

PLANNING DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

XPO BARNESLEY

New footpath connecting car park to public highway

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REPORT

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This statement sets out the case in support of a full planning application submitted to Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (BMBC) in relation to the ASOS Distribution Centre site at Park Springs, Houghton. The application is being submitted to request approval for a small section of footpath connecting the existing car park to the public highway.
- 1.2. The UK is currently experiencing a public health emergency as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is critical that employers, employees and the self-employed take steps to keep everyone safe. In May 2020, the Government issued guidance on working safely during Covid 19 in offices and contact centres. This document was last updated on 30th September 2020 and is designed to help employers understand how to work safely during the pandemic, ensuring as many people as possible comply with social distancing guidelines (2m apart, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable).
- 1.3. The guidance states that, “employers have a duty to reduce workplace risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level by taking preventative measures. Employers must work with any other employers or contractors sharing the workplace so that everybody’s health and safety is protected.” Employers are required to complete a risk assessment and put in place the necessary measures to manage the risks of Covid 19.
- 1.4. In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, temporary measures were put in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all colleagues and visitors to the ASOS Barnsley site. A planning application has recently been approved for the erection of a modular training building at the site with 2no. canopies within the existing car park to provide shelter to workers in inclement weather whilst entering the premises. These works are to ensure the site provides a safe and healthy working environment given the current pandemic.
- 1.5. The proposed footpath is further measure to ensure the continued provision of a safe, healthy working environment by mitigating any future risks of infection and preventing the spread of the virus throughout the site, whilst allowing the facility to operate and sustain continued employment and growth opportunities in the Barnsley Borough through the challenging uncertain economic period that lies ahead.
- 1.6. The key reason for requiring the additional footpath link is to allow one-way footfall between the car park and the public highway, particularly for the use of the bus stop on the A6195. One-way footpaths will provide a straightforward route to and from the car park allowing safe social distancing.
- 1.7. XPO have been working closely with BMBC, PHE and the Environmental Health Officers whom have helped & advised throughout the recent period. Senior Leaders from XPO, BMBC, EHO have been meeting weekly to discuss the transmission rate in the region along with Julia Burrows Director Of Public Health to ensure that we have the right actions & changes in place, so that management of COVID19 is appropriate and in line with the COVID Secure guidelines. The proposed changes have been shared with the Working Party and are deemed as fit for purpose to help maintain the safety of Colleagues, Visitors and members of the public who may enter the site boundaries.
- 1.8. This planning, design and access statement outlines the context within which the application is made and provides a detailed assessment of the main planning considerations and matters relating to design and access together with a reasoned justification in support of the development. The statement should be read in accordance with other documents as part of the existing planning approval for the site.
- 1.9. Section 2 of this statement provides a background to the site including reference to relevant planning history; Section 3 describes the details of the development proposed; Section 4 reviews relevant planning policy considerations; Section 5 considers the key planning issues relevant to the application and a justification on the merits of the application against planning policy; Section 6 considers the

design and access matters relating to the development and Section 7 provides a summary and conclusions.

- 1.10. Accompanying drawings and plans are also included as part of the overall submission.

2 BACKGROUND

Site Location

- 2.1. The existing ASOS Barnsley site is located 6.4km east of Barnsley, adjacent to the A6195 Park Spring Road and takes access via the Houghton Main Colliery Roundabout. The ASOS building is near several villages including Grimethorpe to the north and Great Houghton to the east. The wider site is part of the major employment allocation known as 'Park Springs' and was formerly part of the now reclaimed Houghton Main Colliery site.



Figure 1: Park Springs Site Location

- 2.2. The site is accessed directly from the Houghton Main Colliery Roundabout on the A6195. The site is bounded to the west by the A6195 and by strategic landscaping areas to the north, east and south, with undeveloped agricultural land beyond. Within the site, the main car parking area for staff and visitors is located to the north-west of the main building, with the main HGV yard and manoeuvring area being located to the east, accessible via a perimeter access road circulating the building. A perimeter fence separates the site from areas of public access.
- 2.3. The site lies within Flood Zone 1 and is not, therefore, considered to be at risk from flooding.

