FORMAL PLANNING OBJECTION

Urgent Crown Development Application: PCU/RARE/C3105/3378843
Site: MOD Bicester Site A, Oxfordshire
Objector: [redacted]

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to formally object to the Home Office application **PCU/RARE/C3105/3378843**, relating to the proposed use of MOD Bicester Site A for non-detained asylum accommodation.

I am a resident of [redacted] one of the rural communities close to the proposed development. Having considered the scale and nature of the application, I have serious concerns regarding the suitability of this location and whether the impacts of accommodating up to **1,256 people**, together with associated staff, servicing and infrastructure, have been adequately assessed and mitigated.

I appreciate the national need identified by the applicant to provide asylum accommodation. My objection is **not directed at asylum seekers as individuals**. It concerns whether a development of this scale, intensity and proposed duration is appropriate at this particular location and whether its effects upon surrounding communities have been properly addressed.

1. Scale and duration of the development

The application seeks permission for accommodation for up to **1,256 service users**, including new modular accommodation, staff facilities, health and welfare facilities, security infrastructure, roads, parking, recreational areas and a wastewater treatment plant.

Although described as a temporary development, the application seeks permission for **10 years**. In planning terms and from the perspective of neighbouring residents, ten years represents a substantial period. I ask the decision-maker to consider the proposal on the basis of its real long-term effects rather than giving undue weight to its description as temporary.

2. Impact upon surrounding rural communities

Site A sits amongst relatively small rural settlements, including Blackthorn, Piddington and Arncott. The proposed population of the development would consequently be very significant when considered alongside the populations and infrastructure of the surrounding villages.

I am concerned that the application does not adequately demonstrate how a development accommodating up to 1,256 people can be integrated into this rural location without materially affecting neighbouring communities. The cumulative effects of residents, employees, deliveries, contractors, healthcare provision, waste collection, emergency services and other movements associated with the development must all be considered.

3. Highways, pedestrian safety and transport

The rural road network surrounding the site was not designed to serve a residential or institutional development of this scale. Particular consideration should be given to pedestrian movements from the site and the likelihood of residents travelling towards Bicester and surrounding settlements.

I ask MHCLG to scrutinise the submitted Transport Assessment and Travel Plan and establish whether their assumptions represent realistic **worst-case movements at full occupancy**, rather than relying principally upon predicted or managed behaviour. The safety of pedestrians using rural roads, particularly after dark and during winter, must be properly addressed. Any permission should require

enforceable and fully funded transport and pedestrian-safety measures rather than relying upon voluntary travel arrangements.

4. Pressure on local infrastructure and public services

I remain concerned about the potential effect upon existing services including policing, ambulance services, NHS services and other local infrastructure.

The applicant proposes on-site health and welfare facilities, but MHCLG should require clear evidence regarding exactly which services will be provided on site, their operating hours and capacity, and which services residents will continue to access within the wider community. The application should not be approved until the relevant statutory organisations have been given a meaningful opportunity to assess the proposal and any necessary mitigation has been secured.

5. Community safety, policing and site management

Community safety is a legitimate consideration when assessing a development accommodating more than 1,200 people at a single location. This should be considered objectively and without making assumptions about the individuals who may be accommodated there.

The Home Office should nevertheless demonstrate how such a large facility will be managed, including staffing levels, access arrangements, security, procedures for incidents occurring outside the site, liaison with Thames Valley Police and arrangements for responding to concerns raised by neighbouring communities. Where security information cannot legitimately be made public, I ask that MHCLG satisfies itself that the appropriate authorities have independently scrutinised those arrangements before determining the application.

6. Wastewater, drainage and environmental capacity

The inclusion of a new wastewater treatment plant itself demonstrates the substantial infrastructure requirements generated by the development.

I ask MHCLG and the relevant environmental authorities to carefully scrutinise the proposed wastewater treatment and drainage arrangements at the maximum proposed occupancy of 1,256 residents, together with staff and visitors. There should be clear evidence demonstrating sufficient capacity, resilience during equipment failure or extreme weather, appropriate discharge arrangements and protection of nearby watercourses and habitats. Any necessary mitigation should be secured through enforceable planning conditions.

7. Local consultation and community engagement

For a development of this scale and potential duration, meaningful engagement with the communities most directly affected is important. I am concerned about the limited opportunity for early local involvement before the proposal entered the formal planning process.

The use of the Urgent Crown Development procedure should not result in legitimate local planning concerns receiving less scrutiny simply because the application is being determined quickly. Adequate time and information should be provided so residents, parish councils, local authorities and statutory bodies can make properly informed representations.

8. Urgent Crown Development procedure

I recognise that the proposal is proceeding through the Urgent Crown Development process on the basis of national importance and urgency. However, urgency should not remove the need to establish that the

specific development proposed at this specific location is acceptable in planning terms.

The decision-maker should therefore give full weight to site-specific impacts, the evidence submitted by statutory consultees and residents, and whether identified impacts can genuinely be mitigated through enforceable conditions.

Conclusion

For the reasons above, I respectfully request that **planning permission is refused unless and until MHCLG is satisfied that the impacts of the development have been fully assessed and can be adequately mitigated**.

If MHCLG nevertheless considers permission appropriate, I request robust and enforceable conditions and obligations addressing:

- maximum occupancy and the proposed 10-year period;
- highways and pedestrian safety;
- transport provision;
- wastewater and drainage;
- environmental protection;
- on-site healthcare and welfare provision;
- security and site management;
- policing and emergency-service impacts;
- monitoring and enforcement of mitigation measures; and
- a clear strategy for cessation of the use and restoration of the site at the end of the permission.

I also request that my representation is taken into account alongside the responses of Cherwell District Council, Oxfordshire County Council, Thames Valley Police, relevant NHS bodies, environmental authorities and the parish councils and communities surrounding the site.

Yours faithfully,

[redacted]