

URBANA

TOWN PLANNING

Land at Bank End Road

Worsbrough, Barnsley

Planning Statement

Prepared by: MB

Checked & approved by:

Client: Mrs B. Taylor

Date: September 2020

Submission to: Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION (ALL MATTERS RESERVED) FOR A RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ON LAND ADJACENT TO BANK END ROAD, BARNSELEY

Land at Bank End Road, Worsbrough, Barnsley, S70 4QH

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This planning statement has been prepared by Urbana Town Planning Ltd on behalf of the applicant, Mrs Taylor, in support of an outline planning application for the above proposals.
- 1.2 Following the refusal of previous outline application 2020/0210 by Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (hereafter referred to as BMBC or LPA), this new application seeks to address the reasons cited in the refusal of the previous scheme.
- 1.3 This statement sets out a justification for the principle of development, addressing specific matters including: sustainable development; principle of residential development; impact on green space and biodiversity, and residential amenity.

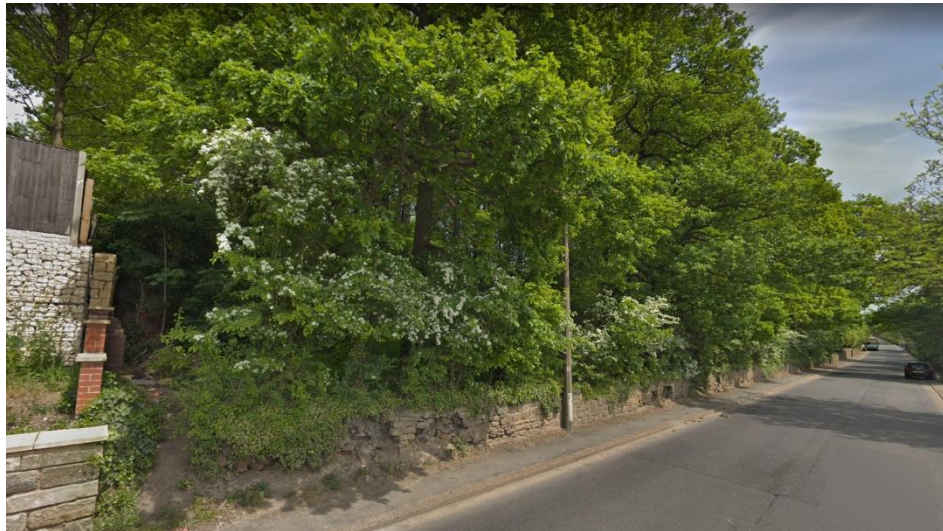
2.0 Site and Location Overview

- 2.1 Below is an aerial image of the site that is the subject of the proposed development, of which further detail is provided in section 4. The red line in the image denotes the boundaries of the proposal site, with north also indicated.



- 2.2 The site in question covers an area of approximately 0.4 hectares and is currently occupied by woodland that is subject to Tree Preservation Order 13, and also forms part of Bank End Road Escarpment Natural Area (GS738). An arboricultural appraisal of the site has established that the site contains a variety of tree species. Of these, Oak is the predominant species, with small numbers of Sycamore, Sweet Chestnut and Ash trees also present. In addition, invasive

pest species have also been identified, including Cherry Laurel and large patches of Japanese Knotweed. This has been attributed a longstanding period without woodland management, which has also resulted in a paucity of ground flora which can undermine soil stabilisation. Together, the site has been characterised as having low biodiversity value but possesses a high visual value in terms of green space provision.



2.3 Immediately to the north of the site is the rear garden amenity space of approximately twelve residential properties located on Yews Avenue. To the south across the highway, Bank End Road, are two residential properties, with further woodland providing screening for neighbouring residential properties on Hollygate, a private road. To the east of the site is a single residential property set within the woodland, with a more recent residential development to the west of the site, which received planning permission in 2007 for sixteen dwellings.



2.4 At a wider scale, the site is located in the Worsbrough area of Barnsley and is approximately 2.5 kilometres south-east of Barnsley Town Centre. The site is highly sustainable insofar as its proximity to public transport services, with multiple

bus routes within five minutes' walking distance. As such, the site is well-connected to local destinations including Wombwell, Hoyland and Elsecar, as well as Barnsley Town Centre where rail links connect to regional centres including Sheffield and Leeds.