Application History

- 2.4. The ASOS site has an extensive and detailed planning history. The wider site was subject to open cast colliery workings between 1997 and 2001. Prior to this the colliery was used for mining by UK Coal between the 1890s and 1991. Once open casting was completed, the land was reclaimed and compacted to provide a platform suitable for industrial development.
- 2.5. The existing warehouse was developed by Prologis and was constructed under Reserved Matters Approval 2005/1441 (which followed Outline Planning Permission B/03/0762/HR granted in 2003 for Class B1, B2 and B8 development of the site). The existing warehouse has more recently been granted planning permission for several extensions. To provide context to the current proposals, the relevant applications are detailed below.
- 2.6. Application 2012/1018: Erection of extensions to southern and western elevations of existing distribution warehouse and extension to existing surfaced car parking area. Approved 24/10/2012.
- 2.7. Application 2013/1250: Minor Material Amendment to app 2012/1018 (Erection of extensions to southern and western elevations of existing distribution warehouse and extension to existing surfaced car parking area) to allow for minor works to building extension and car park and alterations to fire access track and boundary treatment. Approved 26/09/2014.
- 2.8. Application 2016/1106: Erection of 3 storey extension to existing building. Approved 02/11/2016.
- 2.9. Application 2017/0338: Variation of condition of previously approved 2016/1106 to allow enclosure of previously approved external staircase. Approved 08.03.2017.
- 2.10. Application 2017/1390: Formation of emergency access/exit to warehouse. Approved 03/12/2018.
- 2.11. Application 2020/0885: Erection of modular cabin building to existing Asos site and 2no. car park canopies within the existing car park. Approved 29.09.2020.

3 PROPOSALS

- 3.1. Government guidance highlights the requirement for social distancing to be applied to all parts of the business, not just where people spend most of their time, but also entrances and exits, break rooms etc.
- 3.2. The recently approved application for the erection of a modular cabin building and car park canopies addresses many of the issues in terms of health and safety for training and suitable facilities for workers waiting to enter the building. However, it has been recognised that a large number of employees use the small footpath from the car park to the public highway and bus stop. This creates a bottle neck for these employees when entering and exiting the site meaning that social distancing is difficult at busy times.
- 3.3. The proposal is to provide a second small footpath link running between the car park and the highway. The footpath will be located close to the existing footpath and adjoin the highway north of where the bus stop is located. A small area of existing vegetation will be removed to facilitate construction, but the majority of landscaping will be retained.
- 3.4. The proposed footpath was discussed with the case officer during the recent application process for the cabins and canopies. It was initially considered that the footpath would fall within permitted development rights. However, the General Permitted Development Order does not appear to distinguish between an access being for vehicular or pedestrian use and the engineering works required were considered to go beyond permitted development for hardstanding. It was concurred that the proposal would require planning permission. Whilst the development is of a relatively small scale and of little impact, a planning application is duly submitted.



Figure 2: Location of proposed footpath.

- 3.5. The proposed footpath will measure approximately 7 metres in length and 2 metres wide with a pin kerb and a total of 7 steps leading down to the lower level adjacent to the highway.

