

**SECTION 106 APPLICATION
(Report by Development Control Manager)**

Case No: 0803163FUL (FULL PLANNING APPLICATION)

**Proposal: DEVELOPMENT OF 480 PLACE PRISON (CLASS 2A),
EXTERNAL VISITOR CENTRE, PARKING AND
LANDSCAPING**

Location: LITTLEHEY PRISON, CROW SPINNEY LANE, PERRY

Applicant: NATIONAL OFFENDER MANAGEMENT SERVICE

Grid Ref: 515233 266080

Date of Registration: 03.11.2008

Parish: PERRY

RECOMMENDATION - APPROVE

1. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

- 1.1 This full application proposes the development of a new 480 place prison for 18-21 year old male prisoners to be built predominantly within the existing secure perimeter fence on the existing sports pitches and associated development within the remainder of the prison site. The site can be divided into 3 main areas:
- the existing sports pitches within the secure perimeter fence where the majority of the new development will take place;
 - the more public area seen as you first approach the site and where ancillary development of staff club, mess and visitor centre and car park on an area of 6.2 hectares is proposed; and
 - the existing prison accommodation, of predominantly 2 storey buildings, on 11 hectares which accommodate 726 prisoners.
- 1.2 The proposed buildings within the secure perimeter fence are a reception and healthcare building, an education building, multi faith building, library and information centre, and four living units for the 480 prisoners. These are all two storey buildings. A kitchen, workshop and segregation unit are also proposed, all of which are single storey. Outside the perimeter fence the only new building proposed is a new visitor centre. The floorspace of the proposed new buildings is 17,661 square metres. It is also proposed to increase the size of the car park from the existing 248 spaces with an extra 167 parking spaces to give a total of 415 spaces and will involve re-

modelling of the landscape areas near to the entrance of the prison complex.

- 1.3 It is estimated that the prison will employ 243 additional members of staff, which represents a 75% increase in the numbers of staff. This is a relatively high figure as there are higher staff ratios for young offenders as opposed to the older existing prison population.
- 1.4 The proposal is one part of a wider programme to increase prison capacity to address the accommodation pressures currently faced by the National Offender Management Service. It is proposed that the new prison would be operational from early 2010.
- 1.5 The application has been accompanied by a Design and Access Statement, a Transport Assessment, a Foul Sewerage and Utilities Assessment, Heritage Statement, Land Contamination Assessment, Lighting Assessment, Noise Assessment, Open Space Assessment, Planning Statement, Statement of Community Involvement, Sustainability Statement, Travel Plan, Tree Survey/Implications Report, Ventilation Extraction Statement, Air Quality Assessment, Biodiversity Report, Economic Statement and Crime Reduction Statement.

2. NATIONAL GUIDANCE

- 2.1 **PPS1: “Delivering Sustainable Development” (2005)** contains advice on the operation of the plan-led system.
- 2.2 **PPS7: “Sustainable Development in Rural Areas” (2004)** sets out the Government's planning policies for rural areas, including country towns and villages and the wider, largely undeveloped countryside up to the fringes of larger urban areas. Decisions in rural areas should be based upon sustainable development principles and priority should be given to previously developed land.
- 2.3 **PPS9: “Biological and Geological Conservation” (2005)** sets out planning policies on protection of biodiversity and geological conservation through the planning system.
- 2.4 **PPG13: “Transport” (2001)** provides guidance in relation to transport and particularly the integration of planning and transport.
- 2.5 **PPG16: “Archaeology and Planning” (1990)** sets out the Secretary of State's policy on archaeological remains on land, and how they should be preserved or recorded both in an urban setting and in the countryside.
- 2.6 **PPS22: “Renewable Energy” (2004)** sets out the Government's policies for renewable energy, which planning authorities should have regard to when preparing local development documents and when taking planning decisions.
- 2.7 **PPS23: “Planning and Pollution Control” (2004)** is intended to complement the new pollution control framework under the Pollution Prevention and Control Act 1999 and the PPC Regulations 2000.

