

April 2012

**Former Willowgarth School Site,  
Brierley Road, Grimethorpe**

**Planning Policy Statement for an  
Outline Planning Application for Residential  
Development with Appearance,  
Layout, Landscaping and Scale Reserved**

On behalf of

NPS Barnsley Limited

Prepared by

I D Planning  
Atlas House  
31 King Street  
Leeds  
LS1 2HL

---

## Contents

<b>Section</b>	<b>Page Number</b>
1.0 Introduction .....	1
2.0 Site Description and Planning History .....	2
3.0 The Proposed Development.....	4
4.0 Planning Policy Review.....	5
5.0 Planning Assessment.....	12
6.0 Conclusions .....	20

---

---

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Policy Statement has been prepared on behalf of NPS Barnsley Limited to support an outline planning application for residential development with appearance, landscape, layout and scale reserved ("the Proposed Development") at the former Willowgarth School, Brierley Road, Grimethorpe ("the site").
- 1.2 This Statement describes the application site and planning history of the site before identifying and examining the issues relevant to the application, referring to both the relevant development plan and the advice of Central Government. In seeking to establish whether the proposed use is appropriate, particular regard has been had to the statutory development plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 1.3 The application is supported by the following documents and plans:
- Location Plan;
  - Indicative Site Layout;
  - Design and Access Statement;
  - Ecology Report;
  - Initial Drainage Assessment;
  - Phase 1 Report;
  - Statement of Community Involvement;
  - Transport Assessment; and
  - Tree Survey.

---

## 2.0 Site Description and Planning History

### Site Description

- 2.1 The site is located at Brierley Road, Grimethorpe and is approximately 5.6ha in size. The site was previously used as a school but is now vacant as the school moved to new premises at Shafton in January 2012 as part of the Barnsley Building Schools for the Future programme.
- 2.2 The site currently comprises several school buildings, large playing fields and a smaller grassed area. The school buildings, playground facilities and car parking areas are located in the southern part of the site, with the larger playing fields to the north. The school buildings are laid out in numerous blocks and extensions over different levels with terracing and hard standing areas between the various units. There are currently two accesses to the site with the first taken from Brierley Road and the second from Windmill Avenue to the south.
- 2.3 There has been an extensive amount of cut and fill on the site which results in the site levels varying significantly. From Brierley Road the site slopes to the school's reception area by approximately 2.5 metres. The playground area to the rear of the buildings slopes and continues to fall towards the eastern boundary. Overall from Brierley Road to the eastern boundary there is an approximate difference in levels of six metres. From north of the school buildings, the site falls by approximately two metres to the entrance on the southern boundary.
- 2.4 The site is boarded by Brierley Meadows and beyond this the settlement of Brierley. To the east of the site is woodland (Tom Bank Wood) and a residential area. Grimethorpe is located to the south of the site and is an established housing area. Finally Brierley Road is to the west of the site with fields beyond.
- 2.5 The site is allocated within the Barnsley Unitary Development Plan ("the UDP") as being within the green belt as well as an existing community facility. The Environment Agency's indicative flood zone map shows the site to be within Flood Zone 1 and therefore not at risk of flooding.
- 2.6 In terms of the wider area, Grimethorpe is primarily located around two highway routes (Brierley Road and High Street), which are both connected to the site. The centre of Grimethorpe is located to the south west of the site and contains a post office and small convenience store. A doctor's surgery is also located within the town with a primary school and dentists in close proximity.
- 2.7 In addition to this, bus stops are located in close proximity which provide services to Barnsley, Pontefract, Hemsworth, Cudworth and Wombwell which provide ample retail facilities and other services.

---

## **Planning History**

- 2.8 Whilst there is a history of applications for development associated with the school, there have been no applications relevant to the Proposed Development.

