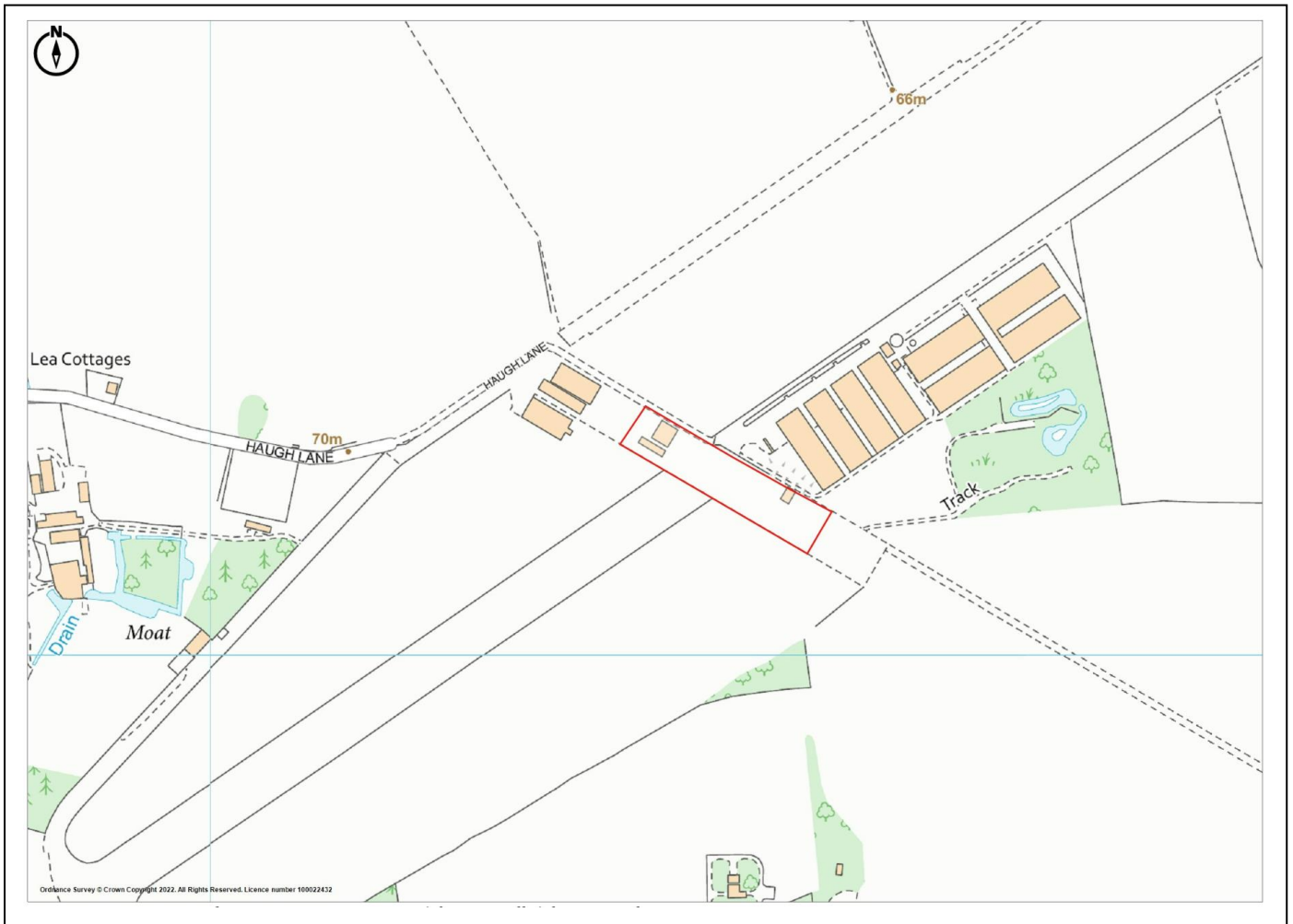


# PRE-APPLICATION ENQUIRY DC/22/04053



Great Ashfield Airfield, Great Ashfield, Suffolk, IP31 3HP

## Pre-application Enquiry

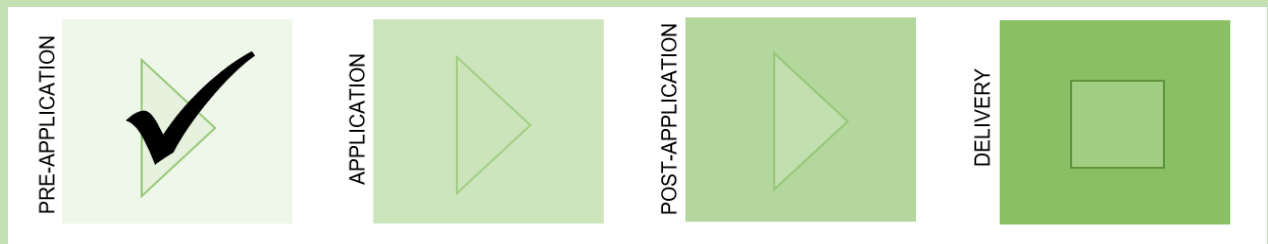
This advice is provided as part of the Council's pre-application advice service.

The advice provided here represents a professional officer opinion based on the material submitted and is given in good faith. The Council as Local Planning Authority must consider every planning application on its own merits after having regard to all material planning considerations. The advice provided here is not in respect of a planning application, has not been subject to public consultation or appropriate statutory consultations and is not necessarily accompanied by all the required supporting material and on that basis the advice is not binding on the Council as the Local Planning Authority.

This advice does not pre-determine the outcome of any subsequent planning application based on the submitted material and/or the Advice provided.

In providing this advice the Council is seeking to proactively and constructively provide support to potential applicants seeking to deliver sustainable development as encouraged by the Government within the National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF] and National Planning Practice Guidance [NPPG]

The Council is permitted to charge for this advice under the provisions of the Local Government Act 2003. The intention is to recover the cost of providing the service and not to deter applicants and their agents from engaging in pre-application discussions.



## The Proposal

**The proposed development is for:**

Change of use of former aircraft hangars.

**The supporting material comprises:**

Defined Red Line Plan - Received 12/08/2022

Supporting Statement 11th August 2022 - Received 12/08/2022

Photograph - Received 12/08/2022

Agent email containing additional information - Received 06/09/2022

Agent email containing additional information - Received 09/09/2022

## The Proposed Development and Site

The application site forms part of the former Great Ashfield Airfield, located to the southeast of Great Ashfield and northeast of Elmswell. The site is access via Haugh Lane, a single-track road, which is also a public right of way (PROW). The nearest residential neighbours are some 450m from the site. The existing buildings on the former airfield are commercial and agricultural, including storage by SCC Highways.



