

Robin Seaton
Programme Director, New
Prisons

To Councillor Kim Moloney, Grendon Underwood Parish Council
Via email only

22 June 2021

Dear Councillor Kim Moloney,

I wrote to you on 24 March 2021 to advise that the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) had delayed the submission of an Outline Planning Application (OPA) for a new prison next to HMP Grendon and Springhill, which we originally planned to submit in February 2021. This allowed us more time to consider the responses that were received at the pre-planning public consultation stage and to address concerns expressed by the local community.

Having taken time to consider community feedback, and following a ministerial decision to proceed, we submitted an application yesterday (21 June) for outline planning permission to Buckinghamshire Council as the local planning authority. We have made with significant amendments to our original proposals which we hope will address some of the concerns the local community raised with us during consultation. We have made some key amendments to our site plans following agreement to purchase some additional land (subject to planning permission), enabling us to re-design the layout. In the consultation we said we were considering whether to include a seventh houseblock in the proposal; ministers have decided not to pursue this. No Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) has been used. These changes include:

- Moving the prison site further away from the pond and ecological zone, whilst increasing the bio-diversity on the site by at least 10%. This will minimise the impact on local wildlife and retain the existing footpaths around the site;
- Location of Springhill Prison sports pitch has moved to be further away from local residents (this sports pitch will not be used by prisoners in the new prison);
- Location of houseblocks moved so that they are not built on the highest point of the land, which will improve the visual impact for the local community, as well as having some ecological benefits. The highest houseblock in the new proposal is 9m – more than half its height – lower than the highest houseblock in the previous proposal;
- Creation of an additional site access road to the north of Willow Lodge which will lessen the burden of traffic on the existing prison access route.

The full details of the revised plans will be available in due course via Buckinghamshire Council's planning portal as part of a suite of documents which will be available to view. There will be further information as to how to feed back on our proposed plans directly to Buckinghamshire Council as part of their consultation.

A separate proposal for expansion of the existing category D prison, HMP Springhill, is still being considered. More information will be made available as the proposals are taken forward. Any expansion of the existing site will be subject to a separate planning application.

We will keep you updated on the outcome of our planning application, and should it be successful we will continue to work closely with the community to ensure the proposed prison has as little impact as possible on the immediate and surrounding area.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Seaton', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robin Seaton
Programme Director for new prisons