



Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities

Lee Rowley MP

*Minister of State for Housing, Planning and Building
Safety*

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Our reference: MC2023/05753

Cllr Joanne Sexton
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26 January 2024

Dear Cllr Sexton,

Thank you for your letter of 11 December and your good wishes.

I am grateful for the update you have provided on the work of Spelthorne Council to put an up-to-date plan in place. Whilst, as I know you appreciate, I am not able to comment on the detail of the emerging Spelthorne Local Plan, thank you to you and your officers for the focus you are placing on moving this work forward at the current time.

I do appreciate the challenges of balancing all of the different facets influencing the planning process and I hope that the publication of the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) on 19 December, reaffirming that Local Plans are a priority for this Government along with the explanation of the transitional arrangements, provides clarity about the Government's position on local plans. I look forward to further updates on progress on resumption of the examination hearings.

Whilst I do appreciate the concerns of the Council with regards to intervention in the Local Plan, I am afraid that I am not able to go any further than then-Minister Maclean indicated in her correspondence to you of 31 October. With this in mind and given my inability to discuss the detail of a local plan due to the quasi-judicial nature of my role as Minister, I am afraid that I will not be able to meet at this current time.

I wholeheartedly agree that we have the common goal of getting a Local Plan for Spelthorne in place as soon as possible and I would be grateful for you continuing to work with Departmental officials on a regular basis.

I am sorry not to be able to meet on this occasion, but I hope the above is helpful in clarifying our position.

Yours sincerely,

LEE ROWLEY MP