



Yorkshire Water

BALK FARM COURT

PLANNING DESIGN AND ACCESS
STATEMENT





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PLANNING DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

TYPE OF DOCUMENT (VERSION) PUBLIC

PROJECT NO. UK0040979.1939

DATE: FEBRUARY 2026

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QUALITY CONTROL

Issue/revision	First issue	Revision 1	Revision 2	Revision 3
Remarks				
Date	01/12/2025	18/12/2025	30/01/2026	
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW

- 1.1.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared by WSP on behalf of Yorkshire Water Services Limited ('the Applicant') and accompanies a retrospective planning application for full planning permission for the construction of an access track and fencing associated with the construction of a new Sewage Pumping Station (SPS) on land at Balk Farm Court, Birdwell ('the Proposed Development'). This planning application is submitted in retrospect as development at the Site commenced on 29 September 2025. The SPS was connected on 22 December 2025; however, some ancillary works including elements of the access arrangements and power infrastructure are still in the process of being completed.
- 1.1.2 The Proposed Development forms part of Yorkshire Water's statutory obligations to address drainage deficiencies affecting existing dwellings at Balk Farm Court, which are currently served by private septic tanks. The Environment Agency has determined that the existing private drainage arrangements are unsuitable, resulting in environmental and amenity issues. Accordingly, Yorkshire Water is required to provide a public sewerage solution under Section 101A of the Water Industry Act 1991, which places a duty on water companies to provide public sewerage infrastructure where private systems are causing problems.
- 1.1.3 The Proposed Development includes a new vehicular access track to facilitate maintenance of the associated new SPS and security fencing enclosing it. The new SPS would replace the existing septic tanks, ensuring a modern and compliant drainage solution for the affected properties.
- 1.1.4 This planning application relates specifically to the proposed new vehicular access track and security fencing required to support the operation and maintenance of the SPS. The SPS, Motor Control Centre (MCC) kiosk and the storage kiosk constitute permitted development under Schedule 2, Part 13, Class B of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (the GPDO 2015) and therefore do not require planning permission. Further detail on the permitted development status of the SPS and kiosks are provided in Sections 3.3 and 3.4 of this Planning Statement.
- 1.1.5 Yorkshire Water Services Limited is a regulated water utility company with statutory responsibilities for the provision of public sewerage and drainage services. Under Section 94(1) of the Water Industry Act 1991 (as amended):
- "It shall be the duty of every sewerage undertaker to provide, improve and extend such a system of public sewers (whether inside its area or elsewhere) and so to cleanse and maintain those sewers as to ensure that that area is and continues to be effectually drained."*
- 1.1.6 In view of these statutory responsibilities, Yorkshire Water proposes this development to ensure effective and compliant drainage provision at Balk Farm Court, and to protect public health and the environment, aligning with both national and local planning policy.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE PLANNING, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

- 1.2.1 The purpose of this Planning, Design and Access Statement is to explain the planning application, summarise the results of the technical assessments which have been carried out for the planning

application, review key policy requirements, and address the material planning considerations which will be used as the basis for the decision-maker to determine the application.

1.2.2 In addition to this Planning, Design and Access Statement, the planning application is accompanied by the following documents in accordance with the national and Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council’s validation checklist, as the determining authority for this application:

- Application Forms and Certificate of Ownership;
- Site Location Plan;
- Site/Block Plan;
- Elevation Drawing;
- Sections Drawing;
- Drainage Concept Design;
- Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy; and
- Heritage Statement.

Table 1-1 – Application Drawing Schedule

Drawing Number	Title	Scale
YW.205642-GAL-WTN-NCS-DR-Z-0100	Site Location Plan	1:1250
YW.205642-GAL-WTN-NCS-DR-Z-0101	Site/Block Plan	1:200
YW.205642-GAL-WTN-NCS-DR-Z-0102	Elevations Drawing	1:100
YW.205642-GAL-WTN-NCS-DR-Z-0103	Sections Drawing	1:50
0040979-WSP-GDG-ZZ-DR-CW-0501	Drainage Concept Design (Indicative Surface Water Drainage Layout)	1:200

1.3 STRUCTURE OF THIS DOCUMENT

1.3.1 This Planning Design and Access Statement is structured as follows:

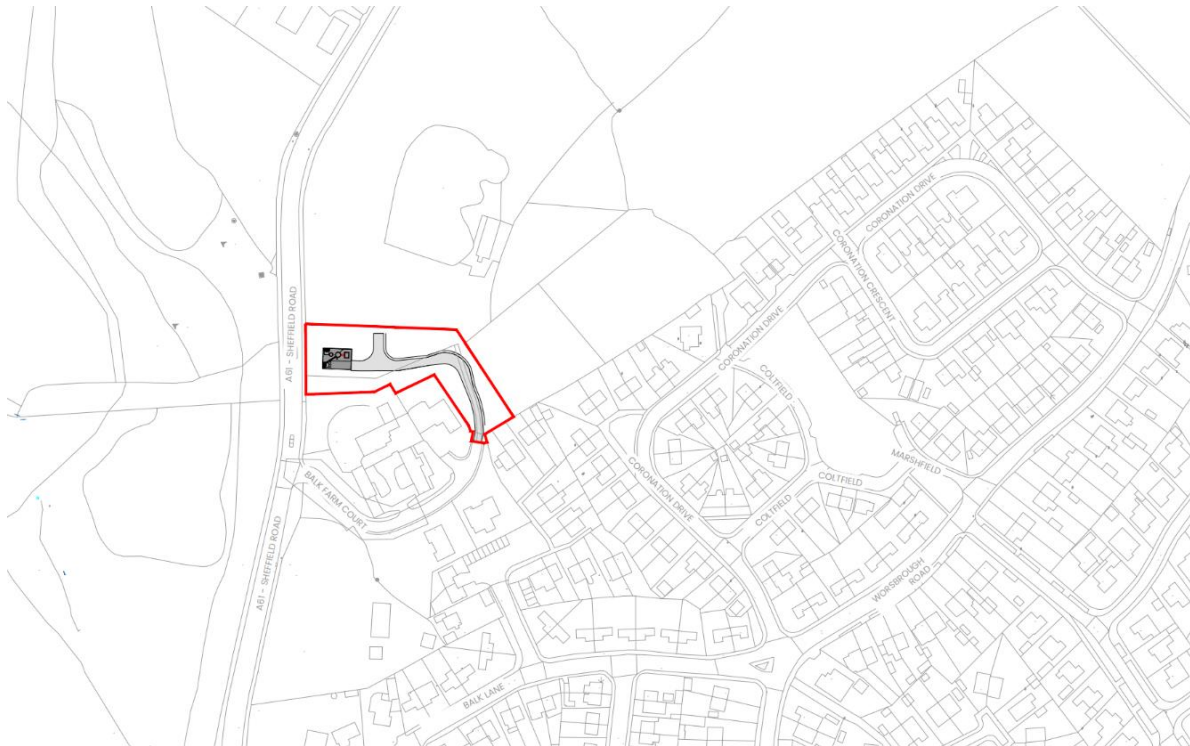
- **Section 2** describes the Site, its surroundings and Planning History;
- **Section 3** sets out a detailed description of the Proposed Development;
- **Section 4** sets out the design principles of the Proposed Development;
- **Section 5** sets out the national and local planning policy context for the Development;
- **Section 6** assesses the proposed development in accordance with the planning policy framework; and
- **Section 7** provides a summary and conclusions.

