From: [redacted]
To: Crown Casework; Ministerial Correspondence
Cc: Calum Miller MP; Planning; T[redacted]
Subject: Re: Formal Planning Objection – 26/01833/CROWN
Date: 16 September 2026 20:11:22

[redacted]

fyi

On Wed, 16 Sept 2026 at 19:57, [redacted] wrote:

MOD Bicester Site A – Urgent Crown Development Application Submitted to: Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) Reference: PCU/RARE/C3105/3378843

1. Introduction and Standing

I submit this objection as a resident of the Bicester area. Although Cherwell District Council is not the determining authority, MHCLG is required to consider public representations as part of the Urgent Crown Development procedure. The scale, nature, and impacts of this proposal extend far beyond the immediate site and will materially affect Bicester, Arncott, Piddington, Launton, Ambrosden, and the wider district.

2. Summary of the Proposal

The Home Office seeks **full planning permission** for a **temporary 10-year change of use** of MOD Bicester Site A to accommodate **up to 1,256 non-detained asylum seekers**, including:

- Retention and change of use of Building A6
- Demolition of existing structures
- Construction of new modular accommodation
- On-site health and welfare facilities
- New roads, access ways, parking, staff accommodation
- Security infrastructure
- Wastewater treatment plant
- Open space and recreation areas

This is being processed under the **Urgent Crown Development procedure**, meaning MHCLG—not Cherwell District Council—will determine the application.

3. Procedural Concerns and Deficiencies

3.1 Inadequate Consultation Period

CDC has publicly stated that the consultation period is extremely short and that residents were not initially given a meaningful opportunity to participate. Given the scale of the proposal (1,256 residents), a truncated consultation is procedurally unreasonable and risks breaching principles of natural justice.

3.2 Determination Outside Local Democratic Control

CDC has confirmed it cannot accept comments and is only a consultee. This removes the normal democratic safeguards associated with major development and places disproportionate decision-making power in central government without adequate local scrutiny.

3.3 Missing or Insufficient Information

CDC's draft committee report identifies multiple areas where **further information,**

clarification, or mitigation is required before any decision can be made. These include:

- Transport and highway impacts
- Pressures on local services and infrastructure
- Impacts on nearby communities
- Drainage, wastewater, and flood risk
- Environmental and ecological impacts
- Noise, lighting, and amenity
- Site safety, security, and emergency access arrangements

A proposal of this magnitude cannot lawfully proceed without resolving these deficiencies.

4. Planning Grounds for Objection

4.1 Transport and Highway Impact

CDC has already identified significant concerns regarding transport impacts. The site is accessed via rural roads (Blackthorn Bridge to Arncott), already under pressure from MOD traffic, logistics operations, and commuter flows. The introduction of 1,256 residents plus staff, service vehicles, deliveries, emergency access, and support services will:

- Increase congestion on Ploughley Road, Arncott Road, and the B4011
- Exacerbate existing safety issues at pinch points and narrow sections
- Place unsustainable pressure on rural junctions not designed for high-volume traffic

No adequate transport mitigation strategy has been provided.

4.2 Pressure on Local Services and Infrastructure

CDC has formally stated that the proposal raises concerns about **pressures on local services and infrastructure**. Local GP surgeries, schools, emergency services, and community facilities in Bicester, Arncott, Ambrosden, and Launton are already operating at or beyond capacity. The application does not demonstrate:

- How 1,256 residents will access healthcare
- How emergency services will respond to incidents on a secure site
- How local amenities will absorb the increased demand

This is a clear conflict with **NPPF paragraphs 8, 20, 92, and 104**, which require sustainable development supported by adequate infrastructure.

4.3 Impact on Nearby Communities

CDC has highlighted concerns about **impacts on nearby communities**, including Piddington and Upper Arncott. Local residents have expressed:

- Anxiety about the scale and intensity of the development
- Concerns about noise, lighting, and 24/7 activity
- Fears about the loss of rural character and tranquillity
- Worries about social cohesion and the ability of small villages to absorb such a large, concentrated population

These concerns are legitimate material considerations under **NPPF paragraphs 130 and 185**.

4.4 Environmental, Drainage, and Wastewater Risks

The proposal includes a **new wastewater treatment plant** and significant hardstanding. CDC has raised concerns about **drainage, wastewater, and flood risk**. The site lies near sensitive watercourses and drainage networks. Without robust modelling, the risk of pollution,

overflow, or contamination cannot be dismissed.

4.5 Ecological and Environmental Impact

CDC has identified **environmental and ecological impacts** requiring further assessment. The demolition of existing structures, introduction of modular units, and installation of lighting and security infrastructure will:

- Disturb wildlife corridors
- Increase light pollution
- Reduce biodiversity
- Create long-term ecological disruption inconsistent with **NPPF paragraph 174**

4.6 Site Safety, Security, and Emergency Access

CDC has raised concerns about **site safety, security, and emergency access**. The proposal includes:

- Security infrastructure
- Controlled access
- On-site staff accommodation
- A large population in a semi-isolated location

Emergency access arrangements are unclear, and the risk profile of a large non-detained population in a secure-style environment has not been adequately assessed.

4.7 Amenity Impacts: Noise, Lighting, 24/7 Activity

CDC has identified concerns regarding **noise, lighting, and amenity**. The scale of the development will inevitably generate:

- Continuous vehicle movements
- Night-time lighting
- On-site activity at all hours
- Increased noise levels affecting Arncott, Piddington, and rural surroundings

This conflicts with **NPPF paragraph 185**, which requires planning decisions to protect residents from unacceptable noise and disturbance.

5. Strategic and Policy Conflicts

5.1 Conflict with Local Plan Strategy

The Cherwell Local Plan does not allocate MOD Bicester Site A for large-scale residential or quasi-residential development. The proposal is inconsistent with:

- Spatial strategy
- Rural protection policies
- Infrastructure-led development principles

5.2 Unsustainable Location

The site is remote from:

- Public transport
- Employment
- Community facilities
- Retail

- Healthcare

This is contrary to **NPPF paragraphs 8, 105, and 110**, which require development to be sustainable, accessible, and well-connected.

5.3 Ten-Year "Temporary" Use

A decade-long development accommodating 1,256 people is not temporary in planning terms. It constitutes a major strategic development and must be assessed as such.

6. Conclusion and Request

Given:

- The **significant unresolved planning harms** identified by Cherwell District Council
- The **lack of essential information**
- The **unsustainable location**
- The **scale of impact on local communities**
- The **environmental, infrastructure, and amenity risks**
- The **procedural deficiencies** in consultation

I respectfully request that **MHCLG REFUSE** application **26/01833/CROWN**.

The proposal is **premature, inadequately evidenced, environmentally harmful, socially disproportionate, and strategically unsound**.

7. Required Submission Details

Please ensure this objection is logged under:

MHCLG Reference: PCU/RARE/C3105/3378843 **Email:** crowncasework@communities.gov.uk
Deadline: Midnight, 17 September 2026