3.0 Relevant Planning History

3.1 Consultation with the BMBC website shows that, from the records available, the site in question has been subject to three previous planning applications, the details of which are given below.

3.2 B/88/0403/WB – **Refused** – Erection of one dwelling (outline).

3.3 B/89/0170/WB – **Refused** – Residential development (outline).

3.4 B/95/0170/WB – **Refused** – Erection of a detached dwelling and garage (outline).

3.5 B/04/0458/WB – **Refused** – Erection of one dwelling (outline).

3.6 2020/0210 – **Refused** – Outline planning application (all matters reserved) for a residential development on land adjacent to Bank End Road, Barnsley.

3.7 With the exception of application 2020/0210, the applications described above have no supporting documents that are available to view on the BMBC website. As stated in the officer report for the last refused application, it is the view of the LPA that the site functions as green space in Worsbrough, where there is an identified shortage of such space.

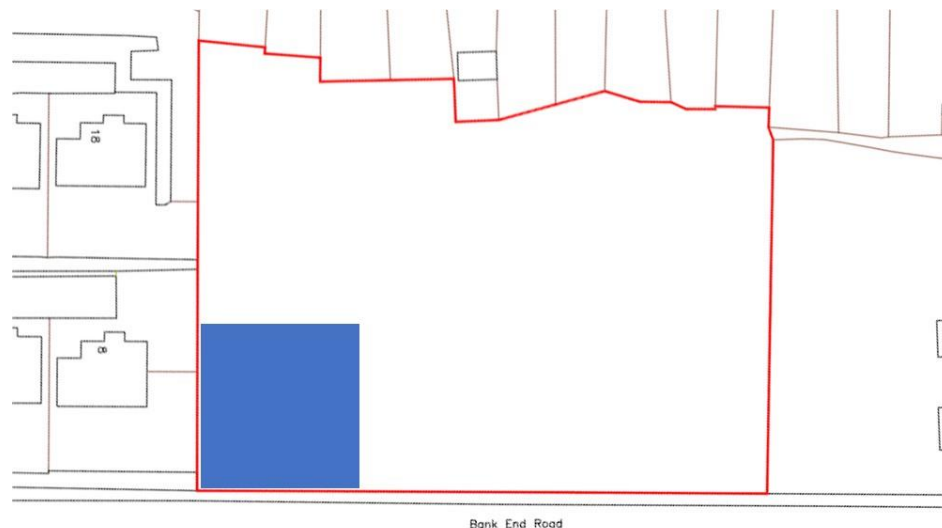
4.0 Proposals

4.1 The site in question is subject to the proposals outlined below:

- Works to a section of the woodland to form a residential development, including:
 - Up to two dwellinghouses;
 - Pedestrian and vehicular access from Bank End Road;
 - Off-street undercroft parking;
 - Private outdoor amenity space.

4.2 So as to minimise the developed area of the site, thereby preserving the greatest possible number of trees, it is proposed that the development be sited in the south-west corner, adjacent to the neighbouring residential development to the west of the land in question (see image below).

4.3 Justification for the proposals is discussed in further detail in section 7.2 of this statement. To summarise, the proposals are intended to strike a balance whereby a modest development facilitates proper management of the remainder of the site that would secure its long-term viability, both in terms of its visual amenity value and its biodiversity value.



5.0 Planning Policy

5.1 In determining the application, the most relevant planning policy documents include the following:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (revised February 2019);
- Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council Local Plan (adopted January 2019);
- South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide (adopted January 2011);
- Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council Housing Strategy 2014-2033;

6.0 Accordance with Planning Policy

6.1 In this section, the proposed development's accordance with relevant national and local planning policy will be demonstrated through a number of key considerations.

7.2.0 Impact on Green Space and Biodiversity

7.2.1 Consideration has been given to the case officer's feedback in previous application 2020/0210. In line with this feedback, the following discussion sets out how the revised proposals have sought to address the concerns of the LPA while still seeking a suitable development of the land to facilitate its long-term management, with the aim of preserving – and potentially enhancing – the overall standard of biodiversity and visual amenity on the site.

