



Ashfield District Council
Urban Road
Kirkby-in-Ashfield
NG17 8DA

21st January 2026

Dear Sir/ Madam,

Planning Application Ref V/2026/0008

**Three Stacked Storage Containers Forming an Archway for the Purpose of an Entrance
Pink Self Storage, Unit 3, Southwell Lane Industrial Estate, Kirkby in Ashfield, Nottinghamshire, NG17
8GJ**

Introduction

We act on behalf of Pink Self Storage in respect of a retrospective planning application for the above development.

Planning Policy Context

Part 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) relates to 'Achieving Well-Designed Places'. It states, amongst other things:

"Plans should, at the most appropriate level, set out a clear design vision and expectations, so that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable. Design policies should be developed with local communities so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics." (Para 132).

"To provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage, all local planning authorities should prepare design guides or codes consistent with the principles set out in the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code, and which reflect local character and design preferences. Design guides and codes provide a local framework for creating beautiful and distinctive places with a consistent and high quality standard of design. Their geographic coverage, level of detail and degree of prescription should be tailored to the circumstances and scale of change in each place, and should allow a suitable degree of variety." (Para 133).

In this context, the design guidance offered by Ashfield District Council in respect of commercial development is limited to Policy ST1 (parts a. & b.) of the Ashfield Local Plan Review (ALPR) 2002, which states:

DEVELOPMENT WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE:-

- a) IT WILL NOT CONFLICT WITH OTHER POLICIES IN THIS LOCAL PLAN,

- b) IT WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE CHARACTER, QUALITY, AMENITY OR SAFETY OF THE ENVIRONMENT

In lieu of any quantifiable local policy/guidance against which to assess the design merits of the development, Para 135 of the NPPF states:

Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.*

Site Context

In order to assess the impact of development on the character or quality of an area, it is necessary to first establish what the pre-existing character and quality is.

Wider Context

The appeal site is located within Southwell Industrial Estate, an established industrial estate towards the north of Kirby in Ashfield. The site contains a mix of commercial and industrial uses, including a large construction training facility (which accounts for the majority of the estate), manufacturing firms and open storage. The appeal site is located towards the southern end of the industrial estate, adjacent to Southwell Lane.

Fig.1 The site in the Context of Southwell Industrial Estate



As is typical of industrial estates, Southwell Industrial Estate contains a range of large commercial buildings and structures, including:

- Large (2 to 3 storey) industrial/manufacturing sheds
- 3 to 4 storey industrial plant structures
- Two storey office buildings
- Other commercial buildings and open storage

A number of these buildings are shown in the images below.

Fig.2 Large, double-height industrial sheds, and associated 3-4 Storey Plant Structures in Southwell Industrial Estate



Fig.3 Large, 2 Storey Office Block in Southwell Industrial Estate



With regard to the wider land uses, to the south and west of Southwell Industrial Estate are existing residential areas, to the north is woodland, and the east (beyond a railway line) is another industrial estate (Welshcroft Close).

Fig.4 Southwell Industrial Estate in its Context



Immediate Context

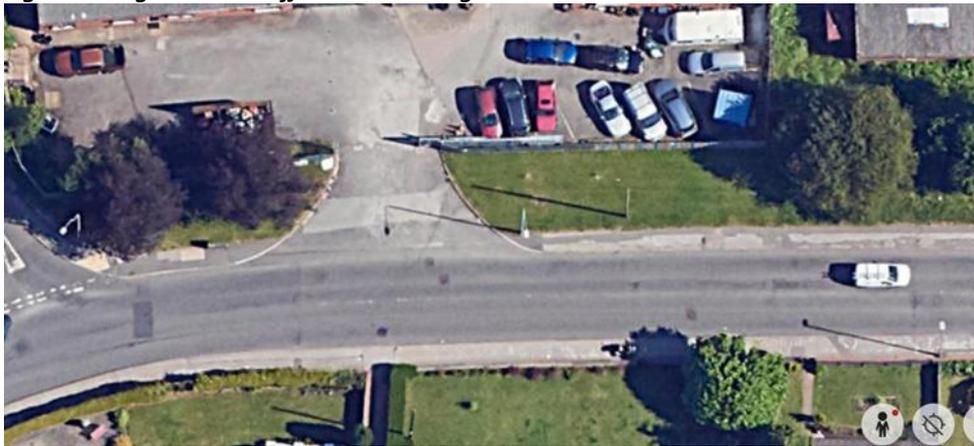
As identified above, the appeal site is located at the southern end of Southwell Industrial Estate, adjacent to Southwell Lane. Southwell Lane at this location represents a demarcation between the residential area to the south, which is characterised by single and two storey dwellings, and the industrial estate to the north, which (as identified above) is characterised by larger industrial/commercial buildings and structure. This is most clearly evidenced in the image at Fig?? below, which shows the residential area on the right, and commercial/industrial area on the left.

