

Planning Statement

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT (33 DWELLINGS)

LAND TO THE SOUTH OF SOUTH VIEW, DARFIELD, S73 9NA

**PREPARED FOR: J HUGHES
PREPARED BY: JAMES ROBERTS MRTPI**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This statement has been prepared to support the submission of an application for full planning permission for a residential development of 33 dwellings. Although part of the site has an allocation that safeguards it as greenspace, it is not publicly accessible and does not serve any beneficial function as open space at the moment. Planning permission has previously been granted for residential development on this part of the site (BMBC reference 2020/1284) and this remains extant.

Residential development of the site represents a sensible and beneficial use for the land that will provide much needed new homes and presents an opportunity to secure a contribution towards enhancing open space provision in the area that better serves the needs of the community.

The statement incorporates a Design and Access Statement, provided to satisfy the statutory requirements imposed under Article 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment) Order 2013 and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

It is a fundamental principle of the NPPF that all requirements for supporting documentation should be proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed. This document sets out the design justification for the proposed development and demonstrates that the scheme is in full compliance with relevant planning policy and guidance.

The site is a parcel of vacant land that lies to the south of South View in the settlement of Darfield. The proposal would provide much-needed new homes. The houses would be completed to a high standard and would provide occupiers with a high standard of housing amenity in a highly sustainable location.

Residential development is entirely compatible with the character and use of the local area. The level of development proposed has been carefully arrived at to ensure that the scheme is viable.

It is anticipated that the Local Planning Authority (LPA) will adopt a progressive approach to this sustainable scheme.

This statement now proceeds to give details of the site and the existing use. The details of the proposal are then set out. The planning merits of the scheme are then discussed in relation to relevant planning policies contained in the statutory development plan, together with Government guidance principally set out in the NPPF. In particular, it will be demonstrated that the proposal would result in a sustainable form of development and would make a valuable contribution to meeting the area's housing needs.

2.0 THE SITE

The site lies immediately to the south of South View, within the settlement of Darfield. The land subject to this application sits in between South View and Hill Street. The existing residential dwellings on South View lie to the north of the site.

The site is predominately undeveloped grassed land. It is not in agricultural use and serves little beneficial purpose at the moment. It has been previously used for some storage and contains shipping containers and vehicles. Some of the site is previously developed land with hard surfacing and low-quality buildings and boundary treatments. Part of the site has a frontage onto the B6096 and part of the terrace of buildings on Snape Hill Road is within the applicant's ownership. It is important to note that the site is entirely in private ownership and there is no public access at all. Whilst parts of the site are allocated as allotments and greenspace they are not used for any purpose and are fenced off from public use.

The full extent of the site measures approximately 0.9ha and it should be noted that the council have previously approved residential development across the vast majority of the site. This application includes an additional strip of land directly off South View which the applicant has subsequently purchased and allows for 8 additional dwellings to be added to the scheme.

The site lies very much within the urban area of Darfield and it is therefore in a highly sustainable location. There are no listed buildings within the vicinity of the site and the site is not within a conservation area.

3.0 THE PROPOSAL (INC DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT)

Full permission is sought for a residential development of 33 houses. Full plans have been provided which demonstrate how these would be accommodated within the site.

USE

The site is vacant land at the moment. No part of the site is used as publicly accessible open space or as allotments. The western part of the site is allocated as greenspace but is vacant and not in any use other than occasional grazing for ponies. The site is not publicly accessible and serves no public open space function.

The proposed use is residential (C3). The principle of residential development within the urban area of Darfield is entirely acceptable as is discussed further below.

AMOUNT

The proposal seeks permission for 33 houses. The number of units proposed has been dictated by ensuring economic viability, ensuring that development would provide a good standard of housing amenity for future occupiers and ensuring that the scale and layout of the development is compatible with the character of the existing built environment.

LAYOUT

Full plans are provided to demonstrate that 33 houses can comfortably accommodated within the site.

The scheme shows a mix of detached and semi-detached dwellings. This is entirely in-keeping with the established character of Darfield, which contains a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced properties in close proximity to the application site.

There is no strict uniformity to the layout of existing houses in the area and there are a mix of crescents and avenues, as well as more linear layouts running both north-to-south and east-to-west. As such, the proposed layout with a combination of both east-to-west and north-to-south orientations would be reflective of the existing character of the area.

The layout shows that recommended parking, space about dwelling distances and private garden space standards would all be met. The scheme would provide a high-quality housing environment for future occupiers and would not have any adverse impacts on the amenity of the occupiers of existing neighbouring dwellings.

LANDSCAPING

A detailed landscaping plan is provided with the application to demonstrate that the site will be developed in a visually pleasing manner whilst also providing opportunities for some ecological gains.