---

### **3.0 The Proposed Development**

- 3.1 This Statement accompanies an outline planning application for residential development. Details of the site access accompany the application but all other matters will form part of a reserved matters submission. Despite this the Design and Access Statement and submitted indicative plans show how the site's physical and policy context have been fully considered and respected.
- 3.2 Indicative drawings submitted as part of this application demonstrate how the proposed residential development can be accommodated on the site. The main site access is proposed from Brierley Road with a number of internal access roads to be provided.
- 3.3 The indicative layout shows a variety of housing types of varying sizes, all with parking facilities and private gardens. An area of open space is proposed to the south of the site in order to create a green space which will benefit the whole community.
- 3.4 In total the indicative layout shows 101 dwellings, which would have two, three and four bedrooms. It is anticipated that the dwellings would be 2 and 2.5 storeys in height given the site's location within the green belt and would respect the existing dwellings in the locality in terms of design. However these details would form part of the subsequent reserved matters submission.
- 3.5 The topography of the site is uneven therefore the site is to be re graded to suit existing levels from the site entrance and existing levels from the boundaries. The site will therefore be accessible to all groups.
- 3.6 To the south of the residential development is approximately 7,230m<sup>2</sup> of public open space. It is anticipated that this area will predominantly be grassed to provide space for children to play and therefore shrub planting would be restricted to peripheral locations.
- 3.7 The public open space will be overlooked by some of the proposed dwellings which will provide natural surveillance of this area.
- 3.8 In addition to the new public open space to be created, the existing playing fields to the north of the site will be retained by the Council.

---

## 4.0 Planning Policy Review

### National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”) was published in March 2012 and replaces all previous national guidance. The introduction to the document confirms it should be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- 4.2 The NPPF is clear there should be a presumption in favour of sustainable development where there is no conflict with the development plan.
- 4.3 The NPPF sets out 12 key principles which planning should seek to adhere to. These include:
- Proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes and thriving places the country needs;
  - Seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupiers of land and buildings;
  - Encourage the effective use of land by reusing land which has previously been developed; 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.
- 4.4 The NPPF sets out guidance on a number of different themes, some of which are relevant to the Proposed Development. The first of which is housing with the document stating there is a requirement for local authorities to have a five year supply of deliverable housing sites (paragraph 47).
- 4.5 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).
- 4.6 The NPPF also considers design matters and states the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment (paragraph 56). As such developments should function well and add to the quality of an area, as well as optimising the potential of the site to accommodate development. Developments should also be visually attractive and create safe and accessible environments (paragraph 58).
- 4.7 The NPPF goes on to consider the need to protect the green belt and states the essential characteristic of green belts is to prevent urban sprawl and maintain the openness of an area (paragraph 79).
- 4.8 The document goes on to state that as with previous green belt policy, inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the green belt and as such should only be approved in very special circumstances (paragraph 87). Very special circumstances to justify inappropriate development will not exist

---

unless the harm by reason of its inappropriateness, and other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations (paragraph 88).

- 4.9 The NPPF sets out five forms of appropriate development (paragraph 89) but these do not include the type of developed being considered here. It is therefore accepted the Proposed Development constitutes inappropriate development and very special circumstances must be demonstrated.
- 4.10 The NPPF also considers sustainability matters and states new development should take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption (paragraph 96).
- 4.11 The NPPF also states there is a requirement to make the effective use of land by re-using land which has previously been developed, provided it is not of high environmental value (paragraph 111).
- 4.12 Finally, the NPPF set out guidance on pre-application engagement stating early engagement has the potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties (paragraph 188). The guidance goes on to reinforce the need for applicants to engage with the local community before submitting applications as the more issues which can be resolved at the pre-application stage, the greater the benefits (paragraph 190).

## **Development Plan**

- 4.13 The Development Plan in this instance is formed by the Regional Spatial Strategy, the Barnsley Unitary Development Plan, the Barnsley Core Strategy and the Barnsley Education Sites DPD.

## **Regional Spatial Strategy**

- 4.14 Strategic planning advice is contained within 'The Yorkshire and Humber Plan Regional Spatial Strategy to 2026' ("the RSS") which was adopted in May 2008. The RSS sets out strategic planning policies in relation to the development of land within the region and the aim of the document is to guide the development of Yorkshire and the Humber over the next 15 to 20 years. The policies within the RSS can be split into a number of categories, two of which are relevant to the Proposed Development and are set out below.

