



GRENDON UNDERWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

All correspondence to the Parish Clerk on clerk.gupc@outlook.com
Tel: 0787 368 3043 Web Site: <https://www.gupc.org.uk/>

11th February 2021

FAO: Permanent Secretary Antonia Romeo
Ministry of Justice
102 Petty France
Westminster
London
SW1 H9AJ

Ref: Public Consultation by the Ministry of Justice in regard to proposals to build a 1440 bed Category C prison on green field & next to two current prisons in Grendon Underwood, Buckinghamshire.

Notified 3rd December 2020 with closing date of 30th December 2020 - later extended to 29th January 2021 – later extended to 5th February 2021.

Grendon Underwood Parish Council & Edgcott Parish Council Response.

Dear Permanent Secretary,

In response to our letter to you, dated 28th January 2021, one Sarah McIntyre emailed late in the evening of 5th February covering a response letter from Robin Seaton dated 22nd January.

We were dismayed that Mr Seaton's letter only partially addressed some of our concerns, made incredible claims against others and totally ignored the majority. Of 28 identifiable concerns, 3 were addressed in part, 2 were attempted but missed the point & 23 were ignored - a detailed breakdown is provided in Appendix 1. It was woefully lacking in any meaningful or credible information regarding the vast majority of the legitimate concerns that we, on behalf of the overwhelming majority of our residents, have regarding this proposal. These are on record both from an open meeting with residents and through multiple consultation responses direct to your portal [he says some 3000].

However, we noted Sarah's cover email appreciating "this response may not cover in detail all elements of your consultation response, and we will be in due course with a supplementary response." We can only hope this will be far more substantive than his first attempt. The list below is intended to be of constructive help in this regard.

Of course, as you would expect, we are now concerned as to when this supplementary response will be forthcoming especially in relation to when you expect to submit the planning application.

Time is of the essence here as we expect the outline planning application to be submitted in a matter of a few weeks in complete disregard of any grounds on which we object. Then, from submission, we will have 21 days to make our case.

As previously advised, by your own government's guidelines, it is generally accepted that the 'public engagement' held across two major holidays and in the teeth of a pandemic was nothing short of scandalous, an egregious abuse of power, an outrageous corruption of due process and a clear demonstration of the contempt in which you hold this whole debacle.

This was exacerbated when our MP's request for information on which other sites had been considered was answered to the effect such information is "commercial in confidence" thereby reinforcing the perception of a Ministry [of Justice no less!] acting with impunity and more than comfortable to deploy tactics of coverup, bullying & lacking in transparency or accountability.

Again, reinforced by the attempted answers in Mr Seaton's letter, we remain of the opinion that the consultation was a cynical, legal box ticking exercise being the first step in your tried & tested strategy to obtain outline planning permission by any means including obfuscation, denying information on spurious grounds, intelligence insulting waffle and verging on down right deceit.

In spite of everything, we do remain hopeful that the outline planning application with its inevitable follow up, if approved, of multiple, unilateral amendments resulting in an actual development significantly different from that originally proposed, is not a foregone conclusion. So, it is important we let our residents know when the "supplementary response" will be forthcoming and have some confidence in what it may contain. Thanks.

Yours faithfully,

Kim Moloney

KIM MOLONEY

CHAIRMAN

GRENDON UNDERWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

Dated: 11th February 2021

Objections to the Ministry of Justice New Prison Proposal

Reference letter Mr Robin Seaton, 22nd January 2021

HAVE THE CONCERNS OF RESIDENTS BEEN ADDRESSED?

1. Justification

- Bucks and particularly the Vale of Aylesbury is a low crime area so why build it here? **NO**
- Resulting imbalance of local population with local villages being swamped by the largest prison complex in the UK. **NO**
- Unemployment not a major problem so extra jobs not an incentive. **NO**

2. Location

- Green field site and too large for a rural area. **NO**
- More suitable brown field sites such as land at MoD Bullingdon. **IN PART**

3. Visual Impact and Landscaping

- Loss of much green field space with Edgcott joining the prison. **NO**
- 4 storey blocks totally unsuitable for a rural location and cannot be screened adequately. **NO**

4. Traffic

- Local roads already struggling to cope with HS2/EWR traffic. **NO**
- Extra 1000 contractors per day will bring traffic chaos and gridlock. **NO**
- Staff and visitors on completion will overload the local roads. **NO**

5. Environmental aspects

- Traffic pollution during and after construction particularly if staff are unable to live locally. **NO**
- Light pollution. **NO**
- Flooding increase by concreting over the fields. **NO**
- Public footpaths under threat. **NO**

6. Wildlife

- Fields and woodland on and around the site are full of wildlife which will be lost. **NO**

7. Local infrastructure

- No capacity in the local sewerage system to cope with an extra 2000+ users every day. **NO**
- Local surface water drainage system would require a massive overhaul in an area that floods badly. **NO**
- Unacceptable increase in demands on local ambulance/fire/police/doctors. **IN PART**

8. Housing

- Where will up to 700 staff live? **NO**
- If locally then large scale housing development will swamp the area. **NO**
- Local house sales currently falling through due to the proposed prison. **ATTEMPTED BUT NO**
- House prices will almost certainly fall. **ATTEMPTED BUT NO**

9. Cat C Prisons

- Local concern that escapees will be more dangerous than those at Cat D Springhill Open Prison. **IN PART**
- Bad reputation of Cat C Bullingdon already well known. **NO**
- Inevitable increase in incidence of drug/alcohol/phone “drops” in local hedgerows/bus shelters etc **etc NO**

10. Economic aspects

- Can we believe the MoJ job figures when they have got Five Wells at Wellingborough so wrong? **NO**

11. Further potential development

- Concern that a 7th block and Springhill expansion will be included in the same scheme. **NO**

12. MoJ proposals

- Local anger that this came out of the blue on 3 December allowing only a 3 week consultation period. Since extended but still a good time to bury bad news over the Christmas period and during a pandemic. **NO**