- 2.8 **PPG24: “Planning & Noise” (1994)** guides planning authorities on the use of planning powers to minimise the adverse impact of noise.
- 2.9 **PPS25: “Development and Flood Risk” (2006)** sets out Government policy on development and flood risk. Its aims are to ensure that flood risk is taken into account at all stages in the planning process to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding, and to direct development away from areas of highest risk. Where new development is, exceptionally, necessary in such areas, policy aims to make it safe, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, reducing flood risk overall.
- 2.10 **Circular 03/98 Planning for Future Prison Development 1998** – sets out advice to local planning authorities on making provision through the planning system.
- 2.11 **Circular 05/2005 Planning Obligations.**

For full details visit the government website <http://www.communities.gov.uk> and follow the links to planning, Building and Environment, Planning, Planning Policy.

3. **PLANNING POLICIES**

Further information on the role of planning policies in deciding planning applications can also be found at the following website: <http://www.communities.gov.uk> then follow links Planning, Building and Environment, Planning, Planning Information and Guidance, Planning Guidance and Advice and then Creating and Better Place to Live

3.1 **East of England Plan - Revision to the Regional Spatial Strategy (May 2008)**

Policies viewable at <http://www.go-east.gov.uk> then follow links to Planning, Regional Planning then Related Documents

- **SS4: “Towns other than Key Centres and Rural Areas”** – Local Development Documents should define the approach to development in towns and rural areas. For other rural areas should seek to support the viability of agriculture, other economic activities, diversification of the economy, provision of housing for local needs and sustainability of local services.
- **T2: “Changing Travel Behaviour”** – to bring about significant change in travel behaviour, a reduction in distances travelled and a shift towards greater use of sustainable modes should be promoted.
- **T3: “Managing Traffic Demand”** – Demand management measures for highway use should be pursued to tackle congestion and, as a consequence provide more reliable journeys.

- **T7:** “Transport in rural Areas” support should be given to providing sustainable access from villages and other rural settlements to market towns and urban areas.
- **T8:** “Local Roads” – local road networks should be managed in accordance with the local transport plan objectives: tackling congestion and its environmental impacts; facilitating the provision of safe and efficient public transport, walking and cycling; providing efficient vehicular access to locations and activities requiring it and improving safety.
- **T9:** “Walking, Cycling and other Non-Motorised Transport” – existing networks should be improved and developed as part of the Regional Transport Strategy.
- **T13:** “Public Transport Accessibility” – public transport should be encouraged throughout the region by increasing accessibility to appropriate levels of service of as high proportion of households as possible, enabling access to core services.
- **T14:** “Parking” – controls to manage transport demand and influencing travel change alongside measures to improve public transport accessibility, walking and cycling should be encouraged. Maximum parking standards should be applied to new commercial development.
- **ENV7:** “Quality in the Built Environment” - requires new development to be of high quality which complements the distinctive character and best qualities of the local area and promotes urban renaissance and regeneration.
- **ENG1:** “Carbon Dioxide Emissions and Energy Performance” – for new developments of 10+ dwellings or 1000sqm non residential development a minimum of 10% of their energy should be from decentralised and renewable or low carbon resources unless not feasible or viable.

3.2 **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan (2003)**

Saved policies from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 are relevant and viewable at <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk> follow the links to environment, planning, planning policy and Structure Plan 2003.

- P6/1 – Development Related Provision – development will only be permitted where the additional infrastructure and community requirements generated by the proposal can be secured.

3.3 **Huntingdonshire Local Plan (1995)**

Saved policies from the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 are relevant and viewable at www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/localplan95

- **R2:** “Recreation and Leisure Provision” – applications for recreational facilities will be considered on their merits bearing in mind: advice from sporting recreation authorities on the need for further provision; the effect on residential amenity; the effect

on landscape, visual amenity, nature conservation and archaeological interest; access, parking and traffic generation; the siting, design and materials of any building and structures.

