JR Planning Consultants
Sheffield



# PLANNING STATEMENT

**OUTLINE PERMISSION (ALL MATTERS RESERVED) FOR 31NO. DWELLINGS**

**LAND TO THE SOUTH OF SOUTH VIEW, DARFIELD**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This statement has been prepared to support the submission of an application for outline planning permission for a residential development of 31 dwellings. Although part of the site has an allocation that safeguards it as greenspace, it is not publicly accessible and does not serve any beneficial function as open space at the moment. Planning permission has previously been granted for residential development on the land immediately to the south of the site. Residential development on the remainder of the site represents a sensible and beneficial use for the land that will provide much needed new homes and presents an opportunity to secure a contribution towards enhancing open space provision in the area that better serves the needs of the community.

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

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

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

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

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

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

**2. THE SITE**

The site lies immediately to the south of South View, within the settlement of Darfield. The land subject to this application sits in between South View and Hill Street. The existing residential dwellings on South View lie to the north of the site. There is also a row of allotment gardens that form a strip between the existing dwellings and the application site. The allotments lie outside of the site.

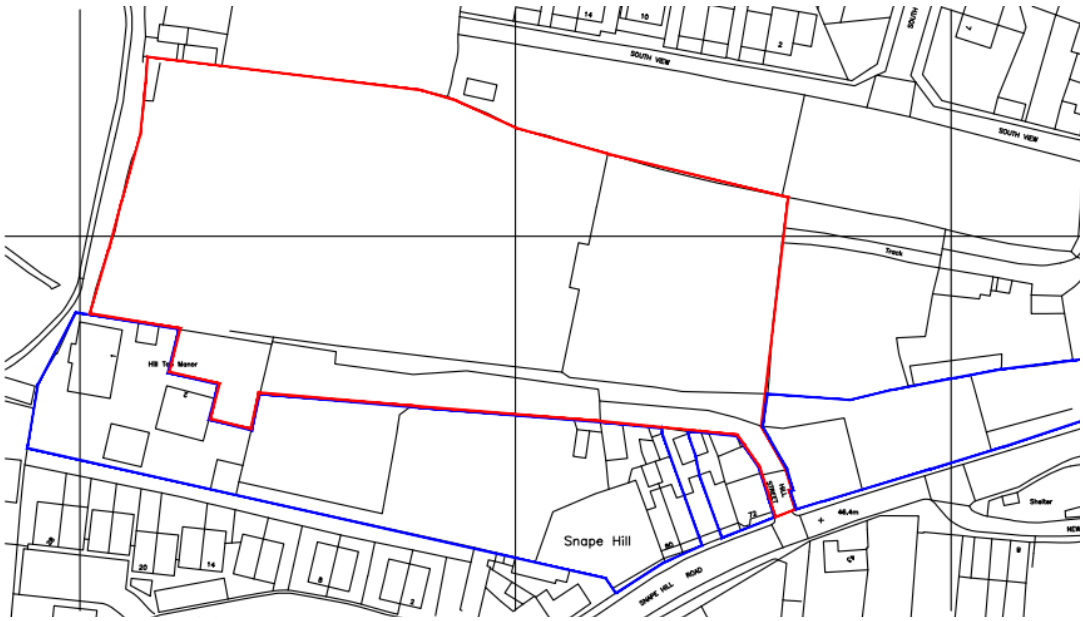
Part of the land subject to this enquiry is undeveloped grassed land. It is not in agricultural use though and serves little beneficial purpose at the moment. It has been previously used for some storage and contains shipping containers and vehicles. Some of the site is previously developed land with hard surfacing and low-quality buildings and boundary treatments. Part of the site has a frontage onto the B6096 and part of the terrace of buildings on Snape Hill Road is within my client's ownership. It is important to note that the site is entirely in private ownership and there is no public access at all. The extent of the wider area in the applicant's ownership is shown below:



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The whole land in ownership has an area of about 1.4 hectares. The area proposed for development under this application has an area of just under 1 hectare.

Planning permission has already been granted for the area of land within the red line above south of Hill Street for residential development. The permission has been implemented and therefore remains extant. This application relates to the area within the red line to the north of Hill Street. The area subject to this application is shown in the red edge area below:




The western half of the site is allocated as Green Space and the eastern half as Allotment under the provision of the Barnsley Local Plan. All of the site is also within a Nature Improvement Area. A copy of the Local Plan allocations map is shown below:

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

**3. THE PROPOSAL – INCLUDING DESIGN AND ACCESS CONSIDERATIONS**

Outline planning permission is sought for a residential development of 31 houses. An indicative proposed site plan has been produced in order to demonstrate that 31 dwellings can comfortably be accommodated within the site.