APPEARANCE

The submitted plans shows that the development would be entirely in-keeping with the pattern and form of the established built environment in the locality.

It is anticipated that the houses would be built predominantly from traditional materials and would be of traditional pitched-roof form in order to reflect the predominant character of existing buildings in the locality.

ACCESS

The location of the site is in a highly sustainable location within the well-established residential settlement of Darfield. Darfield has good public transport links and a range of local services including eating and drinking outlets, local shops and a school. Barnsley town centre is very easily accessible.

The submitted layout shows access to the development from Snape Hill Road. The plan also shows that all of the new dwellings would have adequate off-street parking spaces, in accordance with the LPA's parking standards.

The location of the site and the development itself therefore both comply with national and local objectives of creating sustainable patterns of development. The proposed development will fully comply with all DDA access requirements as set out in current building regulations.

4.0 PLANNING HISTORY

As set out above, application 2020/1284 remains extant on the lower part of the site and allows for the development of 20 dwellings. It is considered clear that the extant permission clearly establishes the broad principle of development at the site.

5.0 ALLOCATION AND POLICIES

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this instance the Development Plan consists of the Barnsley Local Plan which was adopted in January 2019 and the Joint Waste Plan.

Material considerations exist in the form of national policy and guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024 and the suite of documents comprising National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG).

The Council's SPDs are also considered of relevance.

The site is partially allocated as Greenspace, partially allocated as allotments.

Barnsley Local Plan

The following policies are considered to be of particular relevance:

LG2 – The Location of Growth

H1 – The Number of New Homes to be Built

H2 – The Distribution of New Homes

H5 – Residential Development on Large Non-allocated Sites

H6 – Housing Mix and Efficient Use of Land

H7 – Affordable Housing

H8 – Housing Regeneration Areas

GS1 – Green Space

T1 – Accessibility Priorities

T3 – New development and Sustainable Travel

T4 – New Development and Transport Safety

D1 – High Quality Design and Place Making

BI01 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity

6.0 ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

The revised NPPF is a crucial part of the Government's overarching agenda of delivering 1.5m new homes during this parliament. This is a central pillar of the 2024 election pledge and is a response to the well-publicised UK housing crisis. The NPPF places great importance on housing delivery across the UK and is accompanied by recent press releases ("back the builder's, not the blocker's") and written ministerial statements. All of these place heavy emphasis on the need to reform the planning system so that developments, most notably housing developments, can be delivered as quickly as possible.

The proposed level of housing that is expected to be delivered is extremely ambitious. To put it into context, the UK has not got close to delivering the amount of housing now proposed for over 45 years. Using the revised standard methodology set out within the NPPF, annual housing need in Barnsley is set to increase from 638 dwellings to 944 dwellings (a 48% increase).

Applications for housing developments need to be viewed in this context and supported wherever possible.

Policy LG2 sets out that priority will be given to development in urban Barnsley and the site is clearly in a location where growth and regeneration is appropriate. Policy H1 sets out that at least 21,546 net additional new homes will be built over the plan period.

Darfield is identified as being a Local Centre in the local plan and falls within the Principle Town classification for the Wombwell area for settlement hierarchy purposes. Policy H2 sets out that the Wombwell area is expected to accommodate 10% of all new homes in the district over the local plan period. The local plan also sets out that it is an aspiration for Wombwell to flourish as one of the largest urban areas in the district. This is therefore a location where residential development is clearly appropriate.

Policy H8 identifies Darfield as an area where housing market regeneration will be supported. The proposal represents a significant investment in the settlement that would contribute positively to housing market regeneration aspirations and should be welcomed.

Although the site is not allocated specifically for housing, the local plan makes it clear that non-allocated sites will make an important contribution to meeting housing needs. Policy H5 applies and states that:

“Proposals for residential development on sites above 0.4 hectares which are not shown as housing sites on the Policies Map will be supported where they:

- *Are located on previously or part previously developed land;*
- *Are located within Urban Barnsley, Principal Towns and Villages;*
- *Are accessible by public transport; and*
- *Have good access to a range of shops and services.”*

The southern part of the site from which access would be taken is previously developed land and the site also contains a number of existing outbuildings that are to be removed. The site is part-previously developed land. The site is within the Wombwell Principle Town area. The site has good access to public transport and all the local shops and services in Darfield are a very short distance away. All the criteria of policy H5 are met.

The site is therefore clearly one that is suitable for residential development, subject to the LPA's policy in respect of Greenspace being satisfied. This is discussed, and fully addressed, further below.

