

planning statement

williamsarchitects

Studio 8, The Garage Studios
41-45 St Mary's Gate
The Lace Market
Nottingham NG1 1PU

t 0115 945 5691

enquiries@williams-architects.co.uk
www.williams-architects.co.uk

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1.00 INTRODUCTION

- .01.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared to support a planning application for the replacement of two existing buildings at the Mirfield Air Cadet Centre (ATC), Huddersfield Road, Battyeford, Mirfield, WF14 9DQ. It should be read in conjunction with the other documents and drawings that form the planning submission.



aerial view of the site

2.00 LOCATION

2.01 Site context

- .01.1 The Mirfield ATC is located on the southern side of the A644, Huddersfield Road, on the south-western edge of the town of Mirfield. Opposite the site, on the northern side of Huddersfield Road are a number of traditional stone built residential buildings, whilst to the south, east and west, the buildings are predominantly industrial in character.



views looking north from the site, across Huddersfield Road



views looking south from the site

- .01.2 Beyond the industrial units to the rear of the ATC site, lies the River Calder, behind which runs the Huddersfield railway line.

2.02 Site characteristics

- .02.1 The site as existing is used by the Mirfield ATC as their meeting and training centre. There are two existing modular buildings on the site and a storage shed. The site is bounded by a palisade fence which has a double vehicle gate to allow for access from Huddersfield Road.
- .02.2 The existing buildings are located on a level area of hardstanding on the northern part of the site. Beyond this the predominantly grassed part of the site slopes down steeply to the south.
- .02.3 There are mature trees present on the site, clustered around the western, northern and eastern boundaries. The sloping southern part of the site is largely covered in rough grass scrubland.



views of the site, as existing

3.00 PROPOSALS

3.01 Background to the proposals

- .01.1 The proposed development at the Mirfield ATC is to remove the two existing modular buildings from the site and replace these with a new modular building. This project forms part of a nationwide Ministry of Defence (MoD) upgrade of cadet facilities, aimed at improving the training environments for the cadets across the country.
- .01.2 The MoD has undertaken an assessment of the existing buildings on the site and has concluded that they are no longer fit for purpose. The nature of the buildings means that refurbishment would not be a viable option in this case. The MoD have therefore decided that the most beneficial option on this site, to improve the cadet facilities, is to replace the existing buildings with a new modular building, designed and constructed to modern standards.

3.02 Description of the proposals

- .02.1 The proposed new building is a single storey, pitched roof modular building, designed in an L-shaped plan, to make best use of the existing site, retaining the existing entrance gates and perimeter fencing.
- .02.2 The accommodation within the building comprises a Drill Hall, classrooms, offices, flight simulator room, stores, kitchen with servery hatch and WCs.
- .02.3 The main entrance to the building is directly into the Drill Hall, via a ramp or steps. Secondary entrances / exits are provided at the end of each corridor.
- .02.4 A new anti-vandal storage unit is also to be provided on the site for storage of band equipment. It is intended that the existing shed will remain on the site, as will the existing flagpole.

3.03 Appearance

- .03.1 The proposed new building has been designed with a simple palette of materials and in a style that is understated and intended to be long lasting.
- .03.2 The main external walls will be clad in a Plastisol coated metal cladding which has the benefits of high durability, excellent resistance to abrasion and availability in a wide range of colours. The roof will be Kingspan KS10000RW insulated roof panels, which again provide high durability.
- .03.3 The proposed windows are to be uPVC double glazed and the external doors will be steel or powder coated aluminium.
- .03.4 The final colours for these elements are still to be decided, following confirmation from the applicants.
- .03.5 The proposed new band store will be a simple, anti-vandal unit with a profiled metal cladding and matching doorset.

3.04 Access

- .04.1 The existing site access is to be retained as part of the proposals. This allows the existing arrangement for access of pedestrians and the cadet minibus to the site to be retained.
- .04.2 Other than the parking on the cadet minibus on the site, there is no parking provision on the site, as per the current arrangement. There will be no change to the existing intensity of use of the site or times of use of the facility as a result of the development.
- .04.3 Access into the building itself is via a main ramp and steps to the Drill Hall. Secondary entrances / exits are provided at the end of each corridor.

