

Executive

Bullington Immigration Removal Centre (Near Bicester)

1 December 2008

Report of Head of Development Control & Major Developments

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise members of the proposed Bullington Immigration Removal Centre for the UK Border Agency. A secure Category C (5.2m Continuous security fence) 800 bed secure facility based on prison designs where detainees (illegal immigrants and failed asylum seekers) are held awaiting deportation.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to consider and note any community issues arising from the expected development of an Immigration Removal Centre (IRC) near Bicester.

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 The United Kingdom Border Agency (UKBA) is proposing to build a new secure, Immigration Removal Centre (IRC) on the former MoD land known as Site A, DSDC Bicester (diagonally across the B4011 from HMP Bullington).
- 1.2 The UKBA has indicated through a series of public consultations that it is likely to apply for planning permission before the end of 2008. After a presentation to members on the 5 November 2008 (Attached to the report at Appendix 1 is the UKBA briefing paper distributed at the event) a request was made to bring the matter before the Executive to allow the opportunity to identify key community issues that the council should be aware of.

The Proposal

- 1.3 UKBA are proposing a secure Immigration Removal Centre with 800 beds, principally for single males, but with flexibility within the design to convert a wing for the accommodation of single females. It is not the intention of the UKBA to detain families with children at the site. The site will be managed by

approximately 488 staff on a 3 shifts per day pattern, all year-round, all day operation.

- 1.4 The Immigration Removal Centre is proposed to occupy an area of 32500m2 and will be constructed to a security standard identical to a Category C prison. The perimeter is secured by a 5.2m security fence and detainees are not able to leave the centre during their detention. The buildings will 3 storeys in height designed to be as low key as possible, with existing landscaping retained and enhanced to provide screening. A scheme of lighting will also be submitted, designed to ensure security whilst minimising light pollution.
- 1.5 The UKBA have stated that due to the sites 24 hour operation traffic movements will be spread throughout the day, outside morning and evening peak time. A Green Travel plan will support the planning application.

Conclusion

- 1.6 It is Planning Committee's role to consider and determine the eventual planning application, but Executive can identify community issues that need to be considered more generally by the Council. One particular interest to Executive will be the comparison between this proposal and the recent, controversial, asylum centre scheme on the same site. It should be noted that the implications of the development for community issues and service provision are much reduced over the earlier scheme because the facility is secure.

Consultations

All consultations will be carried out during the planning application process and will be reported to the Planning Committee.

Implications

Financial:	None Comments checked by Eric Meadows, Service Accountant 01295 221552
Legal:	None Comments checked by Pam Wilkinson, Principal Solicitor 01295 221688
Risk Management:	None Comments checked by Rosemary Watts, Risk Management & Insurance Officer 01295 221566

Wards Affected

ALL

Corporate Plan Themes

Cherwell: A district of opportunity, A safe and healthy Cherwell

Executive Portfolio

Councillor Gibbard
Portfolio Holder for Planning & Housing

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	UKBA Briefing Paper
Background Papers	
None	
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