
UK to House Asylum Seekers at Two Former Military Bases



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LONDON, October 28 – The UK government has confirmed plans to accommodate asylum seekers at two former military sites in Inverness and East Sussex, as part of efforts to phase out the costly use of hotels by 2029.

The initiative, currently under discussion between the Home Office and Ministry of Defence, aims

to house around 900 men at Cameron Barracks in Inverness and Crowborough Training Camp in East Sussex by the end of November. The move comes as nearly 32,000 asylum seekers remain housed in hotels across the country, costing billions of pounds annually.

Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer said he had instructed officials to “go faster and go further” in finding suitable sites. “I’m really pleased that by the end of this year, more asylum seekers will be moved to military bases,” he told the BBC.

Defence Minister Luke Pollard described the military accommodations as “basic but adequate,” emphasizing that the transition will reduce dependence on hotels and allow their closure “at a faster rate.” He noted that while costs are still being evaluated, public demand to end hotel use remains strong.

The decision has received mixed political and community reactions. Inverness MP Angus MacDonald supported the plan but questioned the suitability of the barracks’ town-centre location, calling it “a bit odd.” Meanwhile, Sussex MP Nusrat Ghani criticized the move, calling the site “wholly inappropriate,” though some residents recalled positive experiences housing Afghan refugees in 2021.

A Home Office spokesperson said the government remains committed to closing all asylum hotels, assuring that all new facilities will comply with health and safety standards. Officials are also

considering additional industrial and temporary sites to further expand capacity.