



Home Office

Wethersfield Phasing Scheme

V2.0 (September 2026)

Revision History

Version	Author and Job Title	Date of Change	Paragraph No.	Purpose/Change
2.0	 AAP Project Team	Sep 2026	All	Updated to illustrate the phasing plan for operating Wethersfield at a permanent year-round occupancy of 1,245 Service Users. This replaces the previous phasing plan for operating at 800 BAU bedspaces and 445 contingency/surge bedspaces (see annex A).

The contents of this document will be kept under periodic review, at least every six months, collaboratively by Home Office and Clearsprings Ready Homes representatives and, where appropriate, will be updated.

The next scheduled review is **January 2027**.

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1. Introduction

This Phasing Scheme has been prepared to set out the phases in which facilities and services are made available to asylum seekers, known as Service Users, accommodated at the Wethersfield site as permanent site occupancy increases from 800 to 1,245 Service Users. It reflects the Home Office decision to operate the site at a permanent Business As Usual (BAU) capacity of 1,245 Service Users from summer 2026, increasing from 800, with no separate surge or contingency capacity.

The site has been operational since 12 July 2023. Planning permission was granted until 10 April 2027 via The Town and Country Planning (Former RAF Airfield Wethersfield) (Accommodation for Asylum-Seekers etc.) Special Development Order 2024¹. The Order grants planning permission for up to 1,700 single adult male Service Users, between the ages of 18 and 65, to be accommodated on the site, subject to the conditions set out in the Order. The site has capacity to accommodate 1,245 Service Users.

Condition 21 of the Order restricted occupancy to 580 Service Users until a phasing scheme had been submitted and approved. This condition was discharged on 31 January 2025 on approval of a phasing scheme (annex A). Permanent site occupancy was increased to 800 with a further 445 contingency bedspaces reserved for temporary use should demand require it. Over 4 months in autumn 2025, the site operated with an occupancy of 1180, during a period of high demand. During this time, concerns with the resilience of the electrical infrastructure were identified. A programme of works to deliver increased resilience has completed, giving confidence that the electrical infrastructure will support a permanent occupation of 1,245.

Facilities and services on the site were originally designed to support up to 1,700 Service Users. The revised permanent BAU capacity of 1,245 therefore remains below the capacity permitted by the Order and within the constructed capacity currently available at Wethersfield. The governance processes set out in this document will continue to ensure that the site remains safe, stable, compliant and able to meet the needs of resident Service Users.

This revised document illustrates the operational phasing approach for increasing occupancy and running the site at 1,245 Service Users as the permanent BAU capacity, including the way in which facilities and services will be reviewed and adjusted as occupancy increases.

The previously approved Phasing Scheme is included at Annex A for reference.

¹ [The Town and Country Planning \(Former RAF Airfield Wethersfield\) \(Accommodation for Asylum-Seekers etc.\) Special Development Order 2024](#)

2. Facilities and Services to be Made Available

The facilities and services to be made available (in accordance with Condition 24) of the Order include the following:

Healthcare

Condition 24 of the Order sets out the minimum requirements for the composition of the on-site medical team and provision of other services. Parts of the Order are

- (2) The facility is a medical isolation facility for resident service users, with at least 28 isolation beds and access to sufficient nursing staff to provide care to those who may be accommodated in it.*
- (3) A medical centre for resident service users on the Order land—*
- (a) staffed by an on-site medical team comprising at least—*
 - (i) a health care assistant;*
 - (ii) a mental health nurse;*
 - (iii) a general nurse;*
 - (iv) an advanced nurse practitioner;*
 - (v) a general practitioner,*
 - (b) where resident service users may—*
 - (i) register with a general practitioner;*
 - (ii) book and attend appointments with on-site medical staff;*
 - (iii) book appointments to receive other services specified in sub-paragraph (4);*
 - (iv) be treated for minor injuries and illnesses.*

replicated below:

The Services outlined in sub-paragraph 4 of Condition 24 are:

Security

The Order also notes at Condition 24(5):

- (5) The service is that suitably trained security personnel are stationed on the Order land at all times.*

Transport

In regard to transport, the Order provides at Condition 24(6):

- (6) *The service is the provision of-*
- (a) *a regular free shuttle bus service for resident service users from the Order land to Braintree, Colchester and Chelmsford, with—*
 - (i) *buses departing for and arriving from each of these destinations at least three times a day;*
 - (ii) *each bus having the capacity to seat at least 16 service users;*
 - (b) *such other transport services as are necessary to enable resident service users to access the services specified in sub-paragraph (4), or hospital appointments.*

Water Supply

The potable water supply utilises the existing Site connection and additional reinforcement through the installation of booster tanks to support a Site occupancy of 1,245 service users. Condition 6(3) (Drainage and Drinking Water) of the Order, was discharged in November 2024 subject to a restriction that no more than 1245 Service Users may be accommodated at any one time.

Catering

To provide SUs with on-site catering facilities which include the provision of three meals a day, which will be served on Site in a designated dining area.

3. Phases for Services and Facilities

The site will operate at a permanent BAU capacity of 1,245 Service Users. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] All 1,245 constructed bedspaces will be treated as available BAU capacity, subject to the operational readiness checks, weekly Inflow Impact Review process and commercial governance arrangements described in this document.

Occupancy will be increased in a controlled and manageable way. Inflow will be subject to a maximum of 100 Service Users per week and 50 Service Users per day, unless another number is agreed through the weekly Inflow Impact Review meeting. Two phasing scenarios have been included to show both the standard phasing of 60 SUs per week and the maximum phasing of 100 per week, which may be implemented should demand require it. Stabilisation periods, where inflow is paused, are built into the phasing plan. The inflow rate may be reduced or paused where service provision, site stability, isolation capacity, transport capacity, dining capacity, security provision, healthcare capacity or wider operational factors indicate that doing so is necessary.

Mechanisms for Adjusting Provision of Facilities and Services

The phasing of services and facilities is governed by two overarching processes: commercial governance and operational governance via weekly Inflow Impact Review meetings. Together, these processes ensure that the site remains stable, safe, compliant and able to meet the needs of Service Users as the population increases to and is maintained at 1,245.

The weekly Inflow Impact Review meeting provides a structured forum for the Home Office, Clearsprings Ready Homes, medical providers, welfare and support providers, facilities management, policing partners and other relevant stakeholders to consider whether planned inflow can proceed. Where concerns cannot be adequately mitigated, inflow will be reduced or paused until the issue has been satisfactorily addressed.

Operational Governance Process – Weekly Inflow Impact Review Meetings

A weekly Inflow Impact Review meeting is held every [REDACTED] to discuss site operations, raise and consider issues, and review the level of provision of facilities and services on site before the following week's inflow is agreed. The purpose of the meeting is to ensure that the site remains safe, stable and compliant, and that the needs of both current and incoming Service Users can continue to be met as the site operates at a permanent BAU capacity of 1,245 Service Users.

The meeting is led by the Home Office Oversight Team and includes representatives from relevant service providers and stakeholders. Attendees may include:

- Home Office Oversight Team
- Home Office Service Delivery Managers [REDACTED]
- Clearsprings Ready Homes Site Manager
- Commisceo
- Integrated Care Board
- Migrant Help
- Essex Police
- Kier
- Other service partners or stakeholders as required

The meeting follows a structured agenda to ensure that all relevant facilities, services and operational considerations are reviewed before a decision is taken on the following week's inflow. The agenda provides a framework for discussion and acts as a "health check" for the site. The questions are illustrative and may vary depending on operational circumstances, but they support consistent consideration of whether the proposed inflow can be safely and effectively accommodated.

