



Planning Statement

The Seam, County Way, Barnsley

On Behalf of Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

December 2024

nineteen47
CHARTERED TOWN PLANNERS
& URBAN DESIGNERS

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Client:

Willmott Dixon Construction

Project:

The Seam, County Way, Barnsley, S70 2JW

Report Title / Version:

Planning Statement

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Date:

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Written by:



Cam Wood
Apprentice Planner

Approved by:



Clare Plant
Director

Section 1 | Introduction

- 1.1 nineteen47 Ltd. is instructed by Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council ["The Applicant"] to prepare and submit a full planning application to Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council ["the LPA"] for the **proposed Improvements to an Existing Public Car Park and Creation of New Public Realm and landscaping** ["the Proposed Development"] on land at The Seam, County Way, Barnsley, S70 2JW ["the Application Site"].
- 1.2 This application for full planning permission is being made under Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992, due to the Proposed Development being submitted on behalf of Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, who are also the determining Local Planning Authority.
- 1.3 Willmott Dixon Construction are a leading national construction company, instructed by the Council to deliver this scheme. They take pride in delivering projects and services of lasting value to the neighbourhoods they work within, with sustainability being at the forefront of development. They take an active and impactful approach to social value with a genuine purpose beyond profit, dedicating to leave a real, lasting legacy in the community.
- 1.4 The purpose of this statement is to assess the principle of the Proposed Development in the context of physical site constraints and relevant local planning policies and national guidance. This statement will set out the substantial public benefits offered by the scheme and demonstrate that the Proposed Development is acceptable in principle and that planning permission should be granted.
- 1.5 This statement should be read and considered in conjunction with the plans, drawings and documents submitted as part of this Application. The list of supporting application documentations includes the following:
 - Site Location Plan
 - Existing Landscape Site Plan
 - Landscape Site Plan
 - Design and Access Statement
 - Transport Statement
 - Drainage and Flood Risk Assessment
 - Arboricultural Report
 - Ecological Appraisal
 - Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment
 - Statement of Community Involvement
 - Heritage Impact Assessment
 - Ground Investigation Report
 - Remediation Summary
 - Lighting
 - Lighting LUX
 - Calculated Lighting LUX Levels
- 1.6 This Statement is structured as follows:
 - Section 2 provides an overview of the Site and its surroundings;
 - Section 3 provides an overview of the Proposed Development;

- Section 4 outlines the relevant Planning Policy Context;
- Section 5 assesses the proposals within a planning context;
- Section 6 draws together conclusions.

Section 2 | Site Context

- 2.1 The Application Site as shown in figure 1 extends to 1.66 hectares and comprises The Seam (lower) car park, situated in the Barnsley Town Centre, adjacent to the Transport interchange and train station.
- 2.2 The Site is shown in figure 1 and comprises a hard surfaced public car park operated by the council. The northern portion of the Site includes a vegetated embankment along the eastern and western boundaries.
- 2.3 The Site is bound by Old Mill Lane to the North, and the railway line to the northeast. A substantial retaining wall abuts the eastern Site boundary, with Eldon Street North and the Courthouse Pub located to the south. The west of the Site is bounded by the upper level of the car park, as well as the Digital Media Centre and a further retaining wall.

