

THE

PIDDINGTON EYE

"Nolite Te Bastardes Carborundorum, But Also Please Fill In The Consultation Form"

ISSUE 1 | AUGUST 2026 | FACTUAL PUBLICATION (WELL, MOSTLY) | PRICE: £0.00 (MORE VALUE THAN THE HOME OFFICE)

VERY URGENT!
(PLEASE ALLOW SEVERAL MONTHS)



"Overridden. Overlooked. Overpowered." —, population 350, meets the Urgent Crown Development bulldozer.

Home Office declares a "national emergency" so pressing it can wait for feasibility assessments — but not for a proper planning process or local consultation

- **EXCLUSIVE** 1,250 men, one footpath, no streetlights
- **SEQUEL** "Bicester III: This Time It's Urgent"
- **MONEY** £28 million spent here already. On nothing.
- **SCOOP** £17m to a consultancy that says it doesn't exist

On 25 June 2026 the Government announced that former MOD Bicester Site A would be assessed for asylum accommodation for **approximately 1,250 single adult men**, progressed under the **Urgent** Crown Development procedure (ss.293B–293C, Town and Country Planning Act 1990, SI 2025/411) — a route that limits normal planning scrutiny. Cherwell District Council says it had **no advance consultation**. We will set out, article by article, the documented evidence gathered by Piddington Parish Council.

FROM THE EDITOR'S (PPC) DESK

Somewhere in Whitehall there is a dusty and worn filing cabinet marked "MOD Bicester," and it has now been opened for the third time since 2001 and several times in the last few months.



Twice before, the Government has arrived here with an urgent national plan for this completely inappropriate a rural site. Yet they keep a straight face. Twice before, they have left a few years later with their tails between their legs having spent **tens of millions of pounds and housed nobody at all**. Tax payers money!

 This time again the word doing the heavy lifting is "urgent." It is, apparently, so urgent that the normal planning process — consultation, scrutiny or even a duty of care cannot be appropriately applied. It is not, however, so urgent that the feasibility assessments can "take several months," and the site can only be committed to for a **minimum of ten years**. We look forward to the Government explaining, with a straight face, how both of those things are the case in unison.

This publication exists because the alternative for our residents is dramatic letting a decision of this scale go through on a Crown Development fast-track with little consideration and without meaningful local scrutiny feels totally unacceptable to both local communities but also to the poor souls will housed on the proposed site. The more the Home office try to bypass us the louder we roar in retaliation.

Everything marked **FACTUAL** is drawn directly from published sources: government factsheets, National Audit Office and Public Accounts Committee reports, court judgments, the Home Office's own statements to select committees, and the parish council's correspondence with statutory bodies. References for every claim.

Everything marked SATIRE is exactly that, and is there to make this kind of material bearable to read. Something needed right now particularly if you have lived in Piddington for the past six weeks.

We are not against people seeking asylum finding somewhere safe to live. We are against **1,250 people being placed on the outskirts of a quiet vulnerable village of 350 (46 children)** within an unserviced former ammunition depot, riddled with protected ecology, next to a Category B prison, on a road with no footpath, without anyone in Whitehall having to answer a single question about it first.

A SHORT GLOSSARY OF HOME OFFICE CROWN DEVELOPMENT-SPEAK

One thing we have learnt is that the Government proceed to mislead, What they said, and what we think they actually meant are sometimes completely different.

These quotes are genuine and referenced; the translations are ours.

"Largely self-sufficient."

— Home Office factsheet, MoD Bicester (Site A), 30 June 2026

"these sites will be contained"

— Home Office minister Anna Turley, 12 August 2026

TRANSLATION: Technically, there are no actual provisions within the European Court of Human Rights to allow for sites to be self-contained with closed gates. Therefore this is a cover hiding the fact all occupants will be free to come and go as and where they wish.

"Subject to feasibility assessments, planning permission and the necessary approvals."

— Minister of State for Border Security and Asylum, House of Commons, 25 June 2026

TRANSLATION: Also known as "not actually decided yet," which sits awkwardly next to "urgent." And completely juxtaposes already signed government contracts with suppliers. Surly you know the urgent lass resort options.

"[Detailed feasibility assessments] could take several months to complete... this does not predetermine the site's future use."

— Home Office factsheet, 30 June 2026

TRANSLATION: We need several months to work out if and how this will work and chose the right moment to submit planning to hide within the school holidays or other news headlines. But we need not months at all to decide it was urgent enough to skip the normal planning process in the first place.

"The proposed use would last at least ten years."

— Home Office factsheet, MoD Bicester (Site A)

TRANSLATION: Nothing says "emergency response" quite like a decade-long commitment in a spur of the moment decision for a flagship scheme.

FACTUAL

Cherwell District Council has publicly recorded that **no engagement or consultation of any kind** took place with the district in advance of the announcement of the Bicester proposal. The council responsible for the planning decision on its own patch found out with everybody else.

Thames Valley Police / Police & Crime Commissioner: The position of Thames Valley's Police & Crime Commissioner is particularly notable. On 26 June, PCC Matthew Barber stated that he had received "**no direct communication from the Home Office**" about the MOD Bicester proposal and immediately raised concerns

STREET OF SHAME, ASYLUM ACCOMMODATION DESK



We expect politicians to act with value for money at the forefront of British politics but....

Scampton, Lincolnshire. **£60m spent, £122m more required to open, total projected cost £180m** — for a site that **housed precisely nobody** before it was abandoned in September 2024. The temporary cabins were installed. They were never occupied. (NAO / PAC, 2024–25).

Northeye, Bexhill. **Bought for £15.4m** in September 2023 — more than double what the previous owner paid thirteen months earlier — and abandoned in November 2024 **without a single bed occupied**. The NAO's verdict: the Home Office "purchased a contaminated site." The Public Accounts Committee called the departmental culture "dysfunctional," where value for money was "a secondary concern." (NAO HC 30, 2024–25)

Linton-on-Ouse, 2022. Proposed for 1,500 men. Withdrawn by the MOD itself in August 2022 after local opposition. Now back on the table for 2026, as if nothing happened.

Cameron Barracks, Inverness, 2026. Proposed and cancelled in the same year, before anyone moved in.

HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF, THE HOME OFFICE TAKES NOTES SLOWLY



BICESTER III: THIS TIME IT'S URGENT (the sequel no one asked for)

The Government has now tried to use MOD Bicester A site for asylum accommodation on **three separate occasions since 2001** — and abandoned, at vast expense, twice.