The weekly review will consider, as a minimum, the following areas:

- 1. Security provision and incidents recorded on site**

Consideration is given to any incidents that have occurred since the previous

intake, current security staffing, site stability, and whether any operational or resourcing concerns would affect the proposed inflow for the following week.

2. Discretionary and recreational activities

The availability and utilisation of recreational and enrichment activities are reviewed to confirm whether there is sufficient provision for the current and proposed Service User population.

3. Transport capacity

Shuttle bus provision, available seats, journey demand and any demand-led transport requirements are reviewed. This includes consideration of whether the current transport arrangements are sufficient to support the proposed inflow and the overall Service User population on site.

4. Medical centre provision and isolation facility

Medical appointment capacity, staffing, arrival health screening arrangements, infectious disease management, medical incidents and isolation bed availability are reviewed. Particular consideration is given to the number of isolation beds currently occupied, the nature and likely duration of any isolation requirements, and whether the remaining capacity is sufficient to support proposed inflow.

5. Dining hall provision and catering arrangements

The dining hall capacity, mealtime arrangements and catering provision are reviewed to confirm that all Service Users can continue to access meals and refreshments appropriately. Where required, sitting times or mealtime arrangements may be adjusted to support the 1,245 BAU population.

6. Daily site stability assessment and service delivery considerations

The Home Office Service Delivery Team considers whether there are any operational, safeguarding, assurance or site stability concerns that would impact the arrival or onboarding of new Service Users.

7. Appointments, client advisers and welfare support

The availability of appointments, ASF1 support, drop-in sessions, advice provision and wider welfare support is considered to ensure that incoming and resident Service Users can access appropriate support.

8. Any other business

Any additional issues relevant to site operation, service provision, planned inflow or Service User welfare may be raised.

As a result of the Inflow Impact Review, the level of services provided on site is actively reviewed before any decision is made regarding the number of Service Users to be inflowed the following week. Meetings and decisions are recorded [REDACTED]. This enables the on-site team to manage intake in an informed and controlled way, including reducing or pausing inflow where there is a risk that the site may not be able to adequately support the onboarding of new Service Users.

Where an issue is identified that requires adjustment to facilities, services or operational arrangements, inflow may be paused and an additional impact review

meeting may be arranged. This allows time for the required adjustments to be explored, implemented and tested before further inflow is agreed.

If it is determined that non-medical service provision is inadequate and a significant change to scope is required, the matter will be escalated through the relevant commercial governance process. Where changes relate to medical centre provision, appointment capacity or operating hours, these will be considered with the medical provider and health partners through the appropriate healthcare governance and commercial arrangements.

For clarity, the Home Office will reduce or pause inflow if a concern or issue identified at the weekly Inflow Impact Review meeting cannot be adequately and satisfactorily mitigated. This review process will continue throughout the operation of the site and will remain the primary mechanism for ensuring that facilities and services are appropriately monitored and adjusted to support a permanent BAU population of up to 1,245 Service Users.

Table 1: Phasing of Facilities and Services for an increase in Permanent BAU Capacity from 800 to 1,245 Service Users

Weeks from start of revised BAU Operations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Constructed Capacity	1245	1245	1245	1245	Review Period (inflow paused)	1245	1245	1245	1245	1245	1245
BAU Bedspaces Available	1245	1245	1245	1245	1245	1245	1245	1245	1245	1245	1245
Indicative Bedspaces Occupied	772	832	892	952	952	1012	1072	1132	1192	1217	1217
Isolation Beds Available (at any one time)	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
BAU Bedspaces Unoccupied	445	385	325	265	265	205	145	85	25	0	0
Inflow Rate	Maximum 60 Service Users per week and 30 Service Users per day, subject to weekly Inflow Impact Review approval. Inflow may be reduced or paused where operational readiness, service provision or site stability requires it.										
Medical Services and Facilities	Medical services and facilities remain in place throughout. The on-site medical centre has 19 rooms and the medical staffing model will continue to be monitored with health partners through weekly review arrangements.										
Security	Security provision remains in place 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Staffing levels are reviewed by the service provider in line with site configuration, accommodation blocks in use, incidents and operational need.										
Transport	Shuttle bus and demand-led transport provision continues throughout. Transport capacity, usage and additional journey requirements are reviewed through weekly Inflow Impact Review meetings.										
Catering	Catering provision continues throughout and is flexed to support the permanent BAU population of up to 1,245 Service Users, including adjustment of mealtime arrangements where required.										

