

Technical Note

Highways Review

Project	21/506787/PSINF- HMP Elmley	Job No	1000007836
Subject	Highways Review Technical Note	Issue	01
Prepared by	Rob Franklin	Date	12/08/22
Approved by	Ben Meekings	Date	12/08/22

Introduction

- 1.1 Swale Borough Council (SBC) has commissioned Project Centre (PCL) to provide a Technical Note (TN) reviewing highway matters relating to:
- Construction of a 4 storey (Category B) houseblock for up to 247 prisoners, a new workshop, a staff administration building, extension to existing property store, extension to existing sports store, new 7-a-side sports pitch, new 3G MUGA pitch, extension to the existing car park (80 spaces) and realignment of existing containment fencing at HMP Elmley Category B/C Prison.
- 1.2 A Transport Statement (TS) was submitted by Cundall in December 2021 in support of a full planning application (21/506787/PSINF) for the expansion of HMP Elmley in the Isle of Sheppey.
- 1.3 An application is also under consideration to increase resident capacity at HMP Stanford Hill (21/505461/PSINF), with access from Brabazon Road via Church Road.
- 1.4 We (PCL) have been commissioned to review the submitted information in to the HMP Elmley proposal outlined above.
- 1.5 The following documents have been provided for review
- Transport Statement dated: 07 December 2021,
 - Original submission.

- Transport Statement dated: 15 July 2022,
 - In response to comments by KCC in February 2022.
- Transport Statement dated: 05 August 2022,
 - In response to additional comments by KCC in August 2022.
- Transport Statement dated: 09 August 2022,
 - In response to our (PCL) comments requesting clarification on information discrepancies, as shown in the previous Transport Statement.
- Transport Statement dated: 11 August 2022,
 - In response to our comments requesting clarification on trips relating to legal representative trips
- Travel Plan dated: 15 July 2022.

1.6 As part of a review for HMP Stanford Hill, we undertook a site visit on 26 May 2022, to identify any existing issues on Church Road, noting:

- Given the sensitivity of the site, we did not review Brabazon Road.
- Unilluminated 40mph road speed signs were observed to be mounted back to back with 30mph signs, at the junction of Church Way and Rowetts Way roundabout,
- A vehicle activated speed (VAS) sign was observed on Church Road close to the junction with Kent View Drive. It is noted this did not activate while on site, however, the green power light was on.
- Another VAS sign which is no longer functional was observed further to the north on Church Road, closer to the Rowetts Way roundabout.

1.7 Following a review of the HMP Standford Hill site, we concluded that vehicle speed surveys should be undertaken in both directions on Church Road, to determine whether there is an existing speed issue.

1.8 The applicant for HMP Stanford Hill provided speed survey data for Church Road in September 2021, noting:

- Data indicates that 85thpercentile average speeds on Church Road do not exceed 28.2mph in either direction, which is below the posted
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30mph speed limit. We note that data does not suggest there is a speeding problem on Church Road.

- The applicant for the Stanford Hill site considered providing additional signage at the exit of the prison cluster advising vehicles to drive carefully, which would also serve the HMP Elmley site.

1.9 A summary of our review is provided as part of the conclusions, with the main points including:

- Feasibility assessment of providing a staff minibus to serve the site should be secured as part of a planning condition,
- We support that a TPC should be appointed 6 months prior to the proposals at HMP Elmley becoming operation, as outlined in Table 7-1 of the TP. We advise this should be secured as part of a planning condition.
- Other changes to Table 7-1: Action Plan we consider should change, include:
 - Provide promotional material on walking to work and the associated health benefits – Prior to Occupation,
 - Prepare plan identifying cycle parking facilities – Prior to Occupation.
- As per KCC Highway commentary, we agree that no hard travel plan commitments or penalties for failing to meet the outlined mode share targets have been outlined and we support the recommendations outlined by KCC.

KCC Highways Review Comments

2.1 KCC Highways Team has provided commentary in relation to highways matters, which are provided in Appendix A. We have taken into consideration the points raised by KCC as part of this review.

PCL Review

3.1 Our review of the information provided by Cundall is discussed below.

3.2 It is noted that our review takes into consideration the points made as part of the TS dated 11/08/202, clarifying points raised by PCL.

