



Andrew Rosindell M.P.

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The Rt. Hon. Priti Patel M.P.
Secretary of State for the Home Office
Home Office
2 Marsham Street
LONDON
SW1A 2AH

Friday 20th August 2021

Dear Priti

Asylum Seekers in the Palms Hotel, Hornchurch

I am writing to you after learning of the Home Office's decision to use the Palms Hotel in Hornchurch to accommodate a large number of asylum seekers, potentially over 200 individuals.

You may recall that I wrote to you about this same issue on 20th June 2020 and was therefore very disappointed to find out from the Leader of Havering Council, Cllr. Damian White that this is being considered again. I am also aware that Cllr. White has contacted you about this on Friday 20th August 2021 and I fully support everything that he has said in his letter to you. As the Member of Parliament for Romford, the Palms Hotel is located on the border of my constituency. I know that many of my constituents that live in the area surrounding the Hotel are very concerned about the impact that placing these people in our local area will have on local communities and services.

I am very concerned that neither myself nor Havering Council were consulted on this decision and that the only warning that anyone has received is an email to the Chief Executive of the council telling him that the Palms will be used "within the next twenty-four hours to accommodate asylum seekers". I am incredibly disappointed with the lack of consultation with the local communities and bodies in Havering which will have to manage the provision of local services, including GP and mental health services.

The Havering Council and communities are already being overstretched in dealing with the stresses that have been caused by the pandemic. Havering is already in the top five boroughs in London for dispersal of asylum seekers. I worry that the cost and demands of a further 200 more asylum seekers in the borough could result in worse services for local people.

Finally, the Palm Hotel is a completely unsuitable building in which to house asylum seekers. The Palms Hotel has been unoccupied for years. It is on a busy dual carriageway with no open outdoor green spaces. Furthermore, it lacks easy access to basic facilities such as shops and pharmacies.

I hope that given the pressure that these extra asylum seekers would put on the council and the complete unsuitability of the Palms Hotel for housing asylum seekers that you will reconsider this decision.

Yours ever,

Andrew Rosindell M.P.