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August 2014



**Low Laithes Village, Wombwell**

**Planning Policy Statement for proposed additional accommodation,  
extension to existing buildings and provision of additional car  
parking**

On behalf of

The Hesley Group

Prepared by

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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Policy Statement has been prepared on behalf of The Hesley Group to support a full planning application for improvements to the existing Low Laithes Village, Wombwell.

### The Application Site

- 1.2 Low Laithes Village is a well-established and highly regarded education and care facility operated by the Hesley Group.
- 1.3 The site itself comprises a number of existing buildings providing a full range of uses including accommodation, education blocks, workshops, offices, a shop and servicing buildings together with landscaping and parking. The curtilage / footprint of the existing development is clearly defined.
- 1.4 The site comprises a previously developed site in the Green Belt and extends to circa 2ha.
- 1.5 Further details on the site are set out in Section 2.

### Planning History

- 1.6 Planning permission for development of the site was originally granted in 2004 for “Demolition of existing buildings and dwellings, conversion of barns and erection of new dwellings”. A subsequent planning application in 2006, on behalf of The Hesley Group, was approved for “Part demolition and redevelopment of farm to form residential care home for young adults”. Planning permission 2006/0205 was granted because the principle of the development was acceptable. At the time it was stated in the decision notice that “an overall loss of buildings will benefit the openness of the green belt”.

### Background to Low Laithes Village and the Hesley Group

- 1.7 Low Laithes Village was originally a dairy farm with a farmhouse, a range of stone buildings, and extensive agricultural sheds. The site is accessed via a private road and surrounded by open countryside and agricultural land.
- 1.8 The site has been redeveloped by the Hesley Group to restore and convert existing buildings together with erection of new buildings to provide a residential campus for younger adults. The site has been providing residential care services since 2007.
- 1.9 The Village complex includes a mixed range of flats and bungalows with a total registered capacity of 30 residential places. On site facilities include a village hall for general activities and indoor sports; an area providing residents with the opportunity to learn activities for daily living (ADL) including basic laundry, catering and domestic tasks; an activities suite with provision for IT work; a pottery kiln and an arts room; a dedicated area for horticulture including a poly-tunnel, planting beds; internal potting room/activity area and a workshop used for storage repairs and maintenance.
- 1.10 There is increasing demand for the specialist services that the Hesley Group provides and a need to increase capacity to provide care on a long term and temporary (respite) basis and this is addressed as part of these proposals. Hesley Group have a national catchment and many families have to travel significant distances to visit relatives without any current provision for on-site temporary accommodation which is also to be addressed as part of the application.

- 1.11 Low Laithes Village is ideally suited to provide the type of care offered by the Hesley Group and required by its residents. It provides an ideal, discrete and characterful setting which has contributed to its popularity and success since it was established in 2007.
- 1.12 The Hesley Group are a long established provider of high quality education and care services to children and young adults with complex needs, severe learning difficulties and challenging behaviour, arising mainly from Autistic Spectrum Disorders.
- 1.13 The Company began to operate from Hesley Hall Nr Tickhill, Doncaster in 1975 and established a well-reputed service in provision of residential care for children with various behavioural difficulties. During the early 1990s, and in direct response to a significantly increased demand from local authorities for these more specialised services, Hesley Group began to focus increasingly upon developing care services in South Yorkshire for younger people with severe autistic disorders.
- 1.14 Gaining an increasingly acknowledged expertise in this field, Hesley Group embarked on an extensive redevelopment programme to provide residential schools and homes for the more complex cases which saw the opening of further special schools at Wilsic Hall at Wadworth and at Fullerton House, a converted hospital at Dovenby. These schools provided single bedroom accommodation for 36 and 46 children and young people respectively in small living groups together with all associated classrooms, recreational and therapy facilities.
- 1.15 The Hesley Group have prepared a statement which is included as part of this application and provides further background information and details of the services and care that they provide.

