



Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

**Matthew Pennycook MP**

*Minister of State for Housing and Planning*

2 Marsham Street

London

SW1P 4DF

Our reference: PO2025/21133

Cllr Jill Cleary  
Leader of New Forest District Council  
Amanda.Smith@NFDC.GOV.UK

18 August 2025

Dear Jill,

Thank you for your correspondence of 22 July regarding the consultation on planning committee reforms.

I appreciate how important this matter is to you and I am grateful to you for taking the time to write. I have asked my officials to address your concerns in the letter appended.

Please be assured that I am conscious of the matters you have raised, and I appreciate the insight your correspondence provides.

I hope the attached response suitably addresses your enquiry. If that is not the case, please don't hesitate to let me know.

Best wishes,

**MATTHEW PENNYCOOK MP**  
Minister of State for Housing and Planning



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Dear Cllr Cleary,

Thank you for your correspondence, to which the Housing Minister has asked me to reply.

Thank you for your comments on the technical consultation on the reform of planning committees. The Department will analyse all consultation responses before developing the regulations in more detail. However, I can provide the following general information on the matter, which I hope will be of use.

Planning is principally a local activity, because decisions about what to build and where should be shaped by local communities and reflect the views of local residents. That is why the Government is determined to ensure every area has an up-to-date local plan developed through significant resident engagement, and it is why the Government believes that planning committees have an integral role in providing local democratic oversight of planning decisions. It is vital, however, that in exercising that democratic oversight, planning committees operate as effectively as possible, focusing on those applications which require member input and not revisiting the same decisions.

Currently, each local planning authority has their own scheme of delegation which sets out which types of planning application should be determined by planning officers, and which should be determined by committee.

The measures in the Planning and Infrastructure Bill to reform planning committees are enabling powers and the detailed provisions will be set out in regulations to be brought forward following Royal Assent of the Bill.

Thank you again for taking the time to write.

Yours sincerely,

**HOLLY HARPER**  
Deputy Principal Private Secretary