

Technical Note

Project: **Proposed New Category B Prison, Land adjacent to HMP Gartree, Outline Planning Application 21/01600/OUT**

Subject: **Appendix A - Response to Edwards & Edwards Consultancy Ltd**

Date: 29/03/2022	Project No.: 5211562
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Introduction

Atkins is a world leading design, engineering and project management consultancy. Atkins is appointed by the MoJ to provide highways advice in respect of the proposed new prison adjacent to HMP Gartree. As part of this work Atkins prepared the Transport Assessment (TA) and Framework Travel Plan which were submitted with the outline planning application for the new prison.

This rebuttal note has been produced by a highly qualified, experienced highway engineer from Atkins to respond to comments from Duncan Clarke at Edwards & Edwards Consultancy Ltd (E&E Consultancy). For ease of reference this rebuttal note follows the same structure as the E&E Consultancy letter.

It is noted that E&E has confirmed that this is a light touch review and does not provide any detailed interpretation of the evidence or considerations in respect of the modelling in the Transport Assessment prepared by Atkins or the review of that report by Systra.

Systra Review

E&E Consultancy has stated that there is no issue with the trip generation methodology, trip generation figures and the Tempro Growth Factors adopted in the TA. Further E&E Consultancy have stated that they are of the opinion that it is unlikely that the proposal would result in a highway capacity issue.

It is noted that E&E Consultancy is suggesting that the Gallow Field Road/B6047 junction is monitored at the applicant's expense. Whilst, this is not something that is required by Leicestershire County Council, it is something that the MoJ would consider if it was requested by Leicestershire County Council. It is of note that Leicestershire County Council has confirmed in their response dated 11th March 2022 that they are satisfied that the proposals will not have an unacceptable highway impact.

In terms of the pedestrian crossing for Lubenham Leicestershire County Council has unequivocally stated that they would not support such a crossing on highway safety grounds. It is a public highway, so it is not in the applicant's gift to provide this crossing. This is accepted by E&E Consulting in their letter.

Transport Assessment – Atkins

The Transport Assessment prepared for Atkins is comprehensive, it includes analysis of the proposed access visibility splay and demonstrates that this meets the required standards. As stated, Atkins are a reputable Highways Consultant who approached the preparation of the Transport Assessment in an analytical way which included agreeing the scope of the report prior to its inception.

- A scaled plan has been provided for the proposed site access, showing the required visibility splays can be achieved.
- For off-site junctions, traffic surveys and road safety data have been reviewed and the agreed forecast junction modelling has concluded that the off-site junctions have sufficient capacity to accommodate the development. No further assessments are therefore required.
- It is not a requirement for applicants to assess visibility and design compliance at all local junctions. If it was a requirement Leicestershire County Council would have requested that this information be included in the Transport Assessment at the scoping stage, and they did not.

As stated, Leicestershire County Council has confirmed that the Transport Assessment (and analysis provided therein) is acceptable in their response dated 1st November 2021 and reiterated in their response dated 11th March 2022.

Welland Avenue

The Transport Assessment has assumed that no traffic will travel along Welland Avenue. The development site access includes clear signage directing staff and visitors away from the Gartree Village. Further, we have included a series of traffic calming measures to deter access to Gartree, which still maintaining accessibility to Foxton Road for the residents of Gartree. This strategy is based on feedback from public consultation undertaken before submitting the application. We disagree that access to Gallow Field Road via Welland Road is preferable from a highways perspective, as the traffic calming measures and alignment of Welland Avenue will make it unattractive for staff and visitors, reinforced by clear instructions from prison management regarding travel routes. The MoJ is committed that Welland Avenue should not be used by staff and visitor vehicles, and accordingly the Travel Plan (Section 6.2) sets out a requirement to regular monitor use of Welland Avenue and engage with locals residents to get their feedback.

At the outset of their letter E&E Consulting confirmed that they had not taken any analysis of the modelling provided therefore, their comments on traffic routes in the second to last paragraph should be disregarded.

Summary

The Transport Assessment prepared by Atkins has been confirmed as acceptable by Leicestershire County Council as confirmed in their response of 1st November 2021 and reiterated in their response of 11th March 2022. It is noted that E&E Consulting agrees with the key findings of that report.

Leicestershire County Council has advised that they will unequivocally not support a pedestrian crossing in Lubenham on highway safety grounds. It is therefore not within the applicant's gift to supply this.

Traffic Calming at Welland Avenue has been the subject of extensive consultation with local residents at the Gartree Estate, Harborough District Council and Leicestershire County Council. It is considered that the proposed scheme is robust and is accepted by both Councils.

It is therefore considered that the proposals are acceptable in highway terms and that the application should be granted planning permission.