### **The Proposed Development**

- 1.16 The proposed development comprises a number of improvements to existing facilities within the village.
- 1.17 The proposal includes additional accommodation (conversion and new build) for residents, staff and visitors, extensions to existing workshop buildings and improved car parking arrangements.
- 1.18 Further details are set out in Section 3 as well as in the accompanying Design & Access Statement prepared by MBooth Design.

### **The Planning Application**

- 1.19 Low Laithes is located in within the Green Belt.
- 1.20 The NPPF states at paragraph 89 that limited infilling in villages, infilling of previously developed sites and extensions to existing buildings are all appropriate form of development in the Green Belt. In addition, paragraph 90 of the NPPF advises that re-use of buildings is also an appropriate form of development in the Green Belt.
- 1.21 It is therefore considered both appropriate and necessary to provide this detailed statement in support of the planning application for the proposed improvements at Low Laithes Village given the associated planning context and background against which this application is to be considered.
- 1.22 This statement describes the application site and nature of the proposal (Chapters 2 and 3) together with an assessment of planning policy issues

(Chapters 4 & 5) of relevance to the application. Assessment of the planning application is set out in Chapter 5. Conclusions are set out in Chapter 6.

- 1.23 The application is submitted following pre-application discussions with Barnsley Council (April 2014) and in light of a recent appeal decision for infill development (single dwelling) in Howbrook where, in granting planning permission, the Inspector confirmed the appropriateness of infill development within the Green Belt.
- 1.24 This statement will fully justify the proposal for the site and will advance justification for the proposed development.
- 1.25 On the basis of the information provided in this statement, the associated supporting documents and on the application drawings, a presumption in favour of development can be maintained in this particular instance, the application being in accordance with the advice set out in the NPPF.
- 1.26 The planning application is supported by the following:
- i. Completed application forms, with all certificates signed and dated;
  - ii. Site Location Plan prepared by M Booth Design;
  - iii. Architectural Plans prepared by M Booth Design;
  - iv. Design and Access Statement prepared by M Booth Design;
  - v. Planning Statement prepared by ID Planning;
  - vi. Phase 2 SI prepared by Eastwood & Partners;
  - vii. Drainage and FRA prepared by Stevenson Associates;
- 1.26 The submitted additional technical information is considered sufficient to enable the Local Planning Authority to determine the clear merits of the proposed development.

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## 2.0 Site Description

- 2.1 Low Laithes Village lies circa 4.5km south east of Barnsley town centre. The settlements of Darfield and Wombwell lie to the east and south respectively.
- 2.2 The site has an established use as a residential campus for young adults with complex needs, challenging behaviours and learning difficulties.
- 2.3 Access to Low Laithes Village is via a private road 'Old Farm Lane' which is a single width road with passing places leading from A633 Barnsley Road. The site is 0.5km from Barnsley Road.
- 2.4 The site is located within open countryside surrounded by agricultural land. There is a fairly consistent gradient across the site from the high point at the north to the south such that the buildings at the rear of the site (north) are set down into existing ground levels by 2 to 3 metres. A topographical survey has been prepared and a copy is included as part of the application documents.
- 2.5 The existing buildings are predominantly constructed of natural stone with slate and concrete tiled roofs. Original buildings which date from late 1800's including the old farmhouse and barns with newer buildings interlinked. The buildings are arranged in a series of courtyards that are consistent with the local vernacular and their farming origins and provide communal garden spaces within the central courts as well as private rear gardens.
- 2.6 To the north of the site there are a number of steel framed buildings which accommodate workspaces for horticulture, a general storage and maintenance building and a bio-mass village heating system.
- 2.7 The site falls within Flood Zone 1
- 2.8 The site does not fall within a conservation area, nor does it affect the settling of any listed buildings.
- 2.9 The site is designated as part of a much larger area of Green Belt in the Barnsley UDP.