- **R13:** "Countryside Recreation" – provision of facilities for informal countryside recreation subject to the criteria of R2 will be supported.
- **R14:** "Countryside Recreation" – will support the promotion of Grafham Water as a major area for informal countryside recreation.
- **R15:** "Countryside Recreation" – will seek to improve access to the countryside, including the network of public rights of way with a view to modifying, extending and improving the network where appropriate.
- **T18:** "Access requirements for new development" states development should be accessed by a highway of acceptable design and appropriate construction.
- **T19:** "Pedestrian Routes and Footpath" – new developments are required to provide safe and convenient pedestrian routes having due regard to existing and planned footpath routes in the area.
- **T20:** "Cycle Routes" – the District Council will identify segregated cycleway routes to be provided in association with certain housing, employment and shopping developments.
- **T21:** "Bus Travel" – applications which maintain or improve the present level of public transport services will be supported.
- **En12:** "Archaeological Implications" – permission on sites of archaeological interest may be conditional on the implementation of a scheme of archaeological recording prior to development commencing.
- **En13:** "Archaeological Implications" – in areas of archaeological potential, planning applications may be required to be accompanied by the results of an archaeological field evaluation or desk-based assessment.
- **En17:** "Development in the Countryside" - development in the countryside is restricted to that which is essential to the effective operation of local agriculture, horticulture, forestry, permitted mineral extraction, outdoor recreation or public utility services.
- **En18:** "Protection of countryside features" – Offers protection for important site features including trees, woodlands, hedges and meadowland.

- **En19:** "Trees and Landscape" – will make Tree Preservation Orders where it considers that trees which contribute to the local amenity and/or the landscape are at risk.
- **En20:** Landscaping Scheme. - Wherever appropriate a development will be subject to the conditions requiring the execution of a landscaping scheme.
- **En25:** "General Design Criteria" - indicates that the District Council will expect new development to respect the scale, form, materials and design of established buildings in the locality and make adequate provision for landscaping and amenity areas.

3.4 **Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alterations (2002)**

Saved policies from the Huntingdon Local Plan Alterations 2002 are relevant and viewable at www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/localplan - Then click on "Local Plan Alteration (2002)

- **OB1** – Nature and Scale of Obligations – will relate to the size of development and the impact on physical infrastructure, social and community facilities and services.

3.5 **Huntingdonshire Interim Planning Policy Statement 2007**

Policies from the Huntingdonshire Interim Planning Policy Statement 2007 are relevant and viewable at <http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk> click on Environment and Planning, then Planning then Planning+Policy then Informal policy statements where there is a link to Interim Planning Policy Statement 2007

- **P8** – Development in the Countryside – Outside the existing built framework of the Smaller Settlements development will be restricted to: that which is essential to the efficient operation of agriculture, horticulture or forestry, or required for the purposes of outdoor recreation; the alteration, replacement or change of use of existing buildings in accordance with other policies; limited and specific forms of housing, business and tourism development, as provided for within the Local Development Framework; or land allocated for particular purposes.
- **G2** – Landscape Character - development proposals should respect and respond appropriately to the distinctive qualities of the surrounding landscape.
- **G3** – Trees, hedgerows and Other Environmental Features - development proposals should minimise risk of harm to trees, hedgerows or other environmental features of visual, historic or nature conservation value.
- **G4** – Protected Habitats and Species – development proposals should not harm sites of national or international importance for biodiversity or geology. Proposals will not be permitted if they potentially damage County Wildlife Sites, Local Nature Reserves, Ancient Woodland, Important Species or Protected Roadside Verges, unless they significantly outweigh the harm.

- **G7** – Biodiversity – proposals that could affect biodiversity should: be accompanied by a suitable assessment of habitats and species; maintain and enhance biodiversity; provide appropriate mitigation measures; seek to achieve positive gain in biodiversity.
- **B1** – Design Quality - developments should demonstrate a high quality of design in terms of layout, form and contribution to the character of the area.
- **B9** – Sites of Archaeological Interest – a proposal that could affect a site or area of archaeological interest should; be accompanied by a suitable assessment of the nature and significance of any remains; not cause harm to remains or their setting which are recognised or identified as being of national importance and allow for their preservation in situ; or make satisfactory arrangements for the physical preservation recording or removal of other remains, as appropriate.
- **T1** – Transport Impacts - development proposals should be capable of being served by safe convenient access to the transport network and should not give rise to traffic volumes that exceed the capacity of the local transport network.
- **T2** – Car and Cycle Parking - development proposals should limit car parking and provide cycle parking facilities to the levels set out in the Council’s parking standards.
- **T3** – Rights of Way and Other Public Routes - Lists the criteria which should be considered in relation to Rights of Way.