Development Proposals

3.3 As per the TS, we acknowledge that the development proposals consist of:

- A modular accommodation unit comprising of 240 bed spaces and the provision of associated expansion of ancillary buildings and facilities.
- The proposal will result in an increased capacity of the prison by 240 inmates increasing the total capacity of the prison to approximately 1377.
- It is proposed that 78 additional staff members will be employed as part of the proposed development,
- The new accommodation will consist of a three storey T60 building, three wings will be used as accommodation and the fourth will be an ancillary or plant wing,
- Construction and renovation works are proposed to take place on site, including:
 - New Workshop and Education Building,
 - New Staff Administration Building,
 - Extension to the existing property store,
 - Extension to the Kitchen,
 - Proposed Sport Pitch configuration,
 - Proposed car park extension,
 - Proposed contractors' compound.

Vehicular Access

3.4 We acknowledge that the existing HMP Elmley access via Brabazon Road is to be retained with no changes proposed.

Car Parking & Cycle Parking

3.5 We acknowledge the proposals include expanding on site parking by 80 spaces, situated to the west of the existing car park. Additional parking spaces will consist of 68 staff and visitor car parking spaces, 4 accessible parking spaces and 8 EV charging spaces in line with SBC parking requirements.

- 3.6 Proposed general and disabled parking bay dimensions are outlined in Figure 3-5 of the TS and are compliant with current SBC parking standards (2.5m x 5m bays). As per KCC highways commentary, it was requested that the parking layout as demonstrated on plan 705674-2201-MDG-XXX-ZZ-DR-A-0022-D2-A1800 is available prior to occupation of the extended areas of the prison by condition.
- 3.7 We acknowledge that cycle parking provisions are to be retained as per existing quantities. We note that 10 Sheffield stands (or 20 cycle spaces) are provided on site, which are covered and secure.
- 3.8 Given the location of the site and the modal split data presented, we anticipate that the existing cycle parking provisions are sufficient to meet demand, however, no evidence has been presented by the applicant to support this.

Trip Generation – Staff & Visitors

- 3.9 As per KCC Highways comments, Section 4.2 of the TS shows inconsistencies in existing and anticipated increase of prison staff on site, based on an increase of 240 prisoners.
- 3.10 Cundall have provided additional information via their TS dated 05/08/2022 and note the following via a separate response:
- “To clarify – the attached Highways Statement is the correct version. The total number of staff employed at HMP Elmley is 630 staff.
 - This includes all staff, i.e. operational and non-operational staff and indirectly employed staff i.e. service providers, stakeholders – e.g. Healthcare, facilities management and other service providers. The 480 figure did not include non-operational and indirectly employed staff (this explains the discrepancy between the figures).”
 - “The earlier Statement (submitted on 15th July 2022) which references 2021 evidence should be disregarded as this has been superseded by the attached Statement. This error is clarified at paragraph 4.1 of the attached Statement. Please note, although this report references client information provided as of June 2022 this is the same information detailed on the planning application form submitted with the planning application last year i.e. 630 existing prisoners and 78 new staff”.

- “The current ratio of operational staff to prisoners is 1:25 (i.e. 1 to 4)”.
- “The uplift of 78 staff is added to the existing pool of staff (630) to cover leave, sickness and training absences etc. Prisons run 24 hours a day/7 days a week so the staffing uplift will also reflect evenings, nights, weekends and bank holidays”.

- 3.11 We assume that the second point above relating to existing prisoners is a mistake and is meant to relate to the 630 existing prison staff.
- 3.12 Nonetheless we have reviewed the additional information provided in Section 4.1, as advised by the applicant.
- 3.13 It is not understood why the proportion of staff who work on each shift is unknown, given the sensitivity of the site and that the site is currently operating, it is considered that this information would be available from HMP Elmley or Ministry of Justice (MoJ).
- 3.14 Based on the information provided in Table 4-1, we note 62 additional two-way trips are expected in any one hour, notably the morning peak and a total of 125 two-way trips throughout the day.
- 3.15 It is noted that some additional departure trips would take place at 12:30pm, as part of the ‘early’ shift, which have not been accounted for in Table 4-1 or the TS in general, however, the applicant has demonstrated the worst case during the main shift change over times and these trips are noted to be moderate.
- 3.16 In relation to visitor trips, in line with KCC Highway comments, we also acknowledge that a 3% visitor assumption could be underestimating the likely impact of visitors once restrictions are fully lifted.
- 3.17 Nonetheless, the times which these visits take place are noted to be outside of network peak hours and are not considered to have a material impact on the surrounding network.
- 3.18 As per the revised TS, it is noted that MoJ has indicated that they estimate an average of 45-50 legal visits per week and are noted to take place between 09:00 – 12:00, Monday to Friday, which is outside of the identified morning peak (07:00 – 08:00).
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3.19 Based on the clarification from the applicant on operational and non-operational staff numbers and visitor numbers, it is considered that the anticipated trip generation for the site during the peak periods is understood and can be supported.