Table 2: Accelerated Phasing of Facilities and Services for an increase in Permanent BAU Capacity from 800 to 1,245 Service Users

Weeks from start of revised BAU Operations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Constructed Capacity	1245	1245	1245	Review Period (inflow paused)	1245	1245	1245	1245
BAU Bedspaces Available	1245	1245	1245	1245	1245	1245	1245	1245
Indicative Bedspaces Occupied	772	872	972	972	1,072	1,172	1,217	1,217
Isolation Beds Available (at any one time)	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
BAU Bedspaces Unoccupied	445	345	245	245	145	45	0	0
Inflow Rate	Maximum 100 Service Users per week and 50 Service Users per day, subject to weekly Inflow Impact Review approval. Inflow may be reduced or paused where operational readiness, service provision or site stability requires it.							
Medical Services and Facilities	Medical services and facilities remain in place throughout. The on-site medical centre has 19 rooms and the medical staffing model will continue to be monitored with health partners through weekly review arrangements.							
Security	Security provision remains in place 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Staffing levels are reviewed by the service provider in line with site configuration, accommodation blocks in use, incidents and operational need.							
Transport	Shuttle bus and demand-led transport provision continues throughout. Transport capacity, usage and additional journey requirements are reviewed through weekly Inflow Impact Review meetings.							
Catering	Catering provision continues throughout and is flexed to support the permanent BAU population of up to 1,245 Service Users, including adjustment of mealtime arrangements where required.							

4. Description of Phasing of Facilities

Service Users accommodated: The number of Service Users accommodated on site will increase from 800 to the permanent BAU capacity of 1,245. Inflow will normally occur on scheduled intake days and will be informed by operational demand, availability of suitable Service Users, planned dispersals, site stability and readiness of services and facilities.

As occupancy approaches the permanent BAU capacity of 1,245 Service Users, inflow will pause at approximately 1,000 occupants to allow a period of operational review. This review will enable the Home Office, Clearsprings Ready Homes and relevant stakeholders to assess the operation of the site, the effectiveness of service provision and any impacts associated with the increased occupancy before inflow resumes.

Healthcare: Medical and healthcare services are available on site and free at the point of use. The provision is developed with health partners and monitored through weekly review processes. The on-site medical centre provides appointment capacity, arrival health screening, access to prescribed medication, mental health support and other healthcare pathways.

Isolation bedspaces: The site includes 28 isolation bedspaces. These are used for medical isolation and, where appropriate, to accommodate Service Users temporarily where an unsuitability criterion is identified pending relocation. Isolation capacity will be reviewed at each weekly Inflow Impact Review meeting. If capacity is under pressure, inflow may be reduced or paused.

Security: Security personnel are stationed on site at all times. The site operator is responsible for determining the appropriate security model and for adjusting provision in response to the accommodation blocks in use, incidents, population levels and other operational factors. Security provision is a standing agenda item for weekly review.

Transport: A free shuttle bus service operates between the site and Braintree, Colchester and Chelmsford, with a minimum frequency as required by the Order. Additional journeys and demand-led transport may be provided where required. Transport use, capacity and demand are reviewed through the weekly Inflow Impact Review process.

Catering and dining: Three meals a day are provided on site. The dining area can support the increase to a 1,245 BAU population through managed sittings and adjusted mealtime arrangements. Catering provision and dining hall capacity are reviewed as part of operational governance and may be flexed to ensure all Service Users have sufficient access to meals and refreshments.

