

For the attention of: Ms Hird.

21/02851/AOP | Outline Planning Application with all matters reserved except for access and scale for the construction of a new Category C prison (up to 67,000 sqm GEA) within a secure perimeter fence together with access, parking, landscaping and associated engineering works.
HM Prison Grendon Springhill Road Grendon Underwood Buckinghamshire HP18 0TL.

Dear Ms Hird,

I would like to object to this planning application on the grounds of Sustainable Travel and contravention of Government aspirations on carbon emissions.

Local Public Transport

In the initial presentation by the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) agents there were many erroneous claims about the state of public transport to Grendon Underwood, Springhill and Edgcott. Whilst it might be possible to extend the current service; 1 bus, which travels only to Aylesbury bus station and does not directly connect with any rail services; I do not believe this would comply with the Government's stated aim of reducing carbon emissions, in that staff would be unable to travel from the nearest urban conurbations to work by public transport alone.

This is a quote from a government HS2 assessment document:

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/544495/Volume_4.11_-_Transport_assessment.pdf)

The High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands) (Greatmoor Railway Sidings Etc.) Order August 2016 CS573_5.4.11 - Environmental Statement – technical appendices Volume 4.11: Transport Assessment: 3.4 Existing Public Transport Network.

The rural location of the site means that there is limited public transport services and accessibility in the vicinity of the Proposed Scheme.

This statement is still true.

If we consider the likelihood that staff will be recruited locally and will travel to the site by public transport I would like to make the following observations about the local labour market and local housing.

Local Labour Market

Their assumption that staff would be recruited from the local area and would walk or cycle to work is laughable. The rate of unemployment in Aylesbury Vale (AV) according to the ONS is 3.7%, below the national average (4.6%), see (<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157291/report.aspx?#tabempocc>).

Of those who were economically inactive, (retired/student/long term sick) 80% of those did not want a job. I respectfully submit that there is an insufficient local labour market to meet either the construction phase or operational needs of such a large construction project. So there is almost 100% employment in our villages where residents work in agriculture (we're a rural community), are largely professional, skilled workers or self-employed, so the claim 'We anticipate a new prison here will create hundreds of jobs for the local community with up to 1,000 people working on site at any one time during construction.' is to say the least, optimistic. It is also my understanding that most of the contractors for this project will almost certainly be brought in. This will have no benefit at all to

the local community and will in fact only make our roads, already under pressure from HS2 and EWR contractors, even more dangerous.

From the information submitted in the Outline Planning Application, it is considered that the additional traffic likely to be generated by the proposal, both during the construction and the operational phases would adversely affect the safety and flow of users of the existing road network. We already experience difficulties in accessing the Buckingham/Grendon Road from the Springhill Road entrance. Given this level of severe harm which would result to the safety and convenience of users of the highway, I consider that this matter should be afforded significant adverse weight in the planning balance.

In the Public Consultation document, under "The Planning Context", the MOJ refers to linking to large urban centres. The Grendon Underwood/Springhill site is completely rural. It is totally disconnected from any urban areas. It sits in a wholly rural, farming locality without any large, local population that can be described as directly linking.

Local Housing Stock

There is insufficient affordable housing available to buy for current local people, let alone for recruits coming in from outside the area. A search for rental properties online today in Grendon Underwood results in just ONE property. Therefore, any staff recruited would almost certainly be travelling a considerable distance, by motor vehicle, to the site

I submit that this makes the proposed site totally unsuitable for a large-scale development and would conflict with the aims of Buckinghamshire's Local Transport Plan (2016 to 2036) (LTP4). The proposal would also be in conflict with paragraph 103 of the Framework which seeks to focus significant development in locations which limit the need to travel and offer a genuine choice of transport modes.

It is respectfully requested that the outline planning application to build a 'mega' prison at Grendon Underwood is rejected outright.