



PLANNING STATEMENT

HYBIRD APPLICATION TO ESTABLISHED BARNSELY ACTIVITY PARK AND DETAILS OF YOUTH ZONE

ON BEHALF OF BARNSELY MBC AND ONSIDE YOUTH ZONES

20 April 2022

Our Ref: CLR251

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Claremont Planning Consultancy has been instructed by the applicant, Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (MBC) and 'OnSide Youth Zones', to prepare a Planning Statement in support of a hybrid planning application to establish the principle of the wider Activity Park and provides detailed information pertaining to the proposed Barnsley Youth Zone as a first phase of delivering the recreational park. The description of development as proposed is;

"A) Full planning permission for erection of a two storey Youth Zone facility with floodlit kick pitch on the roof, service year with ancillary single storey store, roof top plant, minibus and blue badge parking and associated landscape. B) outline planning permission for an activity park, access included with all other matters reserved".

1.1.2 OnSide is a growing national charity which provides young people with somewhere to go supporting them to reach their potential and live healthier, happier lives. OnSide currently operate 14 Youth Zones across England which support over 50,000 young people.

1.1.3 This planning application has been prepared by OnSide in conjunction with Barnsley Metropolitan Council following their long-term engagement and ambitions to secure a comprehensive redevelopment of the site. It is intended that OnSide will bring forward the development of the Youth Zone facility as the first phase of the development, with Barnsley MBC to deliver the proposed Activity Park in a later phase.

1.1.4 This Planning Statement forms part of a wider submission base and should be read in conjunction with the documents and drawings which accompany this submission.

1.1.5 This Statement will set out an overview of the site and the surrounding context, including relevant planning history. It will then go on to consider the relevant provisions of national and local planning policy, including emerging policy documents and supplementary planning guidance. It will then describe the development proposal and provide a detailed assessment of the proposed development against relevant planning policy and other material considerations. Finally, the statement provides a brief summary and conclusions, which will demonstrate that planning permission should be granted for the proposed development.

2 APPLICATION SITE

2.1 Site Context

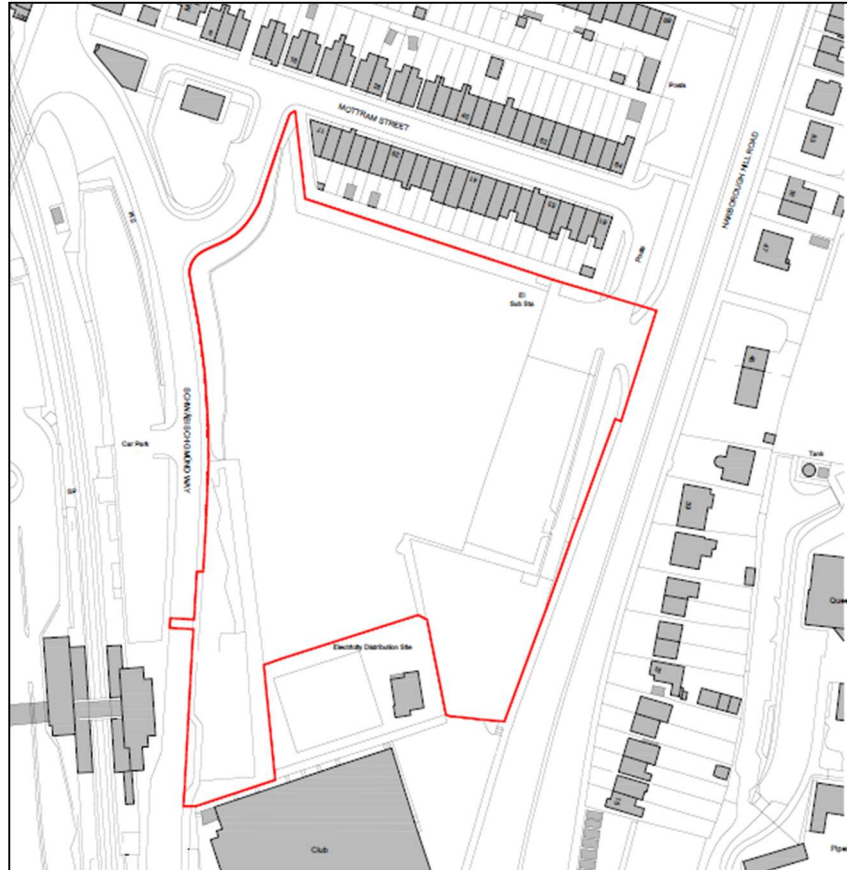
- 2.1.1 The application site is located within the administrative area of Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, sited to the east of the Barnsley Town Centre area. The application site is largely vacant, with only concrete hardstanding and overgrown shrub vegetation present. The extent of the application site is illustrated on the Site Location Plan provided at **Appendix 1** that establishes the limits of the outline consent sought and identifies the area of the full application site as well where full details are provided for the new Youth Zone.
- 2.1.2 The site is effectively enclosed by the Schwäbisch Gmünd Way, Mottram Street, and the A61 to the west, north, and east respectively. Beyond these roads the site occupies a location within a predominantly mixed use area. Established residential development abuts the site to the north, with further residential development and a school also located to the east. Town centre uses, predominate the area to the south and west of the application site, including the Barnsley train station and Transport Interchange which are located less than 100m to the west of the site. This varied land use context also informs the design and scale of buildings within the application site's locality, notably the presence of larger two storey buildings with a variety of pitched and flat roofs as well as the presence of more modern, brightly coloured buildings associated with the Transport Interchange.
- 2.1.3 Given its town centre location, the application site is in very close proximity to excellent public transport infrastructure. As identified, the site is located opposite to the Barnsley train station which is served by a number of regional train services which depart frequently to Leeds, Nottingham, Sheffield, and Huddersfield. The Barnsley Transport Interchange is also located further to the west of the site beyond the train station. A total of 27 local bus services frequently depart from the Interchange. The application site is also advantageously located to access established pedestrian footpaths and cycleways throughout the wider Barnsley town centre area.