Other facilities: Recreational, welfare and enrichment facilities are made available to Service Users and reviewed through operational governance processes. Service User engagement and feedback mechanisms provide further information to support ongoing adjustments to service provision.

5. Unsuitability Criterion

Each Service User's suitability for accommodation at Wethersfield will be assessed at regular intervals and whenever concerns are raised by on-site staff. If a Service User is assessed as unsuitable for accommodation on the site, they will be moved to alternative accommodation that is more appropriate for their individually assessed needs.

If the Home Secretary concludes that a Service User meets an unsuitability criterion, or another relevant reason under the Order applies, the Service User will not be accommodated on the site for more than 48 hours after the decision, except where required to avoid or mitigate a risk to welfare or where the 48-hour period falls over a weekend or public holiday. During this period, the Service User will be accommodated separately from other residents and treated in a way that takes account of the matter that makes accommodation at Wethersfield unsuitable for them.

The 28 isolation bedspaces will continue to provide temporary separated accommodation where required. The use of the isolation facility will be monitored through weekly Inflow Impact Review meetings. Where isolation capacity is of concern, inflow will be reduced or paused until the concern has been addressed.

6. Interrelationship of Phasing Plan to Other Conditions and Dependencies

This Phasing Scheme has been developed in the context of the Special Development Order and the wider operational documentation for Wethersfield, including the Operational Management Plan and Local Services Plan. The approach set out in this document is intended to demonstrate how facilities and services will be maintained and adjusted to support a permanent BAU capacity of 1,245 Service Users.

Condition 21 has previously been discharged. This revised scheme does not seek to introduce surge capacity. Instead, it describes how the site will operate within the constructed 1,245 bedspace capacity as the permanent BAU operating model, while remaining below the 1,700 Service User capacity permitted by the Order.

7. Facilities Plan

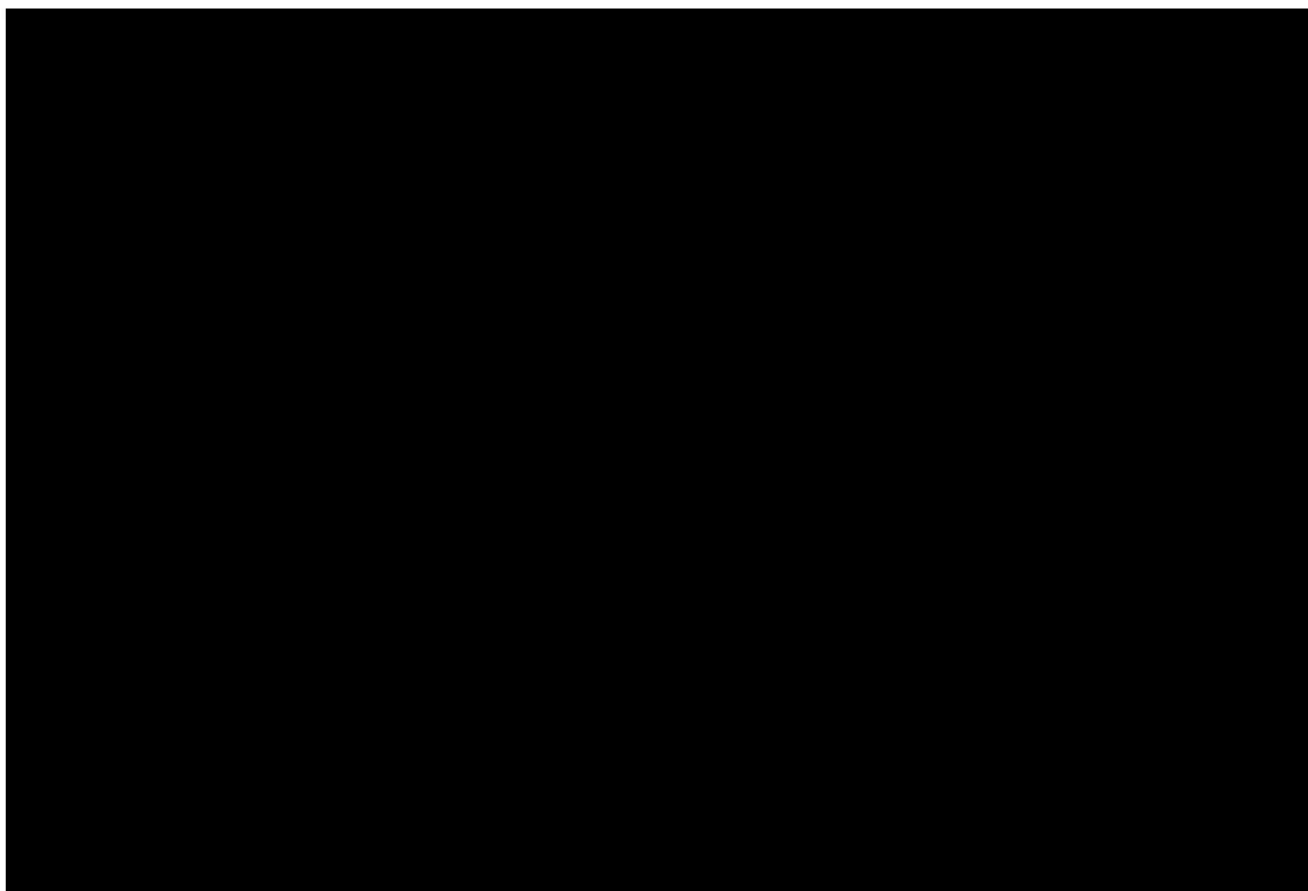
The below plan (Figure 1) demonstrates the accommodation, medical, isolation, catering, security, transport and welfare facilities available to support the site

