

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.

Consultee Comments for Planning Application DC/25/0823/OUT

The Parish Council has referenced the following where relevant:

- [National Planning Policy Framework \[NPPF\]](#)
- [Core Strategy \(2010\) Former SEBC area \[CS\]](#)
- [Rural Vision 2031 \(2014\) Rural \[RV\]](#)
- [Joint Development Management Policies Document \(2015\) \[DM\]](#)
- [Emerging Local Plan](#)
- [Draft Neighbourhood Plan](#) (Reg.16 Consultation completed on 23.05.2025)

Application Summary – West Suffolk Council

Application No: [DC/25/0823/OUT](#)

Address: Aldersfield Place Farm, Ashfield Green, Wickhambrook

Proposal: Outline Planning application (layout and scale to be considered) change of use of storage barn (Use Class B8) to two dwellings (Use Class C3)

This is a new application for outline planning permission for the conversion of a storage barn to form 2 dwellings including layout and scale with all other matters reserved (previous applications considered by the parish council at its meetings on 24th November '22 **Min 22.11.16.3** and 15th December 2022 **Min. EO.22.12.07**, 8th June 2023 **Min EO.23.06.06** and 6th July 2023, **Min. EO.2307.05.3**, 30th May 2024 **Min. 24.05.23**) made by DKR Rural Planning on behalf of Mr Parker for outline planning permission for the conversion of a storage barn to form two dwellings including layout and scale with all other matters reserved. The Planning Heritage and Design and Access Statement is attached as **Appendix A**. Full details of the application can be found at:

[DC 25 0823 OUT-PLANNING STATEMENT-2397090.pdf](#)

The agent has described the site as

"The application site (Site) comprises an existing storage barn on land at Aldersfield Place Farm, Ashfield Green, Wickhambrook, CB8 8UZ."

The site is located to the rear of Aldersfield Place Farm, outside the published settlement area of Wickhambrook [RV3] and within designated countryside [CS4, DM5].



There is a useful summary of West Suffolk's pre-application response at page 9 of their report.

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

- [Biodiversity Checklist](#)
- [Land Contamination Questionnaire](#)
- [Planning Statement](#)
- [Preliminary Ecological Assessment](#)
- [Location](#) & [Block](#) Plans, [Proposed Elevation](#) and [Floor](#) Plans

The application describes that the site has an existing access (which is a reserved matter).

Planning History

- [DC/17/1628/OUT](#) – Outline Planning Application (Means of Access to be considered) – Application Approved – WPC – No objection
- [DC/18/1442/RM](#) – Reserved Matters Application – Submission of details under DC/17/1628/OUT – Application Approved – WPC – No comments made
- [DCON\(A\)/18/1442](#) – Application to Discharge Conditions 4 (provision of access), Condition 5 (Bound Surface Material) Condition 6 (surface water drainage) and Condition 11 (soft landscaping) of DC/18/1442/RM – Application Approved – No consultation with PC
- [DC/19/1251/VAR](#) – Variation of condition 2 of DC18/1442/RM to replace drawing numbers 4177-01A, 4177-05 and 4177-06 with drawing number 4177-10 to reduce the scale and reposition the proposed garaging for 1 no. dwelling and garage – Application Approved – WPC – No objection
- [DC/22/1845/FUL](#) – Planning application – a. one dwelling b. detached garage. c. vehicular access - Application Withdrawn – WPC – objection(s) Mins. 22.11.16.3 & EO.22.12.07
- [DC/23/0813/FUL](#) - Planning application - a. one dwelling b. vehicular access (Mins. EO.23.06.06
- [DC/24/0474/FUL](#) – Planning application – one dwelling with vehicular access (Min. 24.05.23)

Constraints - identified by West Suffolk are:

- Development Type: All wind farm / turbine development
- Description: Within 100m of a Suffolk County Council Historic Environment Record Consultee: Suffolk Archaeological Service
- Designation: Countryside Policy: CS4, DM5
- Consultee: Norwich International Airport Constraint: Statutory consultee for all wind turbine applications within 42.5 nautical miles of Norwich International Airport
- Consultee: Cambridge Airport Constraint: Advise of Any Developments
- Consultee: consultations@naturalengland.org.uk

Responses have been received from:

[West Suffolk Waste Management](#) – bins will need to be presented kerbside for collection.

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

1. **Settlement Hierarchy and Identity:** The proposed site is not within the published settlement boundary of Wickhambrook [RV3 – Housing Settlement Boundaries], but in designated countryside [CS4 – Settlement Hierarchy & Identity, DM5 – Development in the Countryside]. It is acknowledged that the proposal may be described as small scale residential development [DM5]
2. **Sustainable Development:**
 - a. District Council policies seek to protect the countryside against unsustainable development. This application seeks a change of use for an existing storage barn (classic cars) to convert into two dwellings.
3. **Non-designated Heritage Asset:**

The agent has acknowledged that West Suffolk have identified Aldersfield Place Farmhouse as a Non-designated Heritage Asset. A Heritage Impact Assessment has been submitted.

Wickhambrook Draft Neighbourhood Plan

The parish council may wish to consider the application against the following statements and policies within the Draft Neighbourhood Plan:

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 Draft Neighbourhood Plan relevant to this application are:

Policy WHB 1 - Spatial Strategy

...

Outside of the Housing Settlement Boundary, priority will be given to protecting and enhancing the countryside from inappropriate development. Proposals will be supported in principle for:

- agriculture, horticulture or forestry development;
- affordable housing on a rural exception site that meets a proven local need;
- equine related activities;
- small scale facilities for outdoor sport and recreation, community uses, leisure and tourism;
- an agriculture, forestry or equine business key worker dwelling where an essential need is proven;
- the replacement of an existing dwelling on a one for one basis of a similar scale and floor area and small-scale residential development in accordance with other policies on housing in the countryside;

...

Policy WHB 7 - Protecting Wickhambrook's Landscape Character

Proposals must, proportionate to the development, demonstrate how the landscape characteristics of the site and its vicinity have been considered in preparing the scheme, having regard to 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.

Policy WHB 8 - Biodiversity and Habitats

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 substantial harm to, trees, woodlands, hedgerows and other natural features such as ponds and watercourses. Where such losses or harm are unavoidable:

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

...

Proposals will be supported where they integrate 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

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, must be protected. Proposals will be considered with regard to their potential impact on the character and setting of buildings and structures of local significance, 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.

Action: The Parish Council is asked to consider the application above and prepare a response setting out the reasons for its decision.