2.2 Application Site

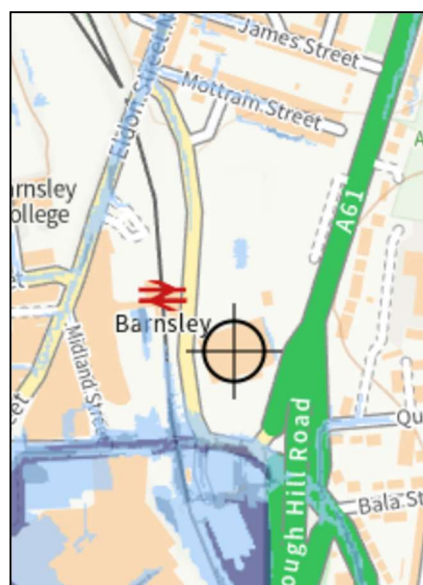
- 2.2.1 The application site extends to approximately 1.7 hectares of previously developed land. Through this hybrid application, full planning permission for the construction of a Youth Zone facility is sought on a 0.5 hectare area of the site, with outline consent for an Activity Park sought on the remaining 1.2 hectares of the site's area.
- 2.2.2 As identified, the application site comprises previously developed land within the urban area of Barnsley. Satellite imagery confirms that historically the site was occupied by a building of industrial character and associated car parking, although this former use was cleared from the site in the early 2000s with only the concrete hardstanding of the building remaining. More recent satellite imagery from 2022 identifies that the site has been left largely unmaintained with only an area to the northeast used for materials storage. Shrub vegetation has been left on site which has now become overgrown due to a lack of maintenance.
- 2.2.3 The application site benefits from an established vehicular access from the A61 to the east, with vehicular access to a small car parking area located towards the southwest of the site provided also.

- 2.2.4 As identified, the application site is bound by the existing road network to the north, east, and west by Mottram Street, Harborough Hill Road and the Schwäbisch Gmünd Way respectively. To the south, the application site abuts an established electricity distribution site.

Figure 2.1 – Outline Site Extent



- 2.2.5 The site is located within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore at the lowest risk of fluvial flooding. A very small area of low surface water flood risk is identified on site, as illustrated below and is largely due to the existing hardstanding and lack of positive drainage.



2.2.6 Additionally, the site is not located in close proximity to any designated heritage assets, and in this respect the site is also not located within any identified Conservation Areas.

2.2.7 The application site presents a somewhat varied topography where the boundaries of the site in the west steeply fall away to the Schwäbisch Gmünd Way and the land rises moderately towards the south.

2.3 Planning History

2.3.1 A review of Barnsley MBC's planning register identifies a number of historical applications on the site. The relevant applications to this proposal are identified below;

- B/05/1339/BA: Redevelopment of the existing site comprising retail, associated car parking, landscaping works and new access. **Approved** (17.10.2005). Reserved matters for this development were approved through application 2008/1564 on 17.12.2008.

2.3.2 The planning history for the site documents a number of subsequent applications related to the approved retail development, including application 2010/1431 which sought an extension of the time limit to implement both the outline and reserved matters consents.

- 2009/0297: Formation of an alternative vehicular and pedestrian access onto Harborough Hill Road. **Refused** (28.04.2009).

2.3.3 This application was refused on the grounds that the proposed access would give rise to conditions prejudicial to highway safety which would be likely to increase the potential for accidents along Harborough Hill Road.

3 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

3.1 National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework was adopted in 2012 and subsequently revised on 20 July 2021 and sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.
- 3.1.2 The Framework outlines the presumption in favour of sustainable development indicating that planning applications should be considered in accordance with the presumption where development plan policies are out of date. Where policies are up to date and accord with the Framework, it is expected that planning applications will be approved where they conform with the development plan and there are no material considerations that indicate otherwise.
- 3.1.3 Set out within **Paragraph 8** of the Framework, achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives:
- a) An economic objective to help build a strong, responsive, and competitive economy, 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.
 - b) A social objective to support strong, healthy, and vibrant communities, including through fostering well-designed, beautiful, and safe places with accessible services that reflect current and future needs and which support communities' health, social and cultural wellbeing.
 - c) An environmental objective to protect and enhance the natural, built, and historic environment. This includes making an effective use of land and the prudent use of natural resources.
- 3.1.4 **Paragraph 38** of the Framework requires Local Authorities to approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way, working proactively with applicants to secure developments which will improve the social, economic, and environmental conditions of an area. In particular, the Framework supports pre-application engagement between applicants and Local Authorities. **Paragraph 39** maintains that pre-application engagement can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. **Paragraph 41** goes on to assert that the more issues which can be resolved at the pre-application stage, the greater the benefits.
- 3.1.5 The Framework outlines the presumption in favour of sustainable development indicating that planning applications should be considered in accordance with the presumption where development plan policies are out of date. Where policies are up to date and accord with the Framework, it is expected that planning applications will be approved where they conform with the development plan and there are no material considerations that indicate otherwise.
- 3.1.6 **Paragraph 86** of the Framework establishes the imperative for planning policies and decisions to support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, taking a positive

approach to their management and adaptation. This includes promoting the long term viability and vitality of town centres by allowing them to diversify and provide for a suitable mixture of uses which reflect their distinctive characters.

- 3.1.7 **Chapter 8** of the Framework promotes the creation of healthy and safe communities. In particular, **Paragraph 92** advises that healthy, inclusive and safe spaces should be created through planning policies and decisions which promote social interaction, and which enable and support healthy lifestyles. This includes the provision of safe and accessible sports facilities. **Paragraph 93** then goes on to advise that the provision of shared spaces and community facilities should be positively planned for, recommending that policies and decisions take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being.
- 3.1.8 **Paragraph 98** of the Framework advises that access to a network of high quality public spaces is important for the health and well-being of communities and can also deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change.
- 3.1.9 **Chapter 9** of the Framework, especially **Paragraph 110**, seeks to ensure that opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes are taken up within development proposals. In this context, **Paragraph 112** recommends that development proposals should give first priority to pedestrian and cycle movements, and which facilitate access to high quality public transport.
- 3.1.10 **Chapter 11** of the Framework establishes the imperative to make an effective use of land. **Paragraph 120** maintains that substantial weight should be afforded to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs.
- 3.1.11 **Paragraph 130** of the Framework requires planning policies and decisions to ensure that developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area; are visually attractive; establish a strong sense of place; and which create places that are safe, inclusive, accessible and promote health and well-being.

4 DEVELOPMENT PLAN

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The application site is located within the administrative area of Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (MBC). For the purposes of determining this planning application, the Development Plan comprises the Barnsley Local Plan, adopted January 2019, alongside various made Neighbourhood Plans.