7.2.2 As highlighted in section 2 of this statement, the entirety of the trees on site are currently protected under Tree Preservation Order 13 (W1). The land is private and not accessible to the public, with its only contribution being its visual amenity, compared to other accessible and usable spaces in the locality, including Worsbrough Dale Park, Worsbrough Recreation Ground and multiple spacious school grounds. Nonetheless, the perceived scarcity of this type of green space places an added degree of importance on ensuring that the site is suitably maintained so as to, at the very least, preserve the contribution that it makes to the visual quality of the locality.

7.2.3 Local Plan policies GS1 and GI1 set out the LPA's objective to preserve and enhance the Borough's networks of green space. While the LPA's position is to oppose proposals that result in the loss of green space, as per policy GS1 of the Local Plan, the same policy sets out exceptions where development may be permissible. Specifically, if an assessment can demonstrate that the green space in question is surplus to requirements, development may be allowed, subject to satisfying other relevant policies. Furthermore, small-scale facilities that serve to support or improve the function of the green space are also allowed, as is offsetting the loss of green space through an appropriate replacement of equivalent or improved quality.

7.2.4 In considering each of these potential exceptions that would allow development, an assessment of the green space in Ward Green and Worsbrough concludes that there is an insufficient provision of natural and semi-natural green space in the area. The same assessment also concludes that the Bank End Road Escarpment possesses a 'fair and stable' quality level and 'high' value for the local area. For reference, the image below illustrates the provision of numerous types of green space in the Worsbrough Dale, with the site denoted by the red marker.



7.2.5 Even if accepting the LPA's view as to the quantum of natural and semi-natural green space in the locality being insufficient, the quality of the space is of equal importance in ensuring that these areas of woodland continue to make a positive

contribution to the Worsbrough Dale area. Comments provided in support of this application, from Anderson Tree Care, make clear that a lack of proper management of natural and semi-natural woodland will be to the long-term detriment of the site's biodiversity. Therefore, while it is the view of the LPA that the quality of the site at present is 'fair and stable', this will inevitably deteriorate over time without regular interventions to sustain its current levels of visual amenity.

- 7.2.6 In seeking to preserve the visual amenity of woodland sites, the cost associated with the level of management required is often prohibitive, especially on smaller sites such as that in question, where the works themselves cannot generate any revenue to fund ongoing maintenance. (By comparison, larger sites might generate revenue from, for example, the sale of timber from felled trees). Therefore, one way of creating the revenue necessary to facilitate this management of the site is to allow a small proportion of the site (approximately 418 square metres, equating to 11 percent) to be developed for up to two residential units. This is a notable reduction from previous proposals, where approximately 25 percent was proposed for development. To put this into context, development of the site would ensure that the long-term future of the remaining 89 percent of the site is preserved. Without the proposed development and the funds it would generate for the site's maintenance, there is the risk of longer-term damage to the visual amenity of the site and its biodiversity.
- 7.2.7 Specifically addressing biodiversity, policy BIO1 details a number of ways in which developments should look to respect the biodiversity credentials that a site possesses, as well as protect species and habitats of principal importance. As with other policies, policy BIO1 seeks measures that prioritise preservation and enhancement of these credentials where possible in order for a development to be considered acceptable.
- 7.2.8 As with the risk to visual amenity, the biodiversity of a site can be impacted by the lack of regular woodland management, whereby woodland will over time fall into dereliction and consequently lose its biodiversity value. Where managed properly, soils and dormant seed are disturbed and stimulated to germinate. Therefore, in order to achieve any sustainable preservation and/or enhancement of the biodiversity of the site in question, a long-term management plan is required.
- 7.2.9 To make clear, the applicant is wholly appreciative of the site's protected status and the contribution it makes to the area's attractive green character. However, the site's appearance at present belies the presence of invasive species that, over time, will have a severe negative impact on both its biodiversity and visual quality. This is confirmed by the report and supplementary comments from the arboricultural officer, as well as a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal carried out in September 2019 (and updated in February 2020).
- 7.2.10 It is asserted, therefore, that the proposals are in accordance with the exceptions set out in policy GS1 and the key objectives in policies GS1, GI1 and BIO1.