## Relevant Planning History

<b>REF:</b> 3671/11	Retention & completion of works: replace cement render to west elevation; replace sole plate and studs up to first floor plate, extending 8m across west elevation from n/w corner.	<b>DECISION:</b> GTD 06.01.2012
<b>REF:</b> 2329/08	Erection of grain storage building	<b>DECISION:</b> GTD 14.08.2008
<b>REF:</b> 1263/06	Erection of single storey agricultural workers dwelling and garage.	<b>DECISION:</b> GTD 11.03.2009

## Planning Policy

### Emerging Local Plan – New Joint Local Plan

The Joint Local Plan will replace the current Local Plan, for both Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils.

The Joint Local Plan has been at examination for review by an Inspector. Following a meeting with the Inspector in December 2021 it is proposed to split the plan into two parts.

Part 1 will include policies, setting out development which is acceptable, and restrictions to development. These Part 1 policies will then be reviewed and subject to change by the Inspector through examination. During this process the policies will gain more weight. This will mean they become more relevant when determining planning applications.

Once Part 1 of the Plan moves towards adoption, and then becomes adopted the Councils will have an up to date plan. This may affect the advice given in this pre-app enquiry.

Part 1 of the Joint Local Plan will be followed by the preparation of Part 2 as soon as possible. Part 2 will be an allocations document, detailing sites across the district for development.

You are advised to look at the progress of the Joint Local Plan as it comes forward. The new policies may impact on your proposal. Details are available on the link below:

<https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/new-joint-local-plan/>

### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF was revised in 2021, and includes, at its heart, a presumption in favour of sustainable development, however this does not affect the statutory status of the development plan (Local Plan) as the starting point for decision making.