2 SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

2.1 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1.1 The application site ('the Site') is located on land to the north of Balk Farm Court, within the settlement of Birdwell, in the Metropolitan Borough of Barnsley, South Yorkshire. The Site lies approximately 500m north of the centre of Birdwell and approximately 4.1 kilometres south of Barnsley.
- 2.1.2 The Grid reference for the Site is: X (Easting) 434412, Y (Northing) 402218.
- 2.1.3 A Site Location Plan (**Drawing No. YW.205642-GAL-WTN-NCS-DR-Z-0100**) is submitted with this planning application.

Figure 2-1 - Location of the Site



- 2.1.4 Access to the Site is currently obtained via Balk Farm Court, which connects to the A61 Sheffield Road to the west, which provides access to the wider highway network.
- 2.1.5 The Site lies within the Green Belt, as defined in the Barnsley Local Plan (2019). There are no statutory ecological designations within or immediately adjacent to the Site.

2.2 SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT

- 2.2.1 The Site comprises a small parcel of greenfield land situated north of existing residential properties at Balk Farm Court. The Site is located within a semi-rural area on the outskirts of Birdwell, in the Metropolitan Borough of Barnsley. The surrounding environment comprises a mix of residential

properties and open agricultural land, characteristic of the transitional landscape between the settlement and the surrounding countryside.

- 2.2.2 To the south and south-east, the Site is bordered by existing residential dwellings at Balk Farm Court and the village of Birdwell. To the north and east, the landscape becomes increasingly open and agricultural, with fields bounded by hedgerows.
- 2.2.3 Within the wider surroundings, the Dearne Valley Wetlands SSSI lies approximately 450 metres north of the Site, while Worsbrough Country Park Local Nature Reserve is situated approximately 600 metres to the north. The nearby settlement of Worsbrough Village is located approximately 580 metres to the north-east, forming part of the rural setting of the area.

2.3 PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.3.1 A Planning History search was conducted on Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council's Planning Public Access database using the map search function. The search was completed on 3 November 2025 for all types of developments within and adjacent to the Site.
- 2.3.2 The relevant planning history context arises from a planning permission granted in 2001 (reference number: B/99/0738/WB) for the conversion of a barn into a dwelling and the erection of three detached houses. This development introduced new residential properties served by private septic tanks, which are currently failing and no longer provide the adequate removal of wastewater. The Proposed Development is necessary to replace the failing private septic tanks for the existing residential dwellings approved under this planning permission.

3 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

3.1 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1.1 This section provides a justification for the Proposed Development, its objectives and a detailed description of the Proposed Development.

3.1.2 As stated in the planning application form, planning permission is sought for:

“The construction of a new vehicular access track and associated security fencing to support the operation and maintenance of a new Sewage Pumping Station (SPS) on land at Balk Farm Court, Birdwell, South Yorkshire. The SPS constitutes permitted development under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 and does not form part of this planning application.”

3.2 NEED FOR THE SCHEME

3.2.1 The need for the Proposed Development arises from the requirement to replace the existing private septic tanks currently serving existing residential properties at Balk Farm Court, Birdwell. The EA has determined that these private systems are unsuitable, leading to potential environmental pollution and amenity impacts.

3.2.2 In accordance with Section 94 (1) of the Water Industry Act 1991, the Applicant has a statutory duty to provide a public sewer where existing private drainage arrangements are causing, or are likely to cause, environmental or amenity problems. The provision of a new public SPS is therefore required to ensure that the affected properties are served by a modern, compliant, and sustainable foul drainage system.

3.2.3 The proposed works will resolve the deficiency of the existing septic tanks, protect local water quality and ensure that the area is effectively drained in line with environmental standards. The scheme will contribute to improved public health, environmental protection, and regulatory compliance, aligning with the Applicant’s duties and objectives.

3.3 ELEMENTS REQUIRING PLANNING PERMISSION

3.3.1 The Proposed Development comprises several elements, some of which require **planning permission** and others that are considered **Permitted Development** under The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (‘the GPDO 2015’).

3.3.2 It is considered that the **proposed new access track** to the new SPS and the **fencing surrounding the SPS compound** would not benefit from Permitted Development rights under the GPDO 2015. These elements are therefore deemed to require **full planning permission** under the **Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)**.

3.4 PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT

3.4.1 The SPS is considered to fall within Permitted Development rights as outlined in the GPDO 2015 under Part 13 Class B (*development by or on behalf of sewerage undertakers*) (d) *the installation in a sewerage system of a pumping station, valve house, control panel house or switch-gear house*.



