argued that where such amendments would be detrimental to the intentions of a Planning Authority, such requests are easily denied with no official recourse or further discussion. Our Local Planning Authorities wield almost total power in planning matters and use these Local Development Plans as the ‘rulebook’ to guide their decision making process. The LDP is so important that a 4 year window is simply not sufficient, especially where planning decisions are made in just weeks after an application is submitted.

A mechanism to allow for immediate changes is desperately needed, which should be officially logged and considered by a LPA on **submission by a Ward Member**. As it stands, where a Planning Authority refuses to review and correct information in a Local Development Plan, affected residents are left powerless in the face of potentially dozens of planning decisions between reviews.

We need to enable more powers for affected residents to take part in what happens in their communities. Today, we can effect very little in the face of large scale development, and as a nation we risk losing our culture and heritage in smaller villages and towns to make way for such constructions as fast food drive through restaurants. With this mechanism for change, we can ensure that residents can protect their homes and communities, at the same time as working with the Local

Planning Authorities to ensure that new developments are appropriate and benefit everyone.