

Sent by email

Rt Hon Anna Turley MP
Minister of State for Border Security and Asylum
Home Office
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

23 July 2026

Dear Minister,

Firstly, please accept my congratulations on your appointment as Minister of State in the Home Office. You have taken on a challenging but important brief, and I wish you every success in delivering the Government's ambitions in this area.

I am writing following our meeting with your officials on 22 July to discuss the current proposals for the former RAF Linton-on-Ouse site. I would like to thank them for their continued engagement throughout this process. The openness shown by officials to meet with us, listen to concerns and respond constructively to the questions raised by the Mayor, our respective teams and I has been greatly appreciated.

During the meeting, I reiterated our request for assurance on the key issues raised in previous correspondence. In particular, I would welcome further consideration of the unique circumstances that apply to the proposed use of the RAF Linton on Ouse site in North Yorkshire for asylum accommodation.

The proposed site is at RAF Linton on Ouse sits in a small rural village in a predominantly rural area, with markedly different policing challenges from those found in urban areas. The Mayor and I continue to be concerned that any substantial increase in community risk and policing demand associated with the site, North Yorkshire Police would struggle to absorb that demand without substantial additional resources, which would have to be pulled in from elsewhere in the county.

This concern is heightened by the fact that the area currently experiences low levels of crime and is not ordinarily resourced to respond to the kinds of pressures that may arise from a facility of this scale. Furthermore, during the summer months policing resources are already under significant pressure due to seasonal demand elsewhere in the county, notably in the City of York, national parks and coastal communities. Having examined the Government Guidance on Large Sites for Asylum Accommodation: support for police forces I am particularly concerned that, in the event that this proposal moves forwards, a different approach would be required to police resourcing for North Yorkshire to mitigate these circumstances. I would urge the Government to ensure the

investigations currently taking place around RAF Linton on Ouse, include these considerations alongside wider policing requirements.

I also welcome guidance issued by the Home Secretary (1/7/26) that no asylum accommodation sites would be located adjacent to schools. As discussed in both my meetings with Home Office officials, the proximity of the proposed site to a primary school has generated considerable public concern. Given those previous public statements, local communities are understandably seeking urgent clarification on the Government's position given the RAF Linton on Ouse proposal. Any early clarification you are able to provide would be welcomed.

RAF Linton on Ouse remains a strategic brownfield site. As you may be aware, the Mayor has repeatedly called for it to be developed for desperately needed affordable housing for the county. This proposal risks that development. It is therefore important that all local and strategic partners are fully involved in discussions about any future use of this site and how this can be optimised for the regional economy. I am aware they are making separate representations. Once again thank you to Home Office officials for the open way in which they have been engaging with the Mayor and I on this issue.

Finally, as I'm sure you can imagine, there has been considerable public interest in this matter and the Mayor, and I have received close to a thousand pieces of correspondence from residents and stakeholders. Whilst a Home Office webpage has been created, a recurring theme within that correspondence is uncertainty regarding the information currently available through Home Office communications, with particular questions on the lack of clarity on specific milestones for this scoping work to be carried out, with timescales measured in months. It also states that, should the site be used for this purpose, the minimum operational period would be three years. This has led many people to conclude the proposal is effectively a foregone conclusion, despite assurances that no final decision has yet been made. I would therefore be grateful for further clarity on these points.

It would be extremely helpful for the Home Office to set out a clearer timeline for decision-making, including key stages in the process, indicative dates where possible, and a more detailed explanation of what remains subject to consideration. This would help address public concerns, improve transparency and provide communities with a better understanding of how and when decisions will be reached.

I would also be keen to meet with you personally to discuss these matters further and would particularly welcome the opportunity to visit the site with you, so that you can see first-hand the site's proximity to the local community and the issues being raised by residents and local partners.

Thank you again for the constructive engagement provided by your officials to date. I look forward to continuing this important dialogue.

Yours sincerely,



Jo Coles

Deputy Mayor of York and North Yorkshire for Policing, Fire and Crime

CC:

Rt Hon Sir Alec Shelbrooke MP - Member of Parliament for Wetherby and Easingwold

Councillor Carl Les, Leader - North Yorkshire Council

Councillor Claire Douglas, Leader - City of York Council