More information about the proposal can be found in the accompanying plans by Neil Bowen Architects. The key elements of the proposal are as follows:

- The application seeks outline consent with all matters reserved. Only the principle of delivering 31 dwellings at the site is under consideration.
- It is intended to make a contribution towards enhancing open space elsewhere in the locality in accordance with the Council's open space SPD.
- The intention is for the development to be accessed from Snape Hill Road.

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- Cross sections have been produced to show that the indicative scheme works well with the sloping land levels in the site.
- The indicative scheme shows good-sized gardens and sufficient off-street parking.
- Technical surveys have been undertaken and the accompanying reports that the scheme is acceptable in terms of highways, trees, ecology and geotechnical considerations.
- The indicative proposed layout is shown below:



**USE**

The site is vacant land at the moment. Although the eastern part of the site is allocated as Allotment, the site is completely separate from the South View Allotments. It is not in use as allotment gardens. This part of the site is laid to grass and includes some disused outbuildings. There is also a caravan on the site. The western part of the site is allocated as greenspace but is vacant and not in any use other than occasional grazing for ponies. The site is not publicly accessible and serves no public open space function.

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

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**AMOUNT**

The proposal seeks outline permission for 31 houses. The number of units proposed has been dictated by ensuring economic viability, ensuring that development would provide a good standard of housing amenity for future occupiers and ensuring that the scale and layout of the development is compatible with the character of the existing built environment.

**LAYOUT**

Whilst the application seeks outline consent with all matters reserved, an indicative proposed layout has been produced to demonstrate that 31 houses can comfortably accommodated within the site.

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

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

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

**LANDSCAPING**

Landscaping is saved as a revered matter so the details are not under consideration at this stage. However, the development would be landscaped to a high-standard with the specific details to be set out at the reserved matters stage.

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**APPEARANCE**

Appearance details are saved as a reserved matter. It should be noted though that the indicative layout plan shows that the development would be entirely in-keeping with the pattern and form of the established built environment in the locality.

Although the details are yet to be finalised, it is anticipated that the houses would be built predominantly from traditional materials and would be of traditional pitched-roof form in order to reflect the predominant character of existing buildings in the locality.

**ACCESS**

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

Means of access is a reserved matter but the indicative layout shows that the intention is to provide access to the development from Snape Hill Road. The indicative plan also shows that all of the new dwellings would have two off-street parking spaces, in accordance with the LPA's parking standards.

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

## 4. PLANNING HISTORY

There is no planning history for the land on which development is proposed under the current application. The following applications relate to the land immediately to the south of the current site, which is also in the ownership of the applicant:

- 2007/1699 Erection of four detached and ten semi-detached houses with integral garages. Application Approved.

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- 2010/1502 Erection of four detached and ten semi-detached houses with integral garages (2007/1699 Extension of time limit). Application Approved.

The 2010 permission has been implemented though the construction of the foundations of some of the approved dwellings. That permission is therefore extant.

**5. PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSIONS**

We have engaged in pre-application discussions with the LPA. A response was received on 01 July 2019 that contains the following key points:

- Policy GS1 applies to the area of the site that is allocated as Greenspace. The loss of allocated greenspace will not normally be allowed unless one of three exceptions apply.
- The greenspace is identified as allotments. There is a good provision of allotments in the area but a deficiency in terms of open space facilities for youth and children.
- A well-designed scheme could be acceptable if it provides sufficient greenspace on the site and the development makes a contribution to alternative greenspace off-site.
- There are trees on the site and a tree survey is required.
- There are no known flood risk or drainage problems in the locality. The scheme should ensure there is no increase in surface water run-off and ensure suitable drainage infrastructure is provided. The use of SUDS should be explored.
- An ecology report is required and the scheme should deliver ecological enhancement as the site is within a nature improvement area.
- Access from Snape Hill Road should be acceptable in principle. The design of the access will however need to be amended from the previously approved scheme to account for the larger number of new dwellings.
- The site is not within a Coal Authority referral area but there may be geotechnical issues that need to be considered further.
- Developer contributions will be required for education and open space provision. Affordable housing at 10% is also required.

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## 6. ALLOCATION AND POLICIES

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this instance the Development Plan consists of the Barnsley Local Plan which was adopted on 03 January 2019.

In addition to the Local Plan, other material considerations exist in the form of national policy and guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and suite of documents comprising National Planning Practice Guidance.