If Site A, MOD Bicester, could talk, it would be exhausted. This is not a new idea being rushed through. It is an old idea, twice rushed and

rejected by events, now returning in a bigger, faster costume.

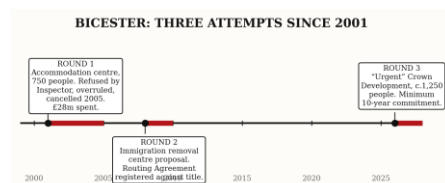
What is the definition of mad?

"Doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results"

Round One (2001–2005). The Government proposed an "accommodation centre" for 750 asylum seekers on this land. A public inquiry sat for fourteen days. The Planning Inspector recommended refusal, citing conflict with sustainable development principles, an unconvincing case for a rural location, and — specifically — the risk of road accidents to pedestrian asylum seekers on unlit roads without footways. The First Secretary of State overruled him anyway. Cherwell District Council's legal challenge failed, but the court found the then immigration minister had been "not entirely accurate" when she told a parliamentary committee it was "non-negotiable" that the centre wouldn't depend on local services. The centre was never built. The scheme was cancelled in June 2005. Cost to the taxpayer: **roughly £28 million**, for a car park's worth of foundations and nothing else.

Round Two (2008–2010). A separate proposal for an immigration removal centre on the same land came with its own legally binding Routing Agreement, restricting heavy vehicles from certain roads — a document that, as far as anyone can establish, has never been formally revisited or revoked.

Round Three (2026, in progress). Same site. Bigger number — roughly 1,250 rather than 750. Same road. Same lack of footway. The 2003 Inspector's findings on pedestrian safety were never overturned by any subsequent assessment; they were simply overtaken by a fresh announcement.



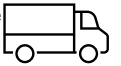
FACTUAL

THE 750-PERSON CAP NOBODY HAS MENTIONED

The 2003 approval for this site was granted subject to a hard planning condition, won by objectors through the High Court after the Home Office declined to offer it voluntarily: **"No more than 750 Asylum Seekers** shall be accommodated at the Development at any one time." The current proposal, at roughly 1,250, would **exceed that limit by around two-thirds**. No published document explains whether this condition still binds the land, whether the current proposal even sits on the same title, or **why nobody appears to have asked**.

1,250 MEN. ONE FOOTPATH. NO STREETLIGHTS.

The Home Office says the site will be "largely self-sufficient." The road network says otherwise.



There is, according to the campaign's own on-the-ground survey, **exactly one formal pedestrian route** from the site — and it leads to HMP Bullingdon (still involves crossing the main road). Every other plausible destination on foot (Bicester, Arncott, Piddington itself) means walking along the B4011 or Widnell Lane: unlit, national-speed-limit rural roads with no continuous footway.

This isn't a new theory. It's precisely what an independent Planning Inspector concluded about this exact stretch of road in 2003, in terms the Home Office has never formally answered: "Asylum seekers walking along these roads, which lack footways, probably in groups and some with children, would be in considerable danger from high-speed traffic on the B4011... There is no provision for footways to be provided on these roads." His overall conclusion listed the pedestrian accident risk as one of three explicit reasons to refuse the 2003 scheme — for 750 people, not 1,250. *If this is an honest proposal that is suitable, why bypass a planning inquiry?*

Since then, the road has got busier, not quieter. Between 2012 and 2024, the five-mile stretch of the B4011 around the site recorded **78 casualties across 53 reported injury collisions** — **2 fatal, 13 serious, 38 slight** — with 31 of those within 1.5 miles of the site entrance. On 14 April 2024, **five-year-old Teddy Hickman died** in a collision on the same B4011 corridor, roughly two miles away. Self-reporting studies suggest the real casualty figure over the same period **could be five times higher** than what was formally recorded.



FACTUAL

WHY WALKING TO THE SHOP IS THE PLAN, WHETHER ANYONE ADMITS IT OR NOT

- Residents are free to leave the site
- Public transport is thin: one bus route doesn't run on Sundays; the other has a limited one-way-only service and its nearest stop is roughly a mile from the site down an unlit road.
- Shuttle transport is going to struggle to accommodate the high site volume sustainably

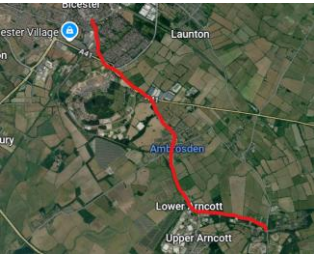
- The nearest railway station is 4.1 miles away, via a route judged unsuitable
- The Home Office's own 2003 mitigation — a single footway on Palmer Avenue — was found by the Inspector to leave "a very serious risk" on every other local road.

B4011 corridor, 2012–2022 (5-mile section)	Recorded incidents
Fatal	2
Serious	13
Slight	38
Total	53

The government is not likely to be full of highly intelligent individuals. It doesn't take a genius to work out that there's a substantial risk of serious, slight, and fatal accidents as a result of the development. Will they be accountable?

THE FOOTPATH TO NOWHERE: A GUIDED TOUR

Should a resident of the proposed site fancy a walk into town, here is what the map actually offers. They could complete the 4.5 mile journey luckily they reach a pavement in circa 2.5 miles lets hope it is light.



There is, at time of writing, no version of this walk that a highway engineer would sign off on .

SATIRE:

We attempted to plan a "self-sufficient and safe" evening stroll from the site using only the infrastructure the Home Office's factsheet implies exists. We got as far as the bus stop outside HMP Bullingdon, which seemed thematically appropriate, and then had to stop, because there was nowhere left to walk to.

Existing traffic the Department for Transport's count doesn't fully capture includes: HMP Bullingdon staff and visitor traffic (an estimated 900+ vehicles a day, in the absence of any official data — the prison and the site operator have not responded to enquiries); HGVs to and from the MOD's C-Site; traffic to the HS2 vehicle compound in Arccott; and traffic to a plant-hire yard directly opposite the prison. None of this appears in the traffic count, which is taken on the far side of a different village. Neither does the additional 900 truckloads of delivery to a potential future bio site that is proposed in Long Crendon. This site is placed on a busy road that is categorically unsafe.

The Prison Next Door: A Risk That Runs Both Ways," sitting right between the Anti-Social Behaviour piece and The Piddington Republic. It covers, briefly:

CRIME AND ORDER WATCH

HMP Bullingdon sits ~0.1km from Site A, and HM Inspectorate of Prisons' most recent review (April 2026) found "no meaningful progress" on the physical security gaps letting drugs in by drone: a 43% rise in positive drug tests and 27% rise in violence, against a national 1,000%+ rise in prison drone sightings since 2021.