3.6 **Huntingdonshire Local Development Framework Submission Core Strategy 2008**

Policies from the Huntingdonshire Local Development Framework Submission Core Strategy 2008 are relevant and viewable at <http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk> click on Environment and Planning then click on Planning and then click on Planning Policy where there is a link to the Local Development Framework Core Strategy.

- **CS1**: “Sustainable development in Huntingdonshire” – all developments will contribute to the pursuit of sustainable development, having regard to social, environmental and economic issues. All aspects will be considered including design, implementation and function of development.
- **CS9**: “Strategic Green Space Enhancement” – enhancement of areas of strategic green space including Grafham Water with enhanced green corridors and creating appropriate access for a wide range of users to enjoy the countryside.
- **CS10**: “Contributions to Infrastructure Requirements” – development expected to provide or contribute towards the cost of providing appropriate infrastructure, including open space and recreation and cycleways.

4. PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 87/01914/CI1884 - Construct staff social centre – no objections raised.
- 4.2 88/00653/CI1884 - Construct new cell block – no objections raised.
- 4.3 89/00280/CI1884 - Proposed new dairy unit – objections.
- 4.4 93/01380/CI1884 - erection of temporary visitors centre – objections.
- 4.5 95/00003/CI1884 - proposed new dairy unit – objections.
- 4.6 96/01469/CI1884 - erection of additional accommodation – objections.
- 4.7 97/01266/CI1884 - erection of additional accommodation – objections.
- 4.8 98/00001/CI1884 - erection of storage building – objections.
- 4.9 98/01582/CI1884 - erection of office building – objections.
- 4.10 00/01916/CI1884 - installation of security cameras – no objections.
- 4.11 03/00112/CI1884 - erection of building to provide additional living accommodation – no objections.
- 4.12 07/02298/FUL - satellite dish – approved.
- 4.13 08/02154/FUL - construction of all weather sports pitch with lighting – approved.

5. CONSULTATIONS

- 5.1 **Perry Parish Council – recommend APPROVAL (copy attached).**
- 5.2 **Great Staughton Parish Council – CONCERNS** about screening from the B645; the use of Cage Lane should be prohibited during construction and not used as a rat run by prison staff and the drainage implications fully considered. **(copy attached)**
- 5.3 **HDC Transportation** – the opportunity should be taken to improve cycling facilities within Perry Village with the upgrading of approximately 850 metres by the provision of an off street route to replace the on street cycling route. It is also recommended that the existing community transport which currently operates between Huntingdon Rail Station and the prison on visiting days is secured for a further 5 year period.
- 5.4 **HDC Environmental Health** – requires additional work to be done on the noise assessment report.
- 5.5 **HDC Lighting Engineer – NO OBJECTIONS** subject to lighting being carried out in accordance with submitted design.
- 5.6 **Highways Agency – NO OBJECTIONS.**

- 5.7 **County Council Highways – NO OBJECTIONS** subject to a Section 106 contribution being secured and approved Travel Plan being in place.
- 5.8 **Sport England – OBJECTION.**
- 5.9 **Natural England – NO OBJECTIONS** subject to the proposed precautionary measures to ensure no impacts on species during the construction works being secured through planning conditions.
- 5.10 **The Wildlife Trust** – recommend that a bat survey is undertaken and that if any bats are found then appropriate mitigation measures are put in place.
- 5.11 **Environment Agency – NO OBJECTIONS** subject to conditions relating to surface water and contamination.
- 5.12 **County Council Archaeology – NO OBJECTIONS** subject to a condition requiring archaeological investigation before development commences.
- 5.13 **Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue** – recommends that a planning condition be imposed requiring the details and provision of fire hydrants.

