

**Somerset Council**  
County Hall, Taunton  
Somerset, TA1 4DY



Sent by email to:

Ms Rebecca Pow MP

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**Please ask for:** Duncan Sharkey

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**Date:** 12 June 2023

Dear Ms Pow

### **Support with Somerset Levels and Moors Nutrient Mitigation Fund Submission**

As you are aware phosphates are holding up delivery of approximately 18,000 new homes across large parts of Somerset. This is having a significant detrimental effect – not just on our economy but in terms of delivering the affordable homes families desperately need. We recognise the need to work with partners to tackle the underlying environmental issues on the Somerset Levels and Moors Special Protection Area, but in the short term we need to unlock development in a way that is aligned with longer-term nature recovery.

Somerset has led the way in addressing this national issue with one of the first Local Authority led Phosphate credits schemes in England and we have produced guidance to assist developers with this challenging issue. However funding availability and staff capacity is restricting our ability to scale up the current Phosphate credit scheme in Somerset and the support we can provide to developers.

We have now submitted a funding bid to the Government's Nutrient Mitigation Fund, working in partnership with Dorset Council, Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG), Plymouth University and Salinity Solutions. A summary is attached – but this will deliver nature based

solutions and innovative technical solutions which will unlock development now – a technology we expect to trial in August. Our bid will ensure that rather than waiting for 2030 we can enable our developers, from small local firms to the national players, to build the houses we need and assist the long-term restoration of the Somerset Levels and Moors Special Protection Area.

Securing this funding is crucial to Somerset, and I would be grateful for anything you can do to support the bid and hence unlock the houses our community needs. Please let me know if you require any further information – any influence or support you can provide would be hugely welcome.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in grey ink, reading 'D Sharkey'.

**Duncan Sharkey**  
Chief Executive