That is, the development as proposed would indeed *support* the *proper function* of the green space by creating a means of funding the maintenance of the site in perpetuity. In doing so, the preservation of the site's positive characteristics supports the core objectives of policy GS1 in improving the existing green space.

- 7.2.11 With regard to the likelihood that protected species are present within the site, a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) was undertaken in September 2019 and subsequently updated in February 2020 and is included in the supporting documentation with this application. In summary, it was concluded that the woodland does not exhibit features of Ancient Woodland (a view shared by the arboricultural specialist). The site appraisal found that a small number of trees within the site exhibit potential roost features for bats, but that the site and surroundings are not considered to form part of an area of high-quality bat foraging habitat. While no bird nests were noted during the site walkover, they are considered likely to be present due to the nature of the site. The presence of amphibians or reptiles is considered unlikely. Should the application be approved, reserved matters including siting of development will determine the extent to which follow-up assessments will be required.
- 7.2.12 It is noted that the LPA, in their refusal of previous application 2020/0210, sought to undermine the validity of the PEA submitted, particularly with regard to the likelihood of whether the woodland was Semi-Natural Ancient Woodland (SNAW). The LPA's biodiversity officer is of the view that the woodland has *potential* to be a relict Ancient Woodland, and the site's lack of designation is owing to its being under two hectares in size. However, while claiming the *potential* of the site to be relict Ancient Woodland, the LPA have provided no evidence to substantiate their claim, whereas the survey work undertaken on behalf of the landowner has shown the site displays no characteristics of SNAW. Therefore, it is unreasonable to discount findings based on a physical inspection of the site in question based on supposition.
- 7.2.13 Another aspect potentially affecting the development of the site is ground conditions. Following objections from the South Yorkshire Mining Advisory Service and the Coal Authority, a Coal Mining Risk Assessment, undertaken by Eastwood & Partners, is submitted in support of this application. Discussion with the consultant confirms that there are no notable constraints to the development of the site, subject to confirmation via an intrusive investigation to be undertaken if development is approved.
- 7.2.14 In summary of the justification of the proposals with regard to its impact on the woodland, it is accepted that the negativity shown by BMBC towards the proposed development of the woodland in question stems from a desire to preserve what is felt to be a dearth of similar green space in the Worsbrough Dale area. Nevertheless, it is maintained that the proposals are in accordance with the LPA's objectives, and would provide the landowner with the financial means to manage the woodland, preserving and, over time, enhancing its biodiversity and visual amenity.

7.2.15 Weight must be given to what purpose the site presently serves and whether the proposals would have a material effect on that purpose. The proportion of the land to be developed has been significantly reduced and cannot reasonably be considered to have a serious impact on the function of the space, either in isolation or as part of the wider green space network. Therefore, when assessing the loss of a small proportion of the woodland, it is logically outweighed by the benefit of securing the positive contribution made by the remainder of the site.

7.3.0 Sustainable Development

7.3.1 Sustainable development underpins the updated NPPF, indicating the greater awareness within society of the shared responsibility to create more sustainable places to live. As such, it states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, by striving to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The achievement of sustainable development has three overarching objectives: economic, social and environmental. These objectives are interdependent and should be pursued in mutually supportive ways. The essence of the framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, and “for decision taking this means: approving development proposals that accord with an *up-to-date* development plan without delay” (paragraph 11, clause C).

7.3.2 In accordance with this focus on sustainable development, local authorities have followed the guidance set out within the NPPF in their formulation of local policy. In the case of Barnsley, sustainability represents a key consideration, demonstrated by specific Local Plan policy, SD1, which makes clear that a positive approach will be taken that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Following the replacement of the Core Strategy with the Local Plan in 2019, the Local Plan represents the primary source of local policy to which, along with relevant supplementary planning documents, much of the evidence provided in this application adheres. The following paragraphs in this section will demonstrate the numerous ways in which the proposed development conforms to the principle of sustainable development with regard to local and national policy.