4.2 Barnsley Local Plan

- 4.2.1 **Policy GD1** of the Plan sets out the Council's general approach to development. This advises that development proposals which are compatible with neighbouring land uses and which will not adversely affect the potential development of a wider area of land which would otherwise be available for development will be permitted. Other criteria including the use of landscaping to provide a high-quality setting for buildings and mitigating any adverse effects of the development on the environment, natural resources, waste, and pollution.
- 4.2.2 **Policy T3** of the Plan expects new development to be located and designed so as to reduce the need to travel, be accessible to public transport and to meet the needs of pedestrians and cyclists. This Policy also requires developments to provide the minimum levels of parking for cycles, motorbikes, scooters, mopeds and disabled people as set out within the Council's Parking SPD.
- 4.2.3 **Policy D1** establishes the Council's design expectations for new developments, requiring these to be of high-quality design and reinforcing the distinctive local character and features of Barnsley. This includes an imperative for development to help to transform the character of physical environments which have become run down and are lacking distinctiveness.
- 4.2.4 The application site is located within the Barnsley Town Centre area, for which the adopted Local Plan contains a number of detailed policies.
- 4.2.5 **Policy BTC4** requires proposals for community uses over 1000 sqm to include proposals for the improvement of public spaces. More specifically, the application site is located within the identified 'Eastern Gateway' area of the town centre and is also the location of the 'Transport Interchange' (Gateway D). **Policy BTC4** specifically identifies the Transport Interchange as a location for public space improvements.
- 4.2.6 The application site is also located less than 100m to the east of the Transport Interchange building which is identified through **Policy BTC5** as a Landmark Building within the city centre. As such, new development at the application site is expected to be designed so as to enhance the settings of and safeguard views of this building.
- 4.2.7 Development on sites located on or within identified town centre gateways are required through **Policy BTC7** to create a strong distinctive visual gateway to the town centre and provide a sense of arrival as well as being designed to welcome people into the town centre and take the opportunity to create distinctive landmark buildings. Additionally, development in these locations is expected to improve public spaces in accordance with the Barnsley Town Centre Public Spaces Strategy.

- 4.2.8 **Policy BTC23** establishes the Council's vision for the Eastern Gateway area of the town centre which comprises the application site. This advises that the Council will allow transport related development, office, education, community and youth facilities and public spaces within this area.
- 4.2.9 More specifically, the application site is identified under **Policy BTC24** as Development Site 4. This policy confirms the Council's identification of education, community and youth facilities as being suitable future uses of the site. This Policy also reaffirms the Council's expectation for development to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the gateway alongside the need to consider any implications arising from the site's location adjacent to an AQMA. Proposals will also be required to support the liveliness and economic strength of the town centre.
- 4.2.10 **Policy GI1** of the Plan establishes the Council's intention to provide an integrated network of connected and multi-functional Green Infrastructure. In particular, the Council seeks to provide attractive environments for people to live, work, and play and which improves opportunities for recreation and enhances the quality of life for present and future residents and visitors. **Policy GS1** then goes on to seek improvements to the existing Green Space network of the Borough.
- 4.2.11 In respect of sustainable design and construction, **Policy CC2** of the Plan establishes that all non-residential development will be expected to achieve a minimum standard of BREEAM 'Very Good'. **Policy CC4** continues on to require all major development to make use of SuDS.
- 4.2.12 Support is established by **Policy I2** for the provision of community facilities such as sports venues and community buildings, advising that these should be located centrally to the communities they serve and in places where they will be accessible by walking, cycling, and public transport.
- 4.3 Supplementary Planning Documents**
- Parking SPD**
- 4.3.1 Barnsley MBC adopted their Parking SPD in November 2019. The SPD advises that proposals for non-residential development falling within Barnsley Town Centre will be treated on their own merits, with regard to the availability of public parking within the centre.
- 4.3.2 With respect to electric vehicle charging provision, the standards identify that provision of 10% of parking on commercial/retail developments will be expected.
- 4.3.3 Table 2 of the SPD sets of minimum cycle parking standards across the Borough. For community centres the following provision is expected;
- 1 long stay space per 4 members or staff and;
 - 1 short stay space per 40 sqm gross floor area for visitors.
- 4.3.4 The cycle parking standards for sports facilities are also applicable to the development. Here Table 2 requires the provision of;
- 1 short stay space per 20 participants and;

- 1 long stay space per 20 staff.

4.3.5 Parking provision for powered two wheelers is also expected in addition to cycle parking facilities and should be provided on a scale of 1 space per 20 car parking spaces with a minimum provision of 1 space.

4.3.6 Disabled parking requirements are also clarified by the Parking SPD, recommending that commercial premises with designated off-street parking have one space for everyone employee who is a disabled motorist, plus 5% of total actual provision for visitors and customers with a further 4% capable of enlargement or laid out as enlarged standard.

Town Centre Plan 2021-2026

4.3.7 Although this document does not represent an adopted Supplementary Planning Document, the Barnsley MBC have prepared a five-year town centre plan aimed at growing Barnsley as a great place to live. The Plan was endorsed at a Cabinet meeting on 15 December 2021.

4.3.8 The Plan seeks to create;

- A town centre that is coherent, well designed, and healthy.
- A place that is 'easy to get to and get around: accessible, better connected and sustainable.
- A place that is the catalyst for a brighter future, with a bustling and thriving economy, a great place to live, learn and do business.
- A safe, inclusive, attractive, exciting and welcoming, family first, age and child friendly town centre.
- A place that wins hearts and minds: a well promoted town centre with a positive reputation, locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.

4.3.9 The town centre plan also establishes expectations of what a well-designed town centre will look like being;

- Integrated with complementary uses;
- Adaptable and able to meet the needs of a wide range of users;
- Have creativity in design, for example through the use of public art;
- Have a variety of spaces for festivals and events; and
- Enhance wildlife and biodiversity.

4.3.10 Particular issues for the town centre identified by the Plan includes the need to improve facilities within the town centre and address the lack of green space within the town centre boundary.

5 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 Claremont Planning have been instructed by the applicants, Barnsley MBC and OnSide Youth Zones to prepare a Planning Statement in support of the proposed development of an Activity Park and provision of a Youth Zone within this new recreational area.

5.1.2 The description of development as proposed is;

“A) Full planning permission for erection of a two storey Youth Zone facility with floodlit kick pitch on the roof, service yard with ancillary single storey store, roof top plant, minibus and blue badge parking and associated landscaping. B) outline planning permission for an activity park, access included with all other matters reserved”.

5.1.3 Through this hybrid planning application, outline consent is sought on an area of the site extending to 1.2 hectares for the development of an Activity Park, whilst full planning permission is sought on a smaller 0.5 hectare parcel of the site for the construction of a Youth Zone facility. In this respect, it is intended that the development of the Youth Zone facility will comprise the first phase of this leisure development, which will then be complemented through the delivery of the Activity Park, the details of which are to be agreed through a subsequent reserved matters application.

5.2 Outline Planning Permission – Activity Park

5.2.1 As identified, this hybrid application seeks outline planning permission for an activity park on an area of the application site extending to 1.2 hectares, with all matters reserved except for access. The design and appearance of the clubhouse will be agreed through subsequent reserved matters submissions, alongside the detailed landscaping and layout out of the park areas and play spaces. Matters relating to lighting, materials, finishes, drainage and site remediation are expected to be attached as matters to be discharged through planning conditions. Delivery of the activity park in accordance with the masterplan provided at Appendix 2 would be an acceptable condition to ensure that the development is delivered in a comprehensive manner.