### 3.0 The Proposed Development

- 3.1 This statement accompanies a full planning application for various improvements to facilities at Low Laithes Village.
- 3.2 The proposal comprises infill development, extension to existing buildings and re-use of existing buildings. These are all appropriate forms of development in the Green Belt. Further discussion on principle is set out in Sections 4 and 5.
- 3.3 The proposal comprises:
- Erection of residential block containing 6 No one bedroom residential living units together with communal and staff facilities and a plant room. The buildings will be single storey with pitch roof. The buildings will be built in regularly coursed natural stone with brown tile roof.  
This block is located in the north east corner of the site on an area currently set to car parking.
  - Conversion of Commercial Kitchens to 2 No one bedroom residential living units and associated external works to create enclosed rear gardens. The building is single storey with pitched roof – the extension is designed to match.  
This building is located to the east of the main entrance / office building (original farm house)
  - Erection of 2 No detached two bedroom residential units to provide accommodation for visiting families and friends. The buildings will be single storey with pitch roof. External walling will comprise cedar cladding with dark blue / grey concrete tiles to roof.  
These buildings are located on the eastern boundary on land currently used for car parking
  - Erection of 2 No detached two bedroom residential units to provide respite accommodation. These are single storey lodge buildings (clad in cedar boarding) with timber fencing to rear (western) boundary.  
These buildings are to be located to the south west of the main entrance / office building
  - Extension of existing workshop/maintenance building to provide additional storage. This building has a shallow pitch roof with profile cladding for the walls. The proposed extension will match the existing building in terms of design and materials.  
The existing workshop building is located in the north-east corner of the site.
  - Realignment of access road and improvements to existing parking arrangements. Areas of land along the eastern boundary currently used for informal parking will be formally laid out and landscaped. Additional car parking will be provided on the inside of the bend in the access road (south-east corner). A total of 78 spaces will be formally laid out.
  - Landscaping to boundary of the site

## 4.0 Planning Policy Review

### National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The National Planning Policy Framework must be taken in to account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans and is a material consideration in planning decisions.

### Sustainable Development

- 4.2 The National Planning Policy Framework sets out that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The guidance advises that the policies in paragraphs 18-219 taken as a whole constitute the government's view on what sustainable development in England means in practice for the planning system. Paragraph 7 sets out the three dimensions to sustainable development, namely economic, social and environmental with Paragraph 8 advising that to achieve sustainable development, economic, social and environmental gain should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system.
- 4.3 At paragraph 14 the NPPF identifies that at the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan making and decision taking. The supporting documentation submitted with this planning application clearly identifies that the development will provide economic, social and environmental benefits and constitutes sustainable development and therefore there is a presumption in favour of the proposal.
- 4.4 Paragraph 14 of the NPPF also goes on to advise that in terms of decision making (i.e. determining planning applications) a presumption in favour of sustainable development means: -
- *Approving development proposals that accord with the Development Plan without delay; and*
  - *Where the Development Plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, granting permission unless:*
    - *Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this framework taken as a whole; or*
    - *Specific policies in this framework indicate development should be restricted.*
- 4.5 The following chapters of both this Planning Statement and the supporting documentation submitted with the planning application demonstrate that the development is sustainable and in accordance with the Development Plan.
- 4.6 However in summary there are clear social and economic benefits with effects on the environment being limited given the nature of the site and quality of the proposals. The social benefits arise from provision of improved facilities within the campus for care and education of residents. With regards economic benefits, in addition to construction jobs created, the additional accommodation and workspace will result in creation of up to 50 additional

staff made up primarily of carers, catering, cleaning and maintenance staff. The increased staff numbers arise from the need to provide '24/7' care, 365 days of the year.

- 4.7 The emphasis for decision making is therefore for the Local Authority to approve the development proposals without delay in accordance with paragraph 14 of the NPPF.