Greater Manchester's Chief Constable discussed vulnerable migrants becoming "cannon fodder to organised crime groups," the NCA's 80+ live investigations into the networks doing the exploiting, and the standard county-lines pattern of grooming isolated people as couriers. I kept this as a risk to vulnerable people from organised crime, not a claim that asylum seekers are the criminals — that's both the accurate reading of the evidence and consistent with the "note on tone" already in your document.

The Care4Calais charity has handed out free phones 500 SIM cards with 6 months' data via Vodafone, per their 2024/25 annual report, flagged as a live political dispute by Chris Philp and Zia Yusuf as "pull factors". Without taking a side on it phone in hand facilitate communication with organised crime groups can be a substantial risk to local businesses, homes and Bicester Village.



VILLAGE VOICES — SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL BUSINESSES

This page is reserved for satirical paid advertisements from village and local businesses.

ADVERTISEMENT COMMON SENSE Purveyors of, since 1974. Currently out of stock at the Home Office — we've got plenty on the shelf. No prescription (or planning permission) required.	ADVERTISEMENT LAND WANTED After an idea suggested by Edwina Currie. We are looking for an appropriate venue to host a brothel to meet the basic sexual needs of 1,250 men.
ADVERTISEMENT NEWT & BAT REHOUSING SERVICES Fully licensed relocation for great crested newts and bats. Currently better protected in law than the residents of Piddington. Surveys booked well in advance — unlike this application.	ADVERTISEMENT PIDDINGTON SIDE GATES AND SECURITY LTD Half the village still doesn't have one. Stop uninvited shortcuts through the garden before someone in Whitehall decides that's "existing infrastructure" too.
ADVERTISEMENT PIDDINGTON PERSONAL ALARMS For when there's no footpath, no streetlight, and no sign the Government's coming to fix either. Loud enough to be heard over the B4011.	ADVERTISEMENT PIDDINGTON Through deprivation pods Perfect for the Home Office if they need somewhere to hide from residents' questions.

FACTUAL

Bicester Village — the retail outlet on the same road network — draws an estimated **6.7 million visitors a year** and generates **over £1 billion in annual sales**, one of the highest sales-density retail sites in the world. **No published economic impact assessment** for the Site A proposal has been identified anywhere in the application material, for Bicester Village or for the smaller shops and trades that this page exists to support.



MONEY TO BURN, PART I: THE £28 MILLION GHOST

Before a single brick (or modular cabin in this case) is laid, Site A already has form as one of the most expensive non-existent buildings in Oxfordshire.

Between 2001 and 2005 the Home Office spent **approximately £28 million pursuing an earlier version** of this exact scheme, for a smaller number of people, on the same land. **Nobody was ever housed.** The National Audit Office's own account attributes the collapse to rising costs and a halving of asylum applications that removed the case for the site in the first place.

That is not an isolated embarrassment. It is, on the Government's own most recent evidence, a pattern. On 5 June 2026 — seven weeks before this application was submitted — the Commons Public Accounts Committee concluded that "the Home Office has yet to demonstrate that it has learned from previous attempts to reform the asylum system, putting it at continued risk of repeating past failures... costly missteps such as acquiring Northeye, Bibby Stockholm and Scampton, which have now been abandoned."

By the end of March 2024, the Home Office had already burned through roughly **£199-230 million** in "sunk costs" across four abandoned or under-delivered large sites. Estimated set-up costs at comparable ex-RAF bases rose from around **£5 million to £49 million (Wethersfield) and £27 million (Scampton)** — a **five- to tenfold miss** that the Public Accounts Committee has described as a pattern of institutional failure, not a series of unlucky one-offs.

From a value-for-money perspective, it doesn't make sense for many people to go around building their own house. They buy already-made houses that are available. This is a great example of why this site is not suitable. It does not have any accommodation currently present and will require substantial investment to make it

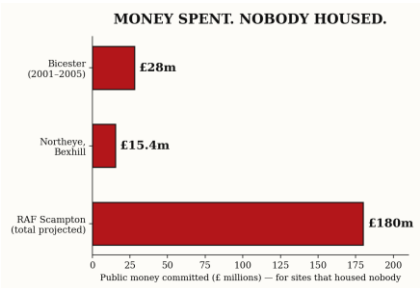
habitable. Why don't the government look at disused university accommodation, or the unused dormitories of boarding houses for boarding schools which have been closed since the 20% VAT hike in 2024?

FACTUAL

THE ADMISSION THAT UNDERCUTS THE CASE

On 5 June 2026, the Home Office told the Public Accounts Committee directly that large sites of this kind are likely to **"cost as much as or more per person per night than hotels."** The entire public justification for large sites like Site A is reducing cost by ending reliance on hotels. Independent analysis puts hotel costs at roughly £145 per person per night against roughly £178 per person per night at a comparable ex-military site — and **£23.25** for ordinary dispersal accommodation in the private rented sector.

Accommodation type	Cost per person, per night
Hotel (Home Office figure to Select Committee)	£144.98
Ex-military large site (based on Wethersfield)	£178.00
Ordinary dispersal accommodation	£23.25



£17 MILLION, ONE CONSULTANCY, ZERO ANSWERS

MPs demand an HMRC investigation into "opaque" offshore payments by the Government's own asylum housing contractor. It would be embarrassing if their own contractor is *fiddling* the books and making excessive profits, which they are covering up through consultancy fees to themselves.

The Home Office runs its large-site accommodation contracts through a small number of private providers, chief among them Clearsprings Ready Homes — whose parent company has reported paying **more than £17 million in "consultancy fees"** to a UAE-based firm it says it partly owns.

There's one problem: investigative reporting by Liberty Investigates and openDemocracy found that the only company of that name on the UAE corporate register said it had never received the payments and had no link to Clearsprings or its founder. The Home Office holds contracts with Clearsprings worth an estimated **several billion pounds**.

"Clearsprings is funnelling money offshore in an extremely opaque way. I believe that HMRC should carry out a thorough investigation."

— Kate Osamor MP

"This is a huge amount of public money and it's clear that something has gone wrong. We urgently need an investigation."

— Bell Ribeiro-Addy MP, Home Affairs Committee

FACTUAL

PROFIT WITHOUT PENALTY

The Home Affairs Committee's inquiry into asylum accommodation management found reported provider profit across the accommodation contracts totalled **approximately £383 million** — and that **no performance penalties were applied** at either Napier Barracks or RAF Wethersfield, despite documented, serious failings at both. Total projected spending on asylum accommodation contracts has risen from an initial estimate of **£4.5 billion to £15.3 billion** over the life of the contracts.