Parameters for Development

5.2.2 The proposed Site Masterplan demonstrates the applicant’s intention to deliver an Activity Park on a large area towards the east of the application site. It is envisaged that this Activity Park will include provision for a large BMX and Skate bowl; two activity play areas; a Parkour Area and Jump Section. Provision for a future club house/café within the activity park will also be made.

5.2.3 The Clubhouse is the only building proposed within the outline master planned area. It is envisaged that this building would be up to 2 storeys in height (circa 14metres), reflecting the surrounding residential context and yet still providing a focal point within the park.

Landscaping

- 5.2.4 The Site Masterplan demonstrates that the Activity Park will benefit from substantial linkages to the existing pedestrian and cycle network, where these will connect the site from north/south and east/west with the proposed Youth Zone and established development adjacent. This is significant given that the A61 road effectively separates the area to the east of the application site from the rest of the town centre area. In this respect, the layout of the Activity Park as proposed will assist in ensuring that the application site fulfils its role as an attractive new gateway into the town centre.
- 5.2.5 It is envisaged that through the creation of the Activity Park significant additional soft landscaping will be provided. The proposed soft landscaping is proposed to integrate the Activity Park with the proposed Youth Zone through assimilating areas of shrub and herbaceous planting alongside areas of low level species rich grassland. This will enrich the biodiversity of the site and enhance the visual appearance of the area.

Drainage

- 5.2.6 The proposed Site Masterplan illustrates that Sustainable urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) are envisaged to be utilised throughout the Activity Park development, chiefly through the provision of attenuation ponds and swales. Whilst the provision of an attenuation pond will provide sustainable drainage for the site, it will also assist in providing an enhanced visual amenity to the area of landscaping to the northeast of the site which encloses the BMX and Skate Bowl.

Materials

- 5.2.7 Although it is the applicant's intention to agree the materials palette for the Activity Park through a subsequent reserved matters submission, the proposed Site Masterplan identifies that a suitable materials palette which complements that of the Youth Zone facility will be delivered.
- 5.2.8 In order to provide high quality, and crucially safe, recreational facilities, the BMX and Skate Bowl and activity play areas will be provided with a specialist skate and play surface respectively. A tarmac finish to both the pedestrian and cycle paths which transect the site will be provided. Any paved areas throughout the Activity Park are also envisaged to be delivered in a complementary finish to that paving provided at the Youth Zone facility.

5.3 Full Planning Application – Youth Zone Facility

- 5.3.1 Full planning permission is sought for an area of the Activity Park as a first phase of delivering the wider vision, whereby a Youth Zone will be provided on an application site extending to 0.5 hectares for the construction of a Youth Zone facility with flood lit kick pitch on the roof alongside an ancillary single storey store, roof top plant, car parking and landscaping. It is the applicants' intention to deliver the proposed Youth Zone facility as the first phase of this leisure development. Matters relating to lighting, materials, finishes, drainage and site remediation are expected to be attached to the full planning consent as matters to be discharged through planning conditions. Delivery of the Youth Zone in accordance with the detailed plans provided would be an acceptable condition to ensure that the development is delivered in accordance with the design presented.

5.3.2 The development proposals for the application site have been strongly informed by informal pre-application engagement between OnSide and Barnsley MBC. The detailed design proposals for the Youth Zone facility in particular have been guided by a series of Design Review Panels with Barnsley MBC, held in March and December 2021. Through these Design Review Panels, the following principles for the development were established;

- The development is an 'excellent' project for the town centre, with the siting of the building being logical given the site's constraints.
- The development should create a distinctive landmark building. The building should make use of bold colours to reflect the youth and future of Barnsley and take precedence from the new modern buildings in Barnsley.
- The provision of a dynamic public space in front of the Youth Zone was supported.
- The dynamic use of lighting to create night views of the development was strongly supported.
- The development is expected to positively respond to the sensitivities presented by residential development to the north. A need to treat the separation space to the north of the building as positive space was identified.
- The Youth Zone facility is required to consider a masterplan for the development site as a whole such to ensure a cohesive design for the site.

Scale and Layout

5.3.3 The proposed Youth Zone facility will extend across two storeys of development (up to 14m), with the proposed kick pitch and plant to be located on the rooftop of the facility. The ground floor of the facility includes a number of small lobby/reception rooms, which open out into a large recreational area spread across two levels. The recreational areas are to be supported by a kitchen with a servery in order to provide a hot and cold food offering for visitors. Accessed from the upper recreational area are a number of meeting rooms of varying sizes (14-44 sqm) which are to be made available for community and educational uses including health and wellbeing and arts, crafts, and fashion.

5.3.4 A large sports hall to be marked up with a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) and climbing wall represent the sporting facilities to be provided at the ground floor level. These facilities are supported by changing room and toilet facilities, including accessible toilet provision, which are also accessed from the upper recreational area.

5.3.5 The provision of sporting facilities is continued at the first floor level, with a fitness suite measuring 178 sqm to be delivered. It is envisaged however that the first floor will be predominated by additional community and educational facilities, including a performing arts studio (103 sqm); a music room and supporting sound studio (68 sqm); and mentoring kitchen (47 sqm). Provision for a board training room and groupwork room measuring 32 sqm and 36 sqm will also be made. Staff and manager office facilities, alongside showers, toilets and accessible facilities will also be provided. To ensure that the various sporting and community facilities are integrated across both storeys of development, a large balcony is proposed at the first floor level which will overlook the upper and lower recreational areas.

- 5.3.6 In order to make an effective use of the application site, a kick pitch is proposed at the roof level with ball netting on tensile wires extending across the kick pitch. To ensure the safety of users, the kick pitch is to be secured with black mesh fencing and painted steel supports.
- 5.3.7 This application also seeks full planning permission for the construction of a small, single storey storage building located to the south of the application site and will provide for a workshop and bin storage area, both measuring 12 sqm respectively. As it is the applicant's intention to locate this building within the parking and service areas of the development and a predominantly uniform dark grey brick finish is proposed. This will reduce the visual prominence of this structure and allow for it to integrate within the car parking area.

