

Sent by email

Alex Norris MP
Minister of State (Minister for Border Security and Asylum)
Home Office
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

24 June 2026

Dear Minister,

I'm aware of the representations made by the Chief Constable of North Yorkshire Police to the Deputy Director of Asylum and Detention Accommodation regarding the proposals for Linton-on-Ouse. Like North Yorkshire Police, I fully appreciate the challenges and pressures on the national asylum system following years of failure to grip the extent of the challenge; the need to process applications quickly; to ensure those entitled to stay are able to be swiftly integrated into communities; and those who are not entitled to stay, to be removed. However, in light of the information shared with the Chief Constable there are a number of assurances I am seeking from North Yorkshire Police and the Home Office.

Linton-on-Ouse is a small rural village in North Yorkshire, with a population of around 1,000, predominantly older people. There is very little infrastructure locally. This proposal would have an enormous impact on these residents and neighbouring villages as well as on North Yorkshire Police. The assurances I am seeking from the Chief Constable on the risks posed to community safety from this proposal are set out below and I attach a copy of that email for completeness. These are:

1. What additional resources North Yorkshire Police assess may be needed and what assurances from the Home Office have been received that the cost of these will be covered centrally?
2. What the impact on other areas of policing across the county may be? I'm particularly concerned about abstraction of officers, the geographical challenges already faced by a rural police force covering York and North Yorkshire, overtime costs and our limited capacity from Police Support Units that are already deployed to meet existing risks across the county.
3. What the financial implications of 1 and 2 are and what assurances are being sought by North Yorkshire Police to ensure, if this goes ahead, this financial risk is not carried by local council tax payers? This letter is to ensure those representations are appropriately heard.
4. How would a site like this be monitored from a policing perspective to ensure everyone in the area is kept safe and the community given assurance? What can I do to support the oversight of this?

5. If this site will not be a secure location, will North Yorkshire Police also undertake an assessment around the risks to road safety given the very limited public transport in this area and the lack of any public footpaths, even within the village itself?
6. What discussions are North Yorkshire Police aware of that the Home Office has had with other emergency services about the infrastructure locally, including the roads and bridges so that emergency vehicles of all kinds would be able to attend the site in an emergency?
7. Has an assessment been made of known extremists who may live in the local area and what additional risk this may cause?

In addition to the points above that I've raised directly with the Chief Constable:

It is particularly frustrating that efforts by the Mayor David Skaith in 2024 and again in 2025 to ensure the Linton on Ouse site is allocated quickly for housing development have not moved more quickly. Failures by North Yorkshire Council to finalise a local plan and obstruction of separate proposals from the Mayor to make this site part of a Mayoral Development Zone are however still extremely important to us. The Mayor is separately and urgently seeking assurances from the Ministry of Defence that any contract doesn't prevent the development of this site for urgently needed affordable housing within the next 2 years of his Mayoral term.

Given this is a national delivery project, what oversight and governance arrangements are there for projects like this? Given the Mayor and I have a formal role in holding the police and fire services to account how will information be shared about the requirements and resourcing from both services at this site?

I would welcome clarity on whether a communications and engagement strategy has been developed in relation to this proposal, including the nature and extent of planned local engagement. In particular, it would be helpful to understand how considerations relating to community safety have been incorporated into this planning.

What is the proposed exit strategy for the site? This is particularly important in the context of its status as a strategic brownfield location for economic development, where active discussions regarding its use for much-needed affordable housing are ongoing.

I fully appreciate the efforts the Government are making to address the processing backlogs inherited from the previous Government and the role this site may play in delivering on the Government's manifesto pledge to tackle small boat crossings and to restore order to the asylum system. I do however need urgent assurances that the proposal for Linton on Ouse will be strictly time limited, that the local community will be kept safe, that public services, especially North Yorkshire Police, will not lose resources as a result and that the wider need for economic growth in areas like this is not compromised by a long-term arrangement.

I look forward to receiving your assurances.

Yours sincerely,



Jo Coles
Deputy Mayor for Policing, Fire & Crime
York and North Yorkshire