



# Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

**Matthew Pennycook MP**  
*Minister of State for Housing and Planning*  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

To: Local Authority Leaders

14 April 2026

Dear Leader,

I am writing to you regarding the implementation of the planning committee reforms provided for by the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025.

As you are hopefully aware, on 26 March we [published a consultation](#) on the draft regulations required to implement a national scheme of delegation and set a limit on the size of planning committees. Alongside the draft regulations, we are also consulting on the draft statutory guidance which local planning authorities must follow in implementing the final regulations.

In preparing the draft regulations and guidance, we carefully considered the responses to the [technical consultation](#) published in May 2025 which contained our detailed proposals and the points raised during Parliamentary debates. The [government response](#) to the May 2025 consultation, including a summary of the key points raised, has also now been published.

As you will note, the draft regulations adopt the two-tier approach proposed in the May 2025 consultation. Schedule 1 sets out the types of application which must in all circumstances be delegated to officers. These include applications for planning permission for householder, minor residential and minor commercial development, as well as a number of supplementary and technical consents. Schedule 2 sets out the types of application which may be referred to a committee subject to the Gateway Tests which are set out in Regulation 5 and this requires agreement between the nominated member (usually the chair of the committee) and officer (usually the Chief Planner or equivalent), but which otherwise must be delegated to an officer. These include other applications for planning permission not in Schedule 1, variations of permissions, and special controls such as listed building and tree preservation order consents.

We are particularly interested in feedback from you in respect of our proposed approach to reserved matters applications. As the consultation now underway sets out, we amended our approach as a result of responses to our 2025 consultation raising concerns regarding the treatment in particular of large scale phased reserved matters applications which, as you will know, can come forward sometimes years or decades after the original outline permission and can be significant in size. We are therefore proposing to place these phased reserved matters applications in Schedule 2 in the draft regulations, so there is the option to take them to committee if they meet the Gateway tests, while other types of reserved matters applications remain in Schedule 1. We are interested in whether you agree that our proposed approach to reserved matters is the right one and achieves our stated objective of ensuring that planning committees can work as effectively as possible and

are focused on those applications for complex or contentious development where local democratic oversight is required.

Our draft regulations also set out the changes to the size of planning committees, proposing to set a maximum size limit of 13 members for a planning committee which reflects best practice highlighted during the previous consultation.

The consultation on the draft regulations and guidance is open until 23 April 2026, and I strongly encourage you to submit your views as part of it.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matthew Pennycook', with a large, stylized initial 'M'.

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