- 3.4.2 The MCC kiosk and storage kiosk are considered to fall within Permitted Development rights as outlined in the GPDO 2015 under Part 13 Class B, as they would each have a volume below 29 cubic metres and therefore do not require planning permission.
- 3.4.3 Any temporary construction compound required to facilitate the Proposed Development benefits from Permitted Development Rights under Part 4 Class A (*temporary buildings and structures*) of the GPDO 2015.

4 DESIGN AND ACCESS

4.1 AMOUNT AND SCALE

- 4.1.1 The Site layout is shown on the Site Plan (**Drawing No. YW.205642-GAL-WTN-NCS-DR-Z-0101**).
- 4.1.2 The application boundary covers 0.31 hectares and encompasses the proposed new access track and perimeter fencing around the associated SPS and two kiosks. The operational area of the SPS compound is compact, designed to minimise land take and integrate appropriately within the rural context.
- 4.1.3 The Sewage Pumping Station comprises below-ground infrastructure (wet well, valve chamber, and associated pipework), with only the kiosks and proposed fencing visible above ground.
- 4.1.4 The amount of development has been kept to the minimum necessary to meet operational requirements.

4.2 LAYOUT

- 4.2.1 The proposed SPS compound would be located on a parcel of land to the north of existing dwellings at Balk Farm Court and accessed via a proposed new access track extending northwards from Balk Farm Court.
- 4.2.2 Within the compound, the wet well and valve chamber would be located centrally, with the MCC kiosk and storage kiosk positioned adjacent to one another on the western side of the slab. The access track runs north-west along the eastern boundary of Balk Farm Court, incorporating a filter drain to manage surface water runoff.
- 4.2.3 The layout has been determined by operational and maintenance requirements, ensuring efficient access for maintenance vehicles.

4.3 APPEARANCE

- 4.3.1 A visual representation of the proposed development is shown on **Drawing No. YW.205642-GAL-WTN-NCS-DR-Z-0102 (Elevations Drawing)**.
- 4.3.2 The proposed fencing enclosing the SPS compound would consist of a 1.2 metre high wooden post and rail fence, which is consistent with the surrounding semi-rural landscape. This design has been selected to be visually unobtrusive while still providing sufficient demarcation and protection for the operational area.
- 4.3.3 The access track would be surfaced in Grasscrete, allowing vegetation to grow through the structure, thereby maintaining a natural appearance while providing a stable surface for maintenance vehicles. Filter drains would run along either side of the track to manage surface water runoff effectively.
- 4.3.4 The finished ground levels would gently fall towards the filter drains to ensure adequate drainage. The combination of low-level structures, green finishes, and rural fencing ensures the scheme sits sensitively within its Green Belt setting and maintains the overall openness and character of the surrounding landscape.

4.4 ACCESS

- 4.4.1 Vehicular access to the Site would be taken from the proposed new access track, which would extend north-west towards the SPS compound from Balk Farm Court.
- 4.4.2 A new access track would measure 5 metres in width at the entrance and 4.7 metres in width towards the SPS compound. The access track would extend from the existing, eastern boundary of Balk Farm Court towards the SPS compound. The track would incorporate drainage measures, including a filter drains alongside the northern boundary of the track to manage surface water runoff.
- 4.4.3 Pedestrian access for operational staff would be via a secure gated entrance to the SPS compound. The design ensures safe and practical access for maintenance personnel and vehicles while limiting disturbance to neighbouring residents.

4.5 OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

- 4.5.1 The Proposed Development would be operated and maintained by Yorkshire Water Services Limited.
- 4.5.2 Routine maintenance visits would be infrequent and undertaken by small service vehicles. No continuous staffing or external lighting is proposed, ensuring minimal operational disturbance to the surrounding area.

5 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

5.1 INTRODUCTION

- 5.1.1 This section sets out the planning policy context for the Proposed Development. In accordance with Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) (TCPA), planning applications must be determined in accordance with the statutory development plan unless 'material considerations' indicate otherwise. The following section introduces the relevant legislative and policy framework in relation to planning matters. This covers national and local planning policy. This section identifies the main planning considerations arising from the development plan applicable to this planning application, as well as the material considerations warranting the grant of planning permission for the Proposed Development.
- 5.1.2 A planning application under the TCPA 1990 should be prepared and submitted to the Local Planning Authority to obtain full planning permission for the Proposed Development.
- 5.1.3 The determining authority for the Proposed Development is Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council. The adopted development plan relevant to this site comprises:
- The Barnsley Local Plan (Adopted January 2019)
 - The Barnsley, Doncaster & Rotherham Joint Waste Plan (Adopted 2012)

5.2 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

- 5.2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in December 2024 forms the adopted national planning policy for this application. The Government issued a minor amended version on 7 February 2025 to correct cross-references in footnotes 7 and 8 and to clarify the wording of paragraph 155. For the avoidance of doubt, the Government confirmed that these amendments do not constitute a change to policy. Accordingly, this Planning Statement relies on the December 2024 NPPF, noting that the February 2025 corrections make no material difference to the policy position. A draft revised NPPF was published for consultation on 16 December 2025; however, given its draft status and the absence of any relevant policy changes, it carries limited weight and does not affect the assessment or determination of this application.
- 5.2.2 The following sections of the NPPF (2024) are of specific relevance to the determination of this application:
- Section 2 Achieving sustainable development
 - Section 4 Decision-making
 - Section 8 Promoting healthy and safe communities
 - Section 11 Making effective use of land
 - Section 12 Achieving well-designed places
 - Section 14 Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
 - Section 15 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- 5.2.3 The Government's 'Water supply, wastewater and water quality' section of the National Planning Practice Guidance, The Water Environment Regulations 2017 apply to surface waters (including some coastal waters) and groundwater (water below the surface of the ground). These regulations set out requirements to prevent the deterioration of aquatic ecosystems; protect, enhance and

restore water bodies to 'good' status; and achieve compliance with standards and objectives for protected areas.

5.3 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

5.3.1 The Development Plan is a set of local planning policy documents that set out the criteria that would be used in the determination of planning applications, detailing the type and location of development that can happen.