Modal Split

3.20 We acknowledge the modal split assessment and consider the methodology of using Census 2011 data Method to Travel to Work acceptable.

3.21 The applicant states that census data is over 10 years old and may be considered not a true reflection of current travel behaviours. With that said, the Census 2011 data provides a baseline mode split which will be later reviewed by the applicant, as outlined as part of a Framework Travel Plan.

3.22 We note that the baseline study should be undertaken as part of a full travel plan (TP), as outlined as part of the applications TP report.

3.23 It is understood that Table 4-2 combines day and night shifts based on the shift times outlined in Section 4.2 of the TS. We assumed that there was a mistake with the times stated as 'day shifts' in the table header, assuming shifts end at 17:30 and not 15:30. This was confirmed by the applicant and updated as part of the TS dated 09/08/2022.

3.24 Although it would have been useful to see a breakdown of each shift in relation to modal split data, we note that two-way shift trips are negligible, especially for the evening shifts and therefore providing this information at this stage is not required.

3.25 We note that KCC Highways has commented on the reality of 8% of staff arriving at HMP Elmley on foot at 07:30am, with these trips likely to depart via car. This has not been adjusted as part of the revised TS for the day shift.

3.26 Although we agree this could be true, we appreciate the applicant has applied Census 2011 data and the increase in car trips, if true, would be 8 two-way trips, which is considered negligible.

Cumulative Impacts with HMP Stanford Hill

3.27 We acknowledge the cumulative impact assessment with HMP Stanford Hill, as per KCC highways request.

- 3.28 Based on the cumulative data presented in Table 4-4 of the TS, we acknowledge that 58 two-way trips are anticipated in the morning peak (07:00 – 08:00). This is similar to the assessment provided for HMP Stanford Hill.
- 3.29 In line with KCC Highway comments, we agree that staff would be more likely to arrive within a 30 minute window, which would result in a vehicle arriving at the Barbazon Road/ Rowetts Way roundabout every 30 seconds.
- 3.30 As per KCC Highway commentary:
- "...it unlikely that high west bound flows at that time of day would cause any safety concern for the roundabout junction. The data for safety incidents did not identify any at this location and as such would support the above assumption".
- 3.31 We have reviewed recent crash data in the area via crashmap.com and agree that westbound flows during the morning peak are unlikely to raise a safety concern at this junction and therefore cumulative impact is agreed for the most part.
- 3.32 Following confirmation on the day shift ending at 17:30, the applicant has updated the cumulative assessment shown in Table 4-4 of the TS, reallocating all departing trips to 17:30.
- 3.33 As the applicant noted via email correspondence:
- "The departures of HMP Elmley staff should have stated 17:30. This has been updated within the text and Table 4-4 has been updated to reflect this change. However, the change does not impact the overall conclusion and the peak hour of the cumulative impact assessment remains as 07:00-08:00".
- 3.34 The assessment shown does not account for prisoner movements from HMP Stanford Hill, given the Category D (open prison) status of this facility. With that said, we note that information provided as part of the HMP Stanford Hill assessment note that prisoner peak movement times are likely to be 05:00 – 07:30 and 18:00 – 21:00, noting:
- 19 prisoners are likely to travel to jobs/ placement outside of the prison using their own vehicle,
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- 19 further prisoners are likely to travel by car sharing or minibus,
- Overall, prisoner movements are to take place outside of the typical peak hours and considered low (up to 38 two-way movements daily), with half of the trips being undertaken by sustainable transport modes.

3.35 Based on the above we consider the cumulative assessment acceptable, noting HMP Emely will generate the most traffic during the morning peak period (58 two-way trips), which are not anticipated to cause any noticeable impacts on the road network.