Design

- 5.3.8 The design of the proposed Youth Zone facility has been strongly informed by the application site's location within the town centre 'Eastern Gateway' area and its allocation under Policy BTC24 which requires the design of the development to be of a high design quality and make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Gateway area.
- 5.3.9 At present, the application site detracts from the visual appearance and character of the Eastern Gateway area, being predominated by concrete hardstanding and overgrown scrub vegetation. The design of the proposed development therefore seeks to add interest and vitality to the appearance of the application site, achieved through an elevational design which makes use of varied colours and materials finishes. This approach to the design of the development was endorsed through the Design Review Panels undertaken.
- 5.3.10 This approach is evident in the elevational design for the prominent western elevation of the facility which will extend along the site's frontage with Schwäbisch Gmünd Way and the landmark Barnsley Transport Interchange. This elevation therefore advances a distinctive design, through the use of mineral wool cladding in both red and black/grey contrasting finishes alongside elements of aluminium profiled cladding and dark grey brick, with this combination of materials and finishes also used throughout the rest of the development. Whilst the use of varied materials adds interest to the proposed elevational design, the consistent use of red and black/grey finishes throughout these materials ensures synergy throughout the elevational design.
- 5.3.11 The use of varying materials and finishes also aides the legibility of the development, denoting the transition between sporting and community uses. This is most evident along the eastern elevation of the facility where transition between the community and educational uses and the sports hall/kick pitch is defined by a shift from the use of contrasting light and dark grey to the use of rock panel mineral wool cladding.
- 5.3.12 The proposed design also seeks to respond positively to the site conditions, mainly variations in the site's topography in order to make an effective use of the site. This is illustrated through the siting of the proposed sports hall on lower ground, such to reduce the visual prominence of the sports hall's bulk and massing.

Access

- 5.3.13 To integrate the development with surrounding public transport infrastructure and ensure safe pedestrian access to the site, a new pedestrian crossing across Schwäbisch Gmünd Way is

proposed. The existing dropped kerb is to be retained and will provide access to the proposed Youth Zone service and parking area.

- 5.3.14 Through this application it is envisaged that the existing vehicle drop off will be retained and this provision extended. A new vehicular access to the south is also proposed to provide access to the proposed Network Rail parking and servicing area.

Car Parking

- 5.3.15 The proposed site masterplan illustrates that the existing car parking area located to the southwest of the application site is to be subdivided into two, smaller, car parks intended to provide servicing and car parking areas for the Youth Zone facility and Network Rail respectively. The total number of general spaces will be reduced by 2 parking spaces in favour of cycle parking, access parking and improved visitor drop-off facilities.
- 5.3.16 Two new designated accessible parking spaces will be provided through the changes and each of these will benefit from electric vehicle charging provision also. Provision will also be made for a minibus parking space. Additionally, the Youth Zone facility will also benefit from use of the extended vehicle drop off. The Network Rail parking area is to accommodate a total of 7 car parking spaces which will be accessed via the new entry proposed off Schwäbisch Gmünd Way.
- 5.3.17 Although only moderate levels of car parking are proposed, these levels are considered to be appropriate in light of the application site's town centre location. Indeed, the adopted Parking SPD does not seek to apply car parking standards to sites within Barnsley Town Centre and instead looks to assess proposals on their own merits and accounting for the availability of public parking within the centres. It is evident that the application site occupies a highly sustainable location within Barnsley Town Centre, and therefore benefits from a high level of accessibility by sustainable transport modes. For example, the application site is located across the Schwäbisch Gmünd Way from Barnsley Train Station providing regional rail services whilst a total of 27 bus services depart from the Barnsley Transport Interchange just over 100m from the application site. Additionally, the application site is located within reasonable walking distance catchment area of substantial residential development and schools. Given the accessibility of the site through sustainable modes, it is considered that only a very small number of those individuals using the facility would be required to access the development via the private car.
- 5.3.18 The proposed levels of parking provision also accord with the Parking SPD's requirement for 10% of car parking to be provided with electric vehicle charging provision, where a total of two electric vehicle charging spaces are proposed. This exceeds the requirement established by the SPD.
- 5.3.19 Within the car parking area for the Youth Zone, provision is made for a total of 4 Sheffield stands to provide cycle parking for staff members, whilst an additional 8 Sheffield stands are proposed adjacent to the youth facility's entrance for use by visitors to the facility.

Landscaping

- 5.3.20 The proposed Youth Zone facility is to be accompanied by a comprehensive hard and soft landscaping scheme which seeks to effectively integrate the proposal with surrounding

development and the wider activity park for which a detailed design will be agreed through subsequent reserved matters submissions.

- 5.3.21 The proposed landscaping scheme for the youth facility includes the provision of an open plan paved public plaza area. To ensure the safety of visitors to this plaza area, bollards are proposed to provide clear separation between the plaza and public highway. In this respect, bollards instead of fencing are proposed so as to retain the permeability of the application site and also to assist in the integration between public realm areas associated with the Youth Zone facility, the train station, and transport interchange. The paving used to deliver the public plaza is to be extended along the western frontage of the application site so that staff and visitors can easily access each distinct part of the building, whilst a smaller, secondary paved outdoor recreation area is proposed at the eastern elevation of the building also. It is envisaged that this smaller outdoor recreational area can be accessed directly from the sports hall and the lower internal recreation area.
- 5.3.22 Although escape routes and stairs are proposed at the eastern elevation, these are to be integrated with areas of new soft landscaping including shrub and herbaceous planting. The proposed Youth Zone Site Plan also illustrates that areas of paving will also be broken up with new areas of soft landscaping and planting.
- 5.3.23 The area of land to the north of the youth zone building will benefit from substantial additional soft landscaping through the introduction of low level planting species such as wildflowers on order to provide an attractive landscaped setting to the facility. This landscaped area will be complemented with raised planters as illustrated on the plans.
- 5.3.24 The proposed landscaping scheme also includes works to ensure that landscaping provided around the Youth Zone facility will integrate seamlessly with the proposed Activity Park. This will be achieved through the banking of ground levels at the Youth Zone boundary to tie in with the adjusted levels and new access path proposed in the Activity Park.

6 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 This planning application proposes the redevelopment of the land between Schwäbisch Gmünd Way and Harborough Hill Road, Barnsley to provide a Youth Zone sports and community facility and an Activity Park. This submission represents a hybrid planning application, seeking full planning permission for the construction of the Youth Zone facility, with flood lit kick pitch, service yard, ancillary single storey store, rooftop plant, minibuses and blue badge parking and associated landscaping. Outline consent is therefore sought for the development of the Activity Park with all matters other than access reserved.