5.3.2 THE BARNSLEY LOCAL PLAN (ADOPTED JANUARY 2019)

5.3.3 The Barnsley Local Plan (2019) was adopted by Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council in January 2019 and forms the main component of the statutory Development Plan for the Borough. It sets out the overarching spatial strategy and detailed policies for determining planning applications up to 2033.

5.3.4 The Site lies within the Green Belt as defined by the Local Plan Policies Map. While the Proposed Development is not an allocated site for development, relevant Local Plan policies provide the framework for assessing proposals for essential infrastructure within the Green Belt.

5.3.5 THE BARNSLEY, DONCASTER & ROTHERHAM JOINT WASTE PLAN (ADOPTED 2012)

5.3.6 The Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham Joint Waste Plan ('Joint Waste Plan') was adopted in March 2012 and provides detailed planning policies for the management of all types of waste across the three authorities. The Plan remains a material consideration in the determination of planning applications relating to wastewater and sewerage infrastructure.

5.3.1 Paragraph 4.20 of the Joint Waste Plan states that future waste proposals on non-allocated sites will be assessed against the relevant policies of the Joint Waste Plan and other relevant policies within each borough's Local Development Framework, including general principles relating to layout, design, energy efficiency and sustainable construction as well as detailed requirements relating to green infrastructure, landscape, biodiversity and flood prevention.

5.3.2 One of the main aims of the Joint Waste Plan is that "*Waste management facilities should protect, maintain and, where possible, enhance the amenity, health and safety of local communities and the wider built and natural environment, especially in areas of sensitivity such as the green belt*".

5.3.3 The policies relevant to planning applications for sewage treatment are Policies WCS1, WCS4 and WCS6 of the Joint Waste Plan, which require measures to avoid and mitigate potential adverse effects on the amenity and health and safety of the immediate locality and wider landscape.

5.3.4 *Policy WCS1: Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham's Overall Strategy for Achieving Sustainable Waste Management* states that provision will be made to maintain, improve and expand the network of waste management facilities throughout Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham to achieve sustainable waste management across all waste streams:

"To facilitate proposals to address the identified municipal, commercial and industrial waste management capacity gap: ...

3) new or replacement smaller-scale facilities will be supported where these are required to serve local catchment areas and communities."

5.3.5 *Policy WCS4: Waste Management Proposals on Non-Allocated Sites* states:

“A. Proposals for waste development on non-allocated sites will be permitted provided they demonstrate how they:

- 1) do not significantly adversely affect the character or amenity of the site or surrounding area;*
- 2) contribute towards the aims of sustainable waste management in line with the waste hierarchy”.*

5.3.6 *Policy WCS6: General Consideration for all Waste Management Proposals* states that:

“A. Proposals for waste development will only be permitted within Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham provided they can demonstrate how they:

- 1) support the vision, aims and overall strategy of the Joint Waste Plan and, where relevant, the delivery of our municipal waste management strategies;*
- 2) provide access (which is appropriate to the scale and nature of the development) to and from the main transport network - including, where possible, rail and canal/river links that offer the potential to transport waste;*
- 3) ensure there is adequate highway capacity to accommodate any additional vehicles generated;*
- 4) ensure there is adequate space on site for vehicles to enter, wait, unload and leave safely;*
- 5) propose technology which is suitable for the location and nature of the site;*
- 6) provide high quality design and architecture, sympathetic to its context and surroundings using sustainable construction, water and energy saving measures to maximise efficiency and recover energy, where practicable;*
- 7) provide effective on-site waste management measures to ensure safety and security;*
- 8) mitigate any constraints that may reduce the potential to redevelop the site and adjoining areas in the future;*
- 9) provide adequate means of controlling noise, vibration, glare, dust, litter, odour and vermin and other emissions (e.g. greenhouse gases and leachate) so as to avoid adverse effects on the amenity of the immediate and surrounding environment and human health, both during and after operations;*
- 10) will not result in loss or damage to the diversity of wildlife and habitats at the site or adjoining land, including linear or other features that facilitate the dispersal of species;*
- 11) will not have an adverse impact upon the quality of ground and surface water or drainage, especially ground water aquifers and flood risk areas”.*

5.3.7 The policies, from both the Barnsley Local Plan (2019) and the Joint Waste Plan (2012) considered by the Applicant to be relevant to the Proposed Development have been set out below in **Table 5-1**:

Table 5-1 - Local Plan Policies

Policy/Paragraph	Requirement
The Barnsley Local Plan (2019)	
Policy SD1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development	Supports proposals that accord with the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF (2024) and development which balances economic, social and environmental objectives.
Policy GB1: Protection of Green Belt	Development in the Green Belt will not be permitted except in very special circumstances. The provision of appropriate facilities may be acceptable where they preserve openness and do not conflict with the purposes of Green Belt designation.
Policy D1: High Quality Design and Place Making	Requires development to be of high-quality design, respecting local character, landscape, and setting, and ensuring that proposals integrate well into their surroundings.
Policy CC3: Flood Risk	Seeks to ensure that new development incorporates sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and does not increase flood risk elsewhere.
Policy POLL1: Pollution Control and Protection	Development must not cause, or contribute to, pollution which would unacceptably affect health, environmental quality or amenity, and should include appropriate mitigation.
Policy HE2: Heritage Statements and general application procedures	Planning applications affecting known or potential heritage assets must provide a proportionate description of their significance, supported by detailed assessment where necessary to ensure that the impact of the Proposed Development can be properly understood.
The Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham Joint Waste Plan (2012)	
Policy WCS1: Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham's Overall Strategy for Achieving Sustainable Waste Management	Sets the strategic framework for sustainable waste management across Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham by safeguarding existing facilities, supporting new infrastructure where needed, and seeks to ensure waste is managed as close as possible to its source.
Policy WCS4: Waste Management Proposals on Non-Allocated Sites	Supports waste-related development on sites not specifically allocated in the Joint Waste Plan, provided proposals do not significantly harm local character or amenity.
Policy WCS6: General Consideration for all Waste Management Proposals	Requires all waste management proposals to demonstrate that they are appropriately located, accessible, safe, and that they support the aims of the Joint Waste Plan. Proposals must be well designed, operate safely, and avoid unacceptable impacts on amenity, the environment, water quality, and flood risk.