SATIRE:

We attempted to contact the UAE consultancy for comment. As it apparently doesn't exist, this proved difficult. If any reader can locate £17 million wandering around Dubai looking for its parent company, The Piddington Eye would very much like to hear from you.

DOWN THE DRAIN: THE QUESTION NOBODY WILL ANSWER

"Largely self-sufficient" is doing a lot of leg work for a site with no confirmed sewage capacity, no confirmed electricity capacity, and a region officially classed as "seriously water stressed."

Somewhere between the Home Office's factsheet and reality sits an inconvenient set of numbers. Bicester Sewage Treatment Works — the most likely destination for the site's wastewater — was recorded by the Environment Agency as running at roughly **87% of its permitted dry-weather-flow capacity**, with the regulator warning that committed growth "could quickly erode remaining headroom."

The wider region isn't much better off: the whole of Thames Water's operating area, including Oxfordshire, is officially classed "seriously water stressed" by the Environment Agency, and the

company's long-term plan depends on a reservoir that doesn't exist yet.

Electricity is no clearer. The network operator's own published material shows no spare firm capacity in the wider Bicester area, according to a formal objection lodged by neighbouring Bucknell Parish Council. Freedom of Information requests to the Home Office and the Defence Infrastructure Organisation about the site's actual electrical supply, demand and any required upgrades remain unanswered at the time of writing.

As a side note, the site itself sits below several large electricity pylons, which are known to have negative impacts on human health, with some potential rumours that they can lead to conditions such as cancer.

FACTUAL

A SENSE-CHECK, USING THE GOVERNMENT'S OWN NUMBERS

Using the standard domestic water-efficiency benchmark (125 litres per person per day), 1,250 residents alone — before staff, catering, laundry or healthcare demand — would use roughly **156 cubic metres of water a day**. No published operational demand assessment, connection offer, or capacity confirmation from Thames Water has been identified for this site.

SATIRE:

The Home Office's factsheet describes the site as "largely self-sufficient." We can only assume this refers to residents bringing their own bucket.

NEWTS HAVE RIGHTS. APPARENTLY, THAT'S RARE ROUND HERE.

Great crested newts get a legally protected survey season. This application, so far, hasn't managed a Health Impact Assessment. No documentation has been published to indicate that these newts are going to be safe from the development. Unless the government are proposing to construct fences around them, or they have miraculously disappeared, these small amphibious friends may hold a substantial weight in preventing some parts of development.



The land around Site A sits inside one of the most ecologically significant landscapes in southern

England, according to Cherwell District Council's own strategy documents — which describe the wider area as "one of the best remaining ecologically coherent, large-scale landscapes in Southern England," hosting **three separate Sites of Special Scientific Interest**. The neighbouring Arncott Bridge Meadows SSSI preserves medieval ridge-and-furrow farmland unploughed for centuries.

Elsewhere on the very same former MOD estate, at Graven Hill, confirmed populations of bats and great crested newts have been formally surveyed and protected with fencing during redevelopment. No equivalent survey for Site A has been identified in any document reviewed. Both species require legally mandated survey windows — broadly spring to late summer — and if this year's window is missed, a valid survey may not be achievable again until well into 2027. An urgent development, apparently, that the newts can hold up until next year.

FACTUAL

RADIOLOGICAL REDUX: BUILDING A33

The Ministry of Defence's own 2010 environmental consultants concluded the site was **"generally unsuitable for redevelopment** to a domestic end use without remediation," and specifically flagged "the former burning grounds and landfilled areas around close to buildings C32, C33 and A33 **where radiological contamination is potentially present**." Building A33 sits within Site A itself — the area now proposed for residential-equivalent occupation. No published document indicates this finding has been revisited, or that remediation has taken place, in the sixteen years since.

SATIRE:

To be clear: we are not saying anyone will glow in the dark. We are saying that somebody, somewhere, wrote the words "radiological contamination is potentially present" about the exact building in question, and as far as we can tell nobody has followed it up since.

VILLAGE VOICES — SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL BUSINESSES

Second advertisement page.

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ADVERTISEMENT PIDDINGTON VILLAGE FETE MARQUEE HIRE The only urgent development we've ever approved of. No Crown Development Order needed	ADVERTISEMENT BLIND BEND & POTHOLE WHIPLASH CLAIMS No win, no fee — much like the footpath. Specialising in the B4011, a road the Government insists is perfectly adequate for 1,250 more pedestrians.
ADVERTISEMENT EMERGENCY GENERATOR HIRE For when the National Grid notices there are 1,250 more people than it was told about. Bicester STW already at 87% — book early.	ADVERTISEMENT COACH PARK & CROWD MARSHALLING Bicester Village's unofficial third emergency service. Ask about our rates for events..
ADVERTISEMENT BUNTING & BANNER PRINTING From "Wrong Plan, Wrong Site" to "Congratulations Doreen on the Bake-Off," same-day turnaround. Unfortunately, turn around slightly longer than a major planning application under crown development.	ADVERTISEMENT FREEDOM OF INFORMATION DRAFTING SERVICE Can't get an answer out of the Home Office? Neither can we. But we'll charge you a very reasonable rate for trying.

FACTUAL

A NOTE FOR ADVERTISERS

Every advertisement sold in this magazine helps fund the parish council and campaign group's ongoing costs — Freedom of Information requests, professional evidence-gathering, and, if it comes to it, legal fees. Nobody involved in producing this magazine is paid.

HEALTH & SAFEGUARDING LESSONS NOT LEARNED

 This is not an argument against people seeking asylum. It is a record of what has happened, repeatedly and on the public record, when they have been housed like before.

Every large former-military site used for asylum accommodation in recent years has produced broadly the same documented pattern: isolation, institutional conditions, and serious harm to the people living there. This is the Home Office's own delivery model under scrutiny, not the residents.

At RAF Wethersfield, joint clinical monitoring by Médecins Sans Frontières and Doctors of the World between November 2023 and December 2024 found **62% of patients seen were experiencing severe psychological distress, 30% disclosed suicidal thoughts, and three-quarters reported previous experience of violence or abuse**. The High Court subsequently found the Home Secretary had **acted unlawfully in relation to three of four lead claimants** housed there, and identified a systemic breach of the public sector equality duty.

