
Case Number	21/04764/OUT (Formerly PP-10322447)
Application Type	Outline Planning Application
Proposal	Outline planning application for residential development of up to 67 dwellings including demolition of stone barn and outbuildings (All matters reserved except Access) Re-submission of planning application 19/01970/OUT
Location	Wiggan Farm 30 Towngate Road Sheffield S35 0AR
Date Received	10/11/2021
Team	North
Applicant/Agent	DLP Consultants
Recommendation	Refuse

Refuse for the following reason(s):

- 1 The Local Planning Authority consider that the proposed development would result in the loss of a non-designated heritage asset which would be harmful to the character of the local area and which would cause less than substantial harm to the setting of Grade II Listed Buildings (64 and 66 Towngate and Fox House on Top Road) to the south east of the application site. The development does not provide clear and convincing justification for that harm and the public benefits and not considered to be sufficient to outweigh this harm. As such, the proposed development is considered to be contrary to Paragraphs 199 - 203 of the National Planning Policy Framework and to Policies BE15, BE19 and BE20 of Sheffield's adopted Unitary Development Plan.
- 2 The proximity and narrowness of the access in relation to both the farmhouse and No.20 Towngate Road would have an unacceptable effect upon residential amenity, through noise and general disturbance as well as unacceptable levels of overlooking. In this respect the development is considered to be contrary to UDP Policy H14, and paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Attention is Drawn to the Following Directives:

1. The applicant is advised that this application has been refused for the reasons stated above and taking the following plans into account:

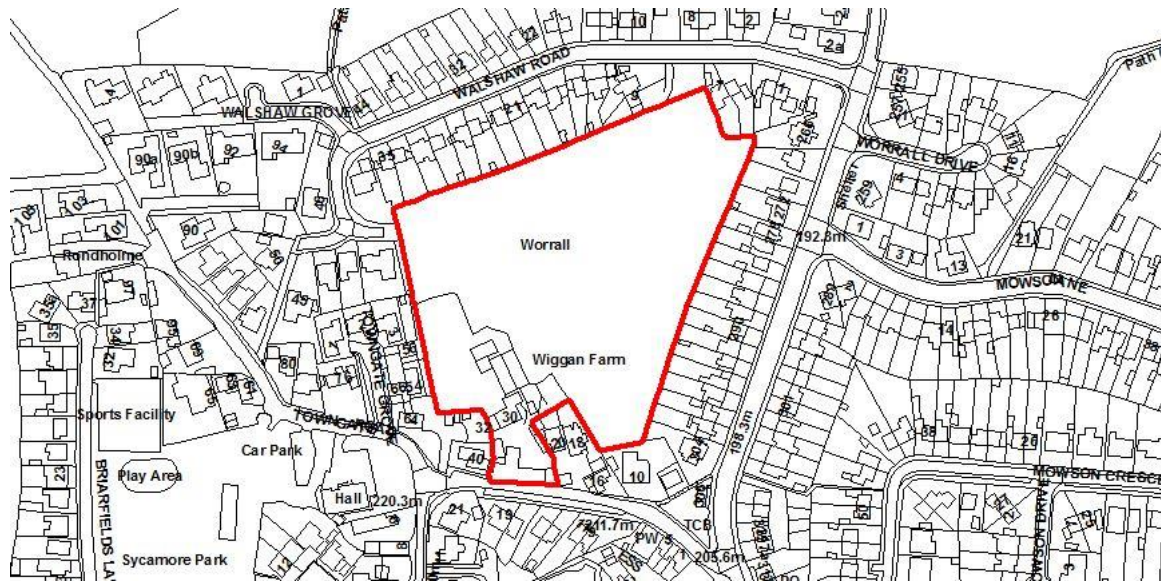
Drawing YK976-5PS Site Location Plan (showing the amended redline boundary) published 2/9/2022

Drawing YK976-4PD-003 Rev A Proposed Site Access Arrangement with Narrowing published 2/9/2022

Drawing SK_101 Rev H Proposed Masterplan (indicative site layout) published 2/12/2021

2. Despite the Local Planning Authority trying to work with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner it was not possible to reach an agreed solution in negotiations.

Site Location



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LOCATION AND PROPOSAL

This application relates to approximately 2 hectares of land located in the centre of the village of Worrall. Approximately 1.7 hectares of the site is a sloping field, the remaining 0.3 hectares is occupied by a farmhouse, ancillary farm buildings and hardstanding.

The site is in a Housing Area as defined in the adopted Sheffield Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and is surrounded by residential properties. One of the farm buildings, a stone barn, adjacent to Towngate Road has been locally listed, making it a non-designated heritage asset.

There are several mature trees along the eastern site boundary which are protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO).

The application seeks outline planning permission for up to 67 dwellings and is a resubmitted application, with planning permission for a similar development having been refused by the planning committee in December 2020 (application 19/01970/OUT refers).

Originally the applicant sought to remove all of the buildings on the site to make way for the access into the development. More recently amended plans have been received which slightly amend the redline boundary to include an agricultural building which is in the applicant's ownership adjacent to the rear boundary of No.20 Towngate Road. The current proposal would now see the stone farmhouse retained; however all other buildings, including the stone barn along the site frontage would be removed to provide access into the site. It is highlighted that the indicative site layout has not been updated to show the amended site access and includes the original access. This is not ideal, however the applicant has expressed reluctance to update this drawing and given the application is outline only this cannot be insisted upon.

The application