

## Consultee Comments for Planning Application DC/26/0318/FUL

This prepared response to a planning application sets out the policies and guidance referred to, an application summary, planning history and the comments of the parish council and any grounds for objection.

The Parish Council has referenced the following where relevant:

- [National Planning Policy Framework \[NPPF\]](#)
- [West Suffolk Local Plan](#)
- [Wickhambrook Referendum Neighbourhood Plan](#) (published August 2025 – Yes vote at Referendum on 13.11.2025)

### Application Summary – West Suffolk Council

**Application No:** [DC/26/0318/FUL](#)

**Location:** Brookfield Coltsfoot Green Wickhambrook Suffolk CB8 8UW

**Proposal:** Change of use of land to domestic equestrian use.

This is an application for change of use of land to private equestrian use made by Mr Jason Parker of Meadows for Mr David and Mrs Elizabeth Jackson.

The applicants wish to use the Site solely for the private keeping of their own horses. No new permanent buildings or operational development are proposed as part of this scheme. Existing buildings on the land, which historically served agricultural purposes, are suitable for typical equestrian functions such as stabling and feed or tack storage and will continue to be used in that manner.

The site is shown below:



**Figure 1 – Extract from the site plan (Application site outlined in Red)**

The following documents were submitted with the [application](#):

- [Flood Risk Assessment](#)
- [Location Plan](#)
- [Planning Statement](#)
- Planning Statement Appendices [1](#), [2](#), [3](#) & [4](#)
- [Proposed Site Plan](#)
- [Site Location Plan](#)
- [Superseded – Site Plan](#)

## Planning History

No previous for this site.

**Constraints** - identified by West Suffolk are:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Constraint Type</b>
Development Type: All wind farm / turbine development	Air Traffic Control Safeguarding WF
Type: Water Recycling Centre Name: WICKHAMBROOK STW Description: Within 400m of Water Recycling Centre	Anglian Water Facilities
Description: Within 100m of a Suffolk County Council Historic Environment Record Consultee: Suffolk Archaeological Service	Archaeological Site (100m Buffer)
Consultee: Environment Agency	Flood Zone 2
Route: W-561/022/0 Consultee: Suffolk County Council Type: Footpath	Public Rights of Way
Route: W-561/024/0 Consultee: Suffolk County Council Type: Footpath	Public Rights of Way
Consultee: Norwich International Airport Constraint: Statutory consultee for all wind turbine applications within 42.5 nautical miles of Norwich International Airport	Wind Turbine Norwich Airport
Consultee: Cambridge Airport Constraint: Advise of Any Developments	Cambridge Renewal Energy - All
Consultee: Natural England	SSSI Impact Risk Zones
Not available	RAMS Buffer

Comments have been received from:

- [Amended Site Plan PRoW](#)
- [Bury St Edmunds Ramblers Association](#)
- [Public Rights of Way and Access Representation](#)
- [Suffolk Highways Representation](#)

There have been no submissions from neighbouring properties to date.

## Matters for Consideration

The following matters are relevant and should be considered with respect to the application:

1. **Settlement Hierarchy and Identity:** The proposed development is not within the published settlement boundary of Wickhambrook [RV3 – Housing Settlement Boundaries

### Wickhambrook Referendum Neighbourhood Plan

The parish council should consider the application against the following statements and policies within the Referendum Neighbourhood Plan (which received a Yes vote at its Referendum on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2025 and will be “made” by West Suffolk Council on 16<sup>th</sup> December)

#### VISION

In 2040 Wickhambrook will remain a village that has retained its distinct structure of a number of small settlements within a high-quality rural landscape, where limited sustainable growth has taken place that meets the needs of the Parish and where essential infrastructure and services are retained and improved.

## Objectives

### *Development Location*

1. New development should minimise the loss of the best quality agricultural land and its impact on the natural and historic environment as well as being well related to the existing services and facilities in the village centre.

### *Housing*

2. New housing development will reflect Wickhambrook’s status as a Local Service Centre within the “Settlement Hierarchy” of West Suffolk and provide a range of types, sizes, prices and tenures that meets the needs of all age groups and incomes.
3. New housing should be located where it is safely accessible by sustainable modes to the village’s services and facilities.
4. Homes should incorporate measures to ensure they are accessible for all needs, incorporate energy saving features and make use of sustainable approaches to building.