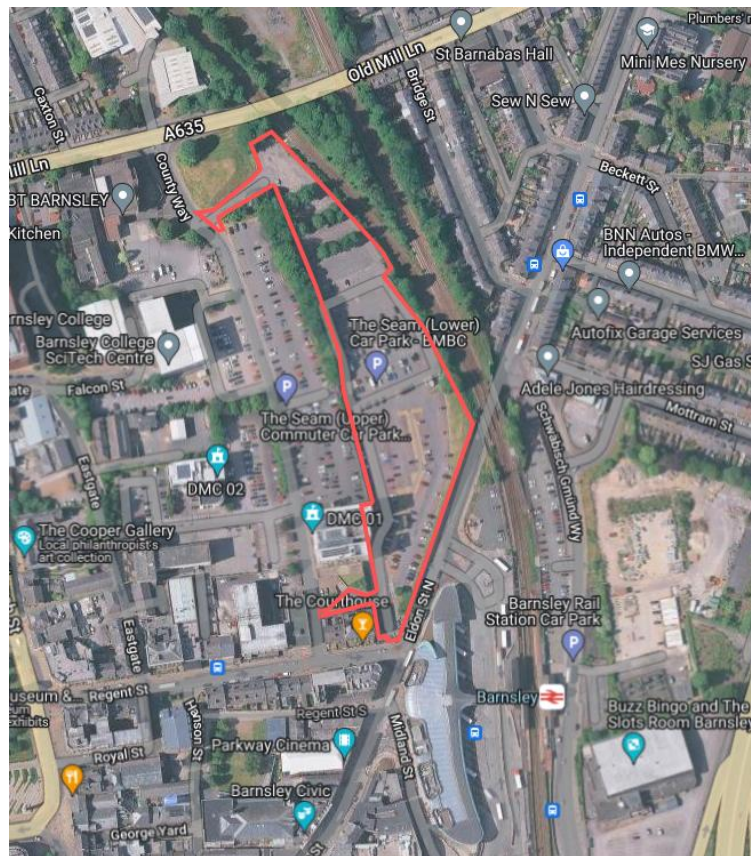


Figure 1 : Aerial image of the Application Site (*Google, MyMaps*)

- 2.4 Regarding topography, the Site is relatively flat, although the roads around the Site vary in levels, with the Site situating at a higher level than Eldon Street running along the southern boundary.
- 2.5 Vehicular access to the Site is achieved via County Way to the northwest and southwest, with pedestrian access to the Town Centre from Eldon Street North at the south of the Site.

- 2.6 The Site located within a 5-minute walking distance to the Bus station within Barnsley Interchange with access to multiple bus routes.
- 2.7 The site itself doesn't contain any listed buildings. However, there are listed buildings located to the immediate south of the Site including The Courthouse, which abuts the southern boundary, and the Queens Court Business Centre situated opposite the courthouse on Regents Street. The Site also locates next to the Regent Street, Church Street and Market Hill conservation area, which will border the Southern Western Coner of the Site.
- 2.8 The site also situates in Flood zone 1.

Planning History

- 2.9 The Council's Public Access records confirm the Site has the following history of planning applications within the Site.
- 2.10 The LPA's Public Access records confirm relevant planning applications / decisions relating to the Site as set out below in Table 1.

Application Reference	Description	Decision
2022/0736	Hybrid planning application for a) full planning permission for a Multi-Storey Car Park (6 storeys above ground and 2 below ground) with 386no spaces, an Active Travel Hub (cafe, cycle hire / repair facility, retail, and cycle workshop space), a public realm scheme covering the entirety of the site and access, and b) outline planning permission with all matters reserved for 136 dwellings and 1887 sqm ground floor commercial space	Withdrawn
2022/0737	Re-grading of the existing pedestrian ramp to achieve a 1:21 fall (inclusive), excavation around the retaining wall and steps to the west of the ramp and replacement with Yorkstone flag surfacing, removal and replacement of existing low retaining wall with railings and finger post sign to enable the extension of the pedestrian ramp, removal and replacement of stepped access from Eldon Street North and along the eastern edge of the pedestrian ramp with new 500mm max height concrete and Yorkstone cladding retaining walls and ornamental tree planting (Listed Building Consent)	Withdrawn
2008/0313	Demolition of existing offices and formation of car park	Granted 02/04/2008

Table 1: Planning History

Section 3 | Proposed Development

- 3.1 This Application seeks full planning permission for proposed Improvements to an Existing Public Car Park and Creation of New Public Realm and landscaping at The Seam, County Way, Barnsley, S70 2JW.
- 3.2 The Proposed Development offers an excellent opportunity to significantly improve the area. The proposed development includes an improved surface car park and a new area of public realm. The northern section of the car park will be retained with improvements and alternations including the addition of EV charging bays.
- 3.3 The southern section of the site will undergo works to create a new public realm which will provide approximately 4,700sqm of new public open space. The public realm will include three areas: Biodiversity Garden, Digital Garden and Town Centre Link.
- 3.4 The Biodiversity Garden will include raised planters including species rich grassland, flower-rich perennials and shrubs, enhancing the biodiversity. Integrated seating within the planters will be available, offering a tranquil green space and the potential to operate as an outdoor classroom.
- 3.5 The Digital Garden will be a multi-functional urban space inspired by the Digital Media Centre which would include central focal point subject to a design competition for local artists and creatives.
- 3.6 The Town Centre Link acts a main gateway between the town centre, station and the site.
- 3.7 Within these areas there will be a combination of pathways, planting, a pedestrian route through the site, as well as hard and soft landscaping. Enhanced pedestrian pathways accompanied with rain gardens and trees will guide users towards the public realm of the Site.
- 3.8 A variety of landscaping materials will be used which are confirmed in the landscaping scheme accompanying the application. There will also be seating areas as well as boundary treatments. Additional tree planting and lighting is also proposed. A detailed lighting scheme is proposed in order to achieve safe illumination levels throughout the Site eliminating any risk of darkness. CCTV will also be installed throughout the Site.
- 3.9 Social and community space will be provided enabling opportunities for stalls and small events to take place within the public realm.
- 3.10 The proposed development would see the loss of 181 existing car parking spaces. Albeit 286 spaces will be retained in the northern part of the application Site, which will also include provision for the addition of 39x EV charging bays and 12 accessible bays. It is still to be determined when these EV bays would be installed. Furthermore, a substation which will service the EV spaces is also proposed.
- 3.11 Existing north-western access will be retained to serve the car park with the southern access closing for vehicle access and providing a service access only.
- 3.12 The primary access point to the car park will be located in the northern section of the site from County Way off Old Mill Lane.
- 3.13 Movement pattern and sightlines have been established for vehicles and pedestrians. Speed bumps will be installed to deter excessive speeds and improve traffic flow. There is also the