7.3.3 With regard to the above aims and objectives of the Council, the proposals set out in section 4 can be said to make a positive contribution to the sustainability of Barnsley’s urban area. Local Plan policy LG2 identifies Urban Barnsley, in which Worsbrough Dale is located, as the main priority area where development is to take place. It is stated that ‘Urban Barnsley will be expected to accommodate significantly more growth than any individual Principal Town to accord with its place in the settlement hierarchy’. Therefore, while the proposed development would be making a modest contribution to housing numbers, it would nonetheless assist in achieving the spatial strategy for the Borough.

7.3.4 Another integral aspect of sustainable development, and something which is benefitted by the location of the proposed development, is the promotion of sustainable travel. This is covered in Local Plan T3, which states that new

developments are expected to be accessible to public transport and meet the needs of pedestrians and cyclists. In line with this objective, it is asserted that the site in question is ideally located to be within a reasonable travelling distance for pedestrians and cyclists. Alternatively, those for whom walking or cycling over longer distances is not practicable can access a number of bus services within a short walking distance of the site, all of which terminate at Barnsley Interchange and provide a convenient link to the national rail network. Specifically, these bus routes are the 2, 6, 7, 66 and 67(a, b, c). Additionally, school bus services to Horizon Community College and Barnsley Academy reduce the need for private car use in transporting children to school.

- 7.3.5 Energy efficiency is another important element of sustainability in new developments. As such, Local Plan policies CC1 and CC2 detail the ways in which all new buildings are expected to be efficient and use resources sustainably, as well as maximising sustainable design and construction features. It is expected that the proposed development will incorporate, where possible, energy efficiency measures including high performance window glazing and frames, low-energy LED lighting and electric heating, water-efficient white goods, taps, toilets, baths and other equipment. Any technologies chosen for off-grid energy production will be based on an assessment of the greatest environmental benefit, benefit to future occupants, ongoing running costs and physical feasibility. Should outline permission be granted for the proposed scheme, detailed design proposals and energy assessments will be undertaken to ensure energy efficiency is optimised.

7.4.0 Principle of Residential Development

- 7.4.1 One of the core aims of the NPPF is to boost the supply of housing. Paragraph 59 makes reference to the sufficient amount and variety of land that can be brought forward for development as part of meeting the needs of specific groups and their respective housing requirements. To aid this identification of land, the NPPF asserts that Local Planning Authorities ensure their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing. As stated in clause A of paragraph 67 of the NPPF, planning policies should identify a supply of specific, deliverable sites for the next five years of the plan period (on a rolling basis).
- 7.4.2 Since October 2018 following the publication of the revised NPPF, central government have directed Local Planning Authorities to use household projections from 2014 when assessing housing need. This directive was necessary to counter 2016 projections by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) which had reduced the required number of households from 269,000 per year to 213,000, which is significantly below the central government target of 300,000. This demonstrates the increasing pressure being placed on local authorities to maximise opportunities for residential development in accordance with national policy.

- 7.4.3 BMBC's housing strategy document states that 20,000–25,000 homes are required between the years 2014–2033, while aiming to complete 1,300 homes per year during this time. These figures have been refined in the production of the new Local Plan, in which policy H1 states that BMBC will seek to complete at least 21,546 net additional homes between this same period, while maintaining a five-year supply of deliverable sites. When isolating these figures to Urban Barnsley only, this equates to a target of 9,070 homes, representing 43% of the overall supply for the Borough.
- 7.4.4 The research undertaken for the housing strategy identified a shortfall in the number of detached and semi-detached properties available. Further to this, the strategy highlights the need to provide a greater variety of homes in Barnsley. As such, a key ambition of BMBC is to build circa 2,500 larger family and higher value homes. Increasing the number of such types of housing is seen as key to improving the prosperity of Barnsley. It is asserted, therefore, that the size and expected quality of the proposed development would be able fulfil both of the criteria for this ambition.
- 7.4.5 The Local Plan acknowledges that small non-allocated sites can make a valuable contribution to the overall housing supply. Specifically, policy H4 states that sites under 0.4 hectares in size will be considered for development where they comply with other relevant planning policy. Given the view of the LPA regarding the site's protected status, it is acknowledged that it may be considered that the proposals are not in accordance with policy H4. However, if it can be agreed that the proposed development enables the sustainable management of the woodland, thereby securing its biodiversity and amenity value, then the site would evidently fulfil policy objectives in contributing towards BMBC's housing targets.
- 7.4.6 Reference is also made to Local Plan policy H8 regarding housing regeneration, with Worsbrough being one of a number of areas in Barnsley highlighted as being a lower value sub market. As such, it is the aim of BMBC to support the renewal and revitalisation of these areas that possess poor housing, through a number of measures including providing a better mix of housing types, and generally supporting sustainable housing growth to achieve a more balanced housing market. Again, notwithstanding the matter of the site's woodland status, a high-quality scheme such as the one proposed can help to achieve these stated objectives.

