

Rougham Airfield Planning, Consultation

WHAT

Rougham Airfield is expected to be designated as 'mixed use' plus it is incorporated in a 'housing settlement boundary'. To quote a response from the Planning Officer:

"The site was proposed to West Suffolk Council as being available for development by the landowner and we are now considering it as a preferred option for employment led growth (20 hectares) with some residential. The red line boundary of the site includes the entirety of the land available for development but only part of that land will be required to deliver the homes and jobs needed. As we are still at an early stage in the plan process we do not yet know what the final boundary of the site will be or what other uses will be on those parts of the site not required for development – if indeed the site goes forward to the next stage of plan preparation as at this stage it is a preferred option."

And:

"The information in relation to the proposed allocation at Rougham Airfield (2.02a) is set out in the Bury St Edmunds section of part three of the preferred options local plan. This sets out policy parameters for a future policy that would guide development on this site. [Part Three: Site Allocations - West Suffolk Local Plan \(Regulation 18\) Preferred Options - West Suffolk Planning Policy Consultations \(inconsult.uk\)](#)"

A document titled 'Opportunity & Constraints Study 2022' states:

"At Rougham Airfield the amount of land available suggests the area could accommodate employment and housing, with suitable accessible natural greenspace (SANG) and new community infrastructure. However, an appropriate safeguarding buffer should be provided to protect the setting of the listed control tower and radar rooms and other sensitive features.

Potential area of opportunity on the eastern edge of the town at Rougham Airfield has been identified."

(Bold type is in the document)

WHY

The land is owned by Rougham Estates. The estate has sold an option to Crest Nicholson (developers).

Crest Nicholson commissioned a report in 2020 titled '[Issues and Options Representations - Crest Nicholson](#)' (the link is to a copy I have put on our Club website. It's formatted oddly to suit a plan at the end - you will need to expand it to read the text), which makes chilling reading.

Two extracts:

“Section 3.18

- The Site is currently infrequently used as an airfield with limited opportunities for leisure and recreation use by the wider community. The current use of the Site is very restrictive for such leisure and recreational uses given the safety concerns. We therefore consider that the current allocation is no longer suitable for the Site and that an alternative approach should be taken to more efficiently use the land to provide market and affordable housing to meet identified needs, whilst providing new areas of publically accessible open space and opportunities for leisure and recreation. “

“Section 3.36

- The current allocation of the Site is no longer suitable and should be reconsidered, particularly given that the Site could make a significant contribution towards meeting the identified housing needs within the community. It could provide open spaces and opportunities for the local community to use the Site, with the only part of the current allocation that could not be included being the airfield, with the flight school being able to relocate elsewhere. New community uses could also be provided on Site for a wide range of the community. “

On top of that, the local authority appear to be unaware that our club has used this site for a number of years. They commissioned a [Sports Facilities Assessment](#) in March 2022, which doesn't even identify Model Flying as an activity in the whole borough.

WHEN

NOW.

This phase of the consultation completes on 26 July 2022, 5pm.

This consultation begins a process that sets the local plans in stone until 2040. Refer to the related 'Context' document.