6.2 Principle of Development

- 6.2.1 The application site occupies a highly sustainable location within the town centre of Barnsley. Critically, the application site is located within an area of the town centre identified for further change and redevelopment through the adopted Barnsley Local Plan. Throughout this submission the application site's location within the 'Eastern Gateway' area identified by Policy BTC23 of the Local Plan has been recognised. Through Policy BTC23, Barnsley MBC set out their requirements for the future development of sites within the Eastern Gateway area, with the provision of community and youth facilities and public spaces identified by the Policy as suitable land uses in this location. Within this context the application site itself has been allocated as Development Opportunity Site 4 (Land between the Transport Interchange and Harborough Hill). Parameters for the redevelopment of the application site are therefore established through Policy BTC24 of the Local Plan. This Policy confirms the suitability of the application site specifically for education, community and youth facilities, alongside the provision of public open space. The supporting text to Policy BTC24 goes on to advise of the Council's understanding that the site provides the opportunity to accommodate a wide range of uses.
- 6.2.2 The outline consent for an Activity Park on the eastern part of the site will deliver high quality public space, making a further contribution to the realisation of the varied mix of land uses supported by the Council in this location. It is therefore maintained that the broad principle for the development has been established by the site's allocation for these uses through the adopted Barnsley Local Plan. The outline consent seeks to reconfirm the allocation and identify a masterplan for delivering the uses proposed. The Outline Masterplan provided to inform this application and establish the acceptability of the recreational use proposed, identifies access routes, recreation zones, locates the future potential of a clubhouse whilst demonstrating a comprehensive approach that shows how the proposed Youth Zone collaborates with the wider park.
- 6.2.3 The proposed provision of an Activity Park on the eastern part of the site will deliver high quality public space on the application site, making a further contribution to the realisation of the varied mix of land uses supported by the Council in this location. It is therefore maintained that the broad principle for the development has been established by the site's allocation for these uses through the adopted Barnsley Local Plan.
- 6.2.4 The detailed consent sought for a Youth Zone facility will provide a variety of high-quality sporting facilities and various community and educational facilities as a first phase of the wider

activity park, therefore strongly complying with the supported land uses for the application site and its environ which have been established through Development Site Policy BTC24 and the general area Policy BTC23 for the Eastern Gateway.

- 6.2.5 The principle for the specific mix of land uses as proposed has been further clarified through informal pre-application discussions with the Council. Initial proposals suggested that the land area outside of the Youth Zone site could be made available for an alternative development opportunity, such as the delivery of residential development. However, subsequent design proposals identified that this area of the application site could be made available for the proposed Activity Park use, such to complement the proposed Youth Zone facility. Through pre-application discussions with Barnsley MBC strong support was established for the delivery of the Activity Park on site, recognising the contribution the site could make towards securing the delivery of high-quality Public Open Space within the town centre.

6.3 Redevelopment of a Brownfield Site

- 6.3.1 Throughout this submission it has been demonstrated that the application site comprises vacant land which for the most part has been cleared such that only concrete hardstanding and overgrown scrub vegetation remains. As such, the proposed development represents the opportunity to secure the development of a sustainably located brownfield site located on the edge of the urban area. The NPPF, through Paragraph 120, affords substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs. Specific support is also established by Paragraph 120 of the Framework for developments which secure multiple benefits from urban land through the delivery of mixed-use schemes, and which take opportunities to achieve net environmental gains.
- 6.3.2 The proposed scheme seeks to restore the application site to a viable and effective use which will provide for a complimentary mix of uses that will offer a range of youth activities alongside much needed Public Open Space, in accordance with the site's allocation through the Local Plan. Additionally, it has been demonstrated that the development proposal is supported by a comprehensive landscaping scheme which focuses on the provision of substantial new planting, including wildflower planting and the introduction of native wildlife friendly species. Therefore, the proposal demonstrably supports the ambitions of Paragraph 120 of the Framework, delivering multiple health and well-being enhancements for existing and future residents of Barnsley town centre alongside securing a net biodiversity gain through the re-use of brownfield land.

6.4 Design

- 6.4.1 The design of the proposed development has been strongly informed through informal pre-application discussions with Barnsley MBC officers and the design review panel process undertaken alongside the Council throughout 2021.
- 6.4.2 The site allocation Policy BTC24 establishes a clear requirement for the future development of the site to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the town centre Eastern Gateway area. The design proposals have therefore sought to establish a development which will add interest and vitality to the visual appearance of the application site and its environ, with this being achieved through an elevational design which utilised varied colours and finishes. Colours and finishes proposed for use on the Youth Zone facility include the use of a

bright red rock panel mineral wool cladding, whilst contrasting patterns of dark and grey brick are also utilised to add interest and draw attention to the development as a gateway feature. Indeed, the proposed materials finish strongly reflects the feedback received from the design panel in March and December 2021, both of which established support for the use of bolder colours throughout the elevational design of the development, in order to reflect the youth and future of Barnsley. It was also recognised that the use of red detailing was of local significance, linking to the football club and the use of this colour on other significant buildings within Barnsley. At the December 2021 design panel review support was established for the design of the proposed development, maintaining that the proposed design is successful in creating an exciting building which is appropriate in this gateway location.

- 6.4.3 The proposal also seeks to establish a comprehensive redevelopment of the site, crucially to provide a legible scheme which can be easily identified as a community and sports facility. In this respect, the design of the proposal endeavours to reflect the ambition of Policy D1 of the Barnsley Local Plan which requires development to transform the character of physical environments which have become run down and are lacking distinctiveness. As identified, the proposed Youth Facility makes a bold use of materials and finishes to establish a distinctive design which draws attention to it. In order to provide a strong character to the development, the building makes use of a masonry base at low level on public and activity fronting areas with slots of glazing so that activities within the building are visible. The proposed Youth Zone facility also makes an effective use of lighting to further aide in establishing a character and distinctiveness to the development, in accordance with Policy D1 of the Plan. In particular, the proposed lighting arrangements for the roof top kick pitch are intended to provide a 'halo' effect of light and activity at the Youth Zone.
- 6.4.4 The requirements of Policy D1 of the Local Plan, alongside the site-specific allocation policies also require a comprehensive approach to the wider site's development to be advanced. Accordingly, OnSide have sought to engage directly with Barnsley MBC in respect of the design of the proposed Activity Park for which outline consent is sought. The layout of the application site proposed in the site Masterplan (Appendix 2) seeks to ensure that an intervisibility between the Activity Park and Youth Zone is established and achieved through the integration of hard and soft landscaping between both the Youth Zone and Activity Park schemes. The layout has also been designed so as to maximise connections to the existing network of pedestrian footpaths and cycleways which surround the site, whilst also seeking to deliver an effective network of footpaths and cycleways within the site in order to connect the different elements of the scheme to one another. It is therefore maintained that the submitted design achieves a comprehensive character to development on the site, which effectively links to the context of its surrounding in accordance with Policy D1 of the Local Plan.
- 6.4.5 Large areas of landscaping with tree planting will provide attractive walking routes through the park linking the new activity areas to the surrounding neighbourhoods. This landscaping is also well placed to provide a visual screen to the rear of existing residential dwellings on Mottram Street an ensure a green outlook is achieved to these residences.