5.3.8 SUPPLYMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS

The Applicant considers that none of the Supplementary Planning Documents prepared by Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council are relevant to the Proposed Development.

6 PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

6.1.1 The following section provides a high-level summary of the planning and environmental considerations that are located within or near to the Site.

6.2 PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

- 6.2.1 The Proposed Development is required to address the deficiencies of the existing private septic tanks serving existing dwellings at Balk Farm Court, which the Environment Agency has identified as unsuitable, leading to environmental and amenity concerns. Under Section 101A of the Water Industry Act 1991, the Applicant has a statutory duty to provide public sewerage where private drainage arrangements are causing environmental problems. The provision of a new SPS therefore meets an essential operational requirement and aligns with the objectives of Policy WCS1 of the Joint Waste Plan, which supports the delivery of necessary wastewater infrastructure to meet local needs.
- 6.2.2 Policy WCS4 of the Joint Waste Plan supports new wastewater infrastructure on non-allocated sites where impacts on local character and amenity are minimised and where the proposal is appropriately located to serve the community. The SPS would be situated adjacent to the properties it would serve, to ensure that any impacts on the surrounding environment would be minimised. Due to the small scale of the Proposed Development, with low-level structures and limited operational activity, the amenity and local character of the surrounding rural area are unlikely to be significantly impacted.
- 6.2.3 Policy WCS6 of the Joint Waste Plan requires development to avoid unacceptable environmental impacts and ensure protection of water quality and local amenity. The Proposed Development has been designed to meet these requirements through the design of small scale kiosks, wooden post and rail fencing, a permeable Grasscrete access track, and appropriate surface water drainage measures, all of which would contribute to the reduction in visual and environmental impacts.
- 6.2.4 The Proposed Development is also in accordance with the strategic aims of the Barnsley Local Plan (2019) which supports essential infrastructure delivery, and Policy GB1: *Protection of Green Belt*, as the Proposed Development would constitute engineering works that would preserve the openness of the Green Belt.
- 6.2.5 In view of the pressing need to resolve existing drainage failures, fulfil statutory obligations, and protect the local environment from ongoing pollution risks, the principle of development is therefore considered acceptable and fully consistent with the relevant planning policies of the NPPF (2024), the Barnsley Local Plan and the Joint Waste Plan.

6.3 GREEN BELT CONSIDERATIONS

DEMONSTRATION OF 'VERY SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES'

- 6.3.1 The Site is located within the Green Belt, where national and local policy apply a strong presumption against inappropriate development. Chapter 13 of the NPPF (2024) - *Protecting Green Belt land*, explains that the Government attaches great importance to Green Belts, and that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open, with the essential characteristics of Green Belts being their openness and their permanence.

- 6.3.2 Paragraph 154(h) of the NPPF (2024) states that development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of the following exceptions applies, including:
- “Other forms of development provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are: ...*
- ii. engineering operations”.*
- 6.3.3 Planning Policy GB1: *Protection of Green Belt* of the Barnsley Local Plan (2019) states that the Green Belt will be protected from inappropriate development, and that reiterates guidance from the NPPF (2024) on the uses which are generally acceptable in the Green Belt.
- 6.3.4 Engineering operations can be regarded as not ‘inappropriate’ in the Green Belt, provided they preserve the openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. The Proposed Development is required to support the operation and maintenance of the SPS, which primarily comprises below-ground pumping infrastructure with limited above-ground elements, and therefore is considered an engineering operation of this nature.
- 6.3.5 The elements of the Proposed Development are visually modest in scale, consisting of a 1.2 metre high wooden post and rail fence, and a Grasscrete access track which retains the appearance of the grassed land. The Proposed Development would not introduce buildings or structures with massing that would materially diminish either the spatial or visual openness of the Green Belt.
- 6.3.6 The design of the Proposed Development intentionally minimises the potential visual impact and would maintain the rural character of the area. The use of wooden post and rail fencing, and a permeable surfacing for the access path which would allow vegetation to grow in between would all help the Proposed Development integrate sensitively within the rural landscape. The Proposed Development does not include lighting or features characteristic of an urban development that would erode the openness of the Green Belt.
- 6.3.7 The Proposed Development is required to enable the Applicant to meet its statutory duty under Section 101A of the Water Industry Act 1991 to address environmental harm arising from failing septic tanks. The infrastructure must be located adjacent to the dwellings it serves, and alternative locations outside the Green Belt are therefore not feasible. Any impact arising from the Proposed Development would be very limited and localised. Accordingly, the Proposed Development constitutes development which is not inappropriate in the Green Belt, would preserve openness and would not conflict with the purposes of including land within it, and therefore complies with national and local planning policy.

6.4 FLOOD RISK

- 6.4.1 A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been prepared in support of this planning application as it is necessary to understand the potential risk of flooding to and from the Site. The assessment considers all relevant sources of flood risk and demonstrates that the Proposed Development can be delivered safely without increasing flood risk elsewhere, in accordance with national and local planning policy.

POLICY CONTEXT

- 6.4.2 The following section identifies the national and local planning policies considered relevant and applicable to the determination of this planning application.

- 6.4.3 Paragraph 170 of the NPPF (2024) states that “Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk”.
- 6.4.4 Paragraph 181 of the NPPF (2024) states that, “*Where appropriate, applications should be supported by a site-specific flood-risk assessment. Development should only be allowed in areas at risk of flooding where, in the light of this assessment (and the sequential and exception tests, as applicable) it can be demonstrated that:*
- a) within the site, the most vulnerable development is located in areas of lowest flood risk, unless there are overriding reasons to prefer a different location;*
 - b) the development is appropriately flood resistant and resilient such that, in the event of a flood, it could be quickly brought back into use without significant refurbishment;*
 - c) it incorporates sustainable drainage systems, unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate;*
 - d) any residual risk can be safely managed; and*
 - e) safe access and escape routes are included where appropriate, as part of an agreed emergency plan.”*
- 6.4.5 Policy CC3: *Flood Risk* of the Barnsley Local Plan seeks to ensure that new development incorporates sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and does not increase flood risk elsewhere.