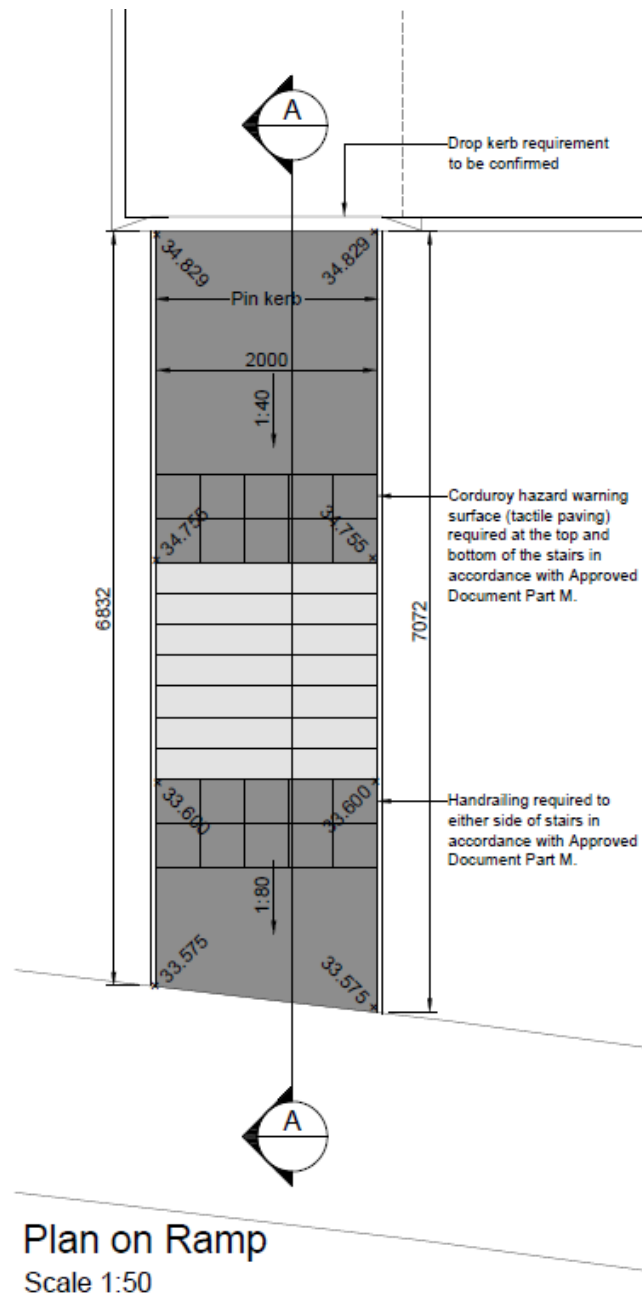


Figure 3: Proposed footpath plan.

- 3.6. The footpath is proposed to be of tarmac construction with concrete paving slab steps over a concrete base. The overall difference in ground level height from the car park to the highway is approximately 1.1m, with each step height approximately 0.16m in height and a tread depth of approximately 0.28m.

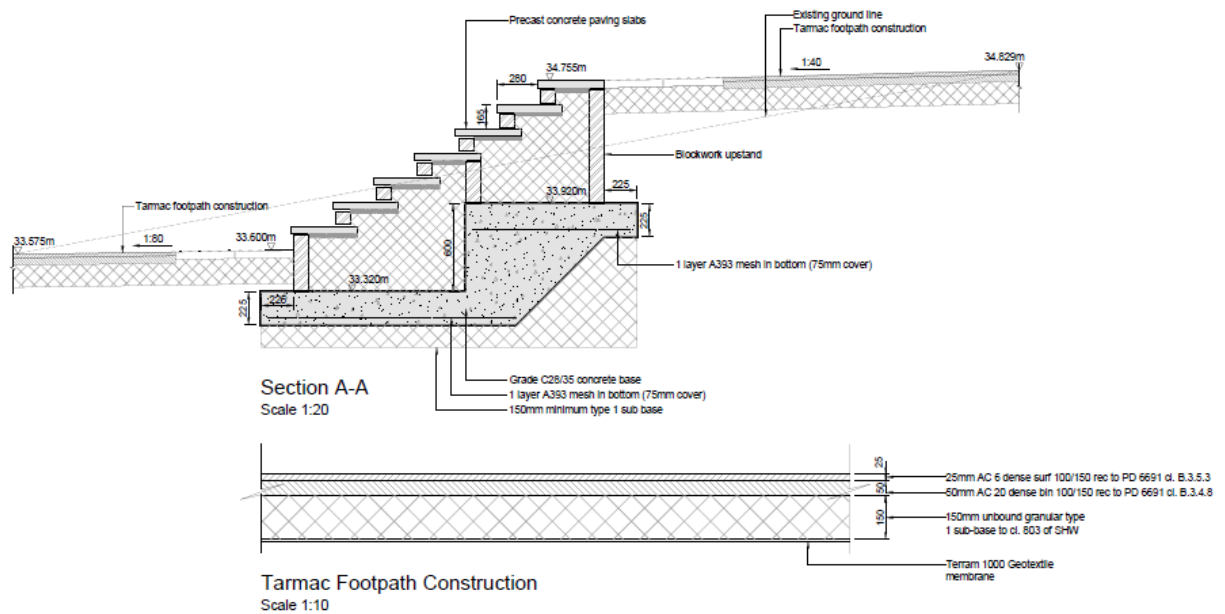


Figure 4: Footpath construction section

- 3.7. Most of the ground works can be carried out from the car park side ensuring no obstruction of or interruption to the public highway.