Travel Plan

3.36 We acknowledge the Travel Plan (TP) provided to support the proposals at HMP Elmley, noting measures to encourage car sharing and the feasibility of providing a mini-bus on the island for trips relating to the prison. It is our opinion this should be secured as part of a planning condition.

3.37 We acknowledge that details of the site Travel Plan Coordinator (TPC) will be provided to Council in advance of the commencement of the development.

3.38 We support that a TPC should be appointed 6 months prior to the proposals at HMP Elmley becoming operation, as outlined in Table 7-1 of the TP. We advise this should also be secured as part of a planning condition.

3.39 Other changes to Table 7-1: Action Plan we consider should change, include:

- Provide promotional material on walking to work and the associated health benefits – Prior to Occupation,
 - Site is already in operation and existing staff could benefit from this.
- Prepare plan identifying cycle parking facilities – Prior to Occupation,
 - Site is already in operation and existing staff could benefit from this.

3.40 As per KCC Highway commentary, we agree that no hard travel plan commitments or penalties for failing to meet the outlined mode share targets have been outlined.

3.41 We support the recommendations outlined by KCC, that being:

- "...evidence of existing mode share be presented to the Planning Authority by condition throughout the life of the TP, along with a staff survey demonstrating who would be willing to make use of a free mini-bus on the island for the purposes of getting to work.
- If the proposed mode share targets are not being met and the Planning Authority determines that there is sufficient justification, based on the staff survey, then a mini-bus to serve access by staff or visitors should be provided by the applicant for so long a time as the prison remains open".

Other Matters

3.42 As discussed, as part of a review for HMP Stanford Hill, PCL undertook a site visit on 26 May 2022, to identify any existing issues on Church Road following road speed concerns from Eastchurch Parish Council.

3.43 From the site visit, we noted that:

- Given the sensitivity of the site, we did not review Brabazon Road,
- Existing speed signage is present and consist of unilluminated 40mph road speed signs mounted back to back with 30mph signs, at the junction of Church Way and Rowetts Way roundabout,
- A vehicle activated speed (VAS) sign was observed on Church Road close to the junction with Kent View Drive. It is noted this did not activate while on site, however, the green power light was on,
- Another VAS sign which is no longer functional was observed further to the north on Church Road, closer to the Rowetts Way roundabout.

3.44 Following a review of the HMP Standford Hill site, we concluded that vehicle speed surveys should be undertaken in both directions on Church Road, to determine whether there is an existing speed issue.

3.45 The applicant for HMP Stanford Hill provided speed survey data for Church Road in September 2021, noting:

- Data indicates that 85th percentile average speeds on Church Road do not exceed 28.2mph in either direction, which is below the posted 30mph speed limit. We note that data does not suggest there is a speeding problem on Church Road.
- The applicant for the Stanford Hill site considered providing additional signage at the exit of the prison cluster advising vehicles to drive carefully, which would also serve the HMP Elmley site.

3.46 We therefore concluded that traffic calming measures were not required on Church Road but supported the installation of additional signage.

Policy Context

3.47 No direct assessment of the development proposal has been provided against National and Local planning policy, as part of the TS or TP.

3.48 We have therefore reviewed the proposal in relation to these policies based on the information provided.

National Policy

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
 - Appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up, given the type of development and its location (paragraph 110);
 - Safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users (paragraph 110);
 - The design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code (paragraph 128);
 - Any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree (paragraph 104).

- In NPPF (paragraph 111); “development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe”.
- National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
 - NPPG notes how Transport Statements can positively contribute to different transport and highway improvements. The TS should therefore outline how the development contributes to:
 - Encouraging sustainable travel,
 - Lessening traffic generation and its detrimental impacts,
 - Reducing carbon emissions and climate impacts,
 - Improving health outcomes and quality of life,
 - Improving road safety; and;
 - Reducing the need for new development to increase existing road capacity or provide new roads.

3.49 Based on the above, we consider the proposal to be compliant with NPPF and NPPG, noting trips in the peak period are moderate and not considered to have a material impact on the road network, especially when considering the cumulative impacts with HMP Stanford Hill.

3.50 We acknowledge the limited public transport provision in the area and note the applicant has proposed to explore a free mini-bus which is inline with the policies outlined above. As noted, this should be inline with the KCC request outlined in Paragraph 3.41 above.