FLOOD RISK TO THE SITE

- 6.4.6 The FRA confirms that the Site lies within Flood Zone 1, indicating a low risk of flooding from fluvial sources. Reviews of available flood mapping, site-specific investigations, and consultation with statutory bodies show that the Site is at negligible to low risk from rivers, the sea, surface water, canals, reservoirs, public sewers, and highway drainage networks.
- 6.4.7 A medium level of risk is associated with the private combined drainage infrastructure, the newly constructed field drainage network, and potential groundwater emergence. These identified risks are localised and manageable through appropriately designed mitigation measures integrated into the Proposed Development.

FLOOD RISK AS A RESULT OF THE DEVELOPMENT

- 6.4.8 The FRA demonstrates that the Proposed Development would not increase flood risk elsewhere and is fully compliant with the requirements of the Sequential Test. Given the Site’s Flood Zone 1 location and the effectiveness of the proposed drainage strategy, the Exception Test is not required.
- 6.4.9 The Surface Water Drainage Strategy (SWDS) demonstrates that runoff from the Proposed Development can be sustainably managed. Discharge rates are restricted to greenfield conditions, and all relevant climate change allowances have been incorporated into the design, including SuDS features such as filter drains and permeable paving.
- 6.4.10 Runoff would be discharged into a newly constructed field drainage network adjacent to the Site, identified as both the most sustainable and practical disposal route. Drainage modelling confirms that the proposed network would function within its design capacity for all assessed storm events, with residual flood risk managed entirely on-site. The SWDS has been prepared in accordance with national and local drainage standards and is subject to review and formal approval by the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA).

IMPLIMENTED MITIGATION

- 6.4.11 To address the identified risks associated with private drainage systems and groundwater emergence, the following mitigation measures have been incorporated into the design:
- Raising the SPS by 1.2–1.8 m above ground level to safeguard against potential flooding or surcharging from surrounding drainage systems, consistent with the current SPS design.
 - Implementing a programme of regular maintenance for both new and existing drainage infrastructure, including the field drainage network and the culvert beneath the A61, to ensure they operate effectively and prevent water backing up towards the Site.
 - Groundwater mitigation measures aligned with Yorkshire Water’s Design and Construction Guidance for adoptable pumping stations, including waterproofing, kiosk protection, anti-floatation foundations, sealed penetrations, engineered road sub-bases, and installation of sump pumps where necessary.
 - Ensuring safe access during extreme flood events, supported by permeable paving and filter drains that provide effective surface water management across the Site.

POLICY COMPLIANCE

- 6.4.12 The Proposed Development complies with Paragraph 170 of the NPPF (2024), which seeks to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding by directing it to areas of lowest risk, as well as Paragraph 181, which requires site-specific assessment of flood risk. The accompanying FRA confirms that the Site lies entirely within Flood Zone 1 and is exposed to only very low risk from all identified flood sources. The Proposed Development would be located in an area of minimal flood risk and is supported with a Surface Water Drainage Strategy (SWDS), therefore, the Proposed Development fully complies with the NPPF (2024)’s sequential approach, ensuring development is steered away from areas of highest flood risk.
- 6.4.13 The Proposed Development complies with Policy CC3: *Flood Risk* of the Barnsley Local Plan as it is located within Flood Zone 1, where the risk of flooding from all sources is assessed as being low to negligible, and it would not result in an increase in flood risk elsewhere. A SWDS incorporating appropriate SuDS has been prepared to manage runoff from the new infrastructure and to ensure that post-development discharge rates would not exceed existing greenfield conditions. The FRA confirms that the Site would be appropriately drained using SuDS techniques up to the 1 in 100-year storm event including climate change allowance, demonstrating that the Proposed Development could be delivered safely and in compliance with local flood risk planning policy.

6.5 SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE STRATEGY

- 6.5.1 A SWDS along with a conceptual surface water design have been prepared in support of this planning application to demonstrate that surface water will be safely and effectively managed at the site of the Proposed Development.

POLICY CONTEXT

- 6.5.2 The following section identifies the national and local planning policies considered relevant and applicable to the assessment of drainage for the Proposed Development.
- 6.5.3 Paragraph 181 of the NPPF (2024) states that development should incorporate SuDS unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate.

- 6.5.4 Paragraph 182 of the NPPF (2024) states that applications which could affect drainage on or around the site should incorporate SuDs to control flow rates and reduce volumes of runoff which are proportionate to the nature and scale of the proposal.
- 6.5.5 Policy CC3: Flood Risk of the Barnsley Local Plan (2019) requires new development to incorporate SuDs to manage surface water runoff and ensure that development does not increase flood risk at the site or elsewhere.
- 6.5.6 The National Standards for SuDS (July 2025) sets out how surface water drainage should be designed for new developments in England, and aim to ensure drainage systems are sustainable, effective, and provide environmental and community benefits.

DRAINAGE DESIGN

- 6.5.7 The proposed SWDS demonstrates that surface water runoff from the development can be managed sustainably, with discharge rates limited to greenfield conditions and appropriate climate change allowances incorporated.
- 6.5.8 The SWDS proposes to discharge surface water flows to a newly constructed field drainage network adjacent to the north of the Site, which has been deemed the most sustainable and practical option for surface water disposal.
- 6.5.9 Drainage modelling incorporated climate change allowances to ensure the long-term resilience of the system. The results indicate that the proposed drainage system is capable of conveying surface water runoff effectively under all design rainfall events. The design rainfall events were under a 1-year event, 30 year event and a 100 year+30% climate change allowance event, as mentioned earlier in this section. The upsized pipes will provide sufficient storage for surplus water during peak rainfall and will comply with discharge rate requirements. The drainage model demonstrated that the system could function at the required discharge rate of 0.2 l/s without a proprietary storage tank.
- 6.5.10 For all simulated events, the drainage system operates within its design capacity and flows are conveyed efficiently through the filter drain and pipe system. The model indicates that for all scenarios, the system does not surcharge or flood up to and including the 100-year event.