### **Core Planning Principle**

- 4.8 Paragraph 17 of the NPPF identifies a set of 12 core land use planning principles which underpin both plan making and decision taking. The relevant principles are set out below: -

- Proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs. Every effort should be made objectively to identify and then meet the housing, business and other development needs of an area, and respond positively to wider opportunities for growth;
- Always seek to secure a high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;
- Contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution. Allocations of land for development should prefer land of lesser environmental value, where consistent with other policies in this framework;
- Encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided it is not of high environmental value; and
- Actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable.
- Support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs.

## **Delivering Sustainable Development**

### **Building a Strong, Competitive Economy**

- 4.9 Paragraph 18 of the NPPF advises that the government is committed to securing economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity. Furthermore, paragraph 19 advises the government is committed to ensuring the planning system does everything it can to support economic growth. It clearly identifies that planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth. Therefore significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system.
- 4.10 It is considered direct and indirect (suppliers) job opportunities will be created through the construction period with up to 40 new staff required once new facilities / accommodation is operational.

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### **Delivering a Wide Choice of High Quality Homes**

- 4.11 Paragraph 47 of the NPPF clearly identifies that Local Authority's should seek to boost significantly the supply of housing with LPAs required to identify and update deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years worth of housing. In terms of how planning applications should be dealt with, paragraph 49 advises:

*"Housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up to date if the Local Planning Authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing."*

- 4.12 The document goes on to state there is a need to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes in order to create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities (paragraph 50).
- 4.13 The housing proposed in this application serves a specific need on site for existing residents and visitors for residents.

### **Requiring Good Design**

- 4.14 The NPPF at paragraph 56 sets out the government's approach to design which advises that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and is indivisible from good planning and should contribute positively to make places better for people. Paragraph 57 expands upon this and advises that it is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes.
- 4.15 The submitted plans and Design & Access Statement accompanying the development proposals clearly sets out how the development can meet these objectives and therefore represent high quality design.

### **Promoting Healthy Communities - Community Use**

- 4.16 The NPPF sets out how the planning system can facilitate social interaction and creation of healthy, inclusive communities.
- 4.17 Paragraph 72 states that the Government attaches great importance to ensuring that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should therefore take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. It advises LPA's should give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools.

### **Protecting Green Belt Land**

- 4.18 Paragraphs 79 – 92 of the NPPF sets out guidance in relation to the Green Belt advising the essential characteristic of Green Belts is their openness and permanence.

- 4.19 Paragraph 89 of the NPPF sets out the types of new building considered appropriate in the Green Belt, this includes:
- Limited infilling in villages;
  - Extension or alteration of a building provided it does not result in disproportionate additions
  - Limited infilling of previously developed sites.
- 4.20 In addition, paragraph 90 of the NPPF advises that the re-use of buildings, provided they are of permanent and substantial construction, is also appropriate development in the Green Belt.
- 4.21 Low Laithes Village is a previously developed site within the Green Belt and, given the nature, scale and location of proposed development within the curtilage / existing built footprint of the site, the proposed new build is considered to constitute infill development. Furthermore the proposal includes re-use of existing buildings and limited extensions to existing buildings, both of which are appropriate forms of development in the Green Belt. In terms of proposed car parking, this generally comprises formally laying out of land within the curtilage of the site that is already used for such purposes. The car parking will also be subject to landscaping as would the boundaries of the site.
- 4.22 As such the proposed development in this location would not harm the open character or appearance of the Green Belt and is therefore considered to be an appropriate form of development.

### **Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment**

- 4.23 Paragraph 109 of the NPPF advises that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment with Paragraph 118 seeking to ensure LPAs conserve and enhance biodiversity interests.
- 4.24 The submitted supporting reports relating to drainage / flood risk and ground conditions all demonstrate compliance with national guidance. The existing balancing pond within the site is suitable to accommodate the new development and as such there is no need to amend the current pond. There are no technical reasons why the proposed development cannot go ahead.

