[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: 13 September 2026 17:02
To: Crown Casework
Subject: Objection to planning application PCU/RARE/C3105/3378843, Site A, MOD Bicester

[redacted]

Dear Secretary of State,

I am writing as a member of the public [redacted] to object to planning application PCU/RARE/C3105/3378843, the proposed 1,256-person asylum accommodation centre at Site A, MOD Bicester, Bicester Garrison, Launton Road, Oxfordshire, OX25 1AE, for the following reasons.

1. The Home Office's own application documents admit the evidence base is incomplete. Its own ecological consultant says the survey "cannot be considered a comprehensive assessment," nine species surveys remain outstanding, no biodiversity net gain assessment has been submitted despite a statutory minimum of ten percent, and the Fire Safety Strategy contains no travel distances, confirmed exits or firefighting water supply. The data used in the application applies to Buckinghamshire, not Oxfordshire as it should, therefore the table top exercise on species abundance is incorrect. Site A in-fact contains four rare and endangered bat species, endangered populations of great created newts and a number of other protected species. No activity should take place on the site until a full habitat assessment and species count is undertaken, covering appropriate breading season best practice for the relevant species. To carry out work without this proper assessment and, as appropriate, licensed mitigation measures in place would constitute a breach of Environmental legislation.

2. Not one borehole has been sunk to test the ground. The site's own 2010 land quality assessment found the areas investigated "generally unsuitable for redevelopment to a domestic end use without remediation," and named a building on Site A itself among those carrying potential contamination risk. The Home Office says this has been superseded by a 2026 geotechnical assessment, but that assessment addresses ground settlement and asbestos in the building fabric, not the contamination question the 2010 report raised.

3. The main accommodation is proposed on the lowest, most flood-prone part of the site. There is no surface water attenuation, because "flows from this area cannot be restricted to greenfield rates" (Drainage Design Statement, paragraph 8.2). Roughly a quarter of the site is at high risk of surface water flooding, including the phase 1 accommodation area and neither the Environment Agency nor the lead local flood authority has been consulted. From the application document I note that draining systems and pumps could not be located and therefore assessed and that MOD site staff stated the site is prone to surface water flooding.

4. The Transport Assessment relies on traffic and speed data for the wrong road. It repeatedly cites the "B1104," a road near Braintree in Essex, not the B4011 that actually borders the site. Department for Transport collision data for the five miles of the B4011 nearest the site record 53 injury collisions between 2012 and 2024, including 2 fatal and 13 serious, one of them reported in April 2024. No pedestrian route audit has been carried out, and there is no footway or lighting for much of the route's

length. The application documents describe there being no safe pedestrian access to the site. Access to the nearest footpath to Bicester is a mile and quarter away in Arncott, down Parker Avenue, an unlit national sped limited road. There is no pedestrian footpath along the B4011 or the A41 until Symmetry Park, some Four miles from Site A. The only proposed mitigation in the application pack is discouraging site occupants from walking off site using either a minibus shuttle service or issuing hi vis jackets. The application clearly states, the site is open for residents to come and go as they please, so despite the hope of the Home Office that residents will remain on site or use the unspecified limited shuttle bus service, I consider it highly likely that residents will leave the site on foot and will therefore be at considerable risk of serious harm or death from road traffic collisions along the unlit and unpaved B4011 and Palmer Avenue roads.

5. The site does not have confirmed working infrastructure, and the cost of fixing that has not been disclosed. The applicant's own Utilities and Infrastructure Assessment says the condition and capacity of the existing electricity network are unknown and cannot be relied upon, so on-site diesel generators are proposed instead, at a likely running cost of millions of pounds a year, with no capital cost disclosed for a permanent grid connection. Its own Drainage Design Statement says capacity to connect to the existing sewage network "has not been determined," so foul waste would instead be tankered off site at significant recurring cost, a fallback its own consultant admits "is not a viable option" once the site reaches full capacity. Bedrooms are proposed as close as 45 metres from the proposed on-site sewage works, well within the applicant's own 250 metre odour boundary, with no odour assessment carried out. No noise or emissions assessments from the use of diesel generators are presented in the application pack and no details of the 40,000 litre diesel storage tank which are required to keep the generators running day and night are addressed. The potential for environmental contamination from diesel leaks is not considered.

6. The published representation period of ten days, 7 to 17 September 2026, is far short of the 30 day minimum guaranteed where an application of this kind is screened as EIA development, and two government letters a week apart (13 and 20 July 2026) cited different, conflicting legal procedures for this same case. In the interests of fairness and transparency I would urge the Secretary of State to extend the consultation time frame to allow proper analysis of the application so that a researched and considered response can be prepared.

7. This exact site was already tried and rejected. A smaller, 750-person scheme on this land was refused by an independent planning Inspector in 2003 and cancelled in 2005 after around £28 million of public money had been spent (National Audit Office, "The cancellation of Bicester Accommodation Centre," HC 19). The current proposal is around 67 percent larger. The reasons for rejection remain extant. The key reasons from refusal were that the site was too remote, lacked the infrastructure necessary to house 750 asylum seekers, would put an unacceptable burden on local public survives and infrastructure and was not safe to access on foot.

8. The proposal has not been shown to represent good value for public money. The National Audit Office found in March 2024 that the Home Office's large sites programme, of which this proposal forms part, is now expected to cost around £46 million more overall than the hotels it was meant to replace, not the savings originally projected, and that internal assurance reviews of the programme were rated "red", meaning successful delivery was assessed as unachievable. Estimates for the cost of establishing this proposal on Site A are expected to exceed £230 million (excluding running costs and additional cost on local services).

I ask the Secretary of State to refuse this application for the reasons detailed in this objection, or at the very least to redirect this application to the standard Crown Development route for determination by the planning inspectorate at an independent inquiry, requiring the outstanding technical evidence,

including a full ground investigation, biodiversity net gain assessment and flood risk sequential test, to be published before any decision. Extend the representation period to at least 30 days, and consult fully with the emergency services, Thames Water, the Environment Agency, the lead local flood authority Cherwell District Council and the local Parish Councils.

I understand that representations will not be acknowledged individually, and that representations received within the representation period will be taken into account by the Secretary of State in determining the application insofar as they raise material planning considerations relevant to the proposed development. Each of the points above is such a material planning consideration, and I ask that they be taken fully into consideration.

Yours Sincerely,

Mr Michael Nixon

[redacted]

13th September 2026

Sent from Outlook for Android