At Napier Barracks, the High Court found residents had been **unlawfully detained during a lockdown** — false imprisonment and a breach of Article 5 of the European Convention on Human Rights. At Manston, a UK Health Security Agency-confirmed **diphtheria outbreak was linked to one death**, now the subject of a non-statutory inquiry examining, among other things, how that death occurred.

FACTUAL

A SPECIFIC RISK FOR THIS SITE: WHO COUNTS AS "ADULT"

The Site A proposal is explicitly for "single adult men." Freedom of Information data obtained by the Helen Bamber Foundation found that, in a six-month sample period, **53% of completed age assessments** for young people referred from adult accommodation and detention were found to be children — **at least 262 minors wrongly placed in adult settings** nationally. The report specifically names "large site" accommodation like Wethersfield as a location children have been wrongly moved to. No document reviewed sets out what age-verification safeguards would apply here.

Also on the record: the site sits roughly **0.1km from HMP Bullingdon, 0.8km from an active firing range, and 1.2km from specialist explosive-ordnance-disposal training facilities** — an environment independent safeguarding organisations have specifically warned against for people who may have experienced conflict, torture or detention. It's not a particularly caring act by the government to put those avoiding war in the centre of one of Britain's busiest military training sites, where

small and large arms fire are common occurrences.

THE TWELVE GROUNDS, EXPLAINED WITHOUT A LAW DEGREE

 Piddington Parish Council's formal objection runs to twelve grounds.

Here they are in plain English.

1. National importance

A national policy problem doesn't automatically make one specific field the right answer.

2. Urgency

You can't be "too urgent for consultation" and "not sure for several months" at the same time.

3. Procedural fairness

The fast-track route strips out the guaranteed consultation periods unless it's screened as an EIA application — so that screening decision matters enormously.

4. Development plan conflict

The site sits outside every settlement boundary in the adopted local plan.

5. Highway safety

Still no footway. Still unlit.

6. Infrastructure capacity

Nobody has confirmed the drains or the power will cope.

7. Ecology / biodiversity net gain

The ecological survey is out of date, and the 10% net gain obligation applies in full.

8. Land quality / contamination

"Generally unsuitable... without remediation" was the verdict sixteen years ago.

9. Landscape, heritage & dark skies

Rural, historic, and currently dark at night — all material planning considerations.

10. Flood risk & drainage

A Flood Risk Assessment was explicitly recommended in 2010. No evidence one exists now.

11. Public health, safeguarding & social impact

12. Need, alternatives & value for money



Every comparable large site has overspent, been delayed, or been abandoned.

"An independent Planning Inspector, reporting on a materially similar proposal at this same landholding in April 2003, identified the risk of road accidents involving pedestrian asylum seekers and others as a real, practical worry to which the Home Office had given insufficient attention."

— Piddington Parish Council, formal objection, Ground 5

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

 The letters below are illustrative examples in the classic pseudonymous local-paper style. Replace with genuine reader letters where you have permission to print them, or keep as clearly signposted illustrative pieces.

Sir, — I have lived on the B4011 for thirty-one years and have never once seen anyone from the Home Office stand at my gate at 5pm on a January evening and watch the traffic go past. I would happily invite the relevant Minister to do so, weather permitting, before the next feasibility assessment concludes.

— Resident beside Site A

Sir, —Why do the newts get a legally protected survey season and the residents of Piddington don't get a Health Impact Assessment. Might I suggest the newts simply have better representation.

— A Concerned Ratepayer, Piddington

Sir, — I note the site is to be "largely self-sufficient." So, it appears, is the sewage works, the electricity substation, and the entire concept of due process.

— Name and address supplied, Blackthorn

Sir, — Might I be the first to suggest that if the Government insists on repeating the exact same planning application it lost in 2003, it might at least update the road safety section.

— A Former Inquiry Attendee, Ambrosden

WHITEHALL DIARY

 Named, factual, and entirely deserved.

Alex Norris MP, Minister of State for Border Security and Asylum, told the Commons on 25 June 2026 that three sites — Bicester, Barnham and Linton-on-Ouse — were under consideration for a **combined 3,750 people**, "subject to feasibility assessments, planning permission and the necessary approvals." Diary notes that two of those three conditions appear to have been treated as optional.

Dame Angela Eagle MP, when cancelling RAF Scampton in September 2024 after **£60m spent and no residents housed**, said the Government had "listened to community feedback and concerns." Piddington residents may reasonably

Wonder what it takes to be listened to before the money is spent, rather than after.

Kevin Foster, as immigration minister in 2022, told the Commons a final decision on Linton-on-Ouse would only be taken "when we are clear it is safe and legal to do so." It was withdrawn by the MOD itself three months later. It is now back.

Nick Timothy MP, opposing the Barnham proposal announced the same day as Bicester's, cited safety, services and cohesion — while stating he would not "support or amplify divisive language, discrimination, or hostility." Diary

invites readers to note that objecting to a rushed planning process and objecting to the people it would house are not the same thing, and it is possible to do the former without the latter.

Graham King, founder of Clearsprings' parent group, is recorded as having received — via a company he is reported to own — **over £17 million in consultancy fees** from a UAE entity that, per its own corporate register, appears not to exist in the form described. Diary would very much like an invitation to the AGM.

Andy Burnham MP (King of the North), giving his first broadcast interview as Prime Minister, told GB News he would "listen to what people are saying and respond to the concerns that they are putting forward" from Piddington — then admitted in the same answer that he did not "know the issue yet in detail." He added that "all parts of the country need to work, to play their part," and that Britain "cannot have a situation where it's only the poorest communities in the country that receive all of the dispersal of refugees and asylum seekers." Diary struggles to distinguish a promise to listen, made by someone who has not yet read the file, from a promise not to; and notes that Piddington's average house price is not, on its own, an argument about road safety, sewage capacity or a single unlit footway.



"Down south" It's a flipping bread roll fyi!!

THE GROUNDS THEY'D RATHER YOU SKIMMED (THE HOME OFFICE HAVE)

The Twelve Grounds page gave you the one-line version. Three of those grounds do most of their work quietly, in policy documents nobody reads for fun. Here they are in full.

GROUND 4: WRONG SIDE OF EVERY LINE

FACTUAL

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 is unambiguous: applications are decided in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Site A sits outside every settlement boundary in the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011–2031. It is not in, and does not adjoin, any village in the settlement hierarchy — it fails at the first hurdle, before a single highways or ecology objection is even reached.