### Location of Development

- 4.15 In terms of the location of development, Policy YH1 advises that growth and change will be managed across places and communities in Yorkshire and Humber in order to achieve sustainable development.
- 4.16 Policy YH4 refers to Sub-Regional Towns stating that they should "be the prime focus for housing, employment, shopping, leisure, education, health and cultural activities and facilities in the region". Figure 2.3 confirms Barnsley as a Sub-Regional Town within the settlement network. Policy YH4 goes on to

---

advise that Sub-Regional Cities will be transformed into attractive, cohesive and safe places where people want to live, work, invest and spend time in.

- 4.17 With regards to the sub-regional approach, Policy SY1 states the South Yorkshire sub area should transform the Sub Regional Towns as vibrant, healthy, accessible, attractive and safe places where more people live, visit and work.

#### Housing

- 4.18 In terms of housing provision, Policy H1 sets out the approach for the provision and distribution of housing. Table 12.1 of the RSS identifies an annual average net addition for Barnsley of 1,015 dwellings (net) per annum between 2008 and 2026. Table 12.3 indicates an indicative gross build rate for 2008-2026 of 1,135 dwellings per annum.
- 4.19 Policy H5 of the RSS states that plans, strategies, investment decisions and programmes should ensure the provision of homes for a mix of households that reflects the needs of the area, including homes for families with children, single persons, and older persons, to create sustainable communities.

#### **Barnsley Unitary Development Plan**

- 4.20 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 and as such it is considered there are no policies within the UDP which are relevant to the Proposed Development.
- 4.21 Despite the UDP policies being superseded, the allocations remain in place until such a time as the Development Sites and Places DPD has been adopted. As such the site is an Existing Community Facility and within the green belt.

#### **Barnsley Core Strategy**

- 4.22 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 Local Plan. There are a number of policies within the document which are relevant to the Proposed Development and these are set out below.

#### Climate Change

- 4.23 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.
- 4.24 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.

- 4.25 Policy CSP4 deals with flood risk and states all development proposals on brownfield sites should reduce surface water run-off by at least 30% and development on greenfield sites to maintain or reduce existing run-off rates.

#### Renewables

- 4.26 Policy CSP5 deals with the requirements for including renewable energy in developments and states all development of 10 or more dwellings will be expected to incorporate decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy sources and other appropriate design measures sufficient to reduce the development's carbon dioxide emissions by at least 15% for applications submitted up to 2015.

#### Location of Growth

- 4.27 Policy CSP9 deals with the number of new homes to be built and confirms the Council will seek to achieve the completion of at least 21,500 net additional homes during the period 2008 to 2026.
- 4.28 Policy CS10 then confirms around 1,800 of these dwellings will be located within Cudworth (which includes Grimethorpe).

#### Housing

- 4.29 Policy CSP14 deals with the housing mix and efficient use of land and states housing proposals will be expected to include a broad mix of house size, type and tenure to help create mixed and balanced communities. Homes must be suitable for different types of households and be capable of being adapted to meet the changing needs of the population. The policy goes on to state priority will be given to the development of previously developed land with the Council seeking to achieve between 55% and 60% of homes built on brownfield land.
- 4.30 Policy CSP15 deals with affordable housing and states housing developments of 15 or more dwellings will be expected to provide affordable housing. Within the Cudworth area 15% of the overall development must be for affordable housing.

#### Transport

- 4.31 Policy CSP26 states new development will be expected to be designed and built to provide safe, secure and convenient access for all road users.

#### Design

- 4.32 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.