operating at 1,245 Service Users as permanent BAU capacity. The accommodation areas previously described as contingency bedspaces should now be identified as part of the permanent BAU bedspace provision.

The isolation block contains the 28 isolation bedspaces. Catering facilities are available from the start of BAU operation and can be managed through sittings and adjusted mealtime arrangements.

Primary healthcare provision, welfare support, transport arrangements and security provision remain available throughout operation and are reviewed through weekly governance.

Figure 1 Red Line Boundary – Accommodation sector



8. Summary

This revised Phasing Scheme illustrates the proposed operating model for Wethersfield as the permanent BAU occupancy of 800 increased to 1,245 Service Users. It removes the previous distinction between 800 BAU bedspaces and 445 contingency or surge bedspaces and treats the full constructed capacity of 1,245 as the site's permanent BAU occupancy.

The site's facilities and services were originally designed to support up to 1,700 Service Users. These will continue to be monitored and adjusted through weekly Inflow Impact Review meetings and commercial governance arrangements. These

mechanisms provide a structured process for ensuring that healthcare, isolation, security, transport, catering, welfare and other operational arrangements remain appropriate for the number of Service Users accommodated on site.

Inflow to the site will be controlled and manageable, with a regular inflow of 60 Service Users per week (30 per day) up to a maximum of 100 Service Users per week and 50 Service Users per day, subject to the outcome of weekly operational readiness reviews. Where a concern is identified and cannot be adequately mitigated, inflow will be reduced or paused until the issue has been satisfactorily addressed.

Occupancy will continue to increase towards 1,245 Service Users; however, a review/stabilisation period will be introduced at approximately 1,000 occupants to enable operational teams and stakeholders to assess the performance and suitability of site services and facilities before further inflow takes place.

The Home Office is satisfied that the approach set out in this document provides a clear phasing plan for operating Wethersfield at 1,245 Service Users as permanent BAU capacity, while maintaining appropriate governance, review and mitigation processes to ensure the needs of resident Service Users continue to be met.

Annex A – Phasing scheme (December 2024)



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