#### The Council's Adopted Development Plan is:

- The Mid Suffolk Core Strategy (2008) and Focused Review (2014)
- The Mid Suffolk Local Plan (1998) and Proposals Map

<https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/adopted-documents/mid-suffolk-district-council/>

#### Relevant Policies include:

NPPF - National Planning Policy Framework  
CS01 - Settlement Hierarchy  
CS02 - Development in the Countryside & Countryside Villages  
CS05 - Mid Suffolk's Environment  
FC01 - Presumption In Favour Of Sustainable Development  
FC01\_1 - Mid Suffolk Approach To Delivering Sustainable Development  
GP01 - Design and layout of development  
SB02 - Development appropriate to its setting

- CL08 - Protecting wildlife habitats
- E09 - Location of new businesses
- E10 - New Industrial and commercial development in the countryside
- E11 - Re-use and adaption of agricultural and other rural buildings
- E12 - General principles for location, design and layout
- T09 - Parking Standards
- T10 - Highway Considerations in Development

### Constraints

The application site is outside the settlement boundary and is therefore designated as countryside.

Haugh Lane is single-track and part of it is a PROW.

The landscape is largely open with expansive views.

### Advice:

#### Principle of Development

As an enquiry for the conversion of two redundant aircraft hangers to a storage/distribution (B8) use, a proposal would be assessed have regard to saved policies in the Local Plan (1998), Core Strategy (2008) and the NPPF.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides that the NPPF "does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. Proposed development that accords with an up-to-date Local Plan should be approved, and proposed development that conflicts should be refused unless other material considerations indicate otherwise".

Following the meeting, the agent has provided additional information regarding the proposed use. It is envisaged that the use would be more of a warehouse storage than a distribution type use. Class B8 would be the most appropriate. There is no planning history available for the existing buildings.

Local Plan Policy E11 for the re-use and adaptation of agricultural and other rural buildings for industrial or commercial use would apply to the proposal. It states:

*In the countryside, applications for the industrial or commercial use of agricultural and other rural buildings, including parts of dwellings and buildings within domestic curtilages will be permitted subject to the following:-*

- *the building structure should be in sound condition and should be appropriate for its intended use without significant structural alteration;*
- *the design of any conversion should be sympathetic to the character of the building and its setting;*
- *the proposed use of the building should not adversely affect residential or rural amenity, highway safety, wildlife features or cause pollution or potentially harmful effects on rivers, groundwaters and watercourses;*
- *the proposal should not involve the conversion of recently constructed agricultural buildings. The district planning authority will remove permitted development rights under the general (permitted development) order 1995 if this is considered necessary to avoid conflict with any of the above criteria.*

*Further development will only be considered if the district planning authority is satisfied that the nature and scale of the activity would not conflict with its surroundings or any of the above criteria.*

*Proposals for associated external storage should, where necessary, be accompanied by a scheme of landscaping to ameliorate any visual impact.*

*In appropriate circumstances the district planning authority will impose conditions governing the height, and areas to be used for, open storage, warehousing and haulage uses will not normally be permitted unless the above criteria are met and the activity is principally to provide a service for nearby villages and communities.*

Compliance with the aforementioned policy would be required. Consideration of the requirements of Policy E12 would also be required.

It is noted that in early 2019 planning permission was granted for the change of use of land for the siting of 32 No. 20' self-storage containers and 8 No. 40' self-storage containers under reference DC/18/04506. This site is approx. 300m to the west of the enquiry site, along Haugh Lane. This permission was tied to the agricultural holding because it was a farm diversification scheme. In addition, the use was restricted to rented self-storage and/or storage associated with the carrying out of agricultural activity. Depending on the type of use proposed here, similar restrictions may be imposed.

### **Design and Landscape Impact**

At this stage, there are no firm plans for the proposal. It is understood that there will be no alterations to the existing buildings, with the exception of some fenestration for natural lighting. The agent has also confirmed that an element of open storage and approx. 6no. storage containers would be proposed for additional storage.

Policy CS5 requires development to be of a high-quality design that respects the local distinctiveness and the built heritage of Mid Suffolk, enhancing the character and appearance of the district. Policy GP1 of the Local Plan states that proposals comprising poor design and layout will be refused, requiring proposals to meet a number of design criteria including maintenance or enhancement of the surroundings and use of compatible materials.

With the exception of the large agricultural units (chicken sheds, etc.) and commercial buildings, the site is fairly open in nature, with limited vegetation owing to its previous use. There is no objection in principle to the conversion of these buildings, given the limited external alterations proposed. The storage containers and open storage have the potential to harm the landscape setting and their siting will need to be carefully considered. The preference would likely be to site them as near to the units as possible. The landscape impact, to a degree, can be mitigated by conditions. Should an application come forward, it is likely that conditions would be imposed to limit the number of containers, preventing them being stacked, limits to their use and the colour of the containers.