At least fourteen policies of the adopted Plan are engaged, covering sustainable development, open space provision, transport connections, flood risk, drainage, water resources, biodiversity, landscape protection, the historic environment, green infrastructure and the prevention of settlement coalescence. The Government's own answer — that the site will be "self-contained" — is not a defence to this ground. It is, in planning terms, an admission against interest: a scheme that must be engineered to be self-sufficient because its location cannot sustainably support it is, by definition, poorly located.

SATIRE:

Somewhere there is a planning officer who once failed a conservatory extension for being 0.3 metres over the building line. We would very much like their view on 1,250 men and a decade-long institutional use landing entirely outside the settlement hierarchy.

GROUND 9: THE DARKEST SKIES IN OXFORDSHIRE, ABOUT TO GET A FLOODLIGHT

FACTUAL

This part of rural Cherwell sits within, on the Council's own description, "one of the best remaining ecologically coherent, large-scale landscapes in Southern England" — an intrinsically dark landscape with no significant existing illumination. The current Site A compound is low-activity, low-movement and largely screened; that is the lawful baseline. A 24-hour, permanently occupied facility with perimeter security lighting, CCTV illumination and continuous vehicle movement is not a continuation of that use. It is a different order of development, and paragraph 136 of the National Planning Policy Framework specifically requires decisions to limit the impact of light pollution on intrinsically dark landscapes. No Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, and no obtrusive-light assessment, has been identified for the current proposal.

There is a heritage dimension too: the wider MOD Bicester estate includes structures of recognised Cold War and wartime significance, including the Bicester Military Railway, and the site sits close to Alchester Roman Town. No

published document confirms that a heritage assessment covering Site A itself has been carried out.

SATIRE:

Somewhere, a bat is filling in its own environmental impact assessment, because nobody else appears to have started one.

GROUND 10: NOBODY HAS ASKED WHERE THE WATER GOES

FACTUAL

Site A exceeds one hectare, which under paragraph 173 of the Framework means a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment is required irrespective of flood zone — not optional, not something to circle back to. The site sits in the River Ray catchment, on Oxford Clay, where the local water company has already identified recurrent groundwater infiltration problems. PPC has asked for the sequential and exception tests, the existing and proposed drainage strategy, the interaction with artesian groundwater beneath the site, the effect on downstream flooding at Arncott Bridge, and — given a resident population confined behind a single access point — a flood evacuation plan agreed with the Environment Agency and the emergency services. None of this has been published.

SATIRE:

"Largely self-sufficient" was already doing a lot of work on sewage and electricity. We didn't realise it was expected to cover flood evacuation planning as well.

THE AFFLUENT AREAS DEFENCE, UNDER OATH

FACTUAL

Reporting in August 2026 found that some of the country's most affluent local authorities host **zero asylum dispersal HMOs**: Hart District Council in Hampshire, which has topped national quality-of-life surveys, has none; nor does Guildford, in the Surrey Hills; nor Tunbridge Wells, Epsom or Sevenoaks; nor Arun on the South Coast. **Just one asylum seeker lives in dispersal accommodation across the whole of Lewes district.** By contrast, the North, Yorkshire, the Midlands, Wales and Northern Ireland account for an estimated **59.3% of all Home Office asylum accommodation nationally** — with the North West alone housing close to a fifth. Every council area in the North and Yorkshire currently hosts asylum seekers; roughly a fifth of councils across the South East and South West host none.

Affluent local authority	Asylum dispersal accommodation
Hart District (Hants)	None recorded
Guildford (Surrey)	None recorded
Tunbridge Wells (Kent)	None recorded
Sevenoaks (Kent)	None recorded
Arun (West Sussex)	None recorded
Lewes (East Sussex)	1 person
Camden (inc. Highgate, Primrose Hill)	33 people (7 in wealthiest wards)

THE ANSWER FROM PIDDINGTON

Piddington Parish Council chair Tim McNally was asked directly about the fairness argument. His response conceded the principle while rejecting its application here:

I fully support that and understand that. What Piddington is asking for is not to be exempt from the national responsibility. ... It's not about the humanity of those being accommodated. ... Just because we are, as you may say, an affluent area it doesn't mean high capacity.

— Tim McNally, Piddington Parish Council chair

The distinction PPC draws is the one this whole magazine has tried to draw: this objection is not a claim that Piddington is too good, or too wealthy, to house asylum seekers — it is a claim that a village of roughly 350 people, with no shop, no pub, no streetlit road and no mains capacity to spare, cannot safely absorb a facility **three-and-a-half times its own population** at a single unlit access point, regardless of the average house price. “Fairness” and “capacity” are different questions, and the Government’s own factsheet answers the second one by describing the site as needing to be “largely self-sufficient” — an admission, not a rebuttal.

SATIRE:

We fully support the principle that affluent areas should play their part. We merely note that Guildford has had roughly the same amount of trouble finding a suitable field as it apparently has finding a spare parking space.

MEDIA & WESTMINSTER: HOW A 350-PERSON VILLAGE BECAME A NATIONAL STORY



What started as a parish council objection has, since June 2026, become sustained national and international coverage — running on GB News, TalkTV, BBC Radio 4’s Today programme, BBC News online, CBS News and beyond. A rough timeline of the coverage that matters:

- 25 June 2026 — Minister of State for Border Security and Asylum Alex Norris confirms to the Commons that Bicester, Barnham and Linton-on-Ouse are under consideration for a **combined 3,750 people**.
- 4 July 2026 — Piddington holds its symbolic referendum on leaving the United Kingdom. The BBC reports a **96% vote in favour** of proceeding, on a turnout the campaign describes as most of the adult village.
- 16 July 2026 — The Daily Caller and other outlets pick up the referendum story internationally, reporting PPC chair Tim McNally’s account of an emergency village meeting and the idea’s improbable origin: a hand-painted “Jeremy Clarkson for King” sign on the village road.
- Late July–early August 2026 — Local children write directly to the Prime Minister. Seven-year-old Rex Perkin’s letter, explaining that housing on the site could stop him visiting his sister’s grave in the village, is widely reported and shared on GB News.
- 4 August 2026 — McNally posts that it has been “14 days of silence” since the village’s open letter to the Prime Minister went unanswered.

- 5 August 2026 — McNally appears on TalkTV: “I now feel I’m representing this country.” The same day, Conservative MP Joy Morrissey gives broadcast comment on the plans; her remarks, reported by several outlets, went further than PPC’s own evidenced case and are not adopted or endorsed by this publication — see the note on tone on p.16.
- 12 August 2026 — Speaking to GB News amid a fresh spike in Channel crossings, Prime Minister Andy Burnham addresses Piddington directly and makes the “affluent areas” fairness argument (see facing page). McNally responds on X that acknowledgement “is not action,” and invites the Prime Minister to visit the village and explain “how placing 1,250 men beside a community of just 350 adults can possibly be fair, safe or responsible.”