### **Decision Taking**

- 4.25 The approach of Local Authorities to decision taking including planning permissions is set out in paragraphs 186 and 187 of the NPPF. Here paragraph 186 advises Local Planning Authorities to approach decision taking in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development. The relationship between decision taking and plan making should be seamless, translating plans into high quality development on the ground.
- 4.26 Paragraph 187 goes on to say that Local Planning Authorities should look for solutions rather than problems, and decision takers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible. Local Planning Authorities should work proactively with applicants to ensure

developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.

- 4.27 More importantly, when determining planning applications, paragraph 197 of the NPPF advises that in assessing and determining development proposals, Local Planning Authorities should apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development. As the proposal has been demonstrated to be sustainable through the submission documentation, it concluded that in accordance with the NPPF, the presumption in favour of sustainable development should apply to these proposals.

## **Development Plan**

- 4.28 The Development Plan in this instance is formed by the Barnsley Unitary Development Plan (saved policies) and the Barnsley Core Strategy.

### **Barnsley Unitary Development Plan**

- 4.29 The Barnsley UDP was adopted in 2000 with the policies subsequently saved in 2007. However the adopted Core Strategy replaced a number of the UDP policies.
- 4.30 In addition to some of the policies being saved, the allocations and designations also remain in place until such a time as the Development Sites and Places DPD has been adopted.
- 4.31 The site sits within the designated Green Belt.
- 4.32 Former UDP Policies GS7 and GS8 were relevant in terms of development within the Green Belt. These have not been saved and are replaced by Core Strategy Policy CSP34.

### **Barnsley Core Strategy**

- 4.33 The Barnsley Core Strategy was adopted in September 2011 and along with other documents published as part of the Local Development Framework will replace the UDP. There are a number of policies within the document which are relevant to the proposed development and these are set out below.
- 4.34 Policy CSP1 sets out how the LPA will deal with climate change and states development will be expected to reduce and mitigate the impact of growth on the environment and carbon emissions ensure existing and new communities are resilient to climate change and increase the efficient use of resources through sustainable construction techniques and the use of renewable energy. The policy goes on to state the LPA will take action to adapt to climate change by giving preference to development of previously developed land in sustainable locations, locating and designing development to reduce the risk of flooding and promoting the use of sustainable drainage systems
- 4.35 Policy CSP2 sets out the requirements to secure sustainable construction and states development will be expected to demonstrate how it minimises resource and energy consumption and how it is located and designed to withstand the longer term impacts of climate change. The policy goes on to state all new dwellings will be expected to achieve at least a level 3 rating under the Code for Sustainable Homes or equivalent.
- 4.36 Policy CSP3 states all development will be expected to use Sustainable Drainage Systems (“SuDS”) and only in exceptional circumstances, where it

- can be demonstrated that all types of SuDS are impractical, will other drainage management systems be permitted.
- 4.37 Policy CSP8 refers to the location of Growth within the Borough stating that development will only be allowed in villages if it is consistent with Green Belt Policy or (my emphasis) necessary for the viability of the settlement and to meet local needs.
- 4.38 Policy CSP26 states new development will be expected to be designed and built to provide safe, secure and convenient access for all road users.
- 4.39 Policy CSP29 sets out design principles and states high quality development will be expected. Development should also contribute to place making and be of a high quality that contributes to a healthy, safe and sustainable environment as well as enabling all people to gain access safely and conveniently, providing, in particular, for the needs of families and children, and of disabled people and older people. The policy also confirms residential developments of ten or more dwellings should score a minimum of a 'good' rating in the Building for Life Assessment.
- 4.40 Policy CSP34 relates to protection of the Green Belt having replaced UDP Policies GS7 and GS8. However the policy is not as explicit as those it replaces simply stating:

***Policy CSP 34 Protection of Green Belt***

*The general extent of the Green Belt is shown on the Core Strategy Key Diagram.*

*Its detailed boundaries will be shown on the Proposals Maps which will accompany the Development Sites and Places DPD.*

