

Dr Roz Savage
MBE MP
Member of
Parliament for South
Cotswolds

The Rt Hon Andy Burnham MP

Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London SW1A 2AA

The Rt Hon Wes Streeting MP

Secretary of State for Defence
Ministry of Defence
Main Building, Whitehall
London SW1A 2HB

28 September 2026

Dear Prime Minister and Secretary of State,

RAF Fairford: Whelford Evacuation and the Safety of Residents Around the Base

I am writing following the major incident in Whelford and the evacuation of around 85 households in my South Cotswolds constituency. My immediate concern is for the residents who had to leave their homes at short notice. Members of my team spoke with people sheltering at Cirencester Leisure Centre yesterday. Some were shaken and had left without medication or other essentials. While many found somewhere to stay with family or friends, others needed accommodation and continuing support.

I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge everyone who responded so swiftly and professionally: the local farmer who first raised the alarm, Gloucestershire Police, Cotswold District Council, Counter Terrorism Policing, and all the emergency services, council staff, and volunteers who have provided care and support to those affected. Their actions have made a real difference to frightened and displaced families.

I have been raising concerns about the security situation at RAF Fairford since March, when the base was first used by the United States Air Force for what were described as "defensive operations" against Iran. I wrote to the Ministry of Defence at that time asking what assessment had been made of the risks to the local communities living around the base. I have not received a satisfactory response, and the events of this weekend demonstrate that those concerns were well-founded.

I am therefore writing to request an urgent meeting with the Secretary of State and his officials at the Ministry of Defence to discuss three matters:

- First, the safety of the residents of Whelford, Fairford, Kempsford and the other communities living in the vicinity of the base, including what assessment has been made of the risks they face, what protective measures are in place, and what more the base can do to ensure their safety going forward. Residents raised concerns throughout the week about the heightened security - yet it fell to a local farmer, in the early hours of Sunday morning, to prevent what could have been a serious incident. That is deeply troubling.



- Second, the implications for the local housing plan. A significant number of new homes are planned for this area. The security situation at and around RAF Fairford must be a material consideration in any planning decisions, and I want to understand how the Ministry of Defence is engaging with local planning authorities on this question.
- Third, what additional steps the base itself can take, in terms of security, community liaison, and communication, to ensure that local residents are not left exposed and uninformed when incidents occur.

In advance of that meeting, I would be grateful for a written response setting out: how the Ministry of Defence is coordinating with Gloucestershire Police, Counter Terrorism Policing, Cotswold District Council, and those responsible for security at the base; whether the security arrangements and risks to neighbouring communities are now being formally reviewed in light of this incident; and how evacuated residents will receive reliable information and reassurance as the investigation continues.

I also ask that the agencies supporting evacuated residents are given the resources they need for as long as people are unable to return home, including help with accommodation, medication, food and other essentials. Residents need clear and regular information about what support is available to them, even where it is not yet possible to say when the cordon will be lifted.

I recognise that the police investigation is ongoing and am not seeking information that could compromise it. But my constituents deserve a clear account of how their safety has been, and will continue to be, considered. I look forward to your response and to meeting with the Secretary of State at the earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roz Savage'.

Dr Roz Savage MBE
Member of Parliament for South Cotswolds