potential for Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) to be installed. Walkways will be clearly marked with the implementation of physical barriers including bollards to separate pedestrians. Signage will be used to effectively indicating speed limits, accessible parking, pedestrian crossings, traffic regulations, stop signs, parking zones and exits. Overall, there will be effective site management and maintenance protocols to ensure security and safety of the proposed development is of the highest standards.

Section 4 | Planning Policy Context

- 4.2 Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.3 The Development Plan for the Borough of Barnsley consists of the Barnsley Local Plan (adopted 3rd January 2019)
- 4.4 In addition to the Development Plan, applications should have regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) and National Planning Practice Guidance, which are material considerations in any decision.

Development Plan

- 4.5 The Development Plan policies relevant to the determination of the application are provided below.

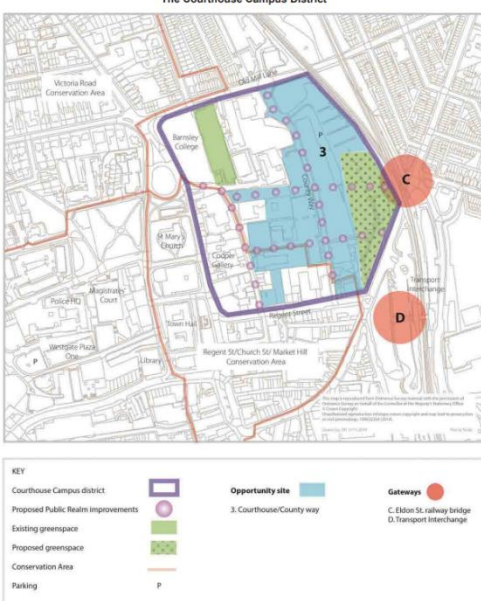
Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council Local Plan

Policy No.	Topic	Comments
SD1	Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development	Indicates a positive approach will be taken with proposals that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development which has an overall aim to improve the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.
GD1	General Development	Outlines proposals for development will be approved if they include landscaping to provide a high-quality setting for buildings, incorporating existing landscape features and ensuring that plant species and the way they are planted, hard surfaces, boundary treatments and other features appropriately reflect, protect and improve the character of the local landscape.
T3	New Development and Sustainable Travel	Addresses that new development will be expected to be located and designed to reduce the need to travel, be accessible to public transport and meet the needs of pedestrians and cyclists. It is also important to provide at least minimum levels of parking for cycles, motorbikes, scooter, mopeds and disabled people set out in the relevant Supplementary Planning Document.
T4	New Development and Transport Safety	States new development will be expected to include designs and built in order to provide all transport users regarding the development with safe, secure and convenient access and movement.