*In order to protect the countryside and open land around built up areas the extent of the Green Belt will be safeguarded and remain unchanged.*

*The Green Belt boundaries will be subject to localised review only which may result in changes necessary to deliver the borough's distribution of new employment sites as set out in CSP12.*

- 4.41 In the absence of any specific guidance on 'appropriate uses', it is considered guidance set out at paragraphs 89 and 90 of the NPPF provides the most appropriate policy context for assessing the planning application for the proposed development.
- 4.42 Policy CSP39 deals with contaminated and unstable land and states where the future users or occupiers of a development would be affected by contamination or stability issues, or where contamination may present a risk to the water environment, proposals must be accompanied by a report which shows that investigations have been carried out to work out the nature and extent of contamination or stability issues and the possible effect it may have on the development and its future users, the natural and historic environment and sets out detailed measures to allow the development to go ahead safely.
- 4.43 Policy CSP43 relates to provision of education facilities and community uses with support set out for provision of schools, educational facilities and other community facilities.

## 5.0 Planning Assessment

### Principle of Development

- 5.1 The site is located within the Green Belt.
- 5.2 Paragraph 89 of the NPPF states that infill development within previously developed sites and extension / alteration of an existing building are appropriate forms of development in the Green Belt.
- 5.3 Paragraph 90 of the NPPF states that the re-use of buildings is also appropriate development in the Green Belt.
- 5.4 It is noted UDP Policies GS7 and GS8 have not been saved and instead replaced by Core Strategy Policy CSP34. However CSP34, does not set out the types of development considered appropriate in the Green Belt. As such guidance set out in the NPPF is considered to be most relevant.
- 5.5 Low Laithes Village is a well-established development within the Green Belt with clear boundaries between areas of built form (buildings, gardens, car parking, hardstanding and so on) and adjacent agricultural uses.
- 5.6 The site is therefore clearly previously developed land in the Green Belt.
- Infill development
- 5.7 The proposed development (as set out in Section 3) comprises infill development to create new residential accommodation for young adults and visitors together with formalisation of car parking areas. These developments all fall within the built footprint / curtilage of the existing site and as such can be considered as infilling. The proposed dwellings are modest in scale being single storey with design / materials carefully considered to match or complement existing buildings on site. The proposed car parking areas will be provided on areas currently used informally for parking and will result in visual benefits through introduction of new planting within parking areas and along the eastern site boundary.
- 5.8 Overall the proposed development will be seen in the context of existing development within the site and not encroach beyond existing site boundaries. As such the proposed development will not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt or the purposes of including land within it and thus constitutes appropriate development.
- Extension and re-use of existing buildings
- 5.9 The proposed development (as set out in section 3) includes conversion of an existing ancillary building together with limited extension to form 2 one bedroom units together with limited extension of existing workshop building. The proposed extensions are limited in scale and as such are not disproportionate when viewed against the host building or the wider site. The design of the extensions simply reflects the design and materials of the host building. The building to be converted is of a permanent and substantial construction (currently in use as commercial kitchens).
- 5.10 The proposed conversion and extensions are therefore in accordance with guidance set out in the NPPF (paras 89 and 90) and thus constitute appropriate development within the Green Belt.

- 5.11 In light of the above the principle of development is considered acceptable.

### **Design**

- 5.12 The proposed buildings and extensions have been carefully designed to complement existing buildings on site. The new buildings (or residential / visitor use) are single storey in height with pitched roofs and constructed in stone (residential blocks) or cedar cladding (visitor and respite accommodation). Tiles will be used on roofs to match existing materials of site
- 5.13 The Design and Access Statement which accompanies this application, provides details of the design of the scheme and demonstrates how development could be accommodated on the site and how this would fit within the wider context. In addition the submitted plans provide details on design, layout and scale.
- 5.14 In light of the above, together with details provided in the D&AS and supporting plans, it is considered the proposed development is in accordance with the NPPF and Core Strategy policies CSP1, CSP2 and CSP29.

