

Crown Development Case Team
Planning Inspectorate

Sent by email to:
crownapplications@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

**The Leader's Office
Oxfordshire County Council
County Hall
New Road
Oxford
Oxfordshire
OX1 1ND**

Councillor Neil Fawcett
Deputy Leader of the Council

21 September 2026

Dear Sir or Madam,

Re: Planning Application ref. CROWN/2026/0000004, Campsfield Immigration Removal Centre, Evenlode Crescent, Kidlington, OX5 1RE

I am writing as Deputy Leader of Oxfordshire County Council to formally object to the proposed expansion of capacity at Campsfield Immigration Removal Centre.

The Council's opposition to the use of Campsfield House as an immigration detention centre is long-standing and democratically established. On 7 October 2022, our Full Council supported a motion opposing its reopening. That motion reflected profound concerns about the treatment of people seeking safety and concluded that reopening Campsfield would represent a costly, ineffective and regressive approach to immigration policy

In adopting the motion, the Council highlighted the history of Campsfield House prior to its closure, noting that nearly 30,000 migrants had been detained at the site and that its operation had been associated with sustained protests, hunger strikes, legal challenges, escapes and two suicides. The motion further noted that the facility was ultimately closed following a highly critical inquiry into conditions at the centre.

The Council also considered the wider operation of the asylum system and resolved that the Government should prioritise the prompt and fair processing of asylum claims, rather than expanding immigration detention. Full Council called for:

- the cancellation of the reopening of Campsfield House as a detention centre;
- the creation of safe havens and expanded legal routes through which people can seek asylum in the United Kingdom; and
- the prompt and fair determination of asylum claims, with appropriate safeguards enabling people seeking asylum to live and work within communities while their claims are considered.

The current planning application does not address the concerns that underpinned the Council's resolution. Instead, it seeks to expand the Immigration Removal Centre through the provision of additional accommodation and supporting infrastructure, thereby increasing the scale and permanence of a use to which the Council has formally objected.

Campsfield House has long been the subject of significant public concern and sustained local opposition. The proposed expansion risks perpetuating and intensifying those concerns making additional financial support for Thames Valley Police necessary to maintain public safety.

Oxfordshire has a strong record of supporting all people in need, including those who have fled violence and persecution, which aligns with our status as a Council of Sanctuary. The Council believes that people seeking sanctuary should be treated with dignity and humanity, and that national policy should focus on safe and legal routes, timely and fair decision-making, and appropriate support rather than increased reliance on immigration detention. Oxfordshire County Council strongly urges the Secretary of State to refuse expansion of the facility and seek to close it permanently.

Yours faithfully,

Neil Fawcett

Cllr Neil Fawcett
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