Local Policy

3.51 We have reviewed the TS and TP in relation to Local Planning Policies, noting:

- SBC Parking Policy,
- Swale Borough Local Plan,
- Swale Transport Strategy,
- Kent Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4),

- Kent County Council Active Travel Strategy.
- 3.52 Based on a review of the proposal in relation to Local Policy, we note opportunities to promote sustainable travel and minimise dependency on vehicles are limited.
- 3.53 The TS and TP outlines that the site can be accessed on foot, on bicycle and public transport. As noted, as part of our review for HMP Stanford Hill, although the HMP Elmley is located within walking distance to a bus stop on Brabazon Road, it is noted that these services are infrequent and may be unattractive, particularly to visitors due to bus times and visiting times not coinciding.
- 3.54 Bus services coinciding with prison change over times only serve Sheppey and not the mainland. Buses might be considered a convenient mode of travel to staff members on the site, however, it is not know where they are travelling from based on the information provided.
- 3.55 It is deemed that buses are unlikely to be used by visitors, noting buses which serve routes beyond Sheppey to the mainland do not coincide with visitor arrival or departure times, and visitors to the site are more likely to be travelling from further afield.
- 3.56 The submitted TP outlines the following initiatives and measures to promote sustainable travel for staff and visitors:
- A plan providing detailing walking and cycling routes to HMP Elmley,
 - A TP Section on HMP Elmleys website with links to travel websites and details of sustainable travel linkages at the site,
 - Promotional events will be held on occasion such as bike week, liftshare week and walk to work week,
 - We do question the suitability of 'walk to work' week given the evidence presented and the location of the site.
 - An information board within the site providing key details of the sustainable travel options,
 - TPC to provide personalised travel journey plans for staff,
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- A travel plan leaflet could be provided and prepared and issued to new staff,
 - We request this should be provided as a minimum for new staff,
- Provide information during the recruitment process, to inform potential employees of sustainable travel options available to and from the site, including discussing transport options to potential recruits during the interview stage.
- Promotion of car sharing schemes, including a guaranteed ride home policy/ fund when a lift falls through,
- Designated car parking spaces adjacent to the main entrance for employees who car share,
- MoJ to explore feasibility of providing a minibus from areas of demand for staff.

- 3.57 We consider that the initiatives and measures outlined in the updated TP to promote sustainable travel options (notably walking and cycling) are unlikely to lead to an uptake in active travel.
- 3.58 Due to the site being geographically isolated and accessed via an A road (A2500), it is considered unlikely that cycling or walking will be an attractive travel choice for staff or visitors.
- 3.59 As mentioned, the discussed minibus between HMP Elmley and areas of demand where staff reside is secured as part of a planning condition and should detail how the minibus would also link to other modes of sustainable travel, such as local railway stations. This is considered to improve accessibility of the site.
- 3.60 We consider that the proposals discussed above comply with Swale Local Plan Policies DM6 and CP2, which were previously flagged by KCC.

Conclusion

4.1 To conclude:

- Based on the clarification provided from the applicant in relation to the operational and non-operational staff numbers, it is considered that the anticipated trip generation for the site during the peak periods is understood and can be supported,
 - We acknowledge the modal split assessment using local Census 2011 data, which has been adjusted for the night time shift, which is understood and supported,
 - We note that KCC Highways has commented on the reality of 8% of staff arriving at HMP Elmley on foot at 07:30am, with these trips likely to depart via car. This has not been adjusted as part of the revised TS for the day shift,
 - We note the applicant has applied Census 2011 data and the increase in car trips, if true, would be 8 two-way trips, which is considered negligible.
 - We consider the cumulative assessment acceptable, noting HMP Emely will generate the most traffic during the morning peak period (58 two-way trips), which are not anticipated to cause any noticeable impacts on the road network, based on that discussed through this TN,
 - No assessment of prisoner movements from HMP Stanford Hill have been included as part of the assessment, however, we understand Category D prisoner movements are likely to take place between 05:00 – 07:30 and 18:00 – 21:00, noting:
 - 19 prisoners are likely to travel to jobs/ placement outside of the prison using their own vehicle,
 - 19 further prisoners are likely to travel by car sharing or minibus,
 - Overall, prisoner movements are to take place outside of the typical peak hours and considered low (up to 38 two-way movements daily), with half of the trips being undertaken by sustainable transport moves.
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- In relation to the Travel Plan, we acknowledge the potential to provide a mini-bus on the island for trips relating to the prison. It is our opinion this should be secured as part of a planning condition.
 - In addition:
 - We support that a TPC should be appointed 6 months prior to the proposals at HMP Elmley becoming operation, as outlined in Table 7-1 of the TP. We advise this should be secured as part of a planning condition.
 - Other changes to Table 7-1: Action Plan we consider should change, include:
 - Provide promotional material on walking to work and the associated health benefits – Prior to Occupation
 - Prepare plan identifying cycle parking facilities – Prior to Occupation
 - As per KCC Highway commentary, we agree that no hard travel plan commitments or penalties for failing to meet the outlined mode share targets have been outlined and we support the recommendations outlined by KCC.
 - Based on the above, we consider the proposal to be compliant with NPPF and NPPG, noting trips in the peak period are moderate and not considered to have a material impact on the road network, especially when considering the cumulative impacts with HMP Stanford Hill.
 - We consider the proposals to comply with Local Policy, notably Swale Local Plan Policies DM6 and CP2, which were previously flagged by KCC.
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Appendix A – KCC Commentary