7.5.0 Residential Amenity

- 7.5.1 Beyond the discussion in section 7.2 of this statement regarding the impact on the woodland status of the site, it is important to consider the likely conditions of the proposed development relating to residential amenity.
- 7.5.2 In assessing the proposals set out in previous application 2020/0210, the LPA were of the opinion that, despite the likelihood of required separation distances being met, the level differences between the site and existing housing opposite

on Bank End Road would cause disamenity to these neighbouring residents by virtue of overlooking. However, this judgement is premature insofar as the design of the proposed dwellinghouses is not subject to consideration as part of this outline application. Rather, the proximity and siting of the existing dwellinghouses merely presents a constraint that should be considered at the design stage and subsequent reserved matters application, should this outline application be approved. Indeed, it is expected that a design solution could be accommodated that would create sufficient levels of amenity to both existing neighbouring residents and prospective occupants of the proposed development. Therefore, at this outline stage, it is asserted that the siting of the proposed development should be permissible in accordance with policy GD1 of the Local Plan.

7.5.3 Despite the LPA's comments that support for the previous application had not been reflected in formal consultation responses, it is nonetheless maintained that there is support, in principle, for the development from local residents living opposite the site in question. Specifically, they share the landowners concerns about the poor state of the overall woodland, and support measures that would serve to address this visual blight which is a consequence of fly-tipping that has taken place in the woodland. Not only has fly-tipping taken place adjacent to Bank End Road, but evidence of garden waste from neighbouring properties has also been highlighted in a previous assessment of the site (which can lead to further presence of invasive species).

7.5.4 The issue of fly-tipping, in any form, inevitably impacts on the visual amenity value of the site. Beyond the works proposed as part of this application, the only other reasonable way to prevent fly-tipping in the future would be to secure the site by erecting fencing of a sufficient height to prevent access by trespassers. However, such an intervention would also negate much of the perceived amenity value that is derived from views of the woodland. Therefore, this adds further positive weight to its proactive management, which would be facilitated by the proposed development.

7.6.0 Highways and Parking Provision

7.6.1 This section addresses any impact that the proposed development may have on the surrounding road and transport network, and how the site incorporates a sufficient provision of car parking. Paragraph 102 of the NPPF highlights the need for proposed developments to pursue opportunities to promote public transport use, while Local Plan policy T3 sets out the expectations of developments with regards to locations of development and proximity to public transport, as well as minimum levels of parking for sustainable modes of transport. Policy T4 also makes clear the expectation of new development to provide safe, secure and convenient access and movement throughout a site for both pedestrians and transport users.

7.6.2 BMBC's *Parking* supplementary planning document specifies the level of parking provision that should be in place for residential developments. As with the pre-

application enquiry, it is proposed that the scale of development deemed acceptable by the LPA will entail three- to four-bed houses. In line with the objective of minimising the developed footprint within the site, it is intended that off-street parking would be incorporated through a shared secure undercroft parking area, with cycle storage also accommodated in this space.

- 7.6.3 Regarding the impact of the development on the road network, it is not anticipated that the volume of traffic would pose any issue. That is, the small scale of the development is such that any increase in traffic would be negligible. Pedestrian and vehicular access to the site will necessitate a point of access being created from Bank End Road. Sharing the undercroft would enable separate entrance and exit points that also allow vehicles to enter and leave the site in forward gear.

7.7.0 Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Contributions

- 7.7.1 A Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a tool to help Local Planning Authorities secure financial contributions towards local infrastructure projects.

