

Heritage Statement

Site	Land to the south of Hethel Industrial Estate, Hethel
Policy	GNLP2109
Heritage statement collated by	Adam Banham, Principal Planning Policy Officer, Greater Norwich Local Plan Team
Heritage Statement reviewed by	Chris Bennett Senior Heritage & Design Officer, South Norfolk Council
Date undertaken:	June 2021

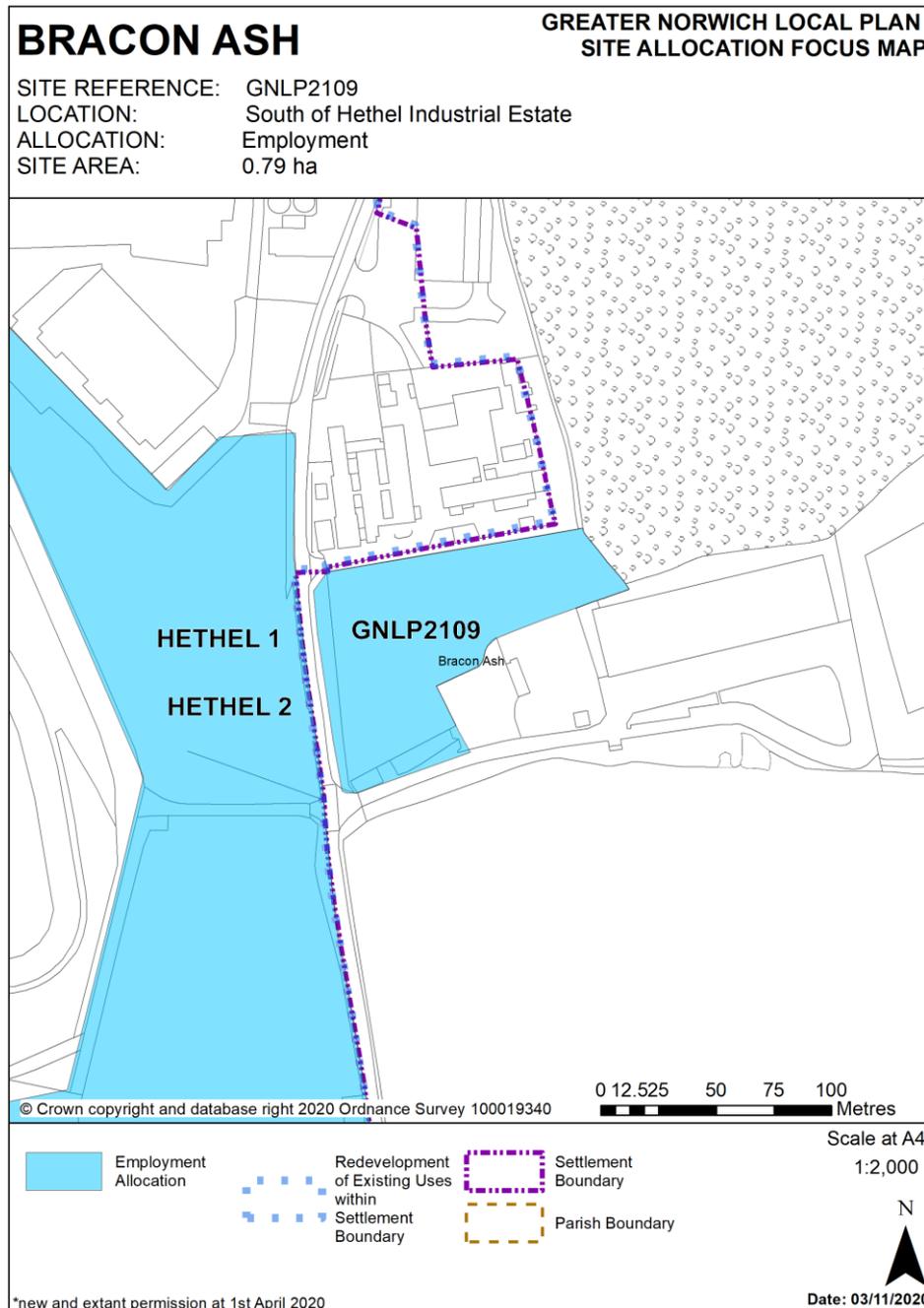


Figure 1

1. Proposed allocation

- 1.1 Site GNLP2109 on land to the south of Hethel Industrial Estate, Hethel is proposed as an employment allocation in the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) for uses associated with, or ancillary to, advanced engineering and technology-based business.

2. Site description

- 2.1 The site measures approximately 0.79 hectares. It is located to the south of Hethel industrial estate and the east of Potash Lane and is currently in use for storage but is undeveloped.



Figure 2: Aerial photos¹

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- 2.2 The area proposed to be allocated is bounded by industrial development to the north and to the south-east, Potash Lane to the west and Brunel House to the south. Hethel Wood abuts the north-east corner of the site. The site was proposed for allocation at the Regulation 18C stage to allow additional capacity for the continued growth of the allocated advanced engineering proposals in the South Norfolk Local Plan.
- 2.3 To the north-west of the site Lotus Cars manufacturing plant and test track provides a hi-tech engineering centre of regional importance. This lies to the west of Potash Lane, opposite Hethel Wood, creating a highly industrialised contrast to its countryside setting.