6. REPRESENTATIONS

- 6.1 A total of 8 letters have been received from local residents which raise the following points:
- Increase in traffic through Perry on an already overcrowded stretch of road;
 - How can car sharing be encouraged if people mainly work shifts and they are looking to stagger shifts to 'smooth out' traffic flows;
 - Danger to cyclists, walkers and resident;
 - Risk of boy racers;
 - Drugs being thrown over the fence;
 - Increase in local crime rate;
 - Reduction in value of properties;
 - Work appears to have already started;
 - Prison contributes to the life of the village particularly the shop;
 - Existing light pollution especially at night;
 - Site already overdeveloped;
 - Vehicles using The Drive and damaging the road;
 - Increase in visiting days;
 - Must be enough car parking;
 - Vital to complete the cycle path through Perry off road and this should be covered by condition;
 - Additional landscape screening needed to screen development from the south;
 - Cage Lane should not be used by prison staff or construction traffic;
 - Drainage must be in accordance with Environment Agency requirements as surface water runoff is a problem;

- Additional load on sewerage system;
- Noise and overlooking to the two cottages directly to the south of the site;
- Bus service to prison very limited and therefore most people will drive;
- A speed restriction on Crow Spinney Lane should be imposed;
- Visitors to the prison will use the shop and pub;
- It is on land which is not allocated for development;
- Residents should be consulted on the landscape scheme;
- A noise barrier should be erected to protect residents, wildlife and rest of Perry Village; and,
- Impact upon wildlife and SSSI

7. SUMMARY OF ISSUES

- 7.1 The main issues to consider here are the principle of the development including the need for the proposal, the siting, layout and design of the proposal, traffic and highways, effect on landscape and wildlife, external lighting, loss of playing fields, impact upon residential amenity.

Principle of Development

- 7.2 Circular 3/98: Planning for Future Prison Development, states that 'there is a need for Her Majesty's Prison Service to provide new prison places in locations close to the areas they serve'. It goes on to say that 'the Secretary of State expects local planning authorities to ensure that appropriate weight is given to the public interest in providing an adequate number of prison places to meet the requirements of the criminal justice system'. Nationally the prison estate has 84,256 prison places and on 26 September 2008 the prison population was 83,508, which was the highest on record. The Carter Review of prisons carried out in 2007 predicted a shortfall of 6000 places by 2009 which would generate a need of 21 new prisons. The proposal for a new prison at Littlehey arises from the urgent need to provide additional prison places identified in the Carter Report and is part of a wider programme to increase prison capacity in order to address the unparalleled accommodation pressures currently faced by NOMS (National Offender Management Service). This proposal is therefore part of the wider programme to address this shortfall.
- 7.3 It is an established practice in terms of meeting this need that existing sites are considered first in terms of a sequential approach. This provides for the intensification of existing prison uses to create economies of scale particularly using land which is within the existing secure perimeter of a prison. This proposal is part of a package of proposals to extend existing prison sites in the region and should not be viewed in isolation as all these proposed extensions are required to meet the additional needs.
- 7.4 The site is outside the village of Perry and is therefore classified as being within the open countryside. Both local and central government policies aim to restrict development within the countryside to that which is essential to agriculture or forestry, recreation and public utility services in the interests of preserving the countryside and sustainability. It is a material consideration to note that prisons have particular requirements in terms of location with security being the

overwhelming consideration. In this case the existing prison already exists on the site and the new prison will be able to benefit from existing infrastructure in place. Although no figures have been presented it is likely that the land take as a result will be less than if a completely new site were being chosen. The application proposes building on previously developed land within the existing perimeter of the prison and therefore it is not extending out into undeveloped land in the countryside. This in turn results in sustainability benefits over and above a Greenfield site since existing infrastructure, such as car parking, can be utilised.

- 7.5 The proposal constitutes a departure from the Development Plan, specifically Policy En17 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan, in that it proposes development within the open countryside and this particular use is not included in the list of exceptions to the normal strict control over new development in the countryside. While Policy En17 is clearly a relevant consideration this needs to be looked at in terms of the purpose of the policy. The supporting text clearly states that the basis of the policy is aimed at avoiding sporadic building in the countryside which could be visually intrusive and lead to uneconomic demands for public services. The proposed development would not create either of these situations and moreover the proposed location of the development primarily within the existing secure perimeter is on land which has a lawful C2A (Residential Institutions) use and therefore must be a significant material consideration. Moreover the intensification of the existing C2A on the site is not detrimental to other uses in the countryside such as agriculture, forestry etc because there is no possibility of these uses taking place on the existing site.
- 7.6 For these reasons, the principle of the development on this site is considered to be acceptable. Having regard to its scale, nature and location, it is considered that the development would not significantly prejudice the implementation of the Development Plan's policies and proposals. If the Panel is minded to support it, the application does not therefore need to be referred to Full Council or the Government Office for East of England.