Swale Borough Council

Swale House
East Street
Sittingbourne
Kent
ME10 3HT

Highways and Transportation

Ashford Highway Depot
4 Javelin Way
Ashford
TN24 8AD

Tel: 03000 418181

Date: 4 February 2022

Our Ref:

Application - SW/21/506787/PSINF

Location - HMP Elmley, Church Road, Eastchurch ME12 4DZ

Proposal - Construction of a 4 storey (Category C) houseblock for up to 247 prisoners, a new workshop, a staff administration building, extension to existing property store, extension to existing sports store, new 7-a-side sports pitch, new 3G MUGA pitch, extension to the existing car park (80 spaces) and realignment of existing containment fencing at HMP Elmley Category B/C Prison

Thank you for consulting the Highway Authority on the above application for which we have the following observations and comments.

Development proposals

An application is made to expand the existing prison to cater for an additional 240 prisoners and includes expansion of the existing car parking facilities by 80 spaces.

The existing staff to prisoner ratio would indicate that the staff level is around 42% staff to prisoners. This would equate to an additional 101 staff operating on four shifts which are as follows;

Early Shift - 07:30-12:30

Late Shift - 12:30-21:00

Main Shift - 07:45-17:30

A Shift - 07:45-21:00

Parking.

An additional 80 spaces are to be provided, 76 visitor and staff and 4 disabled spaces. The number of disabled spaces is compliant with Swale standards. There are currently 274 spaces for 480 staff, a provision of 1.75 spaces per staff member. The new proposal is for 80 spaces for 101 staff, a provision of 1.26 spaces per staff member. This is agreed as appropriate and any under provision is unlikely to impact upon the public highway.

1. No details of space size and dimensions are provided and these should be presented in accordance with the Swale standards.

2. No provision appears to be made for EV charging facilities and as such would not comply with Swale standards.

3. Cycle parking information is limited and a condition would be recommended requiring the new buildings to contain cycle storage facilities.

Highway Impact

The Transport Assessment includes an anticipated trip generation expectation of 162 additional two way movements for staff and 16 two way trips for visitors. The numbers include an assumption that 20% staff will be on leave but does not account for any potential mode share such as car sharing. The analysis of trip generation is considered to be a reasonable and the only movements likely to impact the wider network peak would be in the 17:00-18:00 PM.

No analysis has been provided on the junction performance of the Church Road arm of the Rowetts Way roundabout however there have been no recorded incidents in the 5 years data which we have independently checked. Given the additional estimated number (61) of movements this is unlikely to cause safety concern in accordance with the NPPF severity test.

Construction.

No information has yet been presented in respect of the management and operation of construction traffic. Construction traffic should be timed to avoid conflict with the peak staff shift arrivals and departures and a Construction Environment Management Plan will be required by condition.

Sustainability and Access

The Transport Assessment includes plans to show the facilities and amenities within walking and cycling access, concluding the sites locality provides suitable access for walking to facilities and opportunity for staff living in the area identified to access by use of cycle. There is however limited residential catchment for cycling access and the walking route is beyond a 2KM and approximately a 30 minute walk to the limited facilities at Eastchurch.

