



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Rt Hon Dame Karen Bradley MP  
Chair of the Home Affairs Select Committee  
Houses of Parliament  
London  
SW1A 0AA

Dear Karen

23 February 2026

As the Member of Parliament for Sussex Weald, I am writing to ask the Home Affairs Select Committee to consider holding an inquiry into the Home Office's approach to the rapid repurposing of the functioning Crowborough Training Camp as potential accommodation of asylum seekers, and the resulting failures of transparency, accountability and cost to the tax payer at both central and local government level.

Sussex Weald has borne the brunt of the Home Office committing, at very short notice, to the potential conversion of a fully operational military training site – already accommodating Armed Forces Cadet training – without meaningful consultation with local stakeholders, elected representatives, or the local planning authority.

This submission raises serious concerns that merit examination by the Committee, particularly because whatever has taken place in Sussex Weald constituency will no doubt be replicated elsewhere if left unexamined.

**1. Local authority accountability and transparency**

The critical subject for inquiry is the role of Wealden District Council Leadership, especially in its role as the Lead Local Planning Authority and its refusal to communicate, meet or provide factual updates on their plans and relationship with the Home Office. The Leadership have instead directed their limited messages to social media platforms, often leading to misinformation and confusion with zero accountability.



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There is currently no effective way to hold Wealden District Council Leadership to account as they appear to be either unable or unwilling to:

- Hold meaningful public consultations;
- Meet with Members of Parliament whose constituencies cover Wealden District;
- Share or explain the legal advice on which not to act are based;
- Conduct meetings in public

This lack of openness makes it extremely difficult for residents, stakeholders and elected representatives to scrutinise decisions or hold leadership to account

While local leaders may be content with asylum seekers being accommodated in their area, they need to be open and honest that this is their political position and that this does not remove their obligation to act transparently or to fully address the impact on the local community and the limited resources in a rural constituency, let alone the long-term impact on asylum seekers being on a site that was previously rejected for not being safe, legal and compliant.

### **2. Home Office decision-making, consultation and evidence**

The Committee is asked to examine:

- When and how the Home Office works with the Lead Local Planning Authority – in this case Wealden District Council – and whether minutes, records and correspondence of those discussions are made available so that both the Home Office and Wealden District Council can be properly held to account.
- The absence of any requirement for the Home Office to evidence that a site is suitable, safe, or sustainable before committing its use as asylum accommodation.
- Whether sufficient regard is given to whether a site is already operational and the potential displacement of existing activities, including Crowborough's designation as a military training camp used for Armed Forces Cadet training. This includes the clear safeguarding considerations which accompany placing large numbers of single men in a facility used for cadets.
- Linked to the failure to consider displacement of existing activities, the lack of planning and foresight regarding the displacement of cadet forces, including whether realistic and funded plans exist to reallocated cadet training without detriment.
- The cost to the taxpayer of converting an active military training camp into safe accommodation, particularly where significant adaptation is required.



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Your most recent Home Affairs Select Committee evidence highlights too many cases where asylum accommodation is not of an adequate standard, and where safeguarding concerns relating to vulnerable people in accommodation have not been addressed. These concerns are especially relevant to Sussex Weald, as the Crowborough Training Camp was previously rejected by a Home Office Minister as potential asylum accommodation on the grounds that it was not safe, legal and compliant. It is therefore deeply concerning – and frankly bizarre – that the Home Office is now exploring the use of the same site, while Wealden District Council declines to take legal action or explain the legal basis for its inaction.

### **3. Request for an evidence-led session**

Given the seriousness of these issues, I am asking the Home Affairs Select Committee to hold an evidence-led session at which both the Home Office and Wealden District Council would be required to attend and give evidence. Such a session would allow the Committee to test competing accounts, examine the evidential basis for decisions taken, and assess whether the statutory duties and planning law obligations are being properly observed.

It is an enquiry about due diligence, evidence and impact assessment. In particular, the impact on the residents of my constituency, the district and the county. We respectfully ask you to give consideration to my request.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nusrat Ghani', written over a large, faint circular watermark.

Nusrat Ghani MP

**Member of Parliament for Sussex Weald**