From: [redacted]
To: Crown Casework
Subject: Objection 26/01833/CROWN / MHCLG reference PCU/RARE/C3105/3378843
Date: 07 September 2026 02:19:50

[redacted]

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to formally object to Urgent Crown Development application 26/01833/CROWN for the proposed use of MOD Bicester Site A for asylum accommodation for up to 1,256 people.

My objection is based on material planning considerations concerning the suitability and sustainability of the site, highway and pedestrian safety, drainage and wastewater, ecology, landscape and the scale and intensity of the proposed development.

1. Unsustainable location and inadequate pedestrian infrastructure

The proposed development would accommodate up to 1,256 residents on a site in a predominantly rural location with limited access to local services.

The applicant's own Transport Assessment identifies significant deficiencies in pedestrian infrastructure. In particular, there are no footways at the northern site access, while pedestrian provision elsewhere is limited, discontinuous and in places approximately one metre wide. The surrounding roads include routes subject to speeds of approximately 50 mph.

The application therefore relies substantially on Home Office-operated minibuses to provide access to facilities and surrounding settlements.

This is particularly concerning given the scale of the proposed population. A development of this size should not be treated as sustainable merely because settlements fall within a theoretical walking-distance catchment when the application itself acknowledges that adequate pedestrian infrastructure does not exist.

2. Previous Planning Inspector's decision

There is a particularly important planning precedent concerning this site.

When asylum accommodation was previously proposed at this location, the Planning Inspector identified the site's rural and inherently unsustainable location, its poor accessibility by public transport and the danger to pedestrians arising from roads without adequate footways.

Those fundamental characteristics have not been satisfactorily overcome.

Indeed, the current Transport Assessment appears to confirm that many of the same accessibility problems remain.

The decision-maker should therefore give significant consideration to the previous Inspector's findings and require the applicant to demonstrate what material change in circumstances has occurred since that decision that would justify a different conclusion today.

3. Highway and pedestrian safety

I do not consider that highway safety can be assessed solely by considering whether vehicle junction capacity is technically adequate.

The relevant issue is also the interaction between a population of up to 1,256 residents and the existing rural highway and pedestrian network.

The combination of high-speed roads, limited footways, discontinuous pedestrian routes and the absence of safe pedestrian infrastructure creates a foreseeable risk, particularly for residents who may need or choose to travel beyond the site.

The proposal should therefore be assessed against the requirement to provide safe and suitable access for pedestrians as well as vehicles.

4. Scale and intensity of development

The proposal represents a very substantial concentration of population and activity within a rural former military site.

The development would operate on a 24-hour basis and include accommodation, healthcare, catering, welfare, recreation, security infrastructure, roads, parking and wastewater infrastructure.

Although the site has an existing military use, this does not mean that any intensity or nature of redevelopment is automatically compatible with its surroundings.

The decision-maker should consider whether the scale and intensity of the proposed use are appropriate to the location and whether the existing infrastructure can safely and sustainably accommodate the resulting activity.

5. Drainage and wastewater

The submitted documentation identifies surface-water constraints and acknowledges that elements of the proposed drainage and wastewater arrangements remain subject to further design and consultation.

Given the proposed population of up to 1,256 people, wastewater management is a significant infrastructure consideration rather than a minor technical matter.

Before permission is granted, it should be demonstrated conclusively that:

- the proposed wastewater treatment system has sufficient capacity;
- treated effluent can be discharged safely and lawfully;
- the receiving environment has adequate capacity;
- adequate arrangements exist for plant failure and emergency storage;
- surface-water drainage will not increase flood risk elsewhere; and
- all necessary regulatory approvals and environmental permits can be obtained.

I do not consider it appropriate to rely on unresolved matters of this scale being dealt with retrospectively through conditions unless the decision-maker is satisfied that a technically feasible and environmentally acceptable solution has already been established.

6. Ecology and protected species

The application documentation identifies the need for further ecological surveys and assessment relating to protected species, including bats, breeding birds, reptiles, amphibians, badgers and hazel dormouse.

Given the scale of the proposed development, associated lighting, security infrastructure, access works and changes to the site, these matters should be fully resolved before a decision is made.

The decision-maker should not assume that ecological impacts are acceptable until the necessary surveys have been completed and the results incorporated into an appropriate mitigation strategy.

7. Landscape, lighting and tranquillity

The development would introduce a substantial and continuously occupied accommodation complex, together with security fencing, lighting, roads, parking and associated infrastructure.

The fact that the site contains existing military buildings does not remove the requirement to consider the effect of the proposed use and associated infrastructure on the character and tranquillity of the surrounding countryside.

Particular consideration should be given to:

- 24-hour external lighting;
- security lighting;
- visual effects of fencing and security infrastructure;
- vehicle movements;

- noise and activity during night-time hours; and
- the cumulative effect of the development when viewed from surrounding roads, footpaths and countryside.

8. Insufficient justification for choosing this location

The application should demonstrate why a site with acknowledged deficiencies in pedestrian accessibility and local services is an appropriate location for a development of this scale.

The reliance on privately operated minibuses should not itself be treated as evidence that the location is sustainable. It may instead demonstrate that the location lacks the normal transport and service accessibility expected of a sustainable development.

The previous Inspector's conclusions regarding this site's suitability for asylum accommodation make this issue particularly important.

Conclusion

I respectfully request that the application be refused unless the applicant can satisfactorily demonstrate that the fundamental locational, accessibility, highway safety, infrastructure, drainage, ecological and environmental concerns identified above have been overcome.

In particular, I ask the decision-maker to give substantial weight to the previous Planning Inspector's findings concerning the site's rural and inherently unsustainable location and pedestrian safety, and to consider whether the current application has genuinely overcome those concerns.

My objection is based solely on material planning considerations and is not an objection to the principle of providing accommodation for asylum seekers.

I would be grateful if this representation could be taken into account when determining application 26/01833/CROWN.

Yours faithfully,

[redacted]

Sent from my iPhone