The Transport Assessment further goes on to state that there is one morning peak bus service and two afternoon peak services. Our review indicates that the bus number 367 arrives at 11:46 and departs at 16:20 which is in neither considered peak or aligns to the presented staff shift pattern. Our conclusion is that the service is very limiting and could only be used by local residents but not staff or visitors to the application.

A Travel Plan has been submitted but given the lack of availability of public transport, inaccessibility by walking and cycling and lack of any meaningful actions is unlikely to have any impact. There are some positive measures regarding monitoring and the provision of information but no measures or recommended investment that would be likely to encourage modal shift.

4. The applicant is requested to set up a strategy within the Travel Plan to work with the other prisons in the area with a view to reducing the need to arrive to the complex by private car and reduce the impact on the highway. This should investigate the feasibility of providing a funded mini bus service to collect staff from areas of demand on the island, for instance Sheerness Rail Station.

Summary

The Highway Authority requires further information to be submitted prior to our final opinion being provided.

The application is in an unsustainable location in regards to transportation and provides insufficient evidence that it complies with Local Plan policies DM6 and CP2. No EV charging facilities appear to be included which would be contrary to Swale Parking Standards.

The Highway Authority are unable to support approval of the application at this time due to the non compliance of Local Plan policy and parking standards. The applicant is encouraged to identify a meaningful strategy within a Travel Plan that could make realistic improvements to sustainable accessibility.

Informative: It is important to note that planning permission does not convey any approval to carry out works on or affecting the public highway.

Yours Faithfully

Director of Highways & Transportation

*This is a statutory technical response on behalf of KCC as Highway Authority. If you wish to make representations in relation to highways matters associated with the planning application under consideration, please make these directly to the Planning Authority.



Swale Borough Council

Swale House
East Street
Sittingbourne
Kent
ME10 3HT

Highways and Transportation

Ashford Highway Depot
4 Javelin Way
Ashford
TN24 8AD

Tel: 03000 418181

Date: 2 August 2022

Our Ref:

Application - SW/21/506787/PSINF

Location - HMP Elmley, Church Road, Eastchurch ME12 4DZ

Proposal - Construction of a 4 storey (Category C) houseblock for up to 247 prisoners, a new workshop, a staff administration building, extension to existing property store, extension to existing sports store, new 7-a-side sports pitch, new 3G MUGA pitch, extension to the existing car park (80 spaces) and realignment of existing containment fencing at HMP Elmley Category B/C Prison

Thank you for your consultation in relation to the above planning application. I have the following comments to make with respect to highway matters :-

The applicant has submitted a Travel Plan and updated the Transport Statement to include details of the parking dimensions as requested.

The parking dimensions provided in paragraph 3.6.1 accord with Swale Borough Council Parking standards and as such are agreed. It is requested that the parking layout as demonstrated on plan 705674-2201-MDG-XXX-ZZ-DR-A-0022-D2-A1800 is available prior to occupation of the extended areas of the prison by condition.

The volume of additional traffic has been reviewed and includes an additional 38 staff movements in the morning and afternoon shifts at 07:30 and 15:30. At 07:30 there would be expected to be an additional 14 outbound movements leaving from the night shift. The mode share analysis has been adjusted to take account of the lack of public transport conditions at night, however it still accounts for 8% (4) staff arriving by foot and this is considered to be highly unlikely. The resultant impact would therefore be expected to be 42 arrivals by car at 07:30.

Visitor analysis has also been provided on the basis of 3% of prisoners receiving a visit in line with analysis from August, presumably in 2021 and during Covid restrictions. The analysis presented should be considered as underestimating the likely impact once restrictions are lifted. Notwithstanding the apparent underestimation, due to the timings of the visitor hours, it is unlikely that the numbers expected would account for a severe impact on the highway network.

A cumulative assessment for the increases of prisoners at both HMP Elmley and HMP Standford Hill has now been provided. This demonstrates that the peak hour for the main access junction of Brabazon Road and at the Rowetts Way roundabout would be between 07:00 and 08:00 AM, having an additional 58 two way movements. Taking account of the additional movements that may occur from those staff not walking to work, this would be

uplifted to 62 two way movements. As presented this would be just over 1 additional movements per minute. Our presumption however is that staff would be more likely to arrive through a 30 minute window. Should this be the case then an additional vehicle would arrive at the junction approximately every 30 seconds. The flows of the conflicting traffic from Rowetts Way have not been presented however at 07:00- 07:30AM it unlikely that high west bound flows at that time of day would cause any safety concern for the roundabout junction. The data for safety incidents did not identify any at this location and as such would support the above assumption.