Fig.5 Delineation between the industrial area of Southwell Industrial Estate and the Residential Area to the South



Also evident from the above images is the presence of a nearly continuous tree buffer along the northern edge of Southwell Lane where it bounds Southwell Industrial Estate. This comprises primarily of tree planting largely screens the industrial estate from views from Southwell Lane and the residential properties to the south, with only oblique views of the industrial units. There are two significant breaks in this tree buffer - one of these is where the primary estate road serving the industrial estate (Summit Close) is accessed from Southwell Lane; the other is the access to the application site together with a stretch of land directly to the east of this, immediately in front of the archway to which the application relates. There is evidence from historic aerial photography that there was previously tree planting in this location, but it appears to have been removed sometime prior to 2019.

Fig.6 Existing Break in Buffer Tree Planting



Assessment

The application seeks retrospective planning permission for an archway entrance to the existing Pink Self-Storage site. The archway is formed of 28-foot containers stood on end, with a 40-foot container forming the top of the arch, as detailed in the plan on at Fig.7 overleaf. The overall height of the structure is circa 8.5m, equivalent to the height of a two-storey dwelling and the buildings typically seen across the industrial estate. With a depth of just 2.4m to the highway frontage however, the overall mass of the structure when viewed from the Southwell Lane and the residential properties to the south is not significant. The design of the archway, utilising the same shipping containers which are present across the site (and have been for in excess of 10 years) is both visually interesting and appropriate to its context. In the context of an industrial estate which contains a range of large commercial buildings and structures, including large (2 to 3 storey) industrial/manufacturing sheds, 3 to 4 storey industrial plant structures, 2 storey office buildings and other commercial buildings and open storage (as detailed in the imagery below), the development represents an appropriate addition, and certainly does not give rise to an adversely detrimental impact on the character or quality of the environment.

Fig.7 Elevation Plans of the Application Structure

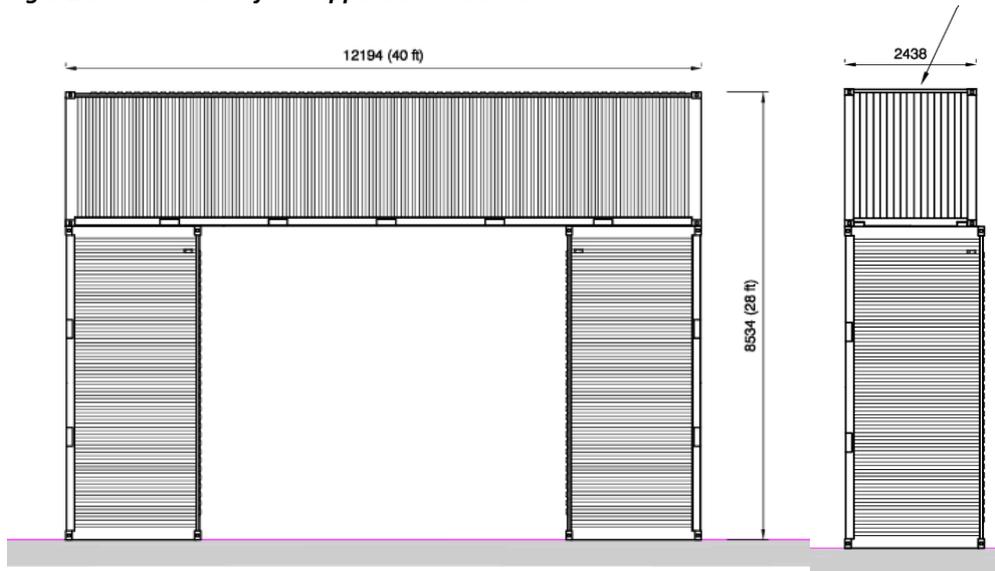
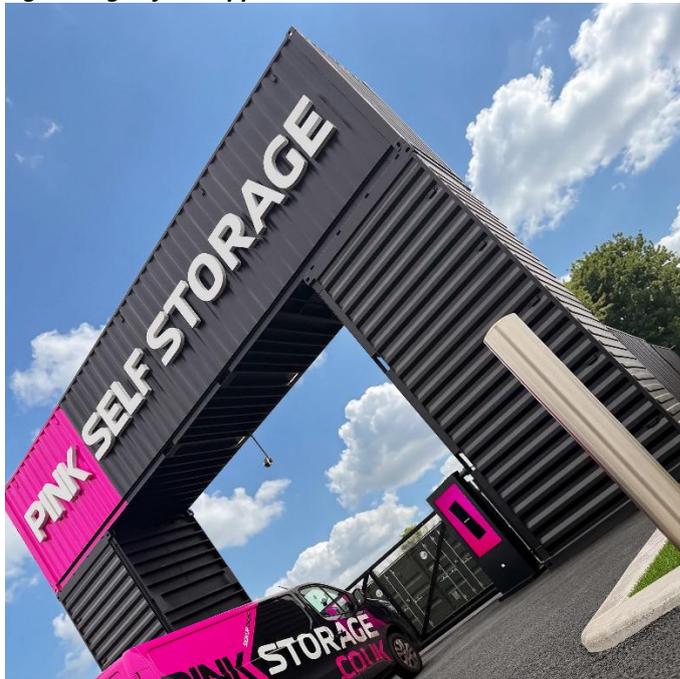


