Supporting Statement for Planning Application

The project which utilises the land in Cawthorne (South Lane) is designed to provide meaningful experiences to maximise independence, personal development, health and well-being and employability skills.

The project is about giving people with learning difficulties who have a recognised barrier to employment the opportunity/choice to participate within a project that is much needed within the Borough of Barnsley. Similar projects have been running in neighbouring boroughs for a number of years and have proved very successful and are examples of good practice and ones that challenge worklessness, something which the leader of Barnsley MBC has promoted/challenged within a document on 'Challenging Worklessness'.

Undoubtedly the major challenge in the years ahead will arise from the restrictions in public sector funding. The Council will need to review and re-prioritise its budget and services and seek economies across all areas of spending. Our project has support from Barnsley MBC commissioning, social workers and councillors and feedback from a recent dragons den presentation (citizens choice session) was extremely positive.

Worklessness and transition into training and/or work is a big problem in Barnsley for people with a learning disability and/or difficulties. For many young people with learning disabilities, the transition years are crucial. Research shows that the type of work project that we are running will make a huge difference to their life chances. It is therefore important that through personalised approaches and best practice, we can provide the support people need to live the lives they have chosen (working towards paid work). Research also indicates that when supported employment projects are involved, young people with learning disabilities/difficulties experience better outcomes.

The project is designed to deliver set objectives:

- To provide learning, training and employment to address worklessness across the Barnsley Borough
- To provide valuable learning, training and work experiences for people with learning difficulties, and other groups as appropriate.
- To support the development of a more sustainable local food economy.
- To provide healthy lifestyles.
- To provide a more cost effective service to BMBC

The structure will be used by trainees to shelter from adverse weather conditions. Some of the trainees will have Downs Syndrome, Autism and a range of other learning disabilities and difficulties. The trainees will also participate in undertaking garden maintenance tasks away from the site at Cawthorne.

The outbuilding will have the visual appearance of a stable or similar agricultural building and will be built in such a way as to be as inconspicuous as possible to minimise the impact on the landscape.

We also want to give access to our trainees and volunteers to rural parts of Barnsley, making parts of Barnsley more inclusive to a wider range of people who wouldn't normally have access. The majority of our trainees will come from low socio-economic groups and would benefit from this access.

Greenworks has been running successfully for 20 weeks, but still requires suitable and appropriate facilities to cater for the welfare of the trainees accessing the service. A comment from one of the commissioning managers at Barnsley MBC said about the

service, quote 'This is an excellent example of the type of future service we would like.' unquote. To continue to develop outstanding services in Barnsley for people with learning disabilities and those whom are classed at NEET, this facility (Welfare unit) is vital.

We hope you support our vision and help the local community and ourselves to take this project forward for Barnsley.