

**Rt Hon Priti Patel MP**  
**Secretary of State for the Home Department**  
**Home Office**  
**2 Marsham Street**  
**London**  
**SW1P 4DF**

**By email**

17 May 2022

Dear Home Secretary

**Asylum Accommodation Proposals – Linton-on-Ouse, North Yorkshire**

I refer to my letter of the 28<sup>th</sup> April 2022 and 13 May 2022, copies of which I enclose.

I remain grateful for the constructive dialogue that your officials have had with me.

Whilst I remain concerned about the appropriateness of the site for its intended purpose, I recognise that it is my responsibility to engage with the issues which touch upon my responsibility for the totality of policing, crime and fire for the locale.

My purpose in writing again at this stage is to invite you **urgently** to reconsider, even at this late stage, the timescales which appear to mean that the site may be occupied by its first new residents as quickly as two weeks from now. I have specific reasons for asking you to revisit those timescales, as follows:

- I recognise the efforts that are now being made by your teams to engage with the existing residents and with stakeholders. Nonetheless the lack of such engagement until this late stage remains a serious concern and has strained trust and community confidence. News that asylum seekers may begin to occupy the site as soon as 31 May 2022 will come as a further shock to local communities. Taking further time to listen, can only benefit in terms of rebuilding community confidence and cohesion.
- Our understanding is that only the most rudimentary facilities for on-site activity (a café) will be ready by a date that early – and that other planned facilities (such as exercise facilities) will not be ready.
- The verbal assurances I have received to the effect that your officials will look favourably on meeting the cost of additional policing and fire demand, is welcome. Amplified assurance in writing, would assist me considerably in addressing the issue in earnest, internally and externally. However, I have already asked both North Yorkshire Police and North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service to assemble their analysis of the additional direct demand, as well as initiatives which will assist the community as a whole, including those who take up residence on the former base site, to be safe and feel safe.

- My team, working together with the operational Chief Officers, need time to make those preparations and to do justice to the initiatives we would like to discuss and agree with your officials. These could include additional resources dedicated to offering community reassurance, prevention and protection (both in terms of fire risk and overall community safety risk) and health responder services. We are also keen to properly explore what benefit there would be from making provision for equipment to mitigate the lead time on fire response times for the site. We are very keen to work constructively with your teams in that endeavour – but need realistic time within which to do so.

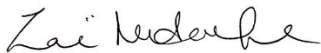
With all of the above in mind, my request is that you authorise a purposeful pause of one month to allow for the above work to take shape.

As ever, I am very happy to meet with you at any time to discuss these matters further.

In any event, I look forward to your response to the matters I have raised both in this letter and in the totality of my correspondence to date.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely



Zoë Metcalfe  
North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner