# Grandfather faces £600,000 loss as The Range warehouse reshapes Suffolk countryside



A grandfather from Suffolk has expressed deep distress as he reports a staggering £600,000 loss in the value of his home and rental properties, attributing this decline to the recent construction of a large warehouse by retail giant The Range next to his land. Ken Lungley, 79, once enjoyed idyllic views over the countryside, but this has dramatically changed with the emergence of the colossal 1.17 million square-foot 'megashed', which looms over his property.

According to Lungley, this sprawling structure has significantly impacted his retirement investment, causing its worth to plummet from £1.5 million to £900,000. Adding to his woes, the local council has sanctioned the construction of an even larger warehouse nearby, which he fears will further diminish his property values. “You can't stand in the way of progress— but not in my back garden,” he lamented in a conversation regarding the matter.

Lungley purchased an acre of land in Creeting St Peter back in 1990 for £65,000, eventually developing it into a four-bedroom home and a four-bedroom holiday rental. The latter rents for £1,500 for three nights, or £2,000 weekly, while another structure on his property features a swimming pool available for hire. Over the years, he has invested around £500,000 into the site, with the intention of passing it onto his family. However, the approval for the warehouse marked a turning point, erasing years of appreciation in property value.

While the warehouse is part of Gateway 14 Ltd, a subsidiary of Mid Suffolk District Council, its approval was granted in a landscape once dominated by farmland. The site is now poised to become one of the largest business parks in East Anglia, designed to accommodate industry growth and employment boosts. Moreover, Gateway 14 is part of the Freeport East initiative, a project aimed at attracting investment through significant tax reliefs, including discounts on business rates for eligible firms.

Despite his concerns, Lungley acknowledges that the warehouse could have been worse—"it's only one warehouse, not ten or eleven little ones," he stated, referring to the initial plan for multiple constructions. His sentiments echo the broader anxieties of local residents, who have raised numerous objections regarding potential traffic increases, noise pollution, and the lack of proposed green spaces in the planning applications. Although these concerns were voiced during the planning process, they ultimately did not prevent the development from moving forward.

The Range, which began operations in November 2023, is now set to benefit from significant logistical advantages that the new facility offers. The site's Freeport East designation allows for expedited customs processes and financial incentives for businesses operating within its borders. As the region continues to develop, it promises to contribute significantly to the local economy, with projections indicating the creation of approximately 1,600 jobs associated with The Range's operations alone.

The situation raises pressing questions about the balance between economic development and the preservation of local character and quality of life for existing residents. For Lungley, the transformation of his view from tranquil farmland to the back of a warehouse feels profoundly unsettling, leaving him to navigate the implications of these changes on both his property and his community's landscape.

As developments continue, further changes are anticipated within and around Gateway 14, particularly with ambitions towards eco-friendly building materials and innovations in construction. However, for Lungley and his neighbours, the reality of large-scale industrialisation serves as a stark reminder of the challenges facing rural communities amidst the push for economic growth.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14750451/Grandfather-sees-600-000-knocked-value-home-holiday-let-Range-build-1-17million-sq-ft-mega-shed.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/w/gateway-14> - Gateway 14 is a significant employment site located on the eastern edge of Stowmarket, Suffolk. Initially known as Mill Lane and the Stowmarket Business and Enterprise Park, it is strategically positioned adjacent to the A1120 and A14. The site has been allocated for employment use, open space, leisure, and recreation in the Stowmarket Area Action Plan (SAAP) adopted in February 2013. Mid Suffolk District Council's subsidiary, Gateway 14 Ltd, is spearheading the development, with planning permissions granted for various phases, including a 1.17 million square foot distribution hub for The Range, which became operational in November 2023. The development aims to provide a mix of business, innovation, and logistics spaces, contributing to the region's economic growth.
3. <https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/w/freeport-east-tax-site-at-gateway-14> - Businesses located on the Freeport East Tax Site at Gateway 14 in Stowmarket may be eligible for significant tax reliefs, including discounts of up to 100% on business rates. This relief is available to new businesses establishing operations on the site before 30 September 2031, subject to specific eligibility criteria. The Freeport East initiative aims to stimulate development, attract inward investment, and boost global trade and innovation. Eligible businesses must align with the sector priorities for the site and demonstrate their commitment to innovation, skills development, and net-zero objectives. The relief is applicable for five years from the date of occupation, providing substantial financial incentives for companies considering Gateway 14 as their operational base.
4. <https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/w/planning-go-ahead-for-green-tenants-at-gateway-14> - Mid Suffolk District Council has granted planning consent for two buildings at Gateway 14, Stowmarket, to be occupied by manufacturers of eco-friendly construction materials. Assan Panel, a major affiliate of Kibar Holding, plans to invest £45 million in an 86,565 square foot manufacturing facility, bringing approximately 100 jobs to the area. Bauder, a leading international manufacturer of building construction materials, intends to occupy a 44,000 square foot distribution centre at the park. Both companies will benefit from Gateway 14's inclusion in the Freeport East zone, offering significant tax benefits and support to drive productivity and local community benefits. Construction on both units is expected to commence imminently, further enhancing the site's role as a hub for sustainable industries.
5. <https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/w/plan-for-transformative-18m-skills-and-innovation-centre-passes-milestone> - Mid Suffolk District Council's plan for an £18 million Skills and Innovation Centre in Stowmarket has passed a major milestone. The three-storey, state-of-the-art centre at Gateway 14 aims to provide office space for high-growth start-ups, collaboration and innovation spaces, training and meeting rooms, as well as a café. In partnership with West Suffolk College and the universities of Suffolk and Essex, the Centre aims to address local skills gaps and seize opportunities in growing sectors such as the green economy and digital/AI technology. The full business case for the centre is set to be presented to the Freeport East Board in March 2024 for final approval, marking a significant step forward in supporting business and skills development in the region.
6. <https://www.logisticsmanager.com/the-range-to-open-mega-distribution-centre-in-suffolk/> - Home, garden, and leisure products retailer The Range is set to occupy a 1.2 million square foot logistics unit on the Gateway 14 scheme at Junction 50 of the A14 in Stowmarket, Suffolk. The development, led by Gateway 14 Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of Mid Suffolk District Council, in partnership with Jaynic, is part of the Freeport East initiative. The Range's new distribution centre is expected to be operational by the autumn of 2023, supporting the retailer's expansion plans and enhancing its logistics capabilities in the region. The Freeport East status of Gateway 14 provides The Range with various tax and customs benefits, contributing to the site's appeal for large-scale logistics operations.
7. <https://www.essexmagazine.co.uk/2024/12/freeport-east-celebrates-a-successful-2024-attracting-jobs-and-investment-to-east-anglia/> - Freeport East has experienced significant growth in 2024, attracting £250 million in private investment and creating 1,800 jobs across its development sites. Notably, Gateway 14 in Stowmarket saw the commencement of full operations at the 1.17 million square foot distribution hub for leisure retailer The Range, creating 1,600 jobs. Additionally, Turkish firm Assan Panel and German company Bauder established new facilities at Gateway 14. The Freeport East initiative continues to boost investment, productivity, and job creation in the East of England, with plans for further developments in 2025, including the Harwich Clean Energy and Maritime Innovation Cluster and the Bathside Bay Green Energy Hub project.