

10 November 2021

Vincent Pearce  
Planning Officer  
Mid Suffolk District Council  
Endeavour House, 8 Russell Rd,  
Ipswich, IP1 2BX

Dear Mr Pearce,

**DC/21/05596 Planning Application. Change of use of part of land to use as a construction and agricultural training facility including new training centre and associated car park and hardstand, equipment/machinery store and scaffold area. Change of use of remainder of land to use for the grazing of horses and sheep including new stables and storage shed. Associated fencing and landscaping and alterations to existing access to site. Land At Pippes Ford A14 Slip Off To A140 Coddenham Suffolk IP6 8LJ**

I am writing on behalf of the Suffolk Preservation Society (SPS) regarding the proposals at Pippes Ford having been contacted by concerned residents regarding the impacts of the scheme. SPS understands that an identical scheme (DC/21/00487) was refused earlier this year and that this application is to allow additional material to be considered.

We note that the previous reasons for refusal included the lack of justification for the principle of development and information on flooding, as well as the impact of the development on the landscape and the natural environment and residential amenity. We are also aware of serious concerns regarding traffic safety and PROW access. SPS would like to raise our concerns regarding the impact of the proposals on this special landscape.

### **Impact on the Gipping Valley landscape**

The site is located within remote and detached countryside with the River Gipping to the south/west. On visiting the site, it is notable that although the A14/ A140 intersection is close by, the serene, remote character of the area remains intact and it is arguably highly sensitive to further degradation. SPS therefore has serious concerns regarding the intrusion of the proposed major development into this tranquil area.

The topography of the site, which falls from east to west, will render the proposed industrial use of the site highly visible within the Gipping Valley landscape. The proposed use of fencing to screen some of the views into the site will have limited effect due to the slope of the site and will itself introduce an alien, highly inappropriate feature into this attractive area. The 30m X 20m training centre and associated parking is at the highest point of the site and the quantum of equipment to

be introduced on the site, including scaffold towers, large construction and farming vehicles as well as cranes, will entirely change the appearance of the site, to the detriment of the wider area.

SPS also has concerns regarding these impact on Pipp's Ford, a grade II listed C16th farmhouse located to the south/east of the site including associated farm buildings, some of which are identified as non-designated heritage assets, directly adjacent to the boundary. Although close to a major highway, the setting of Pipp's Ford retains a strong sense of remoteness and seclusion. The applicant identifies that the setting of Pipp's Ford will be impacted by the proposals at a low level but relies entirely on the visual impact of the scheme in this assessment. SPS is concerned that an overreliance on simple intervisibility does not take into account the impact of introducing a distinctly industrial land use into the original rural setting of the heritage assets. Although partially screened, the buildings, equipment and additional noise, lighting and heavy vehicular movements will impact on how the heritage assets are experienced and requires further assessment.

In conclusion, whilst SPS is wholly supportive of economic development schemes which create varied local jobs, it remains that these proposals are inappropriate on this sensitive site. The decision notice for the previous application highlighted that the visual amenity of the River Gipping is of significance to public benefit. It goes on to conclude that *the application has failed to demonstrate how the proposal sensitively integrates with the character of this rural area and the prevailing landscape characteristics. Due to the sloped terrain this major proposal would be prominent and dominant especially with all the associated paraphernalia operation and use.* SPS does not consider that the applicant has now provided any amendments or justification to change this conclusion.

We therefore see no reason for the local authority to amend its decision based on the landscape harm that the development would bring to the wider area and urge that the scheme is again refused. We trust that you will find these comments helpful in the consideration of this application.

Yours sincerely,



**Bethany Philbidge**  
**BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI**  
**Planning Officer**

Cc: Needham Market Town Council  
Coddensham Parish Council  
Babergh Mid Suffolk Heritage team  
Ward Councillor