Home Office

Alex Norris MP
Minister for Border Security & Asylum
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF
www.gov.uk/home-office

Cllrs James Partridge and Rachel Millward

DECS Reference: MIN/1416681/25

24 November 2025

Dear Cllrs Partridge and Millward,

Thank you for your recent letters about the potential use of Crowborough Training Camp as temporary asylum accommodation. I recognise the strength of feeling locally and appreciate the concerns you have raised.

Firstly, I want to emphasise that no final decision has been made on the use of Crowborough Training Camp. Discussions are ongoing, and any decision will only be taken once all relevant factors have been carefully considered.

I deeply regret that the recent leak forced the Home Office to accelerate our communication and act out of sequence with the engagement plan we had agreed in principle. This was not the approach we intended, and we recognise the difficult position this placed Wealden Council in. I am aware that the leak has led to speculation and misinformation circulating locally, which is something I take extremely seriously. The Home Office priority is to ensure accurate information is shared promptly and transparently.

To address this, officials have worked at pace to ensure the community receives clear, factual information. Including:

- Providing a publicly available fact sheet setting out the key facts, safeguards, and rationale behind any potential use of the site. The fact sheet is available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/asylum-accommodation-at-military-sites-factsheets/crowborough-training-camp-east-sussex-factsheet.
- Engagement with Wealden Council: on 10 October, the Home Office held an online meeting with Wealden District Council and East Sussex County Council to formally notify them of the intention to use Crowborough Training Camp as temporary asylum accommodation. This was followed on 13 October by initial meetings with the Sussex Integrated Care Board (ICB) and Sussex Police to discuss health and public safety considerations for the site. On 15 October, a site visit took place with representatives from Wealden District Council and East Sussex County Council, providing an opportunity to see the facilities first-hand.

With regards to the concerns you raise about the site specifics, including security and wellbeing, occupancy, and access to essential services I want to reassure you of the following;

Safety and wellbeing

The safety and wellbeing of both asylum seekers and the local community is our absolute priority. If the site is progressed:

- All individuals will undergo initial screening and security checks before arrival.
- The site will have a 24/7 security presence, controlled access, and CCTV monitoring.
- Welfare support will include healthcare provision, including mental health support.
- There will be clear safeguarding protocols for vulnerable individuals and robust reporting mechanisms for any issues.
- We are working closely with local police, NHS services, and voluntary sector partners to ensure risks are managed and community cohesion is maintained.

Occupancy and cohort

Occupancy of the site will be phased and incremental, allowing the Home Office to monitor impact and carefully manage the site. In terms of scale, Crowborough Training Camp has a capacity to accommodate up to 540 individuals.

Healthcare

The Home Office intention is for the site to run as self-sufficiently as possible. The detailed design of the provision of essential services such as healthcare and legal advice is currently being worked on. The offer will ensure that asylum seekers receive the support required by law during the processing of their asylum claims.

In summary, the Government has a statutory duty to provide accommodation for asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute. We are determined to restore order to the asylum system so that it operates swiftly, firmly and fairly. Moving away from hotels is essential to reduce the pressure of communities and costs to the taxpayer. Crowborough Training Camp offers basic, safe accommodation designed to minimise the impact on local services while meeting our legal obligations.

I note your request to meet. I look forward to meeting you on Wednesday 25th November to discuss this matter.

Yours sincerely,



Alex Norris MP
Minister for Border Security & Asylum