Weybread Tree Warden Report RE Planning Application DC/25/02757

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Annex A: Walked Weybread Tree Survey Summary

Comment - Objection

As Weybread Tree Warden, on behalf of the residents of Weybread, and speaking on behalf of the natural assets of Weybread, I object to this planning application for a Major Development in this village. I recommend the refusal of planning permission.

1. Introduction

As Tree Warden of Weybread, on behalf of the residents of Weybread, I **formally object** to planning application DC/25/02757 and recommend its refusal. This proposal for an industrial-scale egg incubation unit would result in the **destruction of thousands of hedgerow and mature trees**, threatening visual amenity, biodiversity, flood resilience, and the character of our village.

About 1 **kilometer of mature hedgerow and boundary tree lines** are at risk in this proposal, with— many of which are interconnected with the wider village ecosystem. Of this, only 2 trees are spared!



About 1km of hedging and trees will be lost as well as connectiveness to the wider hedge network



The site in question fits into a tree lined plot, within a village street frontage and small agricultural fields.



The blue areas trees T, tree groups G, and hedges H all targeted for removal.

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2. Key Objections

- Wholesale removal of possibly thousands of mature and healthy hedgerow trees (many healthy ash and oak)
- Destruction of visual and acoustic barriers for residents, including tree groups, hedges, mature trees and the bund walls on which some trees grow.
- Increased flood risk due to removal of natural water management systems, which help to protect neighbouring properties to the north and over the B1116.
- No attempt to design within the brownfield site footprint or respect established trees (only two trees on the entire site are spared!) Removal of trees on south and along the right edge of the western field. Removals are excessive.
- Loss of local biodiversity, including a RARE thriving ash population which has remained free of ash dieback disease.
- Lack of adequate environmental impact and landscape assessment, which takes no account of valuable visual amenities to street, road and footpath users, as well as residents.

- Unacceptable site expansion onto adjacent greenfield land – the western and southern field.

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3. Village Context & Tree Significance

Weybread is a small linear village bordered by rich ecological zones including the River Waveney and Dale Brook. Over 18 km of hedgerows, many with mature trees, form an essential green infrastructure that is valued by residents and wildlife alike.

Our **ash population has shown resilience** to ash dieback — a rare and ecologically valuable trait. The large ash along FP14, and others within the site and acting as ash boundary markers for Victorian cottage residential gardens, should be protected for future biodiversity and landscape continuity.

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4. Issues with Tree Removal

The Arboricultural Report proposes **removal of nearly all boundary trees and hedgerows** across the site and surrounding fields — far exceeding the development footprint and removing the public's visual amenity. This includes:

- **Street frontage trees**: key to traffic calming, visual continuity, and heritage setting



Trees and hedging forming a natural screen and improving the visual amenity of neglected Cranswick buildings as seen from The Street, Waybread.

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Very effective screening of the Cranswick site with mature trees.



Mature trees providing screening for pedestrians and cyclists

Rear garden tree screens: protecting homes from noise and visual pollution and providing a visual amenity from the road and from the rear of the cottages.



Mature, healthy ash trees forming Victorian garden boundary marker trees, also screening the site

- **Bund wall trees and screening**: including 10 mature, fruiting apple trees (not just 2 apple saplings detailed on the Aboricultural report) and laurel hedges



The west bund wall from FP 14 on the western field showing 10 x healthy, mature, fruiting apple trees (not 2 apple saplings as stated on the planning application)

- **Unjustified off-site tree removal**, e.g., in the Southern and Western fields

This scale of removal undermines Mid Suffolk's own Biodiversity Action Plan and violates principles in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

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5. Visual Amenity & Heritage Impact

Removal of mature boundary trees would:

- Replace rural scenes with views of a **massive industrial unit**, dwarfing existing homes
- Sever long-standing **hedgerow connectivity**, vital for wildlife corridors
- Remove layers of tree cover seen from footpaths (e.g., FP14, FP16), degrading public amenity

The proposed bund wall removal particularly impacts walkers and adjacent homes, whose visual and acoustic screening would be lost. The Arboricultural and Demolition Plans also contain **factual errors**, e.g., describing 10 mature apple trees as 2 saplings.

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6. Flooding & Environmental Risk

- Weybread suffers **regular surface water flooding**, especially north of the site and this especially effects the occupied houses to the north.
- Mature trees help mitigate runoff, hold soil, and buffer water flow
- Flood risk assessments are outdated, omitting data post-2019 and takes no account of the experiences of residences.
- Residents face **insurance difficulties** due to recent flood events

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7. Recommendations

1. **Refuse the planning application** on the grounds of excessive ecological harm, flood risk, and inappropriate scale
2. Commission a **full Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment** by a qualified professional
3. **Issue a Tree Protection Order (TPO)** covering:
    - All mature ash, oak, birch and fruit trees and all hedges along ditches (the best places for trees to cope with reduced rainfall and drought) on or near the development site
    - The bund wall and adjacent screening tree groups
    - The back garden boundary ash and oak trees
    - The mature street frontage oak and birch tree
4. **Retain and enhance existing bund wall** and mature screening vegetation
5. **Reject removal of any trees outside the site boundary**, including in Southern and Western fields
6. Require the applicant to **redesign the proposal to fit within the current brownfield footprint – also giving full access for fire engines to the back of the site. This is currently lacking and I doubt the local fire service could effectively fight a fire in a building of this scale so crammed into a plot with its poor access.**
7. Establish **hedgerow connectivity** between Dale Beck and the River Waveney
8. Invite **public bird surveys** — 28 species can be easily observed near the site versus. However only 6 were identified in the developer's survey. I had 14 species just while hanging my washing in the garden this morning and my house is just 60m away from the site.
9. Ensure **flood mitigation measures** are independently assessed and addressed before approval of any development and recognise the role in trees in regulating surface and ground water.
10. Preserve healthy ash populations in this rare colony — crucial for national ash recovery

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8. Conclusion