



**Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government**

Baroness Taylor of Stevenage
*Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for
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2 Marsham Street
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Our reference: MC2026/16445

Martin Tod
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20th July 2026

Dear *Martin*

Thank you for your email of 10 June regarding Winchester Council's Local Plan. I note you sent a follow up to this letter dated 30 June. Please accept this letter as a response to both pieces of correspondence.

We have been clear that upcoming local government reorganisation is not a reason to delay plan making. Getting up-to-date, ambitious plans in place is vital in ensuring communities have the homes and infrastructure they need. Given local authorities are legally required to commence plan-making by the dates set out in regulations, I am pleased Winchester Council has now published its notice of intention to commence plan-making. I am also pleased to hear of the Council's desire to progress quickly and positively plan for its area. We have recently published guidance on our dedicated website *Create or Update a Local Plan on Plan Making and local government reorganisation*, which you may find useful:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/plan-making-and-local-government-reorganisation>.

In terms of the practicalities raised for plan-making whilst local government reorganisation is ongoing, as you are aware we are currently working on transitional arrangements to deal with the various complexities that arise. Once published, we intend for these transitional arrangements to directly address a number of the questions you have posed. We recognise the need for more detailed guidance and for the transitional arrangements to be made available soon, and are working at pace to deliver them.

In light of your letters, I asked my officials to reach out to planning officers at the Council to offer an informal meeting to discuss plan-making in the new system. I am pleased to note this meeting took place on 13 July and would like to thank your officers for providing honest and open feedback, and I hope they found the meeting helpful and constructive. I understand that the Council's officers have been invited to provide feedback on how plan-making transitionals would work best for them, which my officials look forward to receiving.

I trust the above provides assurance that we are alive to the complexities of plan-making for authorities undergoing local government reorganisation and are keen to support authorities wherever possible. My officials will continue to engage with your officers as we develop the transitional arrangements for plan-making.

Thank you for taking the time to write.

Yours sincerely,



BARONESS TAYLOR OF STEVENAGE
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Housing and Local Government