D1	High Quality Design and Place Making	Addresses that within the design principles development is expected to be of high quality design alongside respecting reinforcing the distinctive, local character and features of Barnsley including: - <i>landscape character and green infrastructure assets.</i> - <i>Views and vistas to key buildings, landmarks, skylines and gateways</i> - <i>Heritage and townscape character including the scale, layout, building styles and materials of the built form in the locality.</i> The developments design and layout should also: - <i>Contribute to place making and be of high quality, that contributes to a healthy, safe and sustainable environment</i> - <i>Complement and enhance the character and setting of distinctive places, including Barnsley Town Centre, Penistone, rural villages and Conservation Areas;</i> - <i>Help to transform the character of physical environments that have become run down and are lacking in distinctiveness;</i> - <i>Provide an accessible and inclusive environment for the users of individual buildings and surrounding spaces;</i> - <i>Provide clear and obvious connections to the surrounding street and pedestrian network;</i> - <i>Ensure ease of movement and legibility for all users, ensure overlooking of streets, spaces and pedestrian routes through the arrangement and orientation of buildings and the location of entrances;</i> - <i>Promote safe, secure environments and access routes with priority for pedestrians and cyclists;</i> - <i>Create clear distinctions between public and private spaces;</i> - <i>Display architectural quality and express proposed uses through its composition, scale, form, proportions and arrangement of materials, colours and details;</i> - <i>Make the best use of high quality materials;</i>
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		- <i>Include a comprehensive and high quality scheme for hard and soft landscaping; and Provide high quality public realm.</i> Regarding placemaking, development should also aim in making positive contributions for a successful place by achieving qualities such as character, legibility, permeability and vitality.
LC1	Landscape Character	Specifies development is expected to retain and enhance the character and distinctiveness of the location of development with regard to its individual local character.
HE1	The Historic Environment	Expresses developments will be positively encouraged which help with the management, conservation, understanding and enjoyment of Barnsley's historic environment. Proposals will be supported which conserve and enhance the significance and setting of the borough's heritage assets particularly those elements which contribute most to the distinctive character and sense of place. These elements and assets include the three town centre conservations areas. Furthermore, proposals are supported which preserve or enhance the character or appearance of a conservation area.
HE2	Heritage Statements and general application procedures	States the importance of known heritage assets or sites with an emphasis on sufficient detailed plans and drawings enabling an assessment to be made of the impact of the development upon the significance of any heritage assets including a conservation area or listed buildings.
TC1	Town Centres	States support is provided to maintaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of the hierarchy of centres with Barnsley Town Centre being the dominant town centre in the borough. Town centre developments are recommended to be appropriate to the scale, role, function and character of the centre in which they are located.
BTC3	Public Spaces	highlights the requirement for new development to make a positive contribution to public spaces through its design, siting and use of materials. The creation of new public spaces must be made in accordance with the Barnsley town Centre Public Spaces Strategy.
BTC4	Improving Public Spaces	States new developments of community uses over 1000 square metres must include proposals to improve public spaces.
BTC7	Gateways	States development on or next to the gateways identified on Inset Map 2 must: - Create a strong distinctive visual gateway to the town centre and a sense of arrival;

		- Be of high quality design and use the best quality materials; - Be designed to welcome people into the town centre and create active street frontages; - Not detract from important views or skylines; - Include good pedestrian links through the site and to the town centre; - Take the opportunity to create distinctive new landmark buildings; - Improve public spaces in accordance with the Barnsley Town Centre Public Spaces Strategy; and - Creating linkages to other areas adjacent to the town centre.
BTC11	Car Parks	Signify town centre car parks are to be managed for allowing short stay car parking and restricting long stay car parking. Longer stay car parks will be located on the edge of the town with short stay parking locating within the town centre.
BTC21	Courthouse Campus	Identifies certain types of development, including a new public park and improved public spaces will be allowed in the Courthouse Campus District.
BTC22	Development Site 3 - Courthouse Campus	Seeks that development within the Courthouse Campus area as shown below in figure 2, is expected to: - Include the creation of a new public open space; - Provide improvements to pedestrian links and public spaces; and - Conserve or enhance the Conservation Area.

		 Figure 2 – Extract from Courthouse Campus Masterplan
GI1	Green Infrastructure	Sets out the council will protect, maintain, enhance and create an integrated network of connected functional green infrastructure assets. This will result in Green Infrastructure assets that: - Provides attractive environments where people want to live, work, learn, play, visit and invest; - Meets the environmental, social and economic needs of communities across the borough and the wider City Regions; - Enhances the quality of life for present and future residents and visitors; Helps to meet the challenge of climate change; - Enhances biodiversity and landscape character; - Improves opportunities for recreation and tourism; - Respects local distinctiveness and historical and cultural heritage; - Maximises potential economic and social benefits; and - Secures and improves linkages between green and blue spaces

GS1	Green Space	Addresses the aim for the Council to work with partners to improve existing green space in order to meet the Green Space Strategy.
BIO1	Biodiversity and Geodiversity	States development will be expected to conserve and enhance the biodiversity and geological features of the borough.
Poll1	Pollution Control and Protection	Highlights development is expected to demonstrate no likely increase in different types of pollution which would affect the natural and built environment and the people. Minimising possible pollution and mitigation measures are encouraged.
CL1	Contaminated and Unstable Land	States where future development could be at risk of contamination or unstable land, proposals must be accompanied by a report.
CC1	Climate Change	Emphasises the aims to reduce the causes of and adapt to the future impacts of climate change. This will be achieved by reducing greenhouse gas emissions through sustainable design and construction techniques alongside. Further promoting investment in Green Infrastructure will also support the aims to tackle Climate Change.
CC2	Sustainable Design and Construction	Identifies that development is expected to minimise resource and energy consumption through the inclusion of sustainable design and construction features.
I2	Educational and Community Facilities	Emphasises the support for the provision of educational facilities and other community facilities including meeting places and should be located centrally which can be accessed by walking, cycling and public transport.