The main emphasis of current national planning policy is to ensure proposals are compliant with the definition of sustainable development set out within the NPPF. Sustainability is multi-faceted. The Government's view of what sustainable development means in practice is to be found throughout the Framework, taken as a whole. To achieve sustainable development, the Framework states that economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system.

The proposal would be wholly sustainable using the definition set out in the NPPF for the following reasons:

Social: The proposal would allow for the creation of additional housing in this sustainable residential settlement. It is clearly an area that is suitable for providing development to contribute towards the district's housing needs. The scheme would make an important contribution to meeting the LPA's housing targets. The development proposal would put the site that is currently in no beneficial use to good use and would support the existing community facilities in the locality. The scheme also presents an important opportunity to provide publicly accessible open space within the site and therefore represents an enhancement to the community in this respect. The scheme would not have any adverse social impact.

Economic: The proposal would allow for the efficient use of the urban land resource and would provide growth and investment in the locality. The proposal will also provide employment during the construction period. The new housing would have the knock-on effect of supporting other businesses in the locality. The development is very likely to have positive economic impact and would contribute positively to the LPA's housing regeneration aspirations in this part of the district.

Environmental: Residential development at the site would be compatible with the fabric of the existing built environment and would result in no adverse impact to the character of the

locality. The proposal would deliver Biodiversity Net Gain via a combination of on-site landscaping and the purchase of off-site credits.

The proposal would not result in any material harm and the presumption in favour of sustainable development must be applied. The principle of development must therefore be considered acceptable.

Greenspace

In assessing the previous application at the site, the planning officer stated as follows:

“The eastern portion of the site is a former allotment and is no longer in use whilst the western portion of the site is part of an area known as Hill Street Green Space; a ‘park and open space’. The whole site is fenced off with no public access which reduces its value as greenspace but, nevertheless, it remains the case that open spaces such as this provide visual amenity benefits as well as ecological and environmental benefits.

In assessing if the loss of the greenspace, it is noted that the pre-application enquiry confirmed that there are sufficient allotments within the area. Further, the deficiencies in greenspace which exist in the area relate to youth and child facilities and not informal greenspace such as Hill Street Green.

Looking to alternative or improved provision, the proposed development offers an opportunity to secure funding which can be used to improve greenspace and associated facilities. This would be both in terms of a compensatory payment and a contribution as set out in Local Plan Policy GS1 and the accompanying SPD. Parks have confirmed that to the west of the site is Darfield Recreation Ground which has no children’s play space and the small sports facility (MUGA) located on it has been removed. This area is earmarked for tree

planting as part of the 10,000 Trees Project in the borough and improved access to it though this development would be a benefit. In addition, there are opportunities to invest in Bly Road Recreation Ground and / or Pinfold Recreation ground to provide youth and play facilities.”

Exactly the same factors are at play in this case and the extant permission adds further justification for the scheme. Given the very limited benefit of the site to the community at the moment, and that allotments are not the type of open space that have been identified as being in short supply in the area, the best way forward in this case is to provide a developer contribution that can be used by the LPA to enhance open space off-site. The applicant is willing to agree to this in accordance with the Open Space Provision on New Housing Developments SPD as far as financial viability will allow.

The LPA has previously confirmed that there is an under provision of green space for youth and children. The site at the moment does nothing to address this need but a financial contribution would enable either existing facilities to be greater enhanced or new provision made specifically to meet the identified need for youth and children’s facilities.

As such, as well as not having any harmful impact through the loss of useable greenspace or allotment land, the scheme actually represents an opportunity for significant betterment over and above the existing situation. Land that is not in any beneficial use and is not needed for its identified purpose (i.e. allotment) can be put to extremely beneficial use for housing and a contribution would be made to providing green space that can be targeted at the specific needs of the community.

To summarise in terms of green space therefore, the existing situation is that the land currently makes no beneficial contribution towards identified green space requirements in the locality. There would therefore be no adverse impact arising through the development of

the land. Furthermore, a contribution and compensatory payment will be made to account for the fact that the total size of the green space area will be reduced, thereby allowing other green space in the community to be improved.

The scheme clearly meets the requirements of policy GS1 as there would be no harm through development of the land and there would be a vast improvement in terms of green space provision overall.

Affordable Housing

Policy H7 requires an affordable housing contribution of 10% for schemes of 15 units or more in the Darfield area. An affordable housing contribution to meet this requirement will be made and we will discuss the specific details of how this will be made with the LPA in due course.

Drainage/ Flood Risk

The application site is within flood zone 1 as identified by the Environment Agency so is not at undue risk of flooding. The site is below the size at which a flood risk assessment would be required for development not in zone 2 or 3 (1 hectare). There are no known flooding or drainage issues in the locality.