#### Green Infrastructure

- 4.33 Policy CSP33 deals with green infrastructure and states the network of green infrastructure will be secured by creating new open spaces as part of new development, and by using developer contributions to create and improve green infrastructure.
- 4.34 Policy CSP35 deals with green space and states the loss of such areas will only be permitted if an appropriate replacement green space of at least an equivalent community benefit, accessibility and value is provided in the area which it serves.
- 4.35 Policy CSP36 deals with biodiversity and geodiversity and states development will be expected to conserve and enhance the biodiversity and geological features of the borough by maximising biodiversity and geodiversity opportunities in and around new developments.

#### Contaminated Land and Pollution

- 4.36 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.
- 4.37 Policy CSP40 deals with pollution control and protection and states new housing where existing air pollution, noise, smell, dust, vibration, light or other pollution levels are unacceptable and there is no reasonable prospect that these can be mitigated against.

#### Community Infrastructure

- 4.38 Policy CSP43 deals with existing educational facilities and confirms such uses will be protected from development unless it can be demonstrated that the sites and premises are no longer required by the existing use or an alternative community use.

#### **Barnsley Education Sites DPD**

- 4.39 The Barnsley Education Sites DPD was adopted in January 2009 and will form part of the Local Development Framework. The document confirms the Council's intention to build replacement schools and consolidate facilities within the district.

- 
- 4.40 The document states at paragraph 3.11 three new advanced learning centres will be provided to replace existing schools, including Willowgarth High School. As such it is proposed to provide a new facility at land west of Engine Lane.

### **Other Material Considerations**

- 4.41 There are two further documents which are relevant to the Proposed Development. The first of these is Planning Advisory Note 30 - Sustainable Location of Housing Sites and the second is Supplementary Planning Guidance 20 - Open Space Provision on New Housing Developments.

#### **Planning Advisory Note ("PAN") 30 - Sustainable Location of Housing Sites**

- 4.42 PAN30 was adopted in July 2011 and provides guidance on housing development for the interim period prior to the Development Sites and Places DPD being adopted.
- 4.43 The aim of PAN30 is to promote the development of sustainable, deliverable housing sites consistent with national planning policy, the RSS and the Core Strategy. The objective is to focus new housing development within the main settlements in the Borough and to ensure new development takes place in sustainable locations within them.
- 4.44 The guidance contains a checklist which must accompany all applications for residential development. Further information on this matter can be found in Chapter 5.

#### **Supplementary Planning Guidance ("SPG") 20 - Open Space Provision on New Housing Developments**

- 4.45 SPG20 was adopted in May 2003 and continues to be used as the mechanism to determine open space requirements, until the replacement Supplementary Planning Document is adopted.
- 4.46 The SPG states the Council attaches great importance to the precision of good quality open space in connection with new housing developments as open space can provide a valuable recreational facility for both adults and children.
- 4.47 The document goes on to state that as a minimum 15% of new housing development should be open space of a type appropriate to the site, location and type of housing. Each proposal will however be considered on its own merits taking into account all material considerations.
- 4.48 The SPG splits open space in to three categories. Firstly equipped children's play areas may be required and for developments over 100 dwellings these should be provided on-site. In some circumstances however a financial contribution for off-site facilities may be acceptable if a suitable site is located nearby.

- 
- 4.49 Secondly informal play space and informal landscaped areas may be required and for developments over 40 dwellings provision should be made on-site. In some circumstances however a financial contribution to enhance informal space off-site may be acceptable if any is located nearby.
  - 4.50 Finally, the SPG states for developments under 200 dwellings a financial contribution may be required to enhance formal recreation facilities (sports pitches, courts, greens, etc.) or to provide additional provision if there is a shortfall in quantity or quality in the locality.
  - 4.51 The SPG does however go on to state the relevant provision will not usually be required if existing facilities under the above categories are already within the locality and are adequate in quality and quantity.
  - 4.52 Finally, SPG20 states the amount of each different type of open space to be provided will depend on the type of development, the availability of open space in the vicinity and on other factors including the shape of the site.