6.5 Car Parking

- 6.5.1 Within the outline park proposal, the Masterplan demonstrates that access to the existing electricity distribution utility site will be retained adjacent, with vehicles access provided when necessary via the demountable bollards and a route along the pedestrian/cycle paths. This area of hard landscaping will also afford an access point and servicing for the clubhouse on the occasion vehicle access is required. No other car parking or vehicular access is provided for through the activity park, instead promoting sustainable access via foot and cycles with the provision of cycle parking adjacent to the clubhouse.
- 6.5.2 The proposed full application for the Youth Zone details that the development will provide a total of 7 car parking spaces within the Network Rail car parking and serving area. The Youth Zone facility parking area will provide a total of two accessible car parking spaces, each of which will benefit from electric vehicle charging an electric vehicle charging provision. Provision will also be made for one minibus parking space and four Sheffield stands for cycle parking.
- 6.5.3 The proposed level of car parking provision has been strongly informed by the parking requirements of other Youth Zone facilities operated by OnSide throughout the country. The low level of parking provision is considered to be appropriate given that arrivals to the site will be staggered for different activities operating throughout the day and therefore there will be no peak times for traffic movement to and from the site. Additionally, the application site occupies a highly sustainable location within Barnsley town centre. The site therefore benefits from extremely good connections to surrounding public transport services and is accessible to a large catchment area by walking and cycling.
- 6.5.4 The Council's adopted Parking Standards SPD does not seek to apply minimum parking requirements for development located within Barnsley town centre, instead adopting a pragmatic approach by assessing proposals on a case-by-case basis. As identified, the proposed level of parking provision has been informed by the car parking requirements of other Youth Zone facilities operated by OnSide and is therefore considered to be acceptable, especially given the highly sustainable town centre location of the application site. In this respect, the proposal supports the uptake of sustainable modes of travel to and from the site and should be supported in accordance with Paragraph 110 of the Framework.

6.6 Impact on Adjacent Occupiers

- 6.6.1 The preparation of the proposed scheme has been informed by the need for the development to ensure that the amenity of adjacent occupiers will continue to be safeguarded throughout the operation of the facility. This imperative is reflected within Local Plan Policy GD1 which requires developments to be compatible with neighbouring land uses.
- 6.6.2 Throughout the evolution of the scheme's design, the design panel review raised concern as to the impact of the development on residential occupiers to the north of the application site whilst also ensuring that the separation distances to the residential uses was treated as a positive space. Accordingly, the proposed masterplan demonstrates that the residential dwellings to the north on Mottram Street will benefit from substantial additional tree planting which will assist in protecting the privacy of adjacent residents and maintaining an attractive outlook. Following feedback received from the Design Review Panel, the area of soft landscaping proposed to the north of the Youth Zone facility will be provided with raised planters such that it remains a

functional space which is made available for quieter activities such as gardening. Likewise, the masterplan layout for the proposed Activity Park indicates that an attenuation pond is proposed to the northern area of the site, therefore providing a further set back between residential development in the north and any noise generated by play areas provided throughout the Activity Park. The proposed Site Masterplan layout is therefore in accordance with Policy GD1 of the Local Plan, where it is maintained that a highly effective use of the application site can be established in a way which ensures the continued residential amenity of occupiers to the north of the site.

6.6.3 It is recognised that the pedestrian and cycle routes within the park will be provided with some level of lighting to ensure secure routes; however, it is intended that these would be lit by lights with LED efficient systems that have limited levels of light spillage to avoid any disruption to nearby residents. Whilst also recognising that the urban nature of the site environment is lit by streetlights along existing residential roads and the neighbouring arterial highways.

6.6.4 Additionally, this application is supported by a Noise Assessment which has been undertaken to predict the impact of noise from the operation of the Youth Zone. Given the relatively high levels of background noise and distances involved between the noise sources, the assessment concludes that the site will pose an overall low impact. This assessment therefore confirms that the operation of the proposed Youth Zone will not have any adverse impact on the residential amenity of adjacent occupiers.

6.7 Air Quality

6.7.1 Through Local Plan Policy BTC24, which identifies the application site as a development opportunity within the town centre, the imperative for any future development proposal to consider its impact on the adjacent Air Quality Management Area is identified.

6.7.2 An Air Quality Assessment has therefore been submitted alongside this application which assesses the potential changes in air quality due to the construction and operation of the proposed development. In respect of the construction phase of the development, the assessment proposes dust mitigation measures to ensure that residual dust impacts during the development are not significant.

6.7.3 The assessment also confirms that the concentrations of NO₂ and PM₁₀ are likely to be below their respective long- and short-term objectives at the application site which is therefore considered suitable for use as a Youth Zone with regards to air quality, with the operation of the Youth Zone not expected to have a significant impact on local air quality.

6.8 Quality of Construction

6.8.1 Local Plan Policy CC2 establishes the Council's requirement for all non-residential development to achieve a minimum standard of BREEAM of 'Very Good'. Accordingly, this planning application is also supported by a BREEAM pre-assessment. This assessment demonstrates potential strategies for achieving a BREEAM 'Very Good' rating for the proposed Youth Zone. If the recommendations set out within the report are followed, a BREEAM score of 57.80% - Very Good will be achieved. The proposed development therefore complies with the requirements of Policy CC2.

6.9 Sustainable Development and Planning Balance

- 6.9.1 Paragraph 8 of the Framework establishes that the fundamental objective of the planning system is to deliver sustainable development. This means pursuing social, economic, and environmental objectives in mutually supportive ways. The proposed development contributes strongly towards securing the sustainable redevelopment of the site.
- 6.9.2 The proposed development contributes towards achieving the economic objective identified by the Framework through the provision of a high-quality youth facility. The proposed facility will provide a wide variety of educational opportunities for young people which will assist in providing them with the skills and knowledge necessary to secure employment opportunities in the future. Additionally, the proposal will generate numerous job opportunities for local people, both through the construction of the development and the daily staffing requirements necessary to operate the facility. This will create job opportunities in a variety of roles including cleaning and maintenance, grounds keepers, sports instructors, and those in educational roles.
- 6.9.3 The proposed development makes an unequivocal contribution towards realising the social objective established within the Framework. Through the delivery of a high-quality sports and community facility, the development will provide valuable services which are accessible to local communities and which support and encourage young people to adopt healthy lifestyles. Although the proposed Activity Park will also aide in encouraging healthy lifestyles for young people, the Park will also provide invaluable Public Open Space within the established urban area. Additionally, through the proposed linkages to the existing network of pedestrian footpaths and cycleways the proposed development will further support the uptake of active transport, delivering further health benefits for the local population.
- 6.9.4 The environmental objective established by the Framework includes an imperative to make an effective use of land. Through this submission it has been demonstrated that the proposals seek to achieve the redevelopment and restoration of a vacant brownfield site within the established urban area in order to deliver much needed community facilities for young people and public open space. Through the application site's highly sustainable location within an established urban centre, limited car parking provision is proposed. The development therefore supports the Framework's ambition to move towards a low carbon economy by supporting travel to the site through sustainable modes of travel such as public transport, walking and cycling. Additionally, the proposed scheme seeks to introduce substantial areas of new planting alongside the provision of attenuation ponds and swales. The development will therefore deliver a net biodiversity gain and will contribute towards the sustainable management of surface water on site.
- 6.9.5 From this assessment of the proposed development, it is evident that the scheme will meet the Framework's requirements for sustainable development and will comply with Local Plan Policy.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS & CONCLUSIONS