### **Amenity**

- 5.15 Saved Policy H8a of the UDP seeks to ensure that living conditions for existing and future residents are acceptable. Given the nature of the site and its wider use, it is considered that strict compliance with usual space about dwellings standards is unreasonable. However, the proposed accommodation and respite units are all provided with clearly defined garden areas together with access to communal areas.
- 5.16 The proposed layout therefore ensures that residents are provided with areas of 'private' amenity space thus ensuring satisfactory living conditions for future and existing residents is provided.
- 5.17 In light of the above it is considered the proposed development will provide acceptable living conditions for future residents without harming the living conditions of existing residents. The proposal therefore complies with saved UDP Policy H8a.

### **Highways**

- 5.18 Details on highway and access matters can be found in the supporting Design and Access Statement. A summary of the key highway issues is set out below.
- 5.19 The Village is accessed via a private road 'Old Farm Lane' which is a single width road with passing places leading from A633 Barnsley Road. Given the use of the site, there are limited vehicle movements from the site from residents. Main movements relate to staff movements. The proposal will generate circa 50 additional jobs although this will be shift based work and as such movements will be spread through the day. The new car parking provided on site is a formalisation of informal parking currently taking place within the site.
- 5.20 In summary it can be seen the proposed development will not have a detrimental impact on the local highway network. Overall, it can clearly be seen the proposed development is in accordance with the NPPF and Core Strategy Policy CSP26.

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## 6.0 Conclusions

- 6.1 This Planning Policy Statement has been prepared on behalf of The Hesley Group to support a full planning application for improvements to the existing Low Laithes Village, Wombwell.
- 6.2 Low Laithes Village is a well-established and highly regarded education and care facility operated by the Hesley Group. The site itself comprises a number of existing buildings providing a full range of uses including accommodation, education blocks, workshops, offices, a shop and servicing buildings together with landscaping and parking. The curtilage / footprint of the existing development is clearly defined.
- 6.3 The site comprises a previously developed site in the Green Belt and extends to circa 2ha.
- 6.4 The proposed development comprises a number of improvements to existing facilities within the village including additional accommodation (conversion and new build) for residents, staff and visitors, extensions to existing workshop buildings and improved car parking arrangements.
- 6.5 The proposed new build has been designed as single storey buildings with pitched roofs constructed in natural stone (cedar cladding for visitor accommodation and respite accommodation) and tile roof to match existing buildings on site. The main accommodation is laid out around a courtyard to reflect other accommodation blocks on site. The proposed extensions are limited in scale and reflect the design / materials of the host building. The new car park areas seek to formalise areas within the site currently used informally for parking and will create attractive landscaped areas within the curtilage of the site. The proposed development sits wholly within the built footprint / curtilage of the existing site.
- 6.6 Paragraph 89 of the NPPF states that infill development and extensions to existing buildings are appropriate forms of development in the Green Belt. Similarly, paragraph 90 of the NPPF confirms that re-use of buildings is also appropriate development. It is noted UDP Policies GS7 and GS8 have not been saved and instead replaced by Core Strategy Policy CSP34. However CSP34, does not set out the types of development considered appropriate in the Green Belt. As such guidance set out in the NPPF is considered to be most relevant.
- 6.7 The proposed development therefore constitutes 'appropriate' infill development and will not harm the open character or appearance of the Green Belt in this location. Similarly the proposed extensions are considered to be proportionate additions to the host buildings with conversions taking place in buildings of permanent and substantial construction.
- 6.8 Submitted drawings and supporting reports demonstrate how the proposed infill development can be accommodated on the site and that there are no technical reasons preventing the proposal being developed
- 6.9 In view of the above, it is considered the scheme satisfies national and local policy and represents a suitable and sustainable development proposal for the site that addresses all the relevant and material considerations. In this context, the proposal satisfies Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and it is considered that planning permission should be granted.