3. Heritage Assets

- 3.1 There are no heritage assets on the site itself
- 3.2 There is one listed heritage asset within the immediate vicinity of the site which is of relevance. The listing by Historic England states:

Heritage Asset	Grade	Listing	Assessment
Little Potash (Brunel House)	Grade II	<u>1050694</u>	A late C16 or early C17 lobby-entrance type cottage. Apparent timber frame with a brick plinth, rendered brick infill and a pantiled roof. 2 Storeys with attic and 5 pairs of irregularly spaced principal posts. 2 boarded doors with lean-to hoods, one opposite off-centre axial stack. 3 4-light chamfered mullion widows replacing former 6-light diamond mullion windows. 2 single light windows and one C20 window. Chamfered mullion windows in gable-end. Later external stack to rear, main stack with angled shafts and original winding stair to side. Timber framed lean-to to north side.

- 3.3 Aside from Little Potash/Brunel House, other heritage assets are distant from GNLP2109, and are also visually separated by hedgerows, trees and other buildings. The nearest of these is Corporation Farmhouse, Grade II listed C17 and later, approximately 450m to the south of the site along Wymondham Road.

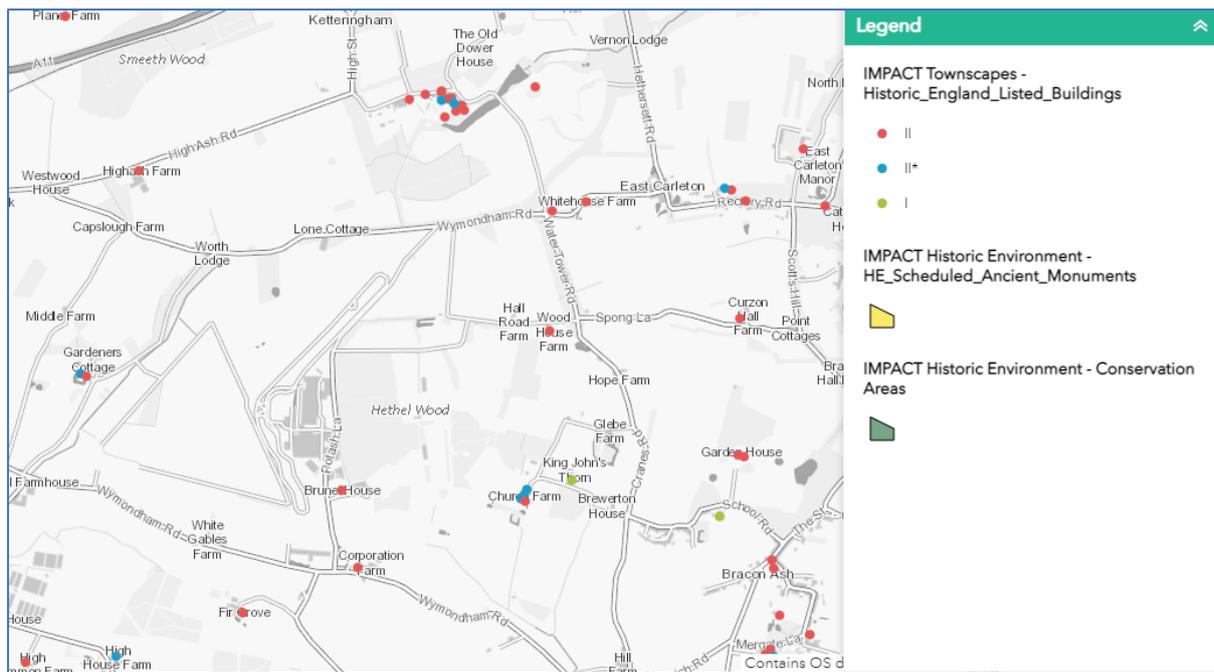


Figure 3: Heritage assets²

4. Recent relevant planning history

4.1 There is no recent planning history on the site itself. Light industrial units have been developed to the south-east of the site, and Classic Team Lotus shop has been developed to the north of the site.

5. What is the heritage of site and why is it important, what aspects contribute to its significance?

Archaeological significance	The site, along with much of the surrounding land, is part of the former Hethel (WWII) Airfield. Given the greenfield status of the site should any archaeological investigations be thought necessary these could be controlled by planning condition.
Architectural significance	Due to its greenfield nature the site itself has no architectural significance but the adjacent listed building would need to be considered in the development of the site.
Historic Significance	The historic significance of site GNLP2109 relates to its former use as an airfield. However, most of the airfield has been developed. The significance of the site on its own is low due to its status as a greenfield site. It has no apparent historic relationship to the adjacent Little Potash/Brunel House, although it does contribute a more rural context to the otherwise industrialised surroundings of the listed building.