Other Material Considerations

The National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- 4.6 The Framework advises that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development (paragraph 7).
- 4.7 Paragraph 8 details that there are three overarching objectives to achieving sustainable development which are interdependent. These objectives are:
- an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
 - a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

- an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 4.8 Paragraph 9 details that these objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in this Framework; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.
- 4.9 Paragraph 10 states that at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, with Paragraph 11(c) detailing that, for decision-taking, this means, *'Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay'*.
- 4.10 In terms of decision-making, paragraph 39 states:

"Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way" and that "Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible."
- 4.11 Section 7 *Ensuring the Vitality of Town Centres* highlights the overarching *"role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation"*.
- 4.12 Section 8 *Promoting healthy and safe communities*, identifies the *"aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places and beautiful buildings"* that *"promote social interaction...safe and accessible...enable and support healthy lifestyles"*. Also ensuring the need to *"provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs"* entailing planning positively for *"the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments"*.
- 4.13 Section 12 *Achieving Well-designed and Beautiful Places* states *"The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve"* including detailing on ensuring overall design, design vision, design expectations and design quality.
- 4.14 Decisions should ensure developments function adequately to the quality of the area, visually attractive, sympathetic of local character, establish or maintain a strong sense of place, sustain an appropriate mix of development including green and public space and create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible.
- 4.15 The importance of trees on the character and quality of the environment, as well as lighting also should be addressed within the design.
- 4.16 Section 14 *Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change* highlights the role of planning should *"support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate"*. Under climate change proposals should ensure a proactive approach is taken that

includes approaches mitigating and adapting to climate change.

- 4.17 Section 16 *Conserving and enhancing the historic environment* refers to the importance of applications recognising the historic environment and character. Applicants should “*describe the significance of any heritage assets affected including the contribution made by their setting*”. Paragraph 210 states that when determining applications, local authorities should take account of:

a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and

c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance

- 4.18 Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council have the following adopted SPDs which provide further specific guidance for the implementation of specific policies within the Local Plan:

SPD	Date
Parking	November 2019
Sustainable Construction and Climate Change	July 2023
Development on land affected by contamination	November 2019
Sustainable Travel	July 2022
Trees & Hedgerows	May 2019
Biodiversity & Geodiversity	May 2019

Section 5 | Planning Assessment

- 5.1 On the basis of the policy framework set out in the previous section and in accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Proposed Development is considered within the context of the Development Plan and national planning policy and guidance including the Framework and the PPG; along with other material considerations below.
- 5.2 The key issues in the determination of the application include the following considerations:
- Principle of Development;
 - Highways Considerations;
 - Urban Design and Layout Considerations;
 - Green Infrastructure;
 - Heritage Considerations;
 - Other Considerations.

Principle of Development

- 5.3 The Development Plan for Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council comprises the Local Plan (2019), which allocates the Site as Town Centre: Development Site 3. The Site is identified as a 'priority Site for public space improvements' on the Local Plan Policy map and is adjacent to two 'gateway sites' of Eldon Street Railways Bridge and Transport Interchange.
- 5.4 The proposed development aligns both with the overarching aims for the town centre, as well as the policy requirement for the Site location itself.
- 5.5 The proposals ensure that the development recognises and adheres to the policies set out on a national level, following the NPPF guidance, as well as the local plan policy for Barnsley with further acknowledgement of the local SPDs.
- 5.6 The proposed development will see improvements and enhancements made directly to the Site, whilst providing a positive impact to the wider area which addresses Section 7 of the NPPF and Policy TC1 of the local plan which both state the importance of town centres and the requirements to create positive places that incorporate the local community and character of the area.
- 5.7 A fundamental aspect of the proposed development is the flexibility of the approach. The proposals will include high quality public open space providing a dynamic environment. The project offers exciting opportunities for Barnsley through the potential for diverse uses including markets, outdoor sculpture galleries, venues for fitness and music events within the local community.
- 5.8 The Site proposal includes public realm, comprising of improved public open space with flexibility and capacity for local community use and activities to be held in. This aligns with the local policies BTC21 and BTC22 that state development siting within Courthouse Campus of the town centre, and within Development Site 3 the courthouse campus is expected to and allowed to include new public open spaces.
- 5.9 With a major focal point of the proposed development being the implementation and improvement of open space with the addition of the public realm, this reinforces the positive contribution of the new development towards public open space, in addition to the aim of

providing high quality community uses with the integration of a digital garden and biodiversity garden alongside the town centre link. These chore aspects of the scheme support the local policies of BTC3 and BTC4 on public space.