---

## 5.0 Planning Assessment

### Principle of Development

- 5.1 The site is shown to be within the green belt and it is accepted the Proposed Development would constitute inappropriate development. The key issue with regard to the Proposed Development is therefore the demonstration of very special circumstances to justify the development. It is considered there are a number of very special circumstances and these are set out below.
- 5.2 Firstly, the proposal does not prejudice the stated purposes or objectives of the green belt as set out in the NPPF. The Proposed Development will increase the openness of the green belt and enhance the existing landscape, by removing the existing school buildings which have fallen into a state of disrepair. The proposals will also provide greater access to the open countryside. It is clear the Proposed Development does not compromise any of the objectives for including land within the green belt.
- 5.3 In addition to this, whilst the site is located within the green belt, the site has previously been developed and constitutes brownfield land. The principle of development on the site has therefore previously been accepted in the past and the Proposed Development will have no greater impact on the green belt than the existing buildings.
- 5.4 Furthermore, when the quantum of development is compared it can be seen the Proposed Development (7,179.5m<sup>2</sup>) will result in a reduction of floorspace compared to the existing buildings on the site (7,259m<sup>2</sup>, rising to 19,180m<sup>2</sup> when the areas of hardstanding are included). The volume of the Proposed Development (55,420m<sup>3</sup>) would also be lower than the existing buildings (79,849m<sup>3</sup>) on the site. It can therefore clearly be seen the Proposed Development would significantly reduce the volume and footprint of the buildings on the site, thereby significantly improving the openness and appearance of the site.
- 5.5 As a result of the above, it is considered the Proposed Development would enhance the landscape close to where people live and improve a vacant and derelict site thereby ensuring the objectives of including land in the green belt are improved. In addition to this, the residential buildings would be a lot smaller in visual terms than the existing school buildings and therefore the visual impact would also reduce.
- 5.6 As set out above, Willowgarth High School is now vacant following the relocation of staff and pupils to new premises at Shafton in January 2012 as part of the Barnsley Building Schools for the Future Programme.
- 5.7 This programme has resulted in seven new buildings being handed over to schools in just over 12 months. Carlton Community College and Dearne Advanced Learning Centre opened in January 2011, followed by Darton

---

College in February, and Kirk Balk Community College and Penistone Grammar Advanced Learning Centre in April 2011.

- 5.8 Phase 2 of the programme delivered the new Springwell Community Special School in July 2011 and Greenacre Special School in August 2011. The Shafton Advanced Learning Centre was the last of the phase 2 schools to be handed over.
- 5.9 The total cost for the programme is over £1bn with the cost for the new facility at Shafton approximately £32m. Whilst the programme is nearing completion, the sale of this site for residential development has been factored in to contribute to the capital receipt required to fund the programme. It is therefore considered there is a strong business case for the Proposed Development so the wider aspirations of the Council can be met.
- 5.10 Taking the above in to account it is considered very special circumstances have been demonstrated for the Proposed Development in accordance with the NPPF which justify the principle of development and granting planning permission for inappropriate development in the green belt.
- 5.11 Turning to other matters, the site represents a previously developed site and its use for residential development is therefore in accordance with the NPPF and Policy CSP14 of the Core Strategy.
- 5.12 The development of the site will also help meet the housing requirements set out in the RSS (Policy H1) and the Core Strategy (Policies CSP9 and CSP10). The proposals will also help increase the attractiveness of this part of Barnsley ensuring the town maintains its role as a sub-regional town within South Yorkshire.
- 5.13 As part of the proposals, the applicant undertook a consultation exercise with relevant parties within the Council stating the site was to be declared surplus to requirements and would be sold unless someone could come forward with a viable alternative use for either the buildings or the site. This was distributed to all departments and also sent further afield to see if there were any viable alternatives. No interest was expressed by any party during this exercise. As such it is considered in accordance with Policy CSP43 of the Core Strategy, the site can be released for alternative uses. The playing fields to the north will however be retained for future use by members of the local community.
- 5.14 Alternative uses have been considered by the applicant however the site is felt to be unsuitable for employment or retail uses. The existing buildings on the site are falling into a state of disrepair and as such the development of such uses would result in large buildings remaining on the site which would have a detrimental impact on the openness of the green belt. The Proposed Development would not have such an impact and it is therefore considered a residential use is more appropriate for this setting.