It is understood that the facility would need to be secure, with the proposal likely to include a form of boundary treatment. A palisade fence (or similar) is expected and may be acceptable (depending on height and colour). It would be beneficial to introduce some soft landscaping to the boundaries to soften the landscape impact.

## **The Natural Environment**

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) should be submitted with any future application. Should any be identified, further surveys would be required prior to determination of an application. Place Services Ecology would be consulted with any future application, and should an objection be raised this would be sufficient to warrant refusal of the application.

## **Highways, Access and Parking**

In respect of Policy T09 and T10 and Paragraph 111 of the NPPF, development should not adversely affect the highway network and associated safety. The Highways Authority will be consulted on any future application where the impact on the highway will be assessed.

The site is currently accessed via Haugh Lane which runs east/west from Elmswell Road. During the meeting concern was raised regarding the suitability of this road for this use and the frequency and type of vehicles accessing the site. Advice from the Highways Authority has not been sought so this is Officer opinion only. It may be beneficial to seek advice from SCC Highways prior to proceeding with an application.

Haugh Lane is single track for its entire length but benefits from a number of passing places adjacent to the existing storage facility. It is likely that the Lane is frequented by vans and HGVs associated with the storage facility and agricultural and commercial uses on the former airfield. The agent has confirmed that the proposed use would result in a small number of vehicle movements (light goods vehicles) throughout the day and some infrequent HGV movements.

A Transport Assessment would be beneficial to assess the impact on highway safety. It is likely that the Highways Authority, if they deem the vehicle no. acceptable, would require additional passing places to be required. The agent states that there are a few areas of concrete on the private section of Haugh Lane which could act as passing bays if required.

A further consideration is the PROW network, which includes a long stretch of Haugh Lane (see below). There is concern about the conflict of uses, especially if the proposed use results in a significant increase in vehicle movements. The Public Rights of Way team would be consulted on any future application where a full assessment would be required.



Consideration should also be given to the parking and manoeuvring within the site. This should be demonstrated on a proposed block plan should an application come forward. The parking requirement would need to be in accordance with the adopted Suffolk guidance for Parking 2019.

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/assets/planning-waste-and-environment/planning-and-development-advice/Suffolk-Guidance-for-Parking-2019-Adopted-by-SCC.pdf>

The Highways Authority will be consulted on any future application where the impact on the highway will be assessed. Should the Highways Authority object to the proposed development, this would be significant to warrant refusal of the application.

### **Flood Risk**

The site lies within Flood Zone 1 and is not at risk of pluvial flooding. If the site area was to exceed 1ha a Flood Risk Assessment would be required, in accordance with the Council's Local Validation requirements.

### **Residential Amenity, Safe and Secure Communities**

The proposed development has the potential to impact nearby neighbouring properties, by virtue of the proposed lighting, associated noise and traffic implications. Traffic/highway safety considerations are as above. The Environmental Health Team would assess the application in respect of noise and lighting. A noise assessment may be required.

Additional information has been provided from the agent in respect of proposed lighting, being motion censored downlighting. It would be useful for this information to be provided at application stage, albeit a condition could be imposed if necessary. Consideration of height and number would be required and a lighting plan to illustrate the extent of light spillage should be provided.



## Conclusions/ Planning Balance

The proposal is acceptable in principle having regard to Local Plan Policy E11. Compliance with the criteria/requirements would need to be demonstrated as part of any future application.

A Transport Statement should be provided given the concerns with the use of Haugh Lane.

Matters of design, ecology, highways, landscape and residential amenity are as above and represent a risk to the acceptability of any future scheme.

Any future application would be subject to a site visit as part of the formal application process where material considerations would be assessed in full.

On the basis of the above considerations and conclusions, should you wish to proceed with an application, a full application would be required.

## Planning Risk Assessment

Compliance with Local Plan Policy E11 would need to be demonstrated as part of a future application.

Officers have concerns regarding the suitability of Haugh Lane given the intensification of use. A Transport Statement would aid the assessment. Consideration to the provision of passing space and the PROW is necessary.

Matters of ecology, highways, landscaping and residential amenity represent a risk to the acceptability of the proposal. Consultation with the relevant parties will take place as part of any future application and should any objections be raised, this may be sufficient to warrant refusal of the application.

