**From:** [redacted]
**To:** Crown Casework
**Cc:** Calum (MP); wpwsobjection@gmail.com
**Subject:** FORMAL OBJECTION – MOD BICESTER SITE A (PCU/RARE/C3105/3378843)
**Date:** 16 September 2026 22:46:51

[redacted]

**Re: Planning Application PCU/RARE/C3105/3378843 – MOD Bicester Site A**

I am writing as a local resident to formally object to the proposal to establish accommodation for up to **1,256 single adult male asylum seekers** at the former MOD site at Bicester Garrison.

I recognise the need for the Government to provide suitable accommodation for people seeking asylum. My concerns relate specifically to whether this particular site is appropriate for a development of such exceptional scale, given its rural setting, limited connectivity and the existing capacity of local infrastructure and services.

## Scale of the proposal

The proposed number of residents needs to be considered in the context of the communities immediately surrounding the site.

The 2021 Census gives the following populations:

- Piddington – approximately 358
- Blackthorn – approximately 605
- Marsh Gibbon – approximately 987
- Arncott – approximately 1,659

A population of 1,256 would consequently be approximately three and a half times the size of Piddington, more than twice the size of Blackthorn, larger than Marsh Gibbon and equivalent to around three quarters of the population of Arncott.

This demonstrates just how substantial the proposal is. It is not simply the addition of accommodation to an existing settlement; it would introduce a population comparable with, or greater than, several established local communities.

In my view, a proposal of this magnitude requires particularly careful consideration of whether the location has the facilities, services and infrastructure necessary to support it.

## Accessibility and transport

I am particularly concerned about the site's accessibility.

The Government's own Transport Assessment recognises the site's rural nature and the limited availability of pedestrian infrastructure and local amenities. It identifies that there are **no other facilities within a 2km walking distance** and acknowledges limitations in pedestrian and cycle accessibility.

It also states that walking is not recommended for local trips and anticipates the use of **Home Office-operated minibuses** to transport residents to facilities elsewhere.

The northern access does not have a footway, while pedestrian provision at the southern access is also limited.

This raises an obvious question about the suitability of the site itself. If more than 1,200 residents cannot reasonably walk or cycle to ordinary local facilities, the proposal will inevitably create a substantial and continuing dependence on organised transport.

Even if traffic modelling indicates that particular junctions have sufficient capacity, that does not resolve the broader issue of whether the site is an appropriate and sustainable location for such a large residential population.

## Infrastructure and drainage

I am also concerned that there appear to be significant uncertainties surrounding the site's existing infrastructure.

The Utilities and Infrastructure Assessment identifies issues requiring further investigation, including the capacity and condition of:

- the water supply;
- electricity infrastructure;
- surface-water drainage;
- drainage outfalls and connectivity; and
- existing drainage infrastructure.

The assessment states that the existing electrical infrastructure **cannot currently be relied upon**, with temporary and/or permanent generators potentially required.

There are also references to ponding, blocked drainage assets and surface defects, with further surveys needed to establish the condition and capacity of the existing drainage system.

Furthermore, the Planning Proposal Statement identifies that approximately **25% of the site has a high probability of surface-water flooding**.

These are significant considerations for a development intended to accommodate more than 1,200 people. I do not believe that uncertainty over essential infrastructure should simply be treated as a technical matter to be resolved subsequently. The ability of the site to support the proposed population should be clearly demonstrated before the development is approved.

## Lessons from Wethersfield

The experience of other large asylum accommodation sites is also highly relevant.

RAF Wethersfield has capacity for approximately **1,245 people**, making it very similar in scale to the Bicester proposal.

The House of Commons Home Affairs Committee considered the operation of large asylum accommodation sites and raised concerns regarding Wethersfield, including its isolated location and the demands placed upon local services.

The Committee also referred to a British Red Cross assessment commissioned by the Home Office, which raised serious concerns about the suitability and safety of large-site accommodation and identified a high risk of suicide at Wethersfield.

The Committee highlighted the importance of:

- effective partnerships with local services;
- adequate services being available on site;
- proper Home Office oversight;
- clear operational arrangements; and
- effective performance management of accommodation providers.

More recently, in 2026, the Home Affairs Committee reported concerns that the Government still did not have a performance framework in place to hold providers accountable for large asylum accommodation sites, including Wethersfield and the proposed Bicester site.

Given this background, I believe there needs to be a clear explanation of what has been learned from Wethersfield and other large sites, and how those lessons have specifically influenced the Bicester proposal.

In particular, local residents should be able to understand what safeguards will be put in place in relation to healthcare, mental health support, emergency services, policing, safeguarding, transport and the management of the site.

## The proposed duration

Although the application describes the accommodation as temporary and proposes a period of ten years, this is a substantial period of time in the context of a local community.

The supporting documentation also indicates that the facilities are being designed in a way that could allow them to operate for longer if required.

The experience of Wethersfield demonstrates that arrangements initially described as temporary can subsequently be extended.

It would therefore be inappropriate, in my view, to assess the proposal simply on the assumption that its impact will be short-lived. A development capable of accommodating 1,256 people for ten years should be assessed according to its likely real-world impact over that period, including the possibility that the accommodation may remain in use for longer.

## Overall concerns

I respectfully ask the Secretary of State to consider the cumulative effect of the issues identified above.

My objection is based on the combination of:

- the exceptionally large number of proposed residents;
- the rural and relatively isolated location;
- the lack of nearby amenities;
- inadequate pedestrian and cycling connections;
- reliance upon shuttle and organised transport;
- uncertainties concerning existing utilities and infrastructure;
- drainage and surface-water flooding concerns;
- the environmental implications of developing the site at this scale; and
- the experience and lessons arising from other large asylum accommodation sites,

particularly Wethersfield.

The question is not simply whether the buildings can physically accommodate 1,256 people. The wider question is whether this particular location can sustainably and safely support a population of that size without placing disproportionate demands on surrounding communities and public services.

Before approving a proposal of this scale, I believe there should be clear evidence that adequate arrangements are in place for **healthcare, emergency services, policing, transport, utilities, drainage and other essential services**, and that the potential impacts on neighbouring communities have been properly addressed.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the application be **refused**.

**I strongly object to the proposed development at MOD Bicester Site A.**

Yours faithfully,