- 
- 5.15 The site is also identified within the SHLAA (reference SS2) as being suitable and available for residential development with the potential capacity for 425 dwellings. However as the site is in the green belt it is being held in abeyance and has not been given a delivery period.
- 5.16 In light of the above, it is considered the principle of residential development in this location is acceptable and in accordance with national, regional and local planning policy.

## **Affordable Housing**

- 5.17 As this is an outline planning application the number of residential properties on the site is not defined within this application. There is however a requirement for 15% affordable housing on sites in the Cudworth area and therefore there will be a requirement to provide affordable housing as part of the reserved matters submission. It has been agreed with Housing Officers at the Council, the site should accommodate seven affordable units on the site with the remainder being achieved through an off-site contribution.

## **Design**

- 5.18 The Design and Access Statement which accompanies this application, provides details of the design of the scheme and the indicative scheme submitted as part of the planning submission demonstrates how development could be accommodated on the site.
- 5.19 In summary however, whilst not for approval as part of this outline application, the layout of the development in particular is led by the position of the access and the road that leads from it which is for approval as part of the current application.
- 5.20 The indicative development provides 101 dwellings which it is envisaged will have 2, 3 or 4 bedrooms with dedicated off street parking and private gardens. The houses are either detached or semi-detached which provides a mixture of housing types at a density similar to the surrounding area.
- 5.21 In terms of the layout within the site although this is not for approval at this stage the indicative layout demonstrates the housing on this site could be accommodated with all of the houses having large rear gardens and parking spaces and / or garages.
- 5.22 In the south of the site there is an area of public open space which is also overlooked by the proposed dwellings. This space compliments the private amenity space associated with each dwelling, and provides a focal point in this area. As required by Policy CSP33 the open space will provide space for informal public recreation which will also help foster a sense of community in general.

- 
- 5.23 Overall the scheme provides active frontages created by the proposed dwellings. The layout also includes both public and private amenity space for residents, which is carefully balanced with the provision of parking for all users of the site. However the layout ensures that the parking of cars will not be the dominant feature within the site.
- 5.24 Although not for approval at this stage the scheme demonstrates on the indicative plans that a suitable development is achievable in line with the NPPF and Core Strategy policies CSP14, CSP29, CSP30 and CSP33.

## Highways

- 5.25 Full details on highway and access matters can be found in the supporting Design and Access Statement and Transport Assessment. A summary of the key highway issues is set out below.
- 5.26 With regard to the existing highway and pedestrian facilities, Brierley Road is a single lane carriageway with well-lit pedestrian footpaths on both sides of the road. Two pedestrian refuges are provided in close proximity of the site's entrance which provides safe crossing points. As set out in Chapter 2 of this Statement, bus stops are also located within close proximity of the site which provide regular services to the surrounding area. It is therefore considered there is excellent access to the site for all users.
- 5.27 In terms of the amount of trips generated from the Proposed Development, it is clear the former school would have generated a significant amount of traffic both from pupils being dropped off / picked up and members of staff.
- 5.28 The Transport Statement submitted with the application provides a full assessment of trip generation, but in summary it is considered the Proposed Development will result in four fewer two-way trips during the AM peak hour (0800 to 0900) than the school. During the PM School Peak (1500 to 1600) there will be 12 fewer trips and during the PM Peak (1700 to 1800) there will be three fewer trips.
- 5.29 It is therefore clear the Proposed Development will generate fewer trips than the former school which will have a positive impact on the surrounding highway network.
- 5.30 The Transport Statement also includes an assessment of the proposed access and junction and confirms the access arrangements can operate well within capacity in both the AM and PM peak hours in the design year (2016).
- 5.31 Turning to the design of the Proposed Development, the main access to the site for vehicles will be from the existing entrance point at Brierley Road. Pedestrians will also be able to access the site from this entrance to the south of the site from Windmill Avenue.
- 5.32 The indicative layout submitted with the application shows the arrangement of streets within the development, with the final layout to be considered at

---

reserved matters stage. It is however apparent a safe and inclusive layout can be provided to reduce the risk of vehicle and pedestrian conflict.