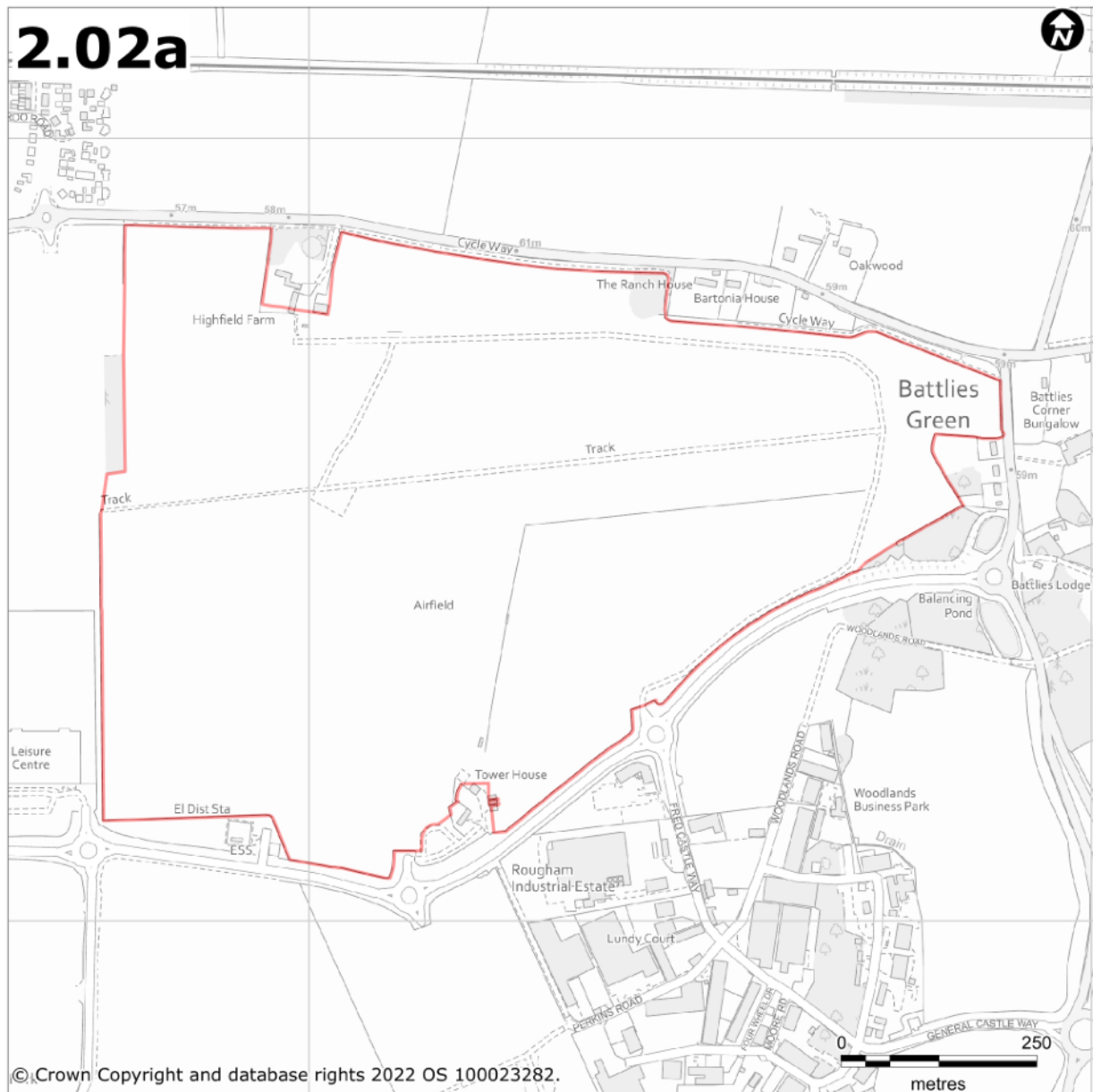
HOW

Responses are requested via West Suffolk's online consultation process - [Part Three: Site Allocations - West Suffolk Local Plan \(Regulation 18\) Preferred Options - West Suffolk Planning Policy Consultations \(inconsult.uk\)](#)

The planning team can be contacted by email, planning.policy@westsuffolk.gov.uk and if you have any questions on any aspect of the consultation, you may contact a member of the strategic planning team on 01284 757368.

WHERE

Rougham Airfield.



WHO

This is a public consultation.

Our club have been specifically invited to respond (once they learned of our existence!) as a group and as individuals.

To quote the Planning Officer:

“I am afraid we have no information on model flying in respect of the local plan. I suggest it would be helpful if you submitted consultation comments to the local plan either online at the link

above, or to this email address, to raise any issues or concerns about the proposals for the airfield or in relation to the flying club.”

(My highlighted text)

And:

“Yes this information can be shared. We can accept responses to the plan on behalf of groups/ clubs if there is a consensus of opinion, but please do include individual signatures and addresses to demonstrate support.”

By implication other users of the airfield, as clubs or individuals, should also be asked to respond.