- 7.7.2 As part of the work undertaken towards producing the new Local Plan, BMBC made preliminary consultations regarding the introduction of a CIL in 2016. However, an agreed CIL charging schedule is yet to be put in place. As such, any contributions from developers will continue to be sought by means of a Section 106 agreement.

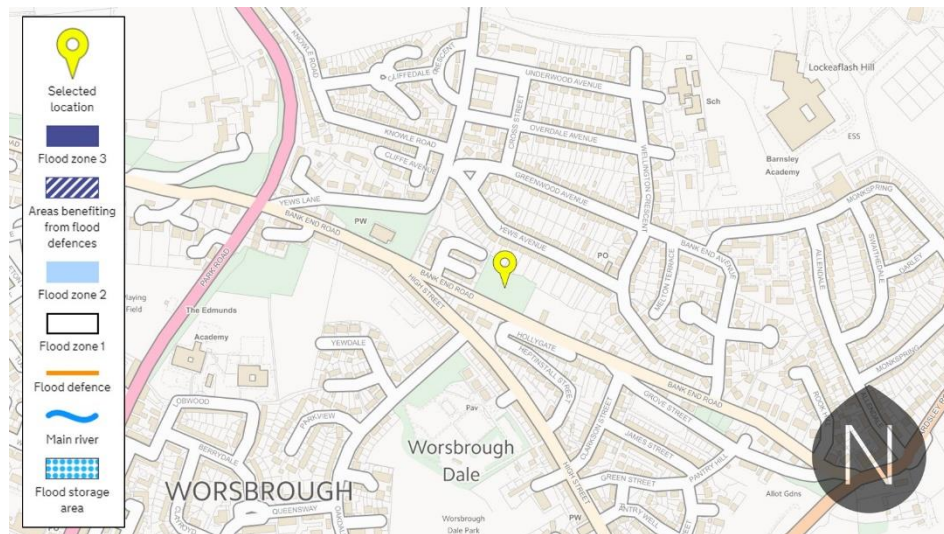
- 7.7.3 Local Plan policy H7 addresses affordable housing, and states that developments comprising fifteen or more units will be expected to provide affordable housing. Although the number of units proposed is presently a reserved matter, it is assured that, if approved, the number of units to be accommodated on site will be comfortably below the threshold to require an affordable housing contribution.

7.8.0 Flood Risk

- 7.8.1 Local Plan policies CC1 and CC3 makes clear that development should be located where it would reduce the risk of flooding. Consultation of the Environment Agency website (see image below) shows the flood risk of the proposal site and the surrounding area (site indicated by yellow marker). As part of Flood Zone 1, the land has less than a 1 in 1,000 annual probability of flooding.

- 7.8.2 Section 14 of the NPPF sets out the guidelines to which developments should adhere with regards to flood risk. With Flood Zone 1 designation, it is not believed that the site requires a flood risk assessment as, per footnote 50 of the NPPF, it is under one hectare in size and has not been identified as having critical drainage problems or being a flood risk in the future. In addition, it is not believed that the development proposed can be considered a more vulnerable use of the site. Nonetheless, it is ensured that, should the site be approved for

development, necessary measures will be taken to ensure that there is sufficient on-site drainage infrastructure.



7.0 Conclusions

- 7.1 In accordance with the above justifications, it is asserted that the proposed development complies with the objectives of relevant national and local planning policy, or with the general principles of development with regard to the location of the proposal site, in the delivery of a residential scheme in Worsbrough, Barnsley.
- 7.2 An important benefit of the proposals is the subsequent long-term management of the remainder of the woodland site that would be facilitated by the development of the small area outlined in this statement. The minor concession of this area of woodland will ensure that the remainder of the site – approximately 89% – will be preserved and enhanced, both in terms of its biodiversity and visual amenity value. The approach set out in this statement follows the advice given by specialist arboricultural and ecological consultants.
- 7.3 Without the proposed development, it is highly likely that the misuse of the site will continue unabated, leading to the eventual loss of the biodiversity and visual amenity value that the proposals seek to protect. Therefore, developing the site in the manner proposed will deliver sustainable development with regard to long-term biodiversity preservation and enhancement, and will have the added benefit of contributing a high-quality residential development in Worsbrough. Therefore, it is asserted that the proposals in this application should be viewed favourably by the Local Planning Authority.