- 5.33 The indicative level of car parking is an average of two car parking spaces for each 2 / 3 bedroom property and this is in accordance with local standards.
- 5.34 In summary it can be seen the Proposed Development will not have a detrimental impact on the local highway network and will actually overcome previous traffic issues associated with the school. Furthermore, the design of the proposed access will use the existing entrance point which will result in a safe access for vehicles and pedestrians. Overall, it can clearly be seen the Proposed Development is in accordance with the NPPF and Core Strategy Policy CSP26.

### **Sustainability**

- 5.35 As set out above, the site is in a sustainable location, close to good public transport links, with pedestrian links to be maintained and improved. All dwellings will also be within 400m of the public transport links.
- 5.36 A Travel Plan Framework will also be provided as part of the development to encourage future occupiers and users of the site to participate in using public transport. Travel Packs will also be issued to every household and will most likely include details on the benefits of using public transport as well as details on local bus services.
- 5.37 It is therefore considered the Proposed Development is in accordance with the aims of the NPPF.
- 5.38 The applicant is committed to ensuring the Proposed Development is sustainable and will actively promote the use of renewable energy and technology when promoting the site for residential development. The Code for Sustainable Homes will also be adhered to where relevant. Therefore insofar as the policies are relevant at this stage, it is considered the Proposed Development accords with policies CSP2 and CSP5 of the Core Strategy.
- 5.39 Finally, as required by PAN30 a sustainability checklist has been submitted as part of the application.
- 5.40 On question 1a, the site scores no points as it lies outside of the limits of Grimethorpe. The site is however located adjacent to the immediate boundary of the settlement and in reality functions as part of the Principle Town. With regard to question 1b the site scores 6 points as it is a mix of brownfield and greenfield but more than 70% of the site is brownfield. In total the site scores 6 points for stage 1, but this increases to 12 if the site's true function is considered. Regardless of which view is taken the site achieves the minimum score for stage 1 and as such it can progress to the next stage.
- 5.41 Turning to stage 2, the site scores 6 points on question 2a as the site is located to the edge of the settlement but does not project into the

---

countryside. However the site scores no points on question 2b as the site is within the green belt. It is important to note all the former school sites which are not in the green belt would score 10 points in terms of the site's current UDP notation. As such the site scores 6 points in relation to stage 2 and as such would not accord with the requirements of stage 2 of PAN30.

- 5.42 Despite this, given the site is located immediately adjacent to the settlement boundary and cannot be considered remote or functionally separate from the settlement, it is considered appropriate to review the site against the requirements of stage 3 of PAN30. This seeks to establish the access to local services and public transport. With regard to question 3a the site would score 10 points as it is immediately adjacent to the existing public transport network and no intervention is required. The site would then score no points in relation to question 3b as the site is further than 800m from services and facilities.
- 5.43 In summary the site score's 6 points (or 12 if the site is considered part of the settlement) in stage 1, 6 points in stage 2 and 10 points in stage 3, achieving a total score of 22 (or 28) which would meet the overall requirements of PAN30.
- 5.44 Notwithstanding the site failing to meet the requirements of stage 2 of PAN30, for the sustainability reasons set out above, it is considered the site is located in a sustainable location and is suitable for residential development.
- 5.45 More specific sustainability and renewable energy matters will be dealt with at the reserved matters stage.

### **Drainage and Flood Risk**

- 5.46 Full details on drainage matters and flood risk issues can be found in the supporting Drainage Assessment. In summary the site is located in Flood Zone 1 and is considered to be at a low risk of flooding. The Proposed Development is therefore suitable for this location.
- 5.47 Flood risk to the site will be minimised by the appropriate use of sustainable drainage techniques but this will be developed as part of the reserved matters application.
- 5.48 The existing effluent drains from the school to the public sewer east of the site are likely to be suitable for reuse to drain away foul water. Surface water will drain to soakaway systems.
- 5.49 The Proposed Development is therefore considered to meet the requirements of the NPPF and Core Strategy policies CSP3 and CSP4 insofar as they are relevant at this stage.