Siting Layout and Design of Proposal

- 7.7 The submitted Design and Access Statement states that the scheme has been in the planning stage for some time and that during this time several siting options have been considered. The other options, included developing land to the north of the existing prison or developing on the existing sports area but relocating the sports pitches to the land to the north. These options were discounted because of the need for additional perimeter fencing and increased visual impact upon the village of Perry and nearby residential dwellings. The chosen siting therefore represented the option with the least visual and residential impact.
- 7.8 The layout of the buildings on the site has been largely determined by security considerations and the creation of separate activity and residential zones. However the height of the proposed buildings is no higher than the existing buildings. It is proposed that the buildings will be clad with pre-finished steel and the precise colour is currently under discussion. It is likely that a colour for the walls which is similar

to the colour of the brickwork of the existing buildings and brown roof covering will be chosen. This will reflect the existing built form and is acceptable.

Traffic and Highways

- 7.9 There are 248 existing car parking spaces on the site and it is proposed that this should increase to 415. An assessment of parking demand in the Transport Assessment showed that there was a peak demand of 190 cars, or 82% of the total. The Transport Assessment shows that weekdays are busier than weekends and, on the week that the survey was carried out, on Thursday there were 747 two way daily movements to and from the site. Accident data for the last 3 years shows three recorded accidents which resulted in slight injuries. None of the accidents were at the junction of Crow Spinney lane with the B661 or on Crow Spinney lane itself, but on the B661 West Perry Road. The capacity of the junction has been assessed and the Local Highway Authority accepts that the proposed additional traffic will not have a detrimental impact upon the operation of the junction or the local highway network. Furthermore the Highways Agency is satisfied that the proposal would not have an adverse impact upon the nearest roundabout junction of the A1 and have not objected to the proposal.
- 7.10 In terms of public transport, bus services are poor and the nearest rail station is at Huntingdon 12 km away. As the catchment area of staff is wide, very few walk or cycle. The only practical opportunities to reduce staff car travel therefore is to promote car sharing. The travel plan has indicated that 23% of those responding to the survey would consider car sharing. There are also opportunities with new starters to promote this. The main opportunities to reduce visitor car numbers is by promoting the mini bus service which currently runs from Huntingdon Station on visiting days. The submitted Travel Plan concludes with an Action Plan and this should be secured through a planning condition.
- 7.11 It is considered that there should be transport mitigation measures due to the impact of the additional traffic on the B661 road through Perry Village, particularly upon the existing level of leisure cyclists using the road. A contribution of £250,000 to upgrade the 850 metre length of cycle route which is currently mainly on the road and therefore considered unsatisfactory has been requested. In addition because of the low level of public transport and the difficulties this presents to visitors it is considered essential that the existing mini-bus service from Huntingdon Station be funded for a further 5 years. The applicant has agreed to the contribution for the cycle route upgrading and to £41,600 for the mini bus service.
- 7.12 The proposed obligation is to be considered by the Section 106 Advisory Group at its meeting on 14 January and its recommendation will be reported at the Panel meeting.

Loss of Sports Playing Fields

- 7.13 Sport England would normally object to the loss of playing fields and this policy relates to all playing fields whether or not they have community access. The current provision consists of 2 senior football pitches and 1 senior rugby pitch and the all weather pitch currently

under construction. The development will result in 1 senior football pitch and the all weather pitch being retained. It is Sport England's policy to oppose the loss of all or part of any playing field unless one or more of their exception criteria is satisfied. In this case exception E5, the only exception which is applicable as new sports facilities are proposed as part of the scheme, is not satisfied. Sport England has stated that the way to satisfy their objection would be to acquire additional land to replace the playing fields lost.