Fig.8 Image of the Application Structure



As identified above, the nearest residential properties are located to the south of the site, on the opposite side of Southwell Lane. The development is located some 21 metres from the garden curtilage of the nearest residential property, a bungalow at 22 Hawthorn Crescent, and some 28 metres from the dwelling itself. The property sits gable on to Southwell Lane, and there are no windows in the northern façade of the property. As identified above, the development is equivalent to the height of a 2-storey dwelling, but with limited mass. Having regard to this, together with the significant distance and juxtaposition between the development and 22 Hawthorn Crescent, it is clear the development does not give rise to an adverse impact on the amenity of the occupiers of this dwelling by way of overbearing or loss of light/overshadowing. Furthermore, the nature of the development is such that it does not give rise to any overlooking.

To the east of 22 Hawthorn Crescent is another bungalow, 122 Southwell Lane. This has a different relationship with the development, insofar as it fronts onto Southwell Lane. This property, however, is

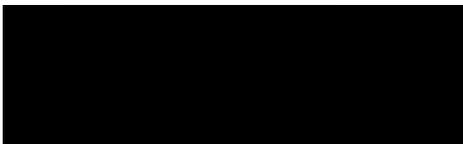
further from the development than 22 Hawthorn Crescent and, furthermore, lies to the south-east. Whilst the development may be visible from the habitable room windows to the front of the bungalow, these would be oblique views only. Again, having regard to the distance and juxtaposition between the development and this property, there is no realistic prospect of an adverse detrimental impact on the amenity of the occupiers of the dwelling.

As identified above, there was, historically, tree planting between the site and Southwell Lane, which formed a continuation of the wider tree buffer which largely screens the wider industrial estate from views from Southwell Lane and the residential properties beyond. This, however, appears to have been removed sometime prior to 2019. The majority of the verge where these trees were previously located is within the control of the applicant and within the application red-line. It would therefore be possible for buffer tree planting to be provided as part of planning permission to reinstate the previous landscape buffer, which would provide a betterment as a result of the development. The applicant is willing, in principle, to provide tree planting in this location, however the wording of any such condition will first need to be agreed.

Conclusion

It has been evidenced that the scale, massing and design of the archway structure is appropriate within its context, and does not give rise to any adverse impact on residential amenity. The development therefore does not adversely affect the character, quality, or amenity of the area, and so would be in accordance with Policy ST1 (parts a. & b.) of the Ashfield Local Plan Review (ALPR) 2002, or any relevant sections of the NPPF. It has been further identified that the development represents an opportunity to provide visual betterment to the area through the reinstatement of a previous tree buffer.

Yours faithfully



Jon Willks
Director
Amity Planning