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Landscape Significance	Due to industrial development adjacent to and near the site, the development of site 2109 is likely to have limited landscape impacts other than potentially from buildings to the south-east and along the approach to the site along Potash Lane from the south.
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6. How will allocation and the development proposals impact upon this heritage and its significance?

6.1 The site itself has little heritage value although development does have the potential to impact upon its surroundings. A summary of these impacts are given in the sections below:

Views

- 6.2 The development of the site would be adjacent to Little Potash/Brunel House. However, the boundary is screened with dense tree/hedge vegetation and views are unlikely to be impacted. However, the development does have the potential to have a limited impact on more distant views from the nearby Grade II listed Corporation Farmhouse and surrounding buildings.
- 6.3 The site is located opposite a landscaping buffer, which separates the site from the Lotus test track. Potash Lane is bounded by hedgerows which effectively screens the site from views to and from the west.
- 6.4 As there is significant industrial development to the north of the site it is not considered that the development would have any significant impact on setting or views to or from this direction.
- 6.5 There is likely to be a view of the development from Potash Lane when approaching the site from the south, but the surrounding context is of an industrial/rural nature. Development of the site is not considered to alter the character of the surrounding area.

Layout, height and massing

6.6 It is considered to be possible to soften the impact of the development on the heritage assets and surrounding landscape through design and layout decisions such as the height and positioning of buildings and materials used.

Impact upon conservation area

6.7 The nearest conservation area is Mulbarton Common, over 3km distant from the site. There is judged to be no impact.

Nearby heritage assets

6.8 Whilst there are no heritage assets on the site, there is one listed building in close proximity. The curtilage of Little Potash/Brunel House is bounded by trees

and visual impact on its setting is likely to be limited. There could be impact from noise disturbance but this is likely to exist already considering the industrialised nature of the surrounding development. The setting of Corporation Farmhouse is less vulnerable, and could be addressed with landscape screening. It is considered that a proposal could be designed and laid out in such a way as to have minimal impact on heritage assets.

Archaeology

- 6.9 There are no archaeological finds on the site or elsewhere on the airfield site. Given the green field status of the site should any archaeological investigations be thought necessary these could be controlled by planning condition.

7. Sustainability Appraisal Findings

- 7.1 The pre-mitigation impact matrix (Table E.2.1) for all reasonable alternative sites in the Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Greater Norwich Local Plan Volume 3 – appendices shows that site GNLP2109 scores a minor negative for historic environment and a minor negative for landscape however this has changed to a neutral for both historic environment and for landscape in the post mitigation impact matrix (Table E.3.15).

- 7.2 With regard to site GNLP2109 SA objective 13 (Historic environment) (F.15.1.14) states that:

‘Site GNLP2109 is located adjacent to the Grade II Listed Building ‘Little Potash’ and approximately 420m from ‘Corporation Farmhouse’. The site policy states that the development should incorporate “*layout and design to protect the residential amenity of nearby Grade II Little Potash (Brunel House)*”, as well as “*adequate landscaping and green infrastructure*”. Furthermore, the policy states that the “*Historic Environment Service to be consulted to determine any need for archaeological surveys prior to development*”. Alongside the requirements of GNLP and Local Plan policies, this would be expected to ensure that the character and setting of Listed Buildings is conserved. Overall, a negligible impact on the historic environment would be expected’.

8. Summary

- 8.1 Consideration of the height and position of industrial development would minimise the impact upon the nearby heritage assets. The main issue for consideration at the planning application stage is the setting of the Grade II listed Little Potash/Brunel House to the south-east of the site.

9. How can these effects be avoided, reduced or mitigated?

9.1 The successful development of the site will be dependent upon the precise detailing which can be dealt with through the planning application and through the use of conditions. Key issues that have been identified in terms of reducing and mitigating any potential negative impacts are as follows:

- Development should be carried out in a way that protects views of the site
- An appropriate programme of archaeological investigation should be carried out.
- The height of buildings should be carefully considered in order to ensure that they have an acceptable relationship with the adjacent listed building.

9.2 Brunel House is recognised as a key heritage asset in paragraph 4.42 of the site allocations document. Within the policy for GNLP2109, the importance of heritage assets is addressed as follows:

'Layout and design to protect the residential amenity of nearby Grade II Little Potash (Brunel House).'

'Historic Environment Service to be consulted to determine any need for archaeological surveys prior to development.'

10. Justification for the allocation

10.1 Based on an assessment of all the features of site GNLP2109, it has been allocated for employment to allow further development related to the advanced engineering and technology-based businesses in this area. It is considered that the site is able to accommodate the proposed level of development without having a detrimental impact upon the historic environment. The allocation is therefore justified.

References

Historic England
<https://historicengland.org.uk/>

Norfolk Historic Environment Record <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/libraries-local-history-and-archives/archaeology-and-historic-environment/historic-environment-record>

Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Greater Norwich Local Plan https://www.gnlp.org.uk/sites/gnlp/files/2021-01/LC-663_Vol_3of3_Appendices_3_250121LB_compressed_Jan_2021.pdf