

Jasmine Rogers, West 1
Planning Inspectorate
Appeal reference: 6009768
Our reference: 25046

7th October 2026

Dear Ms Rogers,

Appeal 6009768 – Land to the north of Drove Lane, Market Lavington, Devizes, Wiltshire
LPA Ref: PL/2026/02029

I write in response to your email of 6th October inviting the appellant to comment on the Council's updated housing land supply position which was issued in June 2026.

The housing land supply position for Wiltshire in the June 2026 Statement is 2.8 years whereas at the time of the appeal, the Council had an acknowledged 2.42-year housing land supply.

The Council in its email to the Inspectorate on 2nd October comments that although the figure has changed from that at the time of the application decision, the change is not significant, and the planning balance is not altered given that this is still below the five-year housing land supply required by the NPPF and the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies in decision-taking.

We agree that the change in the housing land supply position is not significant. However, it still represents a very substantial deficit against the minimum five-year supply required by national policy and provides evidence of a serious deficiency in the availability of deliverable housing land.

Wiltshire Council has also recently fallen below the threshold for the Housing Delivery Test which demonstrates continued under-delivery and has triggered the requirement for the Council to prepare a Housing Delivery Test Action Plan.

The significance of that position has been reinforced by the National Planning Policy Framework published in August 2026. The new Framework establishes national decision-making policies which give clear and positive support to the delivery of housing where there is an evidenced unmet need. Policy S3 establishes the presumption in favour of sustainable development and directs decision-makers, in the case of development outside settlements, to apply Policy S5.

NPPF policy S5(1)(j) is particularly relevant to this appeal as it expressly identifies development addressing an evidenced unmet housing need as a form of development which should be approved outside settlements, providing that the proposal satisfies the locational and infrastructure requirements of that policy. In this case, the principle of development is supported by the appeal site being physically well-related to the existing settlement and the scale of development can be accommodated having regard to the existing infrastructure in the village being a Local Service Centre and public transport links beyond.

The Council's inability to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply provides the very circumstance expressly identified by Policy S5(1)(j). Accordingly, significant weight should be attached to the appeal scheme's contribution towards meeting that unmet housing need.

This conclusion is reinforced by Policy HO7 of the Framework, which requires substantial weight to be given to the benefits of providing homes which contribute towards meeting the evidenced

accommodation needs of the community. The delivery of housing through this appeal proposal therefore attracts substantial positive weight as a matter of national policy.

We also refer to the letter from Rt Hon Matthew Pennycook MP, Minister of State for Housing and Planning to the Chief Executive of the Planning Inspectorate, dated 6th October 2026. This letter covers how the new framework sets out national planning policy in a clearer and more comprehensive manner and highlights key elements that are intended to support the government's ambitions in respect of boosting housing supply and economic growth including the substantial weight afforded to the benefits of providing homes which meet the evidenced needs of communities.

The letter also recognises the vital role that the Planning Inspectorate plays in embedding the new approach into day-to-day development management and references the government's commitment to *a planning system that is an enabler of appropriate development*, which is *something which the Framework places at the heart of decision making*.

The lack of a five-year housing land supply and the stronger rules based approach towards granting appropriate development to meet the needs of communities is further evidenced by the recent Snarlton Farm appeal decision (Land South of Snarlton Farm, Melksham, appeal ref. 3373278). Here the Secretary of State established, after detailed examination of Wiltshire's evidence, that the authority suffers from a very significant housing land supply deficit; accepting the Inspector's conclusion that the Council could only demonstrate a 2.16 years' supply and allowing the appeal giving limited weight to the conflict with Wiltshire Council's spatial policies.

This further confirms that whichever figure is adopted at this point in time, Wiltshire has a severe identified supply deficit, and additional deliverable housing attracts positive weight in the planning balance.

I would be grateful if the Inspector could take this into consideration.

Yours faithfully



Chris Beaver

Director

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