4 PLANNING POLICY

- 4.1. This section considers the relevant planning policy framework for the site and surrounding area, having regard to the proposed application. It considers relevant national planning policy, together with policies within the statutory Development Plan and other local planning policy guidance.

National Policy

- 4.2. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which was initially published on 27 March 2012 and later revised in July 2018 and February 2019, sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It confirms that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 4.3. Sustainable development is achieved through three overarching objectives: economic; social; and environmental objectives. For sustainable development to be pursued in a positive way, a presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of the Framework. In the context of the decision making process, this general presumption in favour of sustainable development means approving development that accords with development plans without delay, and where relevant policies of the development plan are out of date, granting planning permission unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
- 4.4. The NPPF includes core planning principles that aim towards the establishment of a strong, competitive economy, through effective sustainable development and the protection of our historic and natural environments.
- 4.5. In the context of this submission, the main relevant chapters are 6: 'Building a Strong, Competitive Economy'; 9: 'Promoting Sustainable Transport'; 11: 'Making Effective Use of Land'; -12: 'Achieving Well-Designed Places'; 14: 'Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change'; and 15 'Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment'.
- 4.6. Chapter 6 of the NPPF outlines the Government's commitment to securing economic growth in order to create jobs and states that, in order to achieve economic growth, the support of existing business sectors is endorsed, allowing them to expand or make more effective use of their facilities.
- 4.7. Chapter 9 requires development to promote sustainable transport modes, allow for safe and suitable access for all users and mitigate against any significant impacts that may arise from the development. Development should only be refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety.
- 4.8. Chapter 11 requires that decisions promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses. Planning decisions should, amongst other objectives, promote and support the development of underutilised land and buildings.
- 4.9. Chapter 12 affirms the Government's commitment to the design of the built environment as a key aspect of sustainable development. Planning policies and decision making at the local level are required to ensure that developments add to the quality of the area, are visually attractive with good architecture, layout and appropriate landscaping. Developments are also required to be designed in a sympathetic manner, considering local character and history, establish a strong sense of space, optimise the site's potential and create places that are safe, accessible and inclusive.
- 4.10. Chapter 14 guides the energy efficiency of development, and encourages renewable sources of energy generation, where feasible or viable to do so.

Local Policy

- 4.11. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that determinations must be made in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (BMBC) adopted a new Local Plan in January 2019 and this

document, along with the Joint Waste Plan adopted in March 2012 prepared with Doncaster and Rotherham is the relevant development plan.

- 4.12. The Policies Map (also adopted January 2019) shows the site as land within a settlement but having no specific allocation, with two allocated employment sites to the north and south of the site.

