



Home Office

Manston Reception Centre

Public information



Welcome

Since 2021, the Home Office has been operating a reception and processing centre at the former RAF base in Manston, for people arriving in the UK by small boats.

The Home Office is planning to replace the current, temporary infrastructure with a purpose-built Reception Centre.

This will continue to serve the same purpose, next to the area currently in use on the Manston site.

We will be seeking planning approval, with the planning route to be determined.



The existing site

The site is the former RAF Manston base located in north-east Kent, on the Isle of Thanet. The site is located approximately three miles north-west of Ramsgate and around twenty miles from Dover. The main vehicular access to the site is along the southern boundary via Manston Road. There are two secondary vehicular accesses, one to the east of the main access and a second via the B2050 on the north-western site boundary.

The site is assessed to be the only suitable one available within the east Kent area that could accommodate such a facility, in terms of proximity to points of arrival and the ownership and availability of land.

The site area measures approximately 37.6 hectares (ha) and comprises 48 buildings. The existing reception and processing centre at the site was opened in 2021, to strengthen the Home Office capability to bring those who arrive into the UK through small boats quickly into the immigration system.

People arriving that are brought to the reception centre only stay at the facility for a short period of time, usually a maximum of 24 hours, while undergoing welfare, security and identity checks. The site is fully secure, so arrivals cannot freely enter or leave the facility. Once checks are completed, arrivals move on to accommodation around the UK.



Why is this development required?

The current facility is made up of old buildings that have been repurposed, and several temporary structures. We have been working hard over the past year to improve facilities, security, equipment; and support services, such as health and welfare capability by working with local partners.

However, there is scope to make better use of the site and ensure that activities can be carried out as efficiently as possible.

We plan to build a more efficient and fit-for-purpose processing centre, with protection of the local community's safety given the same high priority as now.

The facility at Manston continues to play a vital role, enabling us to quickly and safely bring people into the immigration system so that appropriate actions can then be taken.

The development of a purpose-built Reception Centre at Manston will provide a number of benefits, including:

-  **Efficiency:** Building fit-for-purpose infrastructure will enable us to create a simpler process for people arriving to move through the facility, which will benefit arrivals and staff. This will enable the whole process to be carried out more efficiently while increasing security.
-  **Improved facilities:** On-site facilities for staff and arrivals will be improved, including better interview facilities and short-term accommodation. We also plan to improve the training facilities on the site.
-  **Sustainability:** Infrastructure design will aim to meet the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) 'excellent' rating. The Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method is a sustainability assessment method that sets standards for the environmental performance of buildings through the design, specification, construction and operation phases.

The new infrastructure will be designed with sustainability in mind. This includes improving value for money by reducing running costs (e.g. of heating/cooling buildings and waste and water management), and minimising the impact on the natural environment, such as conservation of wildlife on the site.

More broadly, the site will continue to provide employment opportunities in the local area. This development will increase investment in the local area during construction.

The proposed development

Planning approval will be sought for the following. This represents the maximum extent of any development as plans are not yet finalised.

- Phased demolition of at least five existing unused buildings, to allow the new buildings to be constructed.
- Required engineering works.
- Maximum building heights across the site will be 12m.

- Retrospective approval of the existing reception centre and associated facilities and accommodation (on a temporary basis until the new reception centre is available).
- A new Reception Centre to replace the existing centre operating on site, consisting of up to six buildings.
- A new training facility for staff and equipment for training.

The proposals will also include:

- Redevelopment of the existing entrance to assist with traffic management.
- Additional surface car parking.
- Installation of additional lighting, CCTV and utility requirements.
- Installation of new fencing to the site boundary.
- New small-scale on-site waste treatment centre to sustainably manage waste water from the site.

What will the new buildings look like?

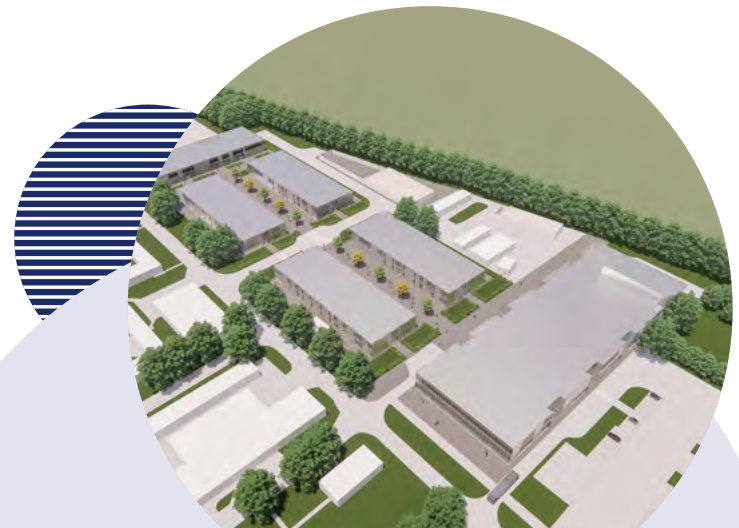
We are in the process of design work, and so the images below are an indication of the type of building being considered.

The Reception Centre is planned to consist of an arrivals centre and short-term accommodation.

An older building has been demolished, and one of the current portable modular buildings would be removed to make room for the modular office blocks.

Further details will be shared as plans progress. Infrastructure design will aim to meet the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method's (BREEAM) 'excellent' green building standards.

A landscape and visual impact assessment will be undertaken to assess the proposed development and identify any potential impacts. The proposed development site is set within the wider Manston site and benefits from being screened to the north and west by mature boundary vegetation. The presence of the existing buildings in the wider site also provides a level of screening. These factors will assist the proposed development in being of a similar scale and nature to the existing structures.



These images are illustrative of current designs and are subject to change.

Environmental factors

Ecology

The Home Office is carrying out all necessary environmental and ecological surveys. The development will ensure biodiversity is protected and enhanced and appropriate landscaping considered and incorporated into the design.

Through our assessments, one building has been identified as a maternity roost for pipistrelle bats. This building will be retained to protect the wildlife. Investigations are ongoing for any further protected species and flora and any findings will be managed in accordance with regulations.

The design of the development will allow for a landscape design that reflects the current level of tree planting within the site.

Ground conditions

Surveys have identified potential sources of contamination on parts of the site. There is a risk of old munitions (unexploded ordnance) due to the historical Ministry of Defence use of the site.

We are carrying out surveys and technical assessments, and will produce a remediation strategy that addresses any contamination.

Noise

The site area may be subject to temporary, short-term noise impacts during construction, however suitable mitigation measures will be considered to minimise these impacts where possible.

Heritage and archaeology

We have carried out an initial heritage and archaeological assessment, which has identified 'non-designated heritage assets' (i.e. buildings that are not subject to statutory listing) on the site. Non-designated heritage assets do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets, but the Home Office may record them as historic buildings to ensure that we mitigate the impacts from the development. We will discuss the planned development, demolition and groundworks (to undeveloped land) with the County Archaeologist to agree a suitable approach.

Utilities

Surveys have been carried out to establish all utilities infrastructure serving the site and across the site. A CCTV survey of the drainage has been undertaken to establish the condition and capacity of the existing surface and foul drainage infrastructure. More detailed surveys will be carried out during design development.

Designs for utilities infrastructure serving the new development will take account of the existing infrastructure condition, capacity and the requirements of the utility operators.

Waste management

We have not yet finalised the design for the small-scale on-site waste treatment centre, to manage waste water in a sustainable manner. However, we plan to engage with the Environment Agency to develop this, to ensure the design is in keeping with the surrounding area and meets relevant technical standards.

An Operational Waste Management Strategy (OWMS) will be produced for the site to ensure that all waste and recycling is handled correctly,

and sufficient storage facilities are provided to allow for the segregation of general waste, recycling and food waste.

Transport, access and parking

Vehicular access is via Manston Road and the B2050, with local highways including the A299 and B2190 being used.

An assessment is being undertaken to determine the expected impacts of the development and identify any necessary actions to mitigate the impact. This work will also outline approaches to encourage positive, sustainable travel choices. The Home Office is engaging with Kent County Council to discuss the transport assessment.

Traffic volumes are not expected to increase from existing levels, except during the construction period. Plans will be developed to effectively manage construction traffic to minimise the impact on the community and the environment.

The planning proposals include a redesign of the site entrance to assist with traffic management, the construction of access roads within the site and additional parking areas for car, coach and operational vehicles. We are currently undertaking modelling to inform the planning requirements and will then be able to determine the overall size of the parking area.

Security measures

The site at Manston will remain fully secure. We plan to install new CCTV and lighting along the boundary fence, and internally within the site, to meet Home Office requirements. The plans for the CCTV and lighting are currently being developed, to ensure that they meet the required standards but do not impact the surrounding environment.

New fencing is proposed to secure the facility. This will include fencing along the site boundary and surrounding the Reception Centre and training facility.

Will there be any impact on local services?

We do not anticipate any significant changes as a result of this development. The site will continue to serve the same purpose.

Healthcare for arrivals at the site will continue to be managed by a healthcare supplier. Primary health care needs are provided for at the site, with referrals to local hospitals for further tests or treatment offsite in certain circumstances. The Home Office works closely with NHS partners, Local Authorities and the UK Health Security Agency to manage any urgent healthcare needs, including infectious disease control, noting that arrivals remain at the site for very short periods of time.

Security for the site will continue to be managed by the Home Office and through its contractor. The Home Office works with Kent Police, Kent Fire & Rescue Service and other public bodies to address any issues in relation to the site.

Planning process and next steps

The Home Office will be seeking planning approval to regularise the existing development of the site as a temporary processing centre, and to secure consent for a new Reception Centre and training facility. The route for submission of the planning proposals is still to be confirmed.

Construction timescales

Subject to approval of the development and designs, the construction would be planned in phases, with a target of completion in 2027/28.

Construction activity would be organised using a construction management plan, ensuring any potential impacts arising from the works are appropriately identified and mitigated, including measures to control noise, dust and lighting. These works would be registered under the Considerate Constructors Scheme to demonstrate the commitment to respecting the local community during the construction process.

We will provide further information in due course on the planned construction works, following submission of the planning proposals.

Community engagement

The Home Office will be carrying out community engagement to inform local residents, property and business owners located close to the site about the planned developments.

Residents will be able to provide feedback on the plans via a feedback form on our website, to help inform the planning proposal. You can access the feedback form by scanning the QR code on the letter we have sent you and following the link or by visiting our website.

We are keen to keep the local community informed as plans progress, including continuing to engage with elected representatives, local authorities and other key partners.





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Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at manstonprogramme@homeoffice.gov.uk