A Drainage Assessment has been prepared by EWE Associates and is submitted separately. This includes design proposals for surface and foul water drainage that are based on the submitted layout. The drainage assessment shows that a development of the size proposed can be delivered with adequate drainage provision. The scheme accords with local and national policy in this respect.

Transport and Accessibility

As previously discussed, the location of the site is considered to be in a highly sustainable location with excellent access to public transport and a wide range of shops and services. The location of the site therefore complies with national and local objectives of creating sustainable patterns of development.

The site is to be accessed from Snape Hill Road with a shared access point with the access road being used by both the houses proposed under this application and the ones already approved on the land to the south.

A Transport Statement has been prepared by Paragon Highways and is submitted separately. This sets out that the proposed development, sustainability, traffic generations and parking proposals are considered to be acceptable in terms of highway safety, capacity and sustainability.

The scheme fully accords with local and national policy in this respect.

Safety and Security through Design

Bringing the site into well-occupied use is highly likely to have a positive impact on safety and security within the site and the surrounding area. The layout of the site would ensure excellent natural surveillance, and the development would be carried out using high-spec security measures. The applicant remains willing to discuss any security measures the council would require at the site. It is therefore considered that the scheme would accord with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended).

Design and Residential Amenity

The submitted scheme demonstrates that 33 houses can be delivered at the site in a manner that would ensure there would be no harm to the amenity of the occupiers of neighbouring properties in the locality.

The plans shows that all space about dwellings recommended standards can be met and the layout of the dwellings would provide a high standard of housing amenity for future occupiers.

As set out further above though, the materials and form of the new houses would be reflective of existing buildings in the locality.

The scheme accords with local and national policy and guidance in this respect.

Ecology

The application is accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment, BNG calculations and a detailed landscaping scheme. The documentation sets out that the development would not affect any designated sites and that site habitats are considered to be of importance to nature conservation at no more than the site level. The site is not considered to be of importance at greater than the site level to any faunal species group. The site has some potential for nesting birds and the impact can be mitigated by avoiding works during the nesting bird season and the carryout of suitable replacement planting.

The proposal is subject to BNG, is within a nature improvement area and the scheme should deliver net enhancement in terms of ecology. The proposed development represents an opportunity to improve the ecology value of the site. This will be achieved via a mixture of on-site landscaping and off site credits.

Overall, subject to the recommended enhancement and mitigation measures, the scheme would not harm protected species and would result in improved ecological value at the site. The scheme accords with local policy, the requirements of the NPPF, and BNG legislation in this respect.

Trees

A tree survey has been undertaken by AWA Trees and this has informed an arboricultural report which is submitted separately. The key findings of the report are that there are no protected trees within the site and all the trees on the site fall within the lower value retention category. Species diversity among the existing trees is also poor. The trees within the site that require removal are predominantly small fruit trees that are generally in a very poor condition.

The proposed development therefore presents an excellent opportunity to significantly enhance the arboriculture value of the site by replacing the existing low value and poor condition trees with suitable new tree planting. The specific details of the replacement planting is set out on the submitted landscaping plan. It is clear that the loss of the existing trees would not be harmful and, subject to appropriate landscape details, the scheme will deliver significant enhancement in this respect. The scheme fully accords with local policy and guidance within the NPPF in this respect.

Land Stability/Contamination

A phase I geotechnical report has been prepared by RB Geotechnical and is submitted separately. This sets out that the development has been considered in terms of possible hydrology, geology and hydrogeology issues as well as potential for land contamination. The report concludes that there is some potential for contamination due to historic uses of the site and uses of neighbouring land. The potential risks are all either low or moderate. It is

recommended that a phase II study is carried out in order to allow mitigation strategies to be put in place if necessary. This can be made a condition of planning approval, and the report is sufficient to demonstrate that site contamination is not a prohibitive risk factor that would prevent permission being granted.

The site is not within a coal mining referral area and site is not unduly affected by land stability issues.

Renewable Energy and Carbon Reduction

The scheme in itself contributes to energy efficiency and carbon reduction by being a wholly sustainable form of development. The building would also achieve excellent levels of energy efficiency. The applicant is happy to discuss any options for renewable energy generation that may be appropriate given site circumstances and financial viability restrictions.

8.0 CONCLUSION

The proposed development represents a sustainable form of development that would not have any unacceptable impact for the reasons set out above. The proposal would wholly accord with adopted planning policy and guidance and the LPA are respectfully urged to grant permission for the scheme.

The applicant is fully willing to discuss any pre-commencement conditions, and we would appreciate early engagement relating to this in order to avoid any unnecessary delays to the determination of the application.

The Applicant is willing to discuss any issues that may arise during the consideration of the proposal with the LPA.

James Roberts (BA, MSc, MRTPI)

JR Planning