A VOICE ON THE OTHER SIDE

Not every voice in the national coverage has backed the campaign. Jane Coles of the Oxfordshire branch of Stand Up to Racism has been reported making the counter-case: that opposition of this kind risks tipping into hostility toward the individuals who would be housed, whatever its stated focus on process. PPC’s own position — stated repeatedly in its formal objection and restated throughout this magazine — is that its case rests on planning process, infrastructure capacity and the documented welfare record of comparable sites, not on the presence of asylum seekers in the UK. Readers can judge for themselves whether the wider national coverage has always kept to that distinction; this publication has tried to.

SATIRE:

Fourteen days of silence from Downing Street is, admittedly, faster than the Home Office’s average Freedom of Information response time. Make of that what you will.

VILLAGE VOICES: ON THE RECORD

FACTUAL

Unlike the pseudonymous Letters to the Editor these are named residents speaking to national media on the record, reproduced here in short as reported.

Dear Andy, We like our village because I and my family walk down to my sister’s grave to see her.

— Rex Perkin, aged 7, Piddington, in a letter to the Prime Minister

I've said to him I think we need to get a better gate. He won't let me get a dog but I'm thinking I will. I'm not a young lady any more, I'm scared really. It breaks my heart. We live here because we want this peace, this safety, this community.

— Karen Joy, 73, Piddington, married to Derek Joy, 86, a retired master saddler

We have no crime in this area. There's no police. There's no need. The community is very tight. It's very well connected. ... We don't have anything to defend ourselves with. It's against the law for us to carry a knife or have a gun.

— Tim McNally, Piddington Parish Council chair

Reporters have also relayed comments from parents who asked not to be named: one mother whose children wrote letters to the Prime Minister said the scale of the proposal would leave the village “so outnumbered that it would change our lives completely”; another parent questioned whether an elderly grandmother could still walk home safely at night. PPC’s briefing to broadcasters has consistently paired these accounts with the sourced, referenced material in this magazine — the B4011’s casualty record, the absence of footways, the sewage and power capacity questions — on the view that lived concern and documented evidence should stand together, not apart.

SATIRE:

For the avoidance of doubt, nobody in this village has yet worked out how to defend a parish boundary using only a stern look and a WI cake stall. We are, however, taking submissions.

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR: WHAT THE EVIDENCE ACTUALLY SAYS

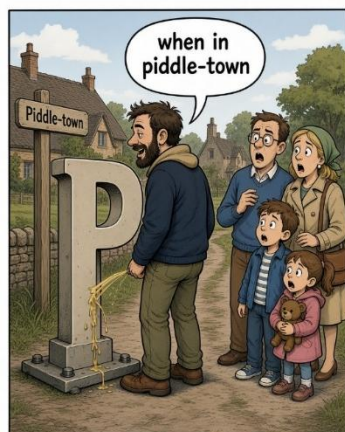
Reporting on Piddington has recorded residents’ fears about anti-social behaviour directly: some have suggested that young men might gather, or drink, at the Jubilee Reserve playing field on the site’s boundary; several women told reporters they would not feel safe walking alone at night. This publication reports that these concerns exist and have been put on the record. It does not present them as proven fact about the people who would be housed here, and does not endorse the inference that they will behave this way.

What is proven fact, and documented by the Home Office’s own inspectorate, is what

happens when a large site opens without a working plan for how residents spend their time. At RAF Wethersfield, a Home Office manager told inspectors the site went live without day-one provision for recreational activity. The then Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration escalated the resulting problem directly to the Home Secretary in December 2023 and to the Immigration Minister in February 2024: boredom and unrest, in the Inspector’s own words, followed the absence of purposeful activity, and continued for months. The Inspector’s October 2024 report recommended the Department define clear responsibility for education, recreation and volunteering provision at every site, and found nobody appeared to be doing so.

WHAT WORKS, AND WHETHER IT CAN WORK HERE

Inspectors found the opposite outcome at Napier Barracks, where a resident activity programme run through a local charity hub was cited as a model — but its success depended specifically on being close to an established town and its voluntary sector. Site A has neither: it is a fenced former military compound at the end of an unlit road, with no published activity specification, and no version of the Napier model has been identified for it.



“Taking the P”

THE PIDDINGTON REPUBLIC: 940 YEARS ON THE MAP, ZERO VOTES REQUIRED UNTIL NOW

Piddington appears in the Domesday Book of 1086 as “Petintone,” one of three Oxfordshire holdings of Countess Judith, niece of William the Conqueror. Its name is generally traced to the Old English “Pyda’s tun” — a farm or settlement connected with a man called Pyda. The parish church, St Nicholas’, contains work dating to the late 13th century, is Grade II*

listed, and carries a ring of five bells. The village’s former pub, the Seven Stars, closed some years ago and is now a private house and restaurant; today the village has no shop and no pub, but does have its church, its village hall — home to a monthly pop-up pub, coffee mornings and a short-mat bowls club — and the Jubilee Reserve playing field, which sits directly against the boundary of the proposed site. **The 2011 Census recorded a parish population of 370;** residents and reporters currently put the figure at **around 350, including some 46 children.**

THE REFERENDUM

On 4 July 2026 — chosen, by the campaign’s own account, for its American Independence Day resonance and the embarrassment value of the coincidence — Piddington residents voted on whether to hold a symbolic referendum on leaving the United Kingdom. The BBC reported a **96% vote in favour**. The vote carries no legal weight and was never intended to: campaigners have been explicit that it is a protest device to draw national attention to the planning process, not a genuine secession bid. It has, on that narrow measure, worked: the story has since run on GB News, TalkTV, BBC Radio 4, BBC News, CBS News and in the international press.

The idea traces, by Tim McNally’s own account, to a hand-painted road sign reading “Jeremy Clarkson for King” and an emergency village meeting at which residents’ mood was, in his words, that a fast-track Crown Development process left them powerless to respond. Fundraising for the campaign has since included a proposed dog show, a motorbike and classic-car ride-out, and a sponsored walk around the perimeter of the site itself.