Residual Risk and Exceedance Flow

- 6.5.11 The model indicates a residual flood risk during the 100-year event, including projected climate change impacts, originating from the proposed drainage network at around SW1 manhole location. The anticipated overflow volume is approximately 0.1037 m³. The proposed Site levels (**Drawing No. YW.205642-GAL-WTN-NCS-DR-Z-0103**) indicate that the access road and the area around SW1 manhole will fall towards the SPS compound and the wet well. In the extreme events this volume will be captured by the compound gully, located at the lowest spot within the compound and it will be directed into the wet well. The kiosk with the associated electric equipment is proposed to be placed on a raised slab and passed the lowest spot within the compound, therefore it is not anticipated that could be impacted by the exceedance from the onsite drainage.
- 6.5.12 Consequently, any exceedance flows will be managed within the Site boundary, thereby eliminating offsite risks to third parties and ensuring uninterrupted operation of the SPS.

POLICY COMPLIANCE

- 6.5.13 The SWDS has been developed in full accordance with the requirements of the NPPF (2024) and the National Standards for SuDS (July 2025), which emphasise the need for new development to

incorporate SuDS that manage runoff effectively, reduce flood risk, and deliver wider environmental benefits. In line with this guidance, the SWDS integrates SuDS features, including filter drains and permeable paving, to ensure that surface water would be managed sustainably and in a manner proportionate to the scale and nature of the Proposed Development.

- 6.5.14 Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, acting in its statutory role as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), has been engaged during the preparation of the SWDS. This engagement process has ensured that the SWDS reflects requirements relating to runoff rates, discharge arrangements and the application of SuDS features to meet the LLFA's standards for surface water management.

Compliance with National Standards for SuDS

- 6.5.15 Destination of Runoff: Surface water runoff would be managed through a combination of SuDS features, principally filter drains and permeable Grasscrete paving, which collectively support infiltration, attenuation, and controlled conveyance. This approach is consistent with the drainage hierarchy, which prioritises sustainable, nature-based methods for the disposal of runoff wherever feasible.
- 6.5.16 Quality: The SWDS incorporates SuDS components specifically selected to improve water quality by encouraging natural filtration and sediment removal prior to discharge. These measures would ensure compliance with the National Standards for SuDS, which require developments to demonstrate that surface water is treated appropriately before leaving the Site.
- 6.5.17 Quantity: Runoff rates would be restricted to greenfield discharge conditions, and the proposed system is designed to contain all runoff volumes on-site for all rainfall events, including climate change allowances. This would ensure that the Proposed Development would not increase flood risk either within the Site or elsewhere, aligning with both national and local drainage policy requirements.
- 6.5.18 Biodiversity and Amenity: The use of Grasscrete paving would provide opportunities to enhance biodiversity through increased vegetation cover, and would also improve amenity by creating a more visually attractive, naturalised surface water management solution, which supports the multifunctional principles set out in the National Standards for SuDS.

6.6 HERITAGE STATEMENT

- 6.6.1 A Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of the planning application as there are designated and non-designated heritage assets located near to the Site. The Heritage Statement assesses whether the Proposed Development would materially affect their historic setting.

POLICY CONTEXT

- 6.6.2 The following section identifies the national and local planning policies considered relevant and applicable to the determination of this planning application.
- 6.6.3 Section 16: *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment* of the NPPF (2024) requires the significance of both designated and non-designated heritage assets to be considered in the planning process. The overarching objectives include securing sustainable development whilst recognising the cultural, social, economic and environmental benefits of heritage conservation, ensuring that heritage assets are conserved in a manner proportionate to their significance.

- 6.6.4 Paragraph 207 of the NPPF (2024) relates to proposals affecting heritage assets, and states that the planning decisions should be informed by an understanding of the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail provided by the Applicant should be proportionate to the importance of the assets and sufficient to assess the potential impact of the Proposed Development on their significance.
- 6.6.5 Policy HE2: *Heritage Statements and general application procedures* of the Barnsley Local Plan requires planning applications affecting known or potential heritage assets to provide a proportionate description of their significance, supported by detailed assessment where necessary to ensure that the impact of the Proposed Development can be properly understood.

THE EXISTING HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Balk Farmhouse: Grade II Listed

- 6.6.6 Balk Farmhouse was originally part of a wider farmstead but is now a private home within the expanded village of Birdwell. The surrounding former barns have also been converted to residential use. The property is listed Grade II for its early 19th-century architectural character, although it has been altered over time, including a late 19th-century extension and a more recent single-storey addition. Its garden and boundary walls still reflect elements of the historic farm layout.

Significance

- 6.6.7 Balk Farmhouse is a Grade II listed building of medium significance. Its architectural interest lies in its early 19th-century origins, including the distinctive double-height stairwell window on the north elevation. Later extensions have generally been sensitively added. The building also has historic value due to its age, long standing presence in the landscape, and its relationship with the surrounding area, including the adjacent footpath to Worsbrough and its location on Balk Road.
- 6.6.8 The farmhouse's setting includes its enclosed grounds and former farm buildings, which retain much of their historic form even though they no longer serve an agricultural use. While the wider area has changed, with modern housing now located in former fields to the south and east, the northern fields still reflect the historic rural character. These immediate surroundings and views across the northern fields contribute to the building's significance.

Barn south-west of Balk Farmhouse: Grade II Listed

- 6.6.9 The Grade II listed barn located 15 metres south-west of Balk Farmhouse dates to around 1800 and is now a private dwelling. The stone exterior remains unrendered, although the first-floor hatches and waggon entrances on the east and west elevations have been glazed. Additional windows have also been added. The property has small gardens to the front and rear, the latter enclosed along Balk Farm Court.