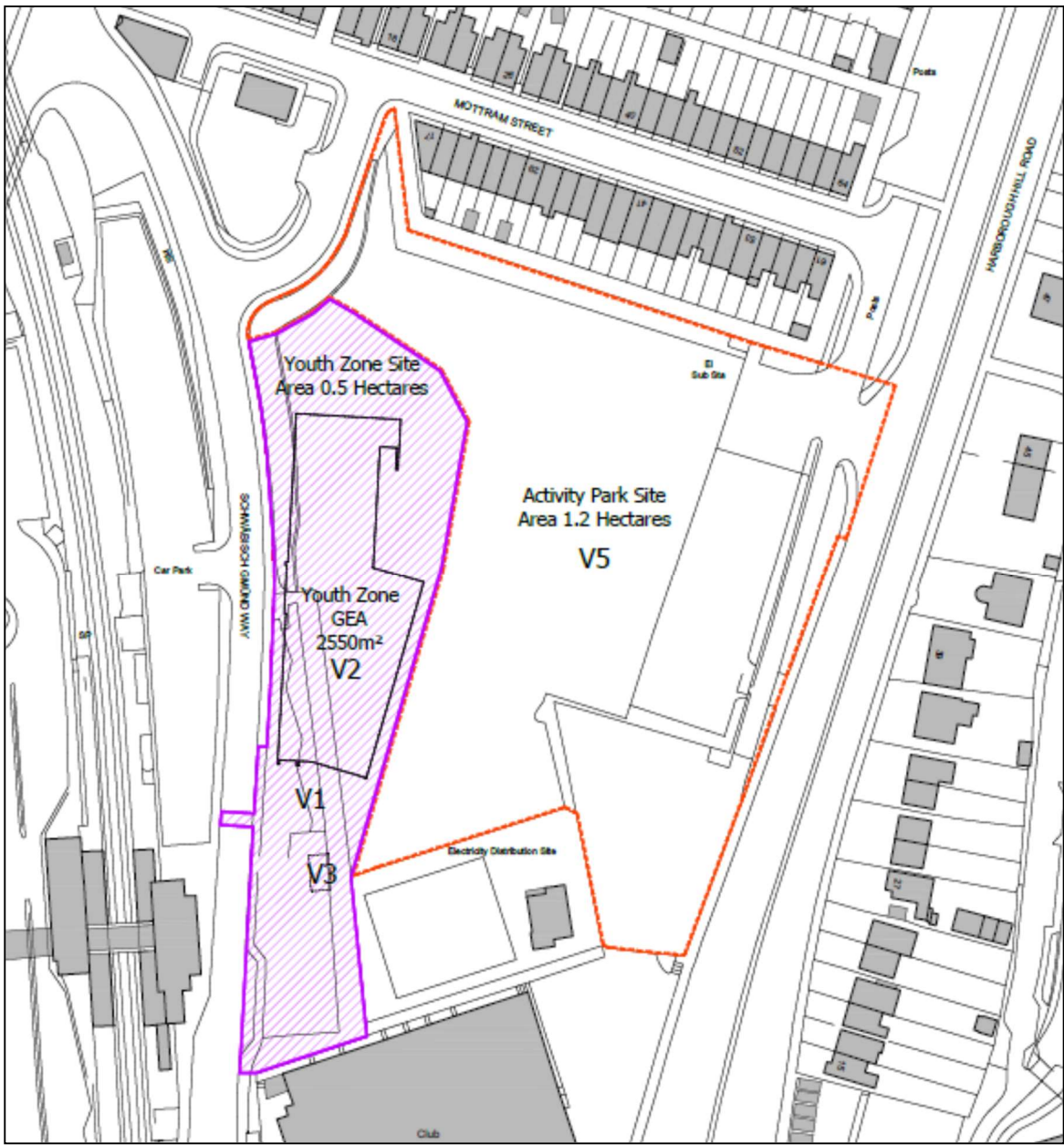
7.1 Recommendations

- 7.1.1 Claremont Planning Consultancy has been instructed by the applicant, Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (MBC) and OnSide Youth Zones, to prepare a Planning Statement in support of a hybrid planning application for the development of Barnsley Youth Zone and activity park. The description of development as proposed is;

“A) Full planning permission for erection of a two storey Youth Zone facility with floodlit kick pitch on the roof, service year with ancillary single storey store, roof top plant, minibuss and blue badge parking and associated landscape. B) outline planning permission for an activity park, access included with all other matters reserved”.

- 7.1.2 This hybrid planning application has been prepared by OnSide in conjunction with Barnsley Metropolitan Council following their long-term engagement and ambitions to secure a comprehensive redevelopment of the site. It is intended that OnSide will bring forward the development of the Youth Zone facility, with Barnsley MBC to deliver the proposed Activity Park.
- 7.1.3 The proposed development seeks to deliver a high quality Youth Zone facility which will provide a variety of sporting, community, and educational facilities, alongside establishing the principles of a wider Activity Park for which outline consent is sought through this application.
- 7.1.4 Through this submission it has been demonstrated that this application has been informed by ongoing engagement with Barnsley MBC, with the design of the proposed Youth Zone being subject to several design review panels. The evolution of the scheme’s design through engagement with the Council has ensured that a development of strong design quality is proposed. The proposed scheme has sought to establish a vibrant, attractive and distinctive facility which will represent a landmark building within Barnsley, appropriate to the site’s location within a gateway area for the town centre and consistent with site allocations BTC23 and BTC24 established by the Barnsley Local Plan.
- 7.1.5 The suite of supporting documents submitted with this statement demonstrate how the proposals can be delivered with minimal adverse impacts, and that the development of this site would not outweigh the social, economic, and environmental benefits of the scheme in this location.
- 7.1.6 The development proposal allows and incorporates measures which enhance the biodiversity value of the site and achieves a net benefit. Alongside the biodiversity enhancement, the landscaping to be provided will maintain filtered views of the development from adjoining properties.
- ### 7.2 Conclusion
- 7.2.1 The Council are therefore respectfully requested to receive this application positively and to grant planning permission expeditiously.

APPENDIX 1 – SITE LOCATION PLAN



- OnSide Youth Zone Boundary (Full Application)
- Volume 1 (V1)
- Youth Zone footprint
- Volume 2 (V2)
- Youth Zone external store footprint
- Volume 3 (V3)
- - - Barnsley Activity Park Boundary (Outline Application)
- - - Volume 5 (V5)

APPENDIX 2 – DETAILED LAYOUT PLAN

APPENDIX 3 – OUTLINE MASTERPLAN