### National

The NPPF is reflective of the guidance contained within the NPPG. The following sections of the revised NPPF are considered of direct relevance to the current proposal:

Paragraph 8 states that *"achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives): a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure; b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and c) an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy."*

Paragraph 10 states that *"So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development."*

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Paragraph 11 goes on to set out that *"Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking this means:*

*approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date , granting permission unless: i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed6 ; or ii. 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."*

Paragraph 38 states that *"Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way."*

Section 5 sets of the guidance to ensure delivery of a sufficient supply of homes

Paragraph 59 states that "*To support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay."*

Paragraph 91 states: "*Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:*

*a) promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages;*

*b) are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example through the use of clear and legible pedestrian*

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*routes, and high-quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas; and*

*c) enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling."*

Paragraph 109 states *"Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe."*

Section 11 discusses the effective use of land. Paragraph 118 states that "…*decisions should:*

*give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land;*

and

*promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively."*

Paragraph 120 sets out that Local Planning Authorities should support different uses of land as a result of changing demand and states *"applications for alternative uses on the land should be supported, where the proposed use would contribute to meeting an unmet need for development in the area."*

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Paragraph 124 states that *"The creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities."*

Paragraph 148 states that "*The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change."*

Paragraph 155 states *"Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future). Where development is necessary in such areas, the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere."*

Paragraph 175 states that *"...if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused."*

The overarching message of the NPPF is that LPAs should adopt a positive and pro-active approach to planning proposals, particularly those that result in sustainable development. LPAs should not place unnecessary burdens on developers and should look to support appropriate schemes such as this.

**Local Plan Policies**

The following policies are considered to be of particular relevance:

LG2 – The Location of Growth

H1 – The Number of New Homes to be Built

H2 – The Distribution of New Homes

H5 – Residential Development on Large Non-allocated Sites

H6 – Housing Mix and Efficient Use of Land

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H7 – Affordable Housing

H8 – Housing Regeneration Areas

GS1 – Green Space

T1 – Accessibility Priorities

T3 – New development and Sustainable Travel

T4 – New Development and Transport Safety

D1 – High Quality Design and Place Making

BI01 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity

**7. ASSESSMENT**

**Principle of Development**

*Principle of Residential Development*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

*Sustainable Development*

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

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

- Social: The proposal would allow for the creation of additional housing in this sustainable residential settlement. It is clearly an area that is suitable for providing development to contribute towards the district's housing needs. The scheme would make an important contribution to meeting the LPA's housing targets. The development proposal would put the site that is currently in no beneficial use to good use and would support the existing community facilities in the locality. The scheme also presents an important opportunity to provide publicly accessible open space within the site and therefore represents an enhancement to the community in this respect. The scheme would not have any adverse social impact.
- Economic: The proposal would allow for the efficient use of the urban land resource and would provide growth and investment in the locality. The proposal will also provide employment during the construction period. The new housing would have the knock-on effect of supporting other businesses in the locality. The development is very likely to have positive economic impact and would contribute positively to the LPA's housing regeneration aspirations in this part of the district.
- Environmental: Residential development at the site would be compatible with the fabric of the existing built environment and would result in no adverse impact to the character of the locality. There would be no adverse ecological impacts.

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

**Greenspace**

It is clear from the local plan allocation and the pre-application discussions that addressing the Greenspace policy is key to the acceptability of residential development at this site. If the Greenspace policy can be addressed then the principle of residential development here is acceptable.

Policy GS1 states that:

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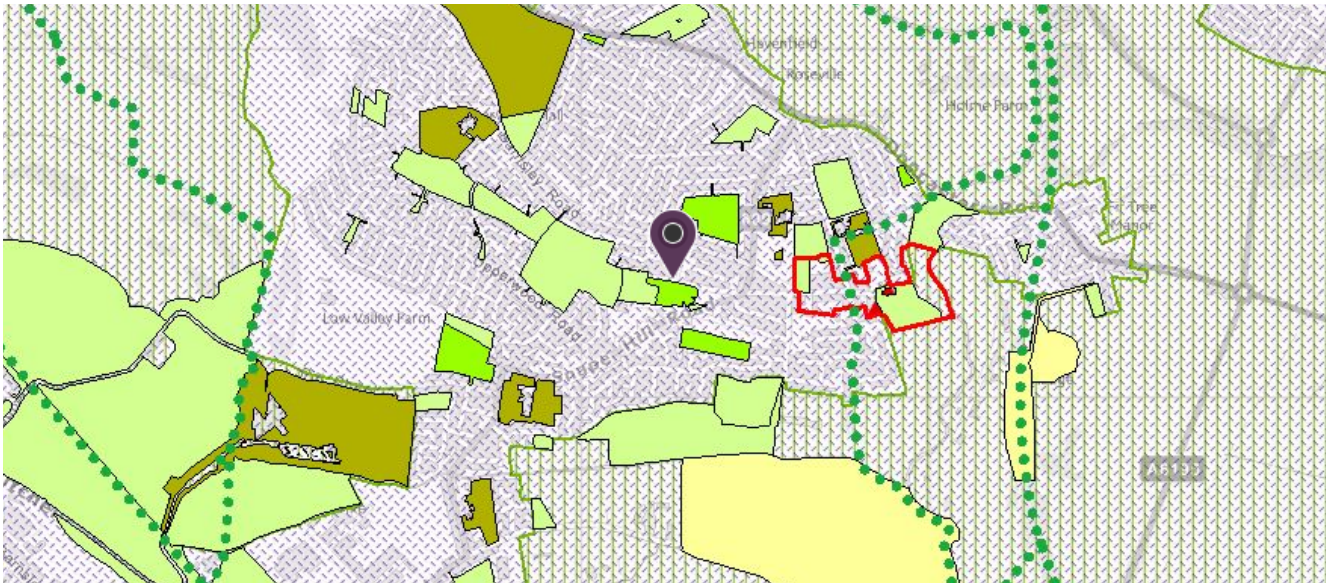
*"Proposals that result in the loss of green space, or land that was last used as green space, will not normally be allowed unless:*

- *An assessment shows that there is too much of that particular type of green space in the area which it serves and its loss would not affect the existing and potential green space needs of the borough; or*
- *The proposal is for small scale facilities needed to support or improve the proper function of the green space; or*
- *An appropriate replacement green space of equivalent or improved quality, quantity and accessibility is provided which would outweigh the loss."*

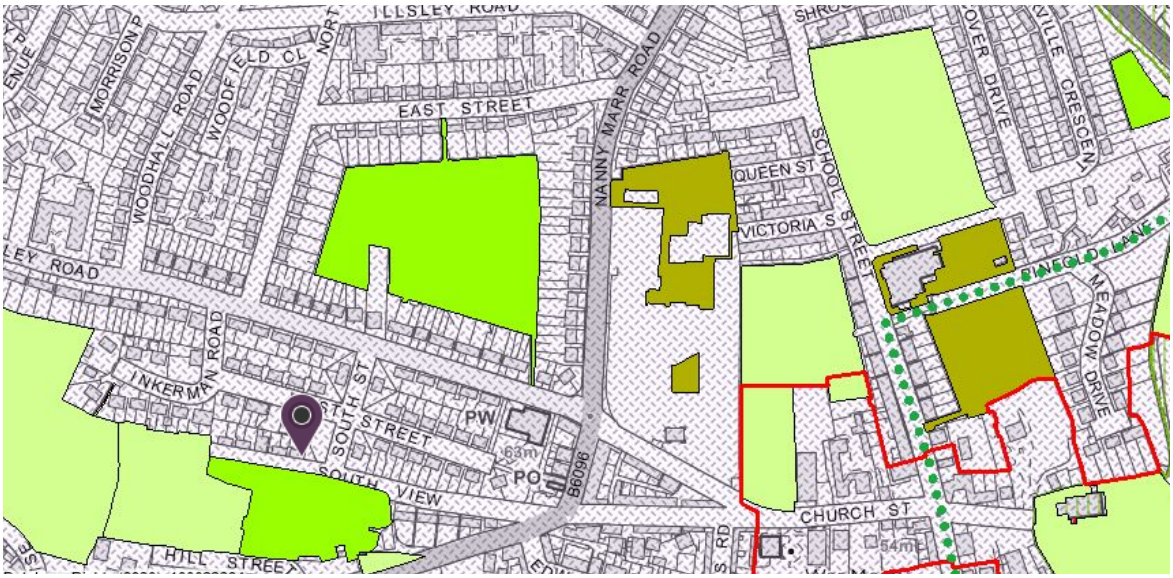
At the pre-application stage the LPA confirmed that the allocated green space area is identified on the Council's green space register as being allotments. The site is not in use as allotments, is in private ownership and has no public access at all. We appreciate that the green space allocation doesn't take into account that the site is privately owned and not accessible, but it is important to put the existing use of the land into context for considering the impact on the local community of the loss of the green space.