Significance

- 6.6.10 The barn is a heritage asset of medium significance. It has architectural and historic value as an early 19th-century farm building and forms part of the historic group associated with Balk Farmhouse, which is reflected in its statutory listing. Although converted to residential use, key external features such as the former waggon entrance and stable openings remain visible.

Barn to East of Former Farmyard: Non-designated Heritage Asset

- 6.6.11 The mid to late 19th-century barn east of the former farmyard is now a private dwelling. The original windows and a central doorway remain in place, although the lintels appear to have been recently replaced. Single-storey extensions have been added to the north and south elevations, and the building has small garden areas to the west and rear.

Significance

- 6.6.12 This building is a non-designated heritage asset of low significance. It has some historic and architectural interest as a surviving 19th-century agricultural structure. Although altered and no longer used for farming, its form is still recognisable and its proximity to the Grade II listed farmhouse and barn gives it group value by contributing to the understanding of the former farmstead.

POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Balk Farmhouse

- 6.6.13 The Proposed Development lies outside the boundary of Balk Farmhouse. The SPS infrastructure to the north of the garden would introduce new development on land historically associated with the farmhouse, resulting in some change to its setting. However, views to the south towards the historic farmyard would remain unaffected. Existing boundary hedging and the natural dip in the land help screen the site and reduce visibility. Some elements may be visible from the northern field and Sheffield Road, although proposed fencing would be in keeping with existing boundaries.
- 6.6.14 The new access path would use Grasscrete, allowing vegetation to grow through and helping it blend into the landscape over time. Overall, the Proposed Development would cause only limited visual change, which would not materially affect the heritage significance of Balk Farmhouse.

Barn south-west of Balk Farmhouse

- 6.6.15 This building sits south-west of the farmhouse, with its main east and west elevations facing away from the Site. As a result, its principal features including the former waggon entrances, would not be affected by views of the Proposed Development. Its setting is shaped by its position within the former farmyard and its historic functional role, rather than by outward or designed views.
- 6.6.16 Although now a dwelling, elements of its historic setting remain visible, particularly from the field to the north. The Proposed Development would be located north of the barn but would not appear visually prominent. It would be only partially visible and would result in a very minor impact to the building.

Barn to East of Former Farmyard

- 6.6.17 This building sits to the south-east of the former farmyard, with Balk Farmhouse positioned between it and the Site. As a result, there would be very limited intervisibility, and the Proposed Development would have no impact on this building.

POLICY COMPLIANCE

- 6.6.18 The Proposed Development has been considered against Section 16 of the NPPF (2024) and Policy HE2 of the Barnsley Local Plan. Both require planning decisions to be informed by an understanding of the significance of heritage assets and to ensure any harm, including harm arising from changes to their setting, is clearly explained and justified.

- 6.6.19 The Heritage Statement identifies a low level of impact to the setting of Balk Farmhouse and the listed barn to the south-west. Under paragraph 207 of the NPPF (2024), this level of harm must be weighed against the public benefits of the scheme. The development provides essential upgrades to wastewater infrastructure, delivering environmental and public health benefits. Its design includes measures, such as Grasscrete surfacing and sympathetic boundary treatments, to minimise the level of visual impact within the rural landscape.
- 6.6.20 The Proposed Development also accords with Policy HE2 of the Barnsley Local Plan, which requires heritage assets to be conserved in line with their significance and supported by proportionate evidence. The Proposed Development would not physically affect any heritage assets, and any visual change would be limited and mitigated through sensitive design. This approach meets the policy aim of conserving the historic environment while enabling necessary infrastructure works.

In summary, the Proposed Development complies with relevant national and local heritage policies. The identified harm is minor, is reduced through design, and is outweighed by the clear public benefits of improved wastewater management. The scheme strikes an appropriate balance between heritage protection and the delivery of essential infrastructure.

7 CONCLUSION AND PLANNING BALANCE

- 7.1.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement has provided an overview of and set out the need for the Proposed Development, and has assessed material matters including the principle of the development, design and access, flood risk, drainage and heritage considerations against relevant policy in both the Development Plan and the NPPF (2024).
- 7.1.2 In accordance with Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, planning applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This Statement demonstrates the compliance of the Proposed Development with national policy, the Barnsley Local Plan and the Joint Waste Plan, alongside consideration of the Applicant's statutory duties as a regulated water company.
- 7.1.3 Planning permission is sought for:
“The construction of a new vehicular access track and associated security fencing to support the operation and maintenance of a new Sewage Pumping Station (SPS) on land at Balk Farm Court, Birdwell, South Yorkshire. The SPS constitutes permitted development under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 and does not form part of this planning application.”
- 7.1.4 The need for the Proposed Development is clear; existing private septic tanks are failing, and Yorkshire Water is legally required under Section 101A of the Water Industry Act 1991 to provide public sewerage where private systems are inadequate. The Proposed Development would resolve these issues and protect local water quality.
- 7.1.5 The Proposed Development constitutes wooden post and rail fencing and a permeable Grasscrete access track which would preserve the openness and rural character of the Green Belt, complying with Paragraph 154 of the NPPF (2024) and Policy GB1 of the Barnsley Local Plan.
- 7.1.6 The Proposed Development would provide necessary wastewater infrastructure on an appropriate site with minimal impacts, complying with Policies WCS1, WCS4 and WCS6 of the Joint Waste Plan.
- 7.1.7 The Site is located within Flood Zone 1 and the Proposed Development incorporates SuDS, demonstrating that it could be delivered safely and without increasing flood risk elsewhere. The Proposed Development complies with Paragraphs 170 and 181 of the NPPF (2024) and Policy CC3 of the Barnsley Local Plan.
- 7.1.8 The Proposed Development would result in minimal impacts on the surrounding historical buildings, which is outweighed by the public benefits of delivering essential wastewater infrastructure, complying with Section 16 of the NPPF (2024) and Policy HE2 of the Barnsley Local Plan.
- The Proposed Development would deliver essential public infrastructure in compliance with national and local planning policy.



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