### *Employment and Local Economy*

5. A range of employment opportunities in the Parish will be retained and supported where there will not be a detrimental impact on the environment, services and infrastructure.

### *Natural Environment*

6. The rural character of the Parish will be protected and, where possible, enhanced.
7. Natural habitats will be protected and enhanced.

### *Built Environment and Design*

8. Wickhambrook’s built heritage assets will be protected.
9. High-quality and eco-friendly development will reinforce the local character of the village.
10. New development will not have a detrimental impact on the quality of life of existing residents.

### *Services and Facilities*

11. The level of services and facilities will be protected and improved.
12. The range of existing community facilities and services will be improved.

### *Highways and Travel*

13. The capacity and safety of the road network to cope with new development will be ensured.
14. The improvement of bus services to nearby towns will be encouraged.
15. The Public Rights of Way network will be protected, maintained and improved

Policies within the Referendum Neighbourhood Plan relevant to this application are:

Relevant paragraphs, policies etc. of Wickhambrook Neighbourhood Plan:

## Natural Environment

7.5	<p>The Local Plan contains seven policies on the natural environment which are of relevance to the Neighbourhood Area, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy SP5 Green infrastructure</li> <li>• Policy SP6 Locally valued landscapes</li> <li>• Policy SP7 Landscape</li> <li>• Policy SP8 Biodiversity net gain and enhancements</li> <li>• Policy SP9 Protected sites, habitats and features</li> <li>• Policy LP12 Trees</li> <li>• Policy LP13 Protected species</li> </ul>
<b>Wickhambrook's Landscape</b>	
7.7	<p>The West Suffolk Landscape Appraisal provides strategic guidance for managing landscape change in the area. Summarised and as relevant to Wickhambrook, it recommends:</p> <p>Development of agricultural buildings and infrastructure          Farmland habitat conservation          Settlement development          Green lanes</p>
<b>Policy WHB 7 - Protecting Wickhambrook's Landscape Character</b>	
<p>Development proposals should respond positively to the landscape characteristics of the site and its vicinity as identified in the West Suffolk Landscape Assessment (2022). As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, and to ensure that they conserve the essential landscape, heritage and rural character of the Parish, development proposals should demonstrate how they have regard to, and conserve, or enhance, the landscape character and the setting of the Parish.</p>	
<b>Consider:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning Statement and appendices</li> </ul>	
<b>Habitats</b>	
7.9	<p>Across the Parish the influence of trees and hedgerows plays a significant role in determining the character of the area. The combined effect of screening, providing natural habitats, and the wildlife corridors that these habitats create are vitally important within the Parish and the wider area and their retention and enhancement will be supported.</p>
7.10	<p>Currently the NPPF encourages net gains for biodiversity to be sought through planning policies and decisions. The 2021 Environment Act introduced a statutory requirement for all appropriate developments to deliver a minimum 10 per cent measurable net gain in biodiversity, measured by using a statutory metric and biodiversity statement to be submitted with planning applications. Strategic Policy SP8 of the Local Plan addresses the requirements for biodiversity net gain in relation to qualifying development proposals and it is not necessary to repeat the requirements in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>
7.11	<p>There may be occasions where a new access to an otherwise acceptable development site would result in the loss of part of an existing hedgerow. Where this is necessary, a new hedgerow should be planted using native species of a local provenance at the rear of the visibility splay returns to minimise the loss of hedgerow and habitat and maintain the character of the area</p>
<b>Policy WHB 8 - Biodiversity and Habitats</b>	
<p>Qualifying development proposals are required to achieve a measurable biodiversity net gain of at least 10 percent, calculated using the statutory biodiversity metric. Wherever practicable, development proposals should protect, and avoid the loss of, or minimise harm to, trees, woodlands, hedgerows and other natural features such as ponds and watercourses. Where such losses or harm are unavoidable, and cannot be reduced through mitigation:</p>	

- i. the benefits of the development proposal must be demonstrated to clearly outweigh any impacts; and
- ii. suitable compensatory measures, that provide better replacement of the lost features will be required and contribute to the enhancement of biodiversity.

Any mitigation or compensatory measures should form an integral part of the design concept. In addition, the layout and design of the development proposal concerned should be landscape-led and appropriate in relation to its setting and context and have regard to its ongoing management. Where new access is created, or an existing access is widened and affects an existing hedgerow, a new hedgerow of native species shall be planted on the splay returns into the site to maintain the appearance and continuity of hedgerows in the immediate locality.