## Expected Supporting Material in the Event of a Planning Application

Our Joint Local Validation Checklist sets out the details required for each application and this is available at <https://www.babergh.gov.uk/planning/development-management/apply-for-planning-permission/national-and-local-validation-requirements/> However on the basis of the information provided I would particularly draw your attention to the need to provide:

- Preliminary Ecological Assessment
- Other Ecological Surveys as required
- Planning Statement
- Design and Access Statement
- Landscaping Plan
- Structural Survey
- Transport Statement/Assessment
- Red line site plan
- Proposed block plan (showing parking and manoeuvring)
- Highway & Access Drawing
- Existing elevations and floor plans
- Proposed elevations and floor plans
- CIL Form

\*\*Land Contamination Questionnaire and Report – Environmental Health have advised that as long as there are no significant groundworks proposed this information is not required.

This is not an exhaustive list of all documents and information which need to support your application, as mentioned above please consult the Joint Local Validation Checklist.

- For all types of development you can submit electronically via the Planning Portal [https://www.planningportal.co.uk/info/200232/planning\\_applications](https://www.planningportal.co.uk/info/200232/planning_applications) (please note that applying via this site may incur a submission charge)
- For all types of development you can download the relevant application form from the Planning Portal and send to us by email or post [https://www.planningportal.co.uk/info/200126/applications/61/paper\\_forms](https://www.planningportal.co.uk/info/200126/applications/61/paper_forms)

## Application Progress

If you submit a formal application we recommend you track its progress by searching using your application reference on our [Public Access webpage](#) and reviewing any comments received.

Technical Consultees are expected to provide formal comments within 21 days from the validation date but may do so sooner. By tracking the progress of your application this can allow you to review comments and provide any additional information during the course of the application.

Note: Pre-applications are not available to search online.

You can register and sign up to receive alerts for your application and any others in your area. Details of how to register can be found on our website via this link:

<https://www.babergh.gov.uk/assets/DM-Planning-Uploads/ldox-PA-3.1-for-Planning-User-Guide.pdf.pdf>

## **Contributions**

### **Community Infrastructure Levy**

Applications for development are subject to Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

All new build development over 100sqm (internal), including residential extensions and annexes and all new dwellings regardless of size must pay CIL.

CIL is payable on Permitted Development as well as Planning Permission development

CIL is payable when the development is commenced and you must notify of commencement using the appropriate forms

Failure to submit a Form 6 Commencement Notice and give a minimum of 1 days notice of commencement will result in the loss of exemptions, relief and/or the right to pay CIL by instalments.

As part of any application you will need to submit the appropriate CIL form. Further information is available on our website:

<https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/community-infrastructure-levy-and-section-106/community-infrastructure-levy-cil/>

The CIL forms are also available online:

[https://www.planningportal.co.uk/info/200126/applications/70/community\\_infrastructure\\_levy/5](https://www.planningportal.co.uk/info/200126/applications/70/community_infrastructure_levy/5)

## Building Control

Pre-application advice is also available from our Building Control Team. Find information online: <https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/building-control/> or contact the Building Control Manager, Paul Hughes, on 01449 724502. We can offer specialist support, local knowledge and a quality service with expert independent and impartial advice.

Charges include access to the surveyor appointed for any query that may arise before or during construction as well as a tailored inspection regime including inspections which only need to be booked by 10am on the day the inspection is required.

We can also provide carbon emission / fabric energy efficiency calculations at pre-application stage to support planning applications and the necessary Part L calculations and Energy Performance Certificates for Building Regulations compliance and our partners at LABC Warranty can offer a very competitive warranty for all new dwellings which we would be happy to provide further details for / liaise with on your behalf.

## NOTES

Please note that any advice provided by the Council's Officers is informal opinion only and is made without prejudice to any formal determination which may be given in the event of an application being submitted. In particular, it will not constitute a formal response or decision of the Council with regard to any future planning applications, which will be subject to wider consultation and publicity. Although the Case Officer may indicate the likely outcome of a subsequent planning application, no guarantees can or will be given about the decision.

This advice is based on the information provided, background details and constraints at the current time. These circumstances can change and this may affect the advice you have received. You may wish to seek confirmation that the circumstances have not changed if you are considering submitting an application and any substantial amount of time has passed since the date of this advice.

**Averil Goudy**

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15th September 2022

Any questions please contact us