WHAT’S ACTUALLY THERE, FOR THE RECORD

This publication has made the case, article by article, that Site A is the wrong location on planning, safety, infrastructure and cost grounds. It is a separate point, but one worth making once, plainly: the suggestion sometimes implicit in “national importance” arguments — that there is nothing much at stake on the receiving end — does not survive contact with the receiving end. Piddington has a longer continuous documented history than the Home Office’s asylum accommodation programme, a listed medieval church, an active community life run substantially by volunteers, and, as of this summer, no functioning shop or pub to fall back on if either of the two things Government has offered so far — silence, and a fairness argument about wealth — turns out to be the whole of the answer.

FACTUAL

For a village of about 350, that ratio yields a proportionate share of fewer than two people — not 1,250. Put plainly, the proposal is roughly 700 times the advisory limit for a settlement this size.

Piddington has never asked to be exempt. A proportionate contribution — in the low single figures, and only once Thames Valley Police capacity is confirmed and the funded resources (the £3,500-per-bed dispersal grant, extra policing and services) are actually in place — has never been refused.

SATIRE:

We asked for our fair share and were offered a city's worth. Flattering — but it still won't fit down Widnell Lane.

The Home Office factsheet says Site A would be used for “at least ten years.” The same Government has pledged to end the use of asylum hotels — the entire stated reason for sites like this — by 2029, inside this Parliament (HM Treasury Spending Review, June 2025).

Both cannot be true. You do not sign a decade-long commitment for an emergency you expect to have solved in four years. A ten-year lease is a forecast — and the forecast is that the arrivals keep coming.

The figures bear that out. Around 41,000 people crossed by small boat in 2025, the second-highest year on record, with roughly 36,000 in the year to May 2026 (Migration Observatory). Asylum applications hit a record 111,000 in the year to June 2025. The National Audit Office expects asylum-accommodation costs to reach £15.3 billion over the decade — triple the original £4.5 billion plan.

SATIRE:

We are told this is a “small boats” emergency. The average “small boat” now carries 63 people, up from 7 in 2018 — about the load of a small airliner. We look forward to Issue 12 and the Boeing 321 that drifts ashore at Dover

Since the Brexit transition ended on 31 December 2020, the UK has sat outside the EU's Dublin system with no access to Eurodac, the European asylum fingerprint database. It can no longer check whether someone arriving here has already claimed — or been refused —

Eurodac holds fingerprints, facial images, names, dates of birth, nationalities and copies of identity documents. Without it, the Home Office relies largely on what an undocumented arrival chooses to say about themselves.

In 2020, the last year of access, half of the 8,466 people arriving by small boat had already been flagged on Eurodac for irregular entry into the EU. Officials have called regaining access a potential “gamechanger.” In 2026 post-Brexit talks the EU again declined to restore access — to Eurodac or to the Schengen Information System’s real-time alerts on wanted and missing persons.

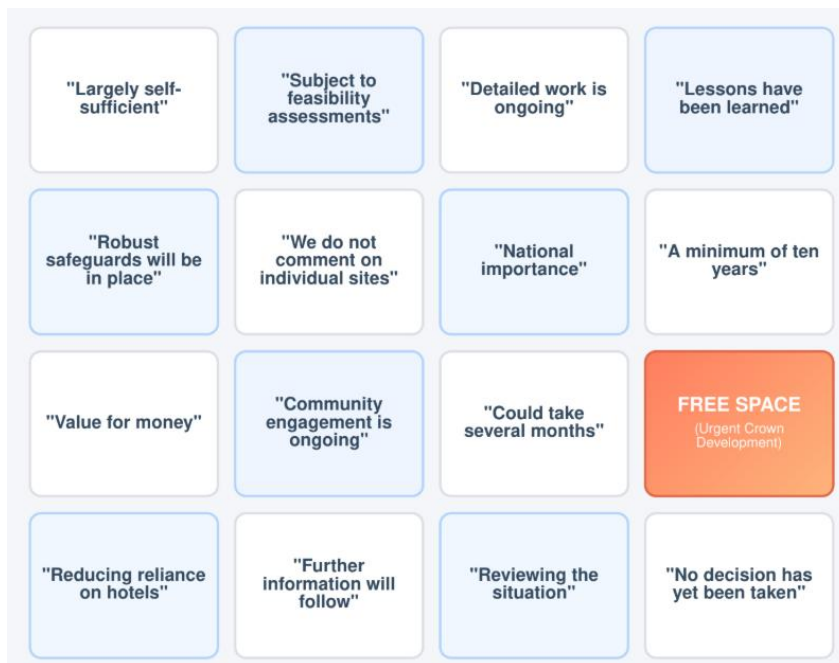
Site A is proposed for 1,250 “single adult men.” As this paper reports elsewhere, in one six-month national sample 53% of disputed age assessments turned out to be children. Not knowing who is who is not a theoretical risk here; it is a documented one.

Three more gaps in the Site A case — one on identity, one on timescale, one on fair shares. Everything marked FACTUAL is drawn from published sources; the jokes are labelled.



HOME OFFICE EXCUSE BINGO

Free to play. Mark off a square every time the Government uses one of these phrases about Site A. First to a full house wins a hollow sense of vindication.



WHAT YOU CAN ACTUALLY DO ABOUT IT

*This magazine exists to make an unglamorous planning process readable. But the process itself is where decisions actually get made.

Here's where to put your energy.

1. Submit a representation. Under the Urgent Crown Development procedure, the local planning authority must forward any representations it receives to the Secretary of State.

The Rt Hon Angela Rayner MP Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)

2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF

Ministerial.Correspondence@communities.gov.uk

2. Back the evidence, not just the objection. The strongest representations engage with specific, sourced points — road safety, infrastructure capacity, ecology, cost — rather than general opposition. Feel free to borrow directly from this magazine; everything marked **FACTUAL** is fully referenced in the underlying documents.

3. Contact your local councillors and MP (whether local or not)

4. Get involved with the campaign. Piddington Parish Council are coordinating evidence-gathering, Freedom of Information requests and formal objections.

5. Share this magazine. It exists to be read, forwarded and argued about — that's rather the point of a free press.

FACTUAL

A NOTE ON TONE, FOR ANYONE READING THIS COLD

This publication objects to a rushed, poorly evidenced planning decision at a specific, unsuitable site — not to the presence of people seeking asylum in the UK, and not to the individuals who would be housed here. The satire in these pages is aimed squarely at process failures in Whitehall: the missing assessments, the unanswered Freedom of Information requests, the repeated cycle of abandoned sites, and the **£383 million in provider profit with no performance penalties** attached. Where residents of the site are mentioned, it is because their safety and wellbeing — walking an unlit road with no footway, or being housed next to a working prison — is precisely what this objection is trying to protect.