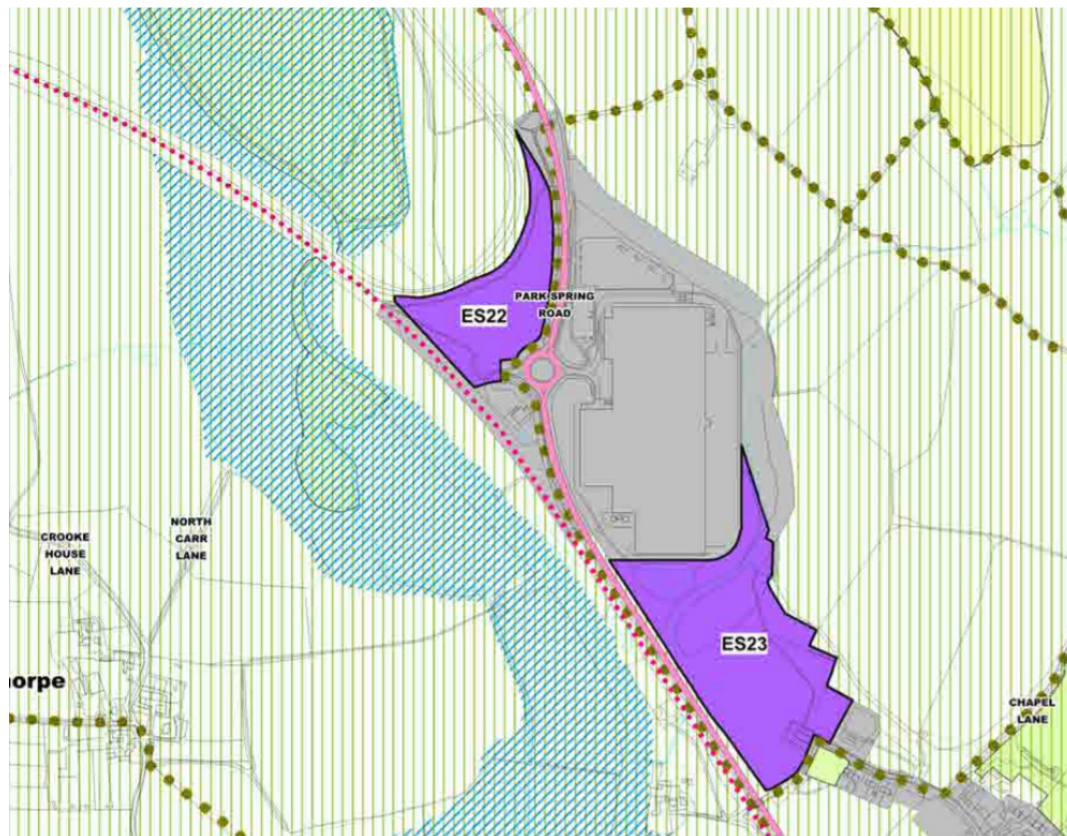


Figure 5: Extract from Policies Map 2019

- 4.13. The areas shaded in purple indicate an employment allocation. The majority of the area covered by the employment allocation to the north-west of the site is owned by XPO and forms part of the car parking provision for the site.
- 4.14. Policy E3 'Uses on employment land' states that the following uses will be allowed:
- Research and development, and light industry;
 - General industry; or
 - Storage and distribution.
- 4.15. It also states that ancillary uses will be allowed where appropriate in scale. The Local Plan goes on to say that it is essential that "land currently in use or last used for employment purposes, is protected and safeguarded from non-employment uses."
- 4.16. Policy E4 'Protecting Existing Employment Land' requires land used for employment purposes to be retained in order to safeguard existing or potential jobs.
- 4.17. Policy D1 'High Quality Design and Place Making' requires development to be of high quality and respect local character. This includes landscape features, viewpoints and historic character. Through layout and design development should:

- Contribute to place making and be of high quality, that contributes to a healthy, safe and sustainable environment;
- Complement and enhance the character and setting of distinctive places, including Barnsley Town Centre, Penistone, rural villages and Conservation Areas;
- Help to transform the character of physical environments that have become run down and are lacking in distinctiveness;
- Provide an accessible and inclusive environment for the users of individual buildings and surrounding spaces;
- Provide clear and obvious connections to the surrounding street and pedestrian network; Ensure ease of movement and legibility for all users, ensure overlooking of streets, spaces and pedestrian routes through the arrangement and orientation of buildings and the location of entrances;
- Promote safe, secure environments and access routes with priority for pedestrians and cyclists;
- Create clear distinctions between public and private spaces;
- Display architectural quality and express proposed uses through its composition, scale, form, proportions and arrangement of materials, colours and details;
- Make the best use of high-quality materials;
- Include a comprehensive and high-quality scheme for hard and soft landscaping; and
- Provide high quality public realm.

4.18. Policy T3 'New development and Sustainable Travel' requires that development be designed to reduce the need for travel and be accessible. It should provide at least minimum levels of parking for cycles, motorbikes, scooters, mopeds and for disabled people.

4.19. Policy T4 'New development and transport safety' states that developments are expected to be designed to provide safe, secure and convenient access and movement.