- 5.10 The town centre link will provide a main gateway between the town centre, station and the Site, thus supporting local policy BTC7 which states the criteria for development next to or in gateway sites. With the Site positioning next to a gateway, and in turn aiming to become a gateway, this supports the overarching aim for the proposal to be of high-quality design, creating a good pedestrian link and connection to the local area.
- 5.11 Detailed site security and safety, alongside the importance of creating a healthy and accessible Site for all, addresses Section 8 of the NPPF which emphasises the importance of creating healthy and safe communities.
- 5.12 With the approach incorporating an emphasis on sustainable development from the outright and ensuring continued discussion and coordination with the Barnsley Council this created a positive and effective approach with the aim to improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. This approach aligns with the local plan Policy SD1 for presumption in favour of sustainable development in addition to Paragraph 10, 11 and 39 of the NPPF, which further support the approval for applications of sustainable development.

Highways

- 5.13 A Transport Statement (TS) has been prepared by Sanderson Associates to support the planning application. The statement considers in detail, the implications of the reduced quantum of parking spaces, which needs to be balanced against the benefits of the enhancements to the site in both public realm and parking terms.
- 5.14 The proposed development will utilise the existing access from County Way at the northern end of the site. Capacity assessments for the junctions identified near the site confirm the proposed access arrangements can accommodate the predicted future traffic flows.
- 5.15 From a car parking perspective, the development seeks to enhance the provision of accessible parking and the introduction of electric vehicle charging facilities. A total of 286no. parking bays will be retained which includes the provision of 12no. accessible bays and the provision of 39no. electric vehicle charging bays.
- 5.16 Whilst it is acknowledged that during the construction period and subsequent operational of the development will result in a reduction in the level of car parking spaces, as assessed as part of the Transport Statement, there is sufficient capacity in alternative car parks within the town centre (many of which are operated by the Council) to accommodate this reduction in parking at the application site.
- 5.17 The developer will work closely with the Council in advance of construction, to develop a robust communication strategy, ensuring users of the Lower Seam car park are informed of the closure to the car park and provide guidance on how to access alternative car parks.
- 5.18 The TS concludes the proposed development would not have a detrimental impact in terms of Town Centre car parking availability and junction capacity. There is sufficient spare capacity within the other Town Centre car parks to manage the loss of spaces within the Lower Seam car park and the resultant redistribution of traffic can be accommodated on the highway network.

- 5.19 The statement confirms that the Site is located with excellent access to sustainable public transport methods, which are achieved within a 5-minute walk to the Transport Hub, providing direct access to multiple bus routes and train services. An integral aspect of the public realm is the town centre link with the site acting as a gateway between the town centre, the station and the edge of the town. The proposals support and address the requirements of Policy T3 in this respect.
- 5.20 Policy T4 highlights the importance and expectation of including design and detail ensuring safe transportation. The Design and Access Statement along with the Transport Assessment highlight the safety and security measures integrated within the proposals for both vehicular and pedestrian users. This includes speed bumps, bollards and signage to effectively manage and maintain the site, thus ensuring an overall safe and secure development, in accordance with the SPD on Sustainable Travel and Parking.
- 5.21 Policy BTC11 highlighted the importance of town centre car parks with regard to short stay parking. The proposed development will offer an appropriate provision of parking, including enhanced EV and disabled parking bays, whilst providing enhanced public realm to also benefit the users of public transport options.
- 5.22 Further acknowledging the above policies, an integral part of the proposal is the inclusive design approach, with a focus on ensuring access for all. Consultation feedback has reinforced this ensuring access for disabled, sensory and neurological process difficulties, which have been carefully considered and implemented.
- 5.23 In summary the proposals are considered to strike an appropriate balance between retained and enhance public car parking provision and the introduction of new high quality public realm. They are demonstrated through the Transport Assessment undertaken to be based on a design which ensures that highway safety is maintained and are therefore considered to be acceptable.

Design and Layout

- 5.24 The Design and Access Statement prepared by One Environment sets out the evolution of the proposals.
- 5.25 The objective of the project has from the outset focused on high quality enhancement of the Application Site and the Applicants continued consultation with stakeholders has enabled the refinement of key ideas.
- 5.26 Principally, the proposals will result in the significant enhancement of all parts of the site. The retained area of car parking will be enhanced and services provided to facilitate EV charging. Additional landscaping and surveillance will also be introduced to enhance the environment for users.
- 5.27 In addition, an extensive and striking area of public open space will be introduced for the benefit of all visitors and to compliment the existing wider digital campus. This open space will feature three distinct areas, which will be further enhanced by the introduction of large-scale public art sculptures (subject of a separate application).
- 5.28 An integral part of the proposed development is the inclusive design approach, with a focal point on ensuring access for all, capturing input from a range of stakeholders as well as site security and safety. Inclusive design has been embedded in the design brief from the beginning of the project.

