Sarah Wollaston (Totnes, Conservative) Click here to watch Sarah speak

Does the Minister share my concern that councillors are sometimes put off from declining planning permission because of the fear of bearing the full cost of an appeal? Does he agree that that is sometimes acting as a barrier to localism?

Nicholas Boles (Grantham and Stamford, Conservative)

I reassure my hon. Friend that if councils go through the proper process of forming policies and a local plan under the NPPF, they have nothing to fear from appeals to the Planning Inspectorate, which upholds the decision of local authorities in 65% of cases and can award costs against applicants who conduct themselves unreasonably in launching such appeals.

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