The land is therefore not in any beneficial use as allotments and the allotment gardens that are in use, and that are a valuable community facility, to the north of the site are completely unaffected by the proposed development. The LPA confirmed at the pre-application stage that there is a good provision of allotments in the area. The local plan map extract below shows the areas of allotment and other green space in the locality:

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It is clear from this that the area is indeed very well served by other allotments. The plan map extract below shows the close proximity of the site to the very large East Street allotment which is managed by Groundwork South Yorkshire:



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Given that the site is not in use as allotments and that there is a good provision of allotments elsewhere in the area, it is clear that development of the site would not affect the existing green space needs of the borough. The first part of the first criterion of policy GS1 is therefore triggered.

We appreciate that as well as the impact on existing green space provision, it is also necessary to consider what potential the site has for meeting green space needs in the future; i.e. the second part of criterion one of policy GS1.

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

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

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

To summarise in terms of green space therefore, the existing situation is that the land currently makes no beneficial contribution towards identified green space requirements in the locality. There would therefore be no adverse impact arising through the development of the land. Furthermore, a contribution and compensatory payment will be made to account for the fact that the total size of the green space area will be reduced, thereby allowing other green space in the community to be improved.

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

**Affordable Housing**

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

**Drainage/ Flood Risk**

The application site is within flood zone 1 as identified by the Environment Agency so is not at undue risk of flooding. The site is below the size at which a flood risk assessment would be required for development not in zone 2 or 3 (1 hectare).

At the pre-application stage the Council's flood risk team advised that there are no known flooding or drainage issues in the locality.

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

**Transport and Accessibility**

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

Means of access is saved as a reserved matter. The indicative scheme shows that the intention is for the site to be accessed from Snape Hill Road with a shared access point with the access road being

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used by both the houses proposed under this application and the ones already approved on the land to the south.

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

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

**Safety and Security through Design**

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

**Design and Residential Amenity**

The indicative scheme demonstrates that 31 houses can be delivered at the site in a manner that would ensure there would be no harm to the amenity of the occupiers of neighbouring properties in the locality.

The indicative scheme shows that all space about dwellings recommended standards can be met and the layout of the dwellings would provide a high standard of housing amenity for future occupiers. Regards has had been had to the South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide in producing the indicative layout and this will be followed through at the detailed design stage to provide an excellent addition to the built environment.

The appearance and scale of the houses is saved as a reserved matter. As set out further above though, the materials and form of the new houses would be reflective of existing buildings in the

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locality. The LPA's design guidance will again be followed to produce a high-quality scheme at the reserved matters stage.

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

**Ecology**

An extended phase 1 habitat survey has been conducted by Middleton Bell Ecology and this has informed a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, which is submitted separately. The report sets out that the development would not affect any designated sites and that site habitats are considered to be of importance to nature conservation at no more than the site level. The site is not considered to be of importance at greater than the site level to any faunal species group. The site has some potential for nesting birds and the impact can be mitigated by avoiding works during the nesting bird season and the carryout of suitable replacement planting. It can be concluded that the scheme would not have a harmful impact on protected species.

The site is within a nature improvement area and the scheme should deliver next enhancement in terms of ecology. The proposed development represents an opportunity to improve the ecology value of the site. Whilst the layout and landscaping details are reserved matters, enhancement measures can be achieved at the detailed design stage. The ecology appraisal recommends nesting boxes and bat roost features. These can easily be incorporated into the detailed scheme.

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

**Trees**

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

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

**Land Stability/Contamination**

A phase i geotechnical report has been prepared by RB Geotechnical and is submitted separately. This sets out that the development has been considered in terms of possible hydrology, geology and hydrogeology issues as well as potential for land contamination. The report concludes that there is some potential for contamination due to historic uses of the site and uses of neighbouring land. The potential risks are all either low or moderate. It is recommended that a phase ii study is carried out in order to allow mitigation strategies to be put in place if necessary. This can be made a condition of planning approval and the report is sufficient to demonstrate that site contamination is not a prohibitive risk factor that would prevent permission being granted.

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

**Renewable Energy and Carbon Reduction**

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

**8. CONCLUSION**

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

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As of 01 October 2018, the Local Planning Authority requires the agreement of the applicant before pre-commencement conditions are required, subject to certain limitations. The applicant is fully willing to discuss any pre-commencement conditions and we would appreciate early engagement relating to this in order to avoid any unnecessary delays to the determination of the application.

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

**James Roberts (BA, MSc, MRTPI)**

**JR Planning**