Notwithstanding the above the evidence presented appears to have a number of inconsistencies that brings in to doubt its overall validity. These are as follows;

Trip generation and mode share.

Paragraph 4.1 in both Transport Statements state that “*a summary of anticipated trip generation and modal split information (is) based on staff movement provided by the client in September 2021*”. Paragraph 4.3 however states that here is currently no modal data available and as such Census data has been used.

1.) Which of the two paragraphs is correct and can we be provided with the evidence provided by the client in September 2021?

Using the same “September 2021 evidence provided by the client”, the initially submitted TS states that there are currently *around* 480 staff and that the 42% ratio of current staff to prisoners would result in an increase of 101 staff. The recent TS states that there are currently *around* 630 staff and yet despite a higher existing staff to prisoner ratio (55%) the expansion requires an increase of a lesser number (78) of staff.

2.) Evidence should be presented on exactly how many staff and prisoners there are in the prison along with a justification for the proposed staff levels.

Shift times.

3.) Paragraph 4.2 provides a breakdown of the shift times with the main shift stated as 07:45 to 17:30. Table 4.1 below it states that the day shift is 07:30 to 17:30, which is the correct time? There is also no allowance for the morning shift.

Travel Plan

The travel plan has been updated and includes additional measures to encourage car sharing and looking into the feasibility of providing a mini-bus for trips on the island. There remains no hard commitment or penalty of failure to meet the proposed mode shift across the term of the Travel Plan. It is recommended that evidence of existing mode share be presented to the Planning Authority by condition throughout the life of the TP, along with a staff survey demonstrating who would be willing to make use of a free mini-bus on the island for the purposes of getting to work. If the proposed mode share targets are not being met and the Planning Authority determines that there is sufficient justification, based on the staff survey, then a mini-bus

to serve access by staff or visitors should be provided by the applicant for so long a time as the prison remains open.

Summary

There are inconsistencies in the evidence being presented that brings in to question its validity. The above raised points should be clarified and evidence re-presented to take account of any changes to data.

Informative: It is important to note that planning permission does not convey any approval to carry out works on or affecting the public highway.

Any changes to or affecting the public highway in Kent require the formal agreement of the Highway Authority, Kent County Council (KCC), and it should not be assumed that this will be given because planning permission has been granted. For this reason, anyone considering works which may affect the public highway, including any highway-owned street furniture, is advised to engage with KCC Highways and Transportation at an early stage in the design process.

Across the county there are pieces of land next to private homes and gardens that do not look like roads or pavements but are actually part of the public highway. Some of this highway land is owned by Kent County Council whilst some is owned by third party owners. Irrespective of the ownership, this land may have highway rights over the topsoil.

Works on private land may also affect the public highway. These include works to cellars, to retaining walls which support the highway or land above the highway, and to balconies, signs or other structures which project over the highway. Such works also require the approval of the Highway Authority.

Kent County Council has now introduced a formal technical approval process for new or altered highway assets, with the aim of improving future maintainability. This process applies to all development works affecting the public highway other than applications for vehicle crossings, which are covered by a separate approval process.

Should the development be approved by the Planning Authority, it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure, before the development is commenced, that all necessary highway approvals and consents have been obtained and that the limits of the highway boundary have been clearly established, since failure to do so may result in enforcement action being taken by the Highway Authority. The applicant must also ensure that the details shown on the approved plans agree in every aspect with those approved under the relevant legislation and common law. It is therefore important for the applicant to contact KCC Highways and Transportation to progress this aspect of the works prior to commencement on site.

Guidance for applicants, including information about how to clarify the highway boundary and links to application forms for vehicular crossings and other highway matters, may be found on Kent County Council's website:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-permits-and-licences/highways-permissions-and-technical-guidance>. Alternatively, KCC Highways and Transportation may be contacted by telephone: 03000 418181

Yours Faithfully

Director of Highways & Transportation

*This is a statutory technical response on behalf of KCC as Highway Authority. If you wish to make representations in relation to highways matters associated with the planning application under consideration, please make these directly to the Planning Authority.