- 7.14 The applicants have submitted an Open Space Assessment and concluded that the sporting facilities will meet prison standards and that the loss of 2 pitches will be replaced by an all weather sports pitch and new sports hall. 8 new basketball courts are also proposed as part of the scheme. The applicants have responded to the Sport England objection by stating that the starting point for the assessment of need must be based upon the nature of the proposed users which consists of a structured programme of specific sport activities at particular times and that the proposals meet the minimum requirements. The new provision will also be of a better quality than the existing in terms of the indoor facilities proposed and surfacing and will therefore have an increased amount of use than the existing grass pitches. In this case it is not considered that it would be beneficial to extend the prison area to provide extra playing field space when this would increase the visual impact of the prison due to the need to extend the perimeter fence. The proposed level of provision is considered appropriate.

Effect upon Landscape and Wildlife

- 7.15 The effect upon existing and proposed landscape and trees is acceptable subject to amendments which will provide landscaping between the accommodation blocks and new buildings, changes to proposed tree species, and additional tree protection information. These have been requested from the applicants and an update will be given at the meeting.
- 7.16 The application site lies within 2 km of Perry Wood and Grafham Water, both of which are Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The proposals will have no discernable effect upon the SSSI sites. The site itself is of low ecological value, with the only likely interest being nesting birds. The effect upon wildlife is covered in the habitat and protected species report and this makes recommendations relating to bats and nesting birds. On that basis Natural England and the Wildlife Trust have no objections subject to the use of suitably worded planning conditions.

External Lighting

- 7.17 The application has been accompanied by a Lighting Assessment which provides information on the enhanced and additional CCTV and lighting proposed. The Council's Lighting Engineer has looked at the proposals and concluded that they are satisfactory as long as implemented in accordance with submitted details. A third party representation has been received concerned about the existing level of light and the applicants response to this will be reported at the meeting.

Impact upon Residential Amenity

- 7.18 The prison is a considerable distance away from most residential properties, the nearest one being Gaynes Lodge Farm at over 300 metres away. Whilst this is a considerable distance there are no features or buildings between this farm dwelling and the new buildings, and thus they will be very noticeable features from this angle within the countryside. The owner of the properties has asked for off site tree planting to soften the effect of the buildings. The other effect there may be upon amenity is noise and the Environmental health officer has requested that the noise assessment be amended so that it is a technically competent document. An update on this will be given at the meeting.

Archaeology

- 7.19 The County Archaeologist has requested a programme of archaeological work be carried out prior to the commencement of any development. The applicants are discussing this further with the County Archaeologist with a view to identifying which areas need to be investigated and then carrying out the investigation, if possible before the planning application is determined. This will not affect the determination of the application and an update will be given at the meeting.

Conclusion

- 7.20 This represents a well thought out proposal which retains the existing prison perimeter but provides much needed additional prison accommodation with minimal impact upon the surrounding area. Subject to further consideration being given to the impact upon residential amenity as stated above, the impacts which the proposal will have upon the surrounding area can be adequately mitigated against and therefore it is considered that the proposal is acceptable and that planning permission can be granted in this instance subject to conditions and a Section 106 Agreement.

8. **RECOMMENDATION – APPROVE**, subject to a Section 106 Agreement to cover transport mitigation as outlined in paragraph 7.9 and conditions to include the following:

Nonstand - Standard time limit

Nonstand - Details of materials

Nonstand - Details of surface water drainage

Nonstand - Details of fire hydrants

Nonstand - Bat Survey to be carried out

Nonstand - Archaeology Survey

Nonstand - Lighting to be carried out in accordance with submitted details

- Nonstand** - Landscaping to be implemented in accordance with approved details
- Nonstand** - Tree protection details
- Nonstand** - Travel Plan

If you would like a translation of this document, a large text version or an audio version, please contact us on 01480 388388 and we will try to accommodate your needs.

Background Papers:

Planning Application File Reference: 0803163FUL
East of England Plan – Revision to the Regional Spatial Strategy May 2008
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan, 2003
Huntingdonshire Local Plan, 1995
Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration, 2002
Huntingdonshire Interim Planning Policy Statement 2007
Huntingdonshire Local Development Framework Submission Core Strategy 2008

CONTACT OFFICER - enquiries about this Report to Jennie Parsons, Development Control Team Leader ☎ 01480 388409.