4.00 ASSESSMENT

4.01 Arboricultural Report

- .01.1 The site benefits from the presence of a number of mature trees on the eastern, northern and western boundaries. This helps to provide screening to the site, both from within the site and from users of Huddersfield Road, and contributes to site biodiversity.
- .01.2 As part of the proposals the applicant has requested the removal of a number of trees to improve safety at the site entrance and one tree to enable the construction of the new building.
- .01.3 In response the presence of the trees on the site and the proposal removal of a number of the trees, Arbtech were commissioned to undertake a three stage tree survey for the site: an initial tree survey, followed by an arboricultural impact assessment (AIA) and arboricultural method statement (AMS).
- .01.4 Stage one of the tree survey was undertaken on 12th October 2023 with a summary findings report produced that accompanies the planning application. The tree survey enables the accurate plotting of the tree root protection areas (RPAs) and an understanding of the condition and life span of the trees on the site. The recommendations in the report were that an AIA, AMS and tree protection plan drawing (TPP) be produced to ensure that there are no irrevocable issues to the proposed retained trees as a result of the development.
- .01.5 The AIA, AMS and TPP have been provided and the recommendations from these are to be incorporated into the proposals to avoid any damage to existing trees on the site.
- .01.6 The loss of the trees that are proposed to be removed as part of the development is intended to be mitigated for through the introduction of a new area of planting on the southern, undeveloped portion of the site.
- .01.7 The six proposed new trees have been selected for their benefits to wildlife and are to be accompanied by two new areas of native hedge planting along the southern boundary of the site. Again, the species selected for the hedge planting have been selected for their wildlife supporting credentials.

4.02 Site ecology

- .02.1 Middleton Bell Ecology were commissioned to undertake a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA), which was completed on 5th October 2022. The purpose of the survey was to identify any evidence of bat roosting in the existing buildings and to provide recommendations to enhance the roost potential of the developed site.
- .02.2 The PRA report concluded that no evidence of bat roosting was recorded in the existing buildings and that they were considered to display a negligible level of bat roosting potential.
- .02.3 The survey summary states that no further survey effort would be required providing that works commenced within 24 months of the survey date. Williams-Architects contacted Middleton Bell Ecology in December 2023 to confirm that their report was still valid to accompany a planning application and they confirmed that it was.
- .02.4 The PRA recommended that a tree mounted bat box be erected as part of the proposed scheme. This recommendation has been incorporated into the proposals, with a Greenwood's Ecohabitat Double Crevice Box proposed to be affixed to mature tree G04.
- .02.5 The proposed new native hedge planting to the southern border of the site is also intended to enhance site biodiversity.
- .02.6 The PRA also identified a small area of invasive Himalayan Balsam present on the site. The applicant has since commissioned and implemented an invasive species management plan to address this issue.

4.03 Flood Risk

- .03.1 Paul Waite Associates have produced a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) for the development site and have concluded that the site has the following flood risk levels:

Source of flooding	Risk level
Primary River Flood Risk	Low risk
Surface Water Flood Risk	Low risk
Groundwater Flood Risk	Very low risk
New Drainage System	Very low risk
Reservoir & Artificial Waterbody Flood Risk	Low risk
Climate Change & Residual (Lifecycle) Primary River Flood Risk	Low risk

- .03.2 In addition to the above, the FRA confirms that the site has passed the exception and sequential test and that the proposed development will not adversely affect flood risk on-site or off-site.
- .03.3 The FRA recommended that floor levels of the proposed new building be set at no lower than 51.300m AOD, which is 300mm above the adjacent road level and the same as the floor level of the existing building. This recommendation has been incorporated into the proposals.

