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7 July 2026

Dear Jo,

Thank you for your recent email about the proposed use for the Ministry of Defence (MoD) Linton-on-Ouse site for asylum accommodation.

The Home Office provides support under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 to asylum seekers and their dependants who would otherwise be destitute in order to comply with its legal obligations. I will seek to address your concerns in turn; however, I understand you have now met with officials and agreed an ongoing rhythm of engagement, so you may have had some of below questions answered already.

The Linton-on-Ouse site is no longer in active use by the MoD. The Government is considering using this former military site to accommodate people seeking asylum. If taken forward, it would provide basic, safe accommodation and would be designed to be largely self-sufficient to minimise any impact on the local community.

This site is subject to detailed feasibility assessments, which could take several months to complete. During this period, some activity on site may be visible. These assessments are routine exploratory work to understand the site's potential and do not predetermine its future use. Any proposals would be subject to the necessary planning permissions and approvals.

The site would be used for a minimum of three years. Making use of existing basic accommodation on MoD sites such as this site is just the first step in the Government's work to exit hotels and source more appropriate accommodation to meet our statutory obligation; however, we are aware that MoD Linton forms part of the commitments within the MoD's Defence Housing Strategy, and our intention is not for our temporary use of the site to hinder the progression of its final use as a site for the development of new housing.

An experienced, specialist provider of asylum accommodation would be appointed to manage the site on behalf of the Home Office. They would be responsible for ensuring the safe and secure operation of the accommodation and for providing wraparound support that meets the essential health and wellbeing needs of the asylum seekers.

The safety and security of the local community, the staff who work there and those accommodated on the site will be of the utmost importance. There will be a specialist and experienced provider of security services on site 24/7, as well as security systems including CCTV monitoring and recording, if the site is taken forward.

The Home Office regularly works in collaboration with local authorities and other partners including police to ensure that accommodation sites are successfully managed and the impact upon the local community is minimised. This includes a comprehensive and ongoing approach to identifying and managing any public protection or safeguarding risks associated with individuals.

Mandatory security checks are conducted on all people seeking asylum through linking their biometric data to immigration, security and criminality databases. This includes criminality checks for, amongst other things, convictions, pending prosecutions, wanted or missing reports, as well as fingerprints and photographs. These checks are critical to the delivery of a safe and secure immigration system.

If the site is taken forward, the Home Office would continue to engage regularly with representatives from the relevant local authorities, NHS, police forces and local partners to address the concerns of those most impacted by the site and to identify ways to keep them informed.

We will also engage with the local community via their elected members and via our factsheets, which are linked at the bottom of this letter and will be updated regularly.

I note your concerns about resourcing for North Yorkshire Police. Police forces should include within their policing and budget plans reasonable contingencies for unexpected events within their areas. However, the Home Office has established a grant scheme for police forces impacted by large sites, to which forces may apply should the sites have an impact on business-as-usual demand. More information on the grant funding provision is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/large-sites-for-asylum-accommodation-support-for-police-forces>.

Asylum seekers at the site would not be detained; however, the site would be self-contained as essential services would be provided on site to reduce the impact on local services through reducing the need for asylum seekers to leave the site. Suitability assessments are ongoing and will consider a range of factors including safety, security, operational deliverability, planning requirements and the impacts on local services and communities. If the site is taken forward, transport arrangements would be considered as part of operational planning and in discussion with relevant local partners.

The latest public information is available on the MoD Linton-On-Ouse factsheet, which is updated regularly on GOV.UK at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/asylum-accommodation-at-military-sites-factsheets/mod-linton-on-ouse-north-yorkshire-factsheet>.

Thank you for taking the time to write to me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Alex Norris', written over a horizontal line.

Alex Norris MP
Minister for Border Security & Asylum