4.20. Policy CC1 'Climate change' looks at reducing the causes of and adapting to the future impacts of climate change by:

- Giving preference to development of previously developed land in sustainable locations;
- Promoting the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions through sustainable design and construction techniques;
- Locating and designing development to reduce the risk of flooding;
- Promoting the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS);
- Promoting and supporting the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy; and
- Promoting investment in Green Infrastructure to promote and encourage biodiversity gain.

4.21. Policy CC2 'Sustainable design and construction' requires developments to minimise resource and energy consumption through sustainable design and construction features.

5 KEY CONSIDERATIONS

National Policy

- 5.1. As a development that will increase the overall health and safety credentials of the ASOS operation, the proposed footpath will improve the safety of the site as a whole. With the proposed development allowing for safe and Government guidance compliant entering and exiting of the ASOS site, overarching principles of the NPPF concerning sustainable economic development are strongly complied with in this instance.
- 5.2. The proposals will help to secure the future of the site for employment purposes and allow the retention of local jobs. The development is limited in scale and is in keeping with the character of the existing employment development on the site.
- 5.3. The proposal helps to encourage the use of public transport and allows for safer entry and exiting to and from the site. It is therefore considered to comply with the relevant chapters within the NPPF.

Local Policy

- 5.4. In terms of local policy, the proposal will not increase the number of movements in and out of the site, nor will it reduce the level of car, cycle or motorcycle parking at the site. Vehicular access to the site will not be altered but will encourage safer use of public transport for employees. The proposal will therefore result in very little impact in terms of the physical presence and is therefore considered to be consistent with Policies T3 and T4.
- 5.5. Overall, it has been demonstrated that the development proposal is consistent with the Development Plan and represents sustainable development. It is therefore considered that the development as proposed is afforded high level of support by the Local Plan and the NPPF.

6 DESIGN AND ACCESS

- 6.1. This section of the document sets out the design of the proposal and details the scheme within this Full Application. It has been written in line with CABE publications 'Design & Access Statements - How to write, read and use them', based on the principles of inclusive design.

- 6.2. Please ensure that this section of the statement is read in conjunction with all the supporting plans and documents.

Design context

- 6.3. The proposed footpath has been designed in response to the specific requirement for an additional access to the site for health and safety reasons. It has been designed to be in keeping with the surrounding area

Scale

- 6.4. The footpath is at existing ground level with no requirement for the raising of the existing landform. A total of 7 no. steps will facilitate appropriate safe access down the 1.1m level difference from the car park to the highway. The development will be entirely in-keeping with the existing context and will not represent a prominent feature in the surrounding area.

Appearance

- 6.5. The footpath has been designed to be similar in materials and appearance to the existing footpath link to the south.

Landscaping

- 6.6. Some of the existing landscape verge will need to be removed to accommodate the footpath. However, due to the limited size of the footpath, this will be minimal and have little impact on the view of the site from the highway.

Access

- 6.7. No changes are proposed to the vehicular or emergency access to the site. The pedestrian access proposed will improve access to the site for employees providing an additional route between the site and the highway and local public transport network. The works will not impact or cause any obstruction of the public highway.

Sustainability

- 6.8. The Proposed development will be designed to incorporate sustainability initiatives and reduce energy consumption where appropriate.

Crime

- 6.9. Existing CCTV will cover the area proposed for the footpath.

7 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1. This statement has set out the case in support of a planning application to request approval of a proposed new footpath link between the existing car park and public highway.
- 7.2. XPO has continued a close working partnership with BMBC, PHE and the Environmental Health Officers whom have helped & advised throughout the recent period and XPO are now able to move forward with the above proposed changes.
- 7.3. This statement has considered the material planning considerations relating to the proposed development, and through appropriate assessment, has demonstrated the proposal to be in accordance with established national and local planning policy and guidance. In particular, the application shows that the development will serve to allow appropriate access facilities to comply with health and safety law and Government guidelines regarding Covid 19.
- 7.4. In view of the above, Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, as Local Planning Authority, is respectfully requested to consider the application favourably and grant planning permission for the development.