4.04 Sustainability & Climate Change

- .04.1 The proposed new building will provide a significantly better building in terms of energy use in operation. The project is targeting a DREAM (MoD sustainability accreditation) 'excellent' rating which will include: achieving a 30% improvement of BER over TER, zoned lighting, occupancy and daylight linked lighting controls, daylight factor equal to or greater than 5%, appliances installed to achieve the Government Buying Standard Best Practice Level and sub-metering to all major energy uses within the building, monitored and controlled by a remote BMS.
- .04.2 The above measures will contribute to significant reductions in operational energy demand when compared to the existing buildings on the site.
- .04.3 A 13kW PV array is proposed to be installed on the southern facing roof, to provide the facility with on-site, renewable, electricity generation.
- .04.4 The construction of the proposed new building itself will be off-site, with the modules transported to site in an almost complete state. This has the advantage of reducing carbon emissions associated with construction, through much more efficient and resourceful use of materials, high levels of quality control and streamlining of material deliveries.
- .04.5 In addition, the DREAM 'excellent' rating requires that at least four of the building elements forming the roof, external walls, windows, insulation, floor finishes and internal walls to be Green Guide A or A+ rated and that timber will be procured in line with the UK Government Timber Procurement Policy for sustainable timber.
- .04.6 Water consumption in the proposed new building will be controlled through a number of measures, as follows: metering capable of being monitored by BMS to all major water uses within the building, rainwater harvesting system to be installed (2,350 litre underground tank & pump), all fittings to be WRAS approved, kitchen taps to be mixer taps with flow rates of <5 litres/minute, wash hand basin taps to have flow rates of <4 litres/minute delivered through either hand detecting spray taps or push button spray taps with timed shut-off, all WCs to have an effective flush volume of <3.5 litres.
- .04.7 The combination of the above water consumption control measures will result in significant water savings over the existing facilities.

- .04.8 The arboricultural and ecology sections above have discussed the biodiversity enhancements that are proposed for the site.
- .04.9 Overall, it is concluded that the proposed new building will offer significant ongoing sustainability benefits in terms of reducing energy and water consumption in the building and that the site ecology will be enhanced through the introduction of new areas of hedge planting and new trees of high ecological value to replace those that are proposed to be removed.

4.05 **Ground conditions**

- .05.1 A Geoenvironmental Appraisal of the site was undertaken by G&M Consulting Ltd in November 2022 to assess the existing ground conditions and assess any contamination on the site.
- .05.2 The report concluded that the end use of the site is classified as a medium/low sensitivity end use to sources of contamination.
- .05.3 The results obtained from the assessment indicate that the made ground tested poses a moderate/high risk to end users through ingestion, dermal contact or inhalation. However, it concluded that if the made ground is left below the existing hardstanding, as is currently proposed then it is considered to pose a negligible risk to end users as any pathways for contaminants to reach end users are severed by the capping of the hardstanding.
- .05.4 A minimum 600mm of clean capping soils were indicated as required to support new soft landscaping on made ground across the site. This is to provide a health medium for plant growth and to remove pathways for exposure to end users to residual contaminants.

5.00 **CONCLUSIONS**

- .01.1 This Planning Statement has set out the context for the proposals, including the existing site context and the background to the project. It has also described the proposals, including brief summaries of the key design and access elements. In addition, the proposals have been assessed in reference to site arboriculture, ecology, flood risk and sustainability/climate change.
- .01.2 The proposed new building at Mirfield ATC will provide a modern, sustainable building, enhancing the training environment for the cadets at this site.
- .01.3 Removing the existing buildings and replacing them with the proposed new building will improve how the site appears from the adjacent street and neighbouring properties.
- .01.4 The felling of several trees as part of the proposals, in order to create a safer site entrance and to allow for the construction of the new building, will be compensated for with new planting to the southern site boundary. The new planting will comprise tree and hedge planting with species selected specifically for their wildlife supporting characteristics. In addition, a new bat box will be installed in one of the existing mature trees on the site, in accordance with the recommendations of the Preliminary Roost Assessment.
- .01.5 The flood risk for the site has been assessed as low or very low for all potential sources of flooding, and floor levels for the proposals have been set at 51.300m AOD, as recommended in the Flood Risk Assessment.
- .01.6 Consideration of sustainability and climate change have been key elements in development of the design of the proposed new building. The project is targeting a DREAM 'excellent' rating which requires the incorporation of many design elements and features which reduce operational energy use, embodied carbon and water use, as well as requiring an improvement in site biodiversity.
- .01.7 The presence of ground contamination was detected in made ground on the site. However, the retention of the existing hardstanding reduces the risk to end users from contamination to

negligible, due to the capping provided by the hardstanding. A minimum of 600mm of clean capping soils will be required for all new soft landscaping on the site.

[end]

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