---

## **Contamination**

- 5.50 A Phase 1 report has been produced for the Proposed Development and this accompanies the application and a desk top study of the site has been carried out. Given the previous use of the site as a school it is unlikely there will be a specific contamination although there may be naturally elevated concentrations of common contaminants such as sulphates. As such it is recommended an intrusive investigation is carried out and this should include chemical testing and soil analysis. It is therefore considered the proposals are in accordance with Policy CSP39 of the Core Strategy.

## **Landscape and Public Open Space**

- 5.51 To the south of the Proposed Development it is intended to provide an area of public open space. It is anticipated this area will predominantly be grassed to provide a community space therefore shrub planting would be restricted to peripheral locations.
- 5.52 The public open space will be overlooked by the proposed dwellings which will provide natural surveillance of this area. In accordance with SPG20 7,230m<sup>2</sup> of public open space will be provided, which equates to approximately 13% of the total site area. The make-up of this provision will be a matter dealt with during discussions with the LPA on the Section 106 Agreement following the submission of the application.
- 5.53 In general landscape terms there are no trees of high importance within the school grounds. However there are several trees and groups of trees which are of moderate importance and these will be retained where possible. The tree survey findings were considered when preparing the indicative scheme layout. Further details on this matter can be found in the supporting Tree Survey submitted with the application.
- 5.54 Again this scheme is indicative at the outline application stage and full details of landscaping will be covered by the reserved matters application. Nevertheless, it is considered the proposals comply with policies CSP33 and CSP35 of the Core Strategy and SPG20 which deals with the provision of open space within developments.

## **Ecology**

- 5.55 Full details on ecological matters can be found in the supporting Ecology Statement. In summary, site surveys have been carried out to establish the potential for protected species on the site. As a result of this the ecological value of the site is considered to be low. Despite this, mitigation and enhancement proposals are proposed including undertaking nesting bird surveys where required and enhancing the site's biodiversity where possible.
- 5.56 In light of the above it is considered the Proposed Development is in accordance with policy CSP36 of the Core Strategy.

---

## **Community Involvement**

- 5.57 Full details on the community consultation undertaken as part of the application can be found in the supporting Statement of Community Involvement. In summary however, a letter was sent to local residents on the 21<sup>st</sup> January 2012 along with a plan of the indicative layout, to inform them of the proposals. A consultation response form was also included and residents were able to provide comments on the scheme, which have been considered.
- 5.58 In addition to this, a meeting was held between the applicant and local councillors on the 16<sup>th</sup> January 2012 to seek their comments on the proposals.
- 5.59 It is therefore considered the community consultation undertaken is in accordance with the aims of the NPPF.

---

## 6.0 Conclusions

- 6.1 This Planning Policy Statement has been prepared on behalf of NPS Barnsley Limited to support an outline planning application for residential development with appearance, layout, landscaping and scale reserved at the former Willowgarth School, Brierley Road, Grimethorpe.
- 6.2 The site represents a previously developed site and its use for residential development is therefore in accordance with national, regional and local planning policy.
- 6.3 In addition to this, very special circumstances have been demonstrated for the Proposed Development in accordance with the NPPF which justify the principle of development and granting planning permission for inappropriate development in the green belt.
- 6.4 Indicative drawings submitted as part of this application demonstrate how the proposed residential development can be accommodated on the site and show a range of house types. The dwellings would replicate the existing dwellings in the vicinity and would be built using similar materials as the surrounding buildings.
- 6.5 The access arrangements to the Proposed Development are the same as the previous school facility and are considered to be acceptable for residential development. It has therefore been demonstrated that a scheme can be provided that is of an appropriate scale for the surrounding area.
- 6.6 In view of the above, it is considered the scheme satisfies national and local policy and represents a suitable 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.