As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should incorporate improvements to biodiversity which will secure a measurable net gain as part of the design through, for example,

- a) the creation of new natural habitats including ponds;
- b) the planting of additional native trees and hedgerows (reflecting the character of Wickhambrook's traditional trees and hedgerows);
- c) restoring and repairing fragmented wildlife networks, for example, including swift-boxes, bat boxes and holes in fences which allow access for hedgehogs

**Consider:**

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**Built Environment and Design**

**Policy WHB 10 - Buildings and Structures of Local Significance**

Development proposals should be designed to respect the integrity and appearance of Wickhambrook's built heritage. Valued characteristics of the Parish, including buildings, structures, features and gardens of local significance, and the character and distinctiveness of the various greens, hamlets and neighbourhoods, should be protected.

Proposals affecting buildings and structures of local significance will be considered in the context of their potential impact on their character and setting including their situation and location in both the immediate and wider contexts.

Proposals for any works that would lead to the loss of or substantial harm to a local heritage asset or a building of local significance should be supported by an appropriate analysis of the significance of the asset together with an explanation of the wider public benefits of the proposal

**Consider:**

- [Proposed Site Plan](#)

**Flooding and Sustainable Drainage**

8.18	A number of roads are susceptible to surface water flooding, especially Nunnery Green, Attleton Green and Coltsfoot Green. It is essential that development proposals do not create new or exacerbate existing surface water flooding through creating surfaces where rainwater can run-off into the highway or neighbouring sites. New development will be required, where appropriate, to make provision for the attenuation and recycling of surface water and rainwater through Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) that might include on-site rainwater and stormwater harvesting and greywater recycling, and the management of run-off and water management in order to reduce the potential for making the situation worse.
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**Policy WHB 13 - Flooding and Sustainable Drainage**

Proposals for new development, or the intensification of existing development, in Flood Zones 2 and 3 should be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment and will not be supported, unless the applicant has satisfied the safety requirements in the Flood Risk National Planning Policy Guidance (and any successor), and National Planning Policy Framework and the sequential test.

Proposals for all new development will be required to submit schemes appropriate to the scale of the proposal detailing how on-site surface water drainage and water resources will be managed so as not to cause or exacerbate surface water and fluvial flooding elsewhere.

Development will only be supported where it has an acceptably low risk of being affected by flooding when assessed through sequential testing against the most up-to-date (SFRA) maps. Environment Agency flood risk maps and the West Suffolk Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. Additionally, development should be safe for its lifetime and not increase flow rate compared to a greenfield scenario, and where possible reduce flood risk overall. Protection of the surrounding watercourses is necessary to decrease the likelihood of increasing the flood risk of Wickhambrook in the future. Proposals should, as appropriate, include the use of above-ground open Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). These could include:

- wetland and other water features, which can help reduce flood risk whilst offering other benefits including water quality, amenity/ recreational areas, and biodiversity benefits; and
- rainwater and stormwater harvesting and recycling; and other natural drainage systems where easily accessible maintenance can be achieved.

**Consider:**

- Flood Risk Assessment

**Highways and Travel**

10.1	Neighbourhood plans have little power to introduce highway improvements as most schemes will not require planning permission. Improvements are therefore reliant on Suffolk County Council, as the highways authority, for investment in projects or improvements required as part of the mitigation of the impact of development proposals
10.7	The NPPF seeks to promote sustainable transport through reducing the impacts of development on transport networks and promoting walking, cycling and public transport. At a local level, the Local Plan includes the following policies in relation to highways and travel: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy LP41 Active and sustainable travel</li> <li>• Policy LP42 Rights of way</li> <li>• Policy LP43 Transport assessments, transport statements and travel plans</li> <li>• Policy LP44 Parking standards</li> </ul>
10.11	Public rights of way provide opportunities for recreational walking, horse riding and cycling. Where feasible, improvements to the quality and extent of the public rights of way network will be supported where provided as part of development proposals

**Policy WHB 17 - Public Rights of Way**

Measures to improve and extend the existing network of public rights of way will be supported where their value as biodiversity corridors is safeguarded and any public right of way extension is fit for purpose. Where practicable, development proposals should incorporate measures to enhance biodiversity within the improved or extended public right of way.

**Action:**

**Using the pro-forma template, consider where the planning application meets and/or departs from the Wickhambrook Neighbourhood Plan objectives, and identify where the planning application departs from the NP Policies identified above.**