- 5.29 Circulation and movement for pedestrian/cycle and vehicle users has been informed by vehicle tracking to ensure a safe, accessible and permeable development.
- 5.30 A combination of a variety of hard and soft landscaping is introduced throughout the site. Hard landscaping is used to create a strong sense of arrival whilst ensuring the Site is robust and fit for purpose. The inclusion of street furniture is an integral aspect, ranging from signage, bins to benches, raised planters, bollards and fencing.
- 5.31 Soft landscaping includes trees and hedges, shrubs of various species, perennials and a significantly positive BNG increase of 45%, reinforces the benefits the proposal will provide.
- 5.32 The spaces have been designed to also support social and community uses, providing potential for stalls and small events to take place in the public realm. The Site also aims to build a link with the DMC building with the scope for outdoor teaching. These important aspects of the design adhere to Policy I2 of the local plan regarding education and community facilities. The accessibility from various modes of transport and the ease of access to the site further supports the need for community spaces to be centrally located and accessible.
- 5.33 The proposed development will also support the requirements set in the local plan through Policy D1 regarding high quality design and placemaking, along with Policy CC2 regarding sustainable design and construction. The Site further supports the guidance in Section 12 of the NPPF for achieving well-designed places.

Green Infrastructure

Ecology and Biodiversity

- 5.34 An Ecological Impact Assessment (ECiA) and BNG baseline report have been prepared to inform and support the planning application.
- 5.35 The ECiA considers any potential ecological receptors that may be represent on site or within an identified zone or influence. The assessment also identifies relevant potential mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures. A further assessment of the survey findings on habitats, bats, birds, badgers, great crested newts and other protected species. The assessment concludes no detrimental impact will occur from the proposed development, with avoidance measures, mitigation strategy and a compensation scheme ensuring no impact is posed.
- 5.36 Policy BIO1 of the Local Plan states an expectation to conserve and enhance biodiversity as well as geological features. The proposal is supported by attached documents and assessments which provide a detailed layout of the ecology and biodiversity within the site.
- 5.37 A significant benefit of the proposal is the biodiversity net gain score of 45% for the proposed development, significantly exceeding the 10% requirement. The improved surface car park will be retained with improvements including species rich grass, raised planters, ground planting and trees planting. These will be an addition to the retention of existing trees and vegetation.
- 5.38 The new area of public realm will further contribute to the biodiversity with an area outlined to be a Biodiversity Garden. The garden would include, raised planters, including species rich grassland, flower-rich perennials and shrubs, enhancing the biodiversity.

- 5.39 For the overall public realm area, there will be a combination of planting, rain gardens, trees as well as hard and soft landscaping which further contribute to the biodiversity of the site. The details of these proposals are set out in the Landscape Masterplan Plan.
- 5.40 The proposed development is therefore considered to be in accordance with relevant national guidance and local policy requirements including the SPD on biodiversity and geodiversity.

Tree and Landscaping

- 5.41 An Arboricultural Report has been prepared by Elliot Consultancy to support the application which assesses the quality of the trees on Site. In addition, an Arboricultural Method Statements is included which details pre construction and site preparation works, tree protection measures during construction, and tree protection measures post construction.
- 5.42 The detailed landscaping proposals demonstrates that overall, a high-quality scheme which enhancing the character of the Site and surrounding area can be achieved. This will result in an overall improvement of the character and local landscape which adheres to the requirements set out under the Policy GD1 for general development.
- 5.43 A detailed approach to the design of the Proposed Development has been taken which acknowledges the character of the local area which has resulted in a high-quality design, meeting the requirement of local plan policy LC1 on landscape character.
- 5.44 Policy GI1 is further addressed by the variety and detailing of the green infrastructure which will enhance the environment, quality of life and attractiveness of the area. The supporting reports provide more detailed information to demonstrate that the application is in accordance with the Trees and Hedgerows SPD along with the local plan policies.

Heritage Considerations

- 5.45 A Heritage Impact Assessment has submitted as part of the application, which takes into account the impacts of the proposed development on the adjacent conservation area and neighbouring listed buildings (the Grade II Listed The Old Courthouse and the Queens Court Business Centre).
- 5.46 As set out in the Heritage Impact Assessment, the proposed scheme would enhance the town centre offer of Barnsley, improving the setting of the nearby listed buildings and will encourage public movement and the narrative of Barnsley.
- 5.47 As such, the Heritage Statement concludes that the scheme will result in a medium positive effect on the nearby heritage assets in accordance with the local plan policies HE1 and HE2.
- 5.48 Protecting and enhancing the historic environment is addressed in Paragraph 8 of the NPPF on achieving sustainability through environmental objectives alongside Section 16. With the proposal supported by a detailed heritage impact assessment, this reinforces the measures of protecting the surrounding conservation area and listed buildings and also highlights how the historic environment and character of the site will be enhanced through the proposed development. This aligns with the requirements for applications relating to historic environments set out within the NPPF.

Other Considerations

- 5.49 An assessment of the drainage strategy and flood risk has also been conducted confirming the site is entirely located in flood zone 1 (low risk) and therefore at a low risk of flooding including surface water flooding.
- 5.50 The proposed development will deliver a 37% reduction in the discharge rate of surface water across the whole site, meeting the requirements of achieving a minimum 30% reduction stipulated by Yorkshire Water. Therefore in flood and drainage terms, the proposed development is considered to be desirable and acceptable.
- 5.51 Finally, Paragraph 8 of the NPPF details that there are three overarching objectives to achieving sustainable development which are interdependent. These objectives are economic; social and environmental. The proposed development critically tackles these objectives.

Economic Benefits

- 5.52 The development aims to deliver an attractive, community focused new area of public realm, which can be used for a range of purposes. This will encourage increased visitors to and through the area, in a location within close proximity of excellent links to the transport hub and ease of accessibility, resulting in the provision for higher footfall to the area. This in turn will provide a larger customer basis for local services and the town centre. During the construction phase, the proposals will also support the local economy, creating jobs, sourcing materials locally and working with local based consultants in the area.

Social Benefits

- 5.53 The public realm provides a range of opportunities for social and community spaces. A healthy, sociable environment offers an abundance of social benefits with the encouragement to socialise outdoors, use sustainable modes of transport and connect the community with a wide scope of events and activities to be held.
- 5.54 Consultation feedback from the public and local access groups has informed the design proposals, including measures to ensure access for disabled, sensory and neurological processing difficulties personal have been carefully considered and implemented. Thus, creating an outstanding public realm experience allowing everyone in society to access.

Environmental Benefits

- 5.55 The development scheme offers a number of environmental benefits within the context of enhancement compared to the existing hard surface car park. The provision of extensive new hard and soft landscaping will not only provide sustainable surface water management but also achieve a 45% biodiversity net gain.
- 5.56 The car parking area will also include new landscape and tree planting and the addition of EV parking bays to support electric vehicle use. The site encourages sustainable modes of transport with pedestrian and cycle links towards the neighbouring transport hub.
- 5.57 Drainage and ecology design details in addition to a focal point of the development strategy aiming to design places to be more climate and carbon considerate this aligns with the Local Plan policy and section 14 of the NPPF for climate change, pollution control and protection.

Summary

- 5.58 In conclusion, the approach to the design of the proposals informed by detailed stakeholder engagement, have resulted in a sustainable and high-quality proposal, which will set a new standard for public open space and car parking provision in the town.
- 5.59 The hybrid approach of integrating the existing car park, will see improvements in appearance, maintenance and management, alongside the major addition of a public realm with scope to offer a variety of purposes to the local community.
- 5.60 In summary the proposals offer significant environmental, social and economic benefits, that meet the three dimensions of sustainable development as defined within the NPPF. Furthermore, the proposal are in accordance with Local Plan policies and supporting SPDs. Therefore, there should be a general presumption in support of the application.

Section 6 | Conclusions

- 6.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared to support this full planning application for proposed Improvements to an Existing Public Car Park and Creation of New Public Realm and landscaping at The Seam, County Way, Barnsley, S70 2JW .
- 6.2 The proposed development offers the opportunity to significantly enhance an existing low quality surface car park area in the centre of Barnsley town centre. The proposals include the creation of extensive new high quality public open space reflective of the character of this gateway location and well as strengthening links with the existing DMC campus.
- 6.3 As set out in section 5 of this Statement, the proposals adequately consider site constraints and opportunities including key matters of highways, urban design, green infrastructure, heritage and other considerations. The proposals strike a balanced approach between retained levels of parking provision and opportunities to create an enhanced and sustainably located space for residents enjoyment.
- 6.4 The potential impacts of the proposed development have also been considered and appropriately addressed alongside all relevant planning policies and material considerations. The supporting documents which accompany this submission clearly demonstrate that the proposals present no insurmountable constraints and have considered all the material considerations.
- 6.5 The proposals have been subject to substantial stakeholder consultation, which has informed the final proposals. This has resulted in a highly accessible and attractive development, which will support the sustainable development aims of the NPPF and Local Plan. The development is also in accordance with the requirements set out in SPDs.
- 6.6 On the basis of the above the application is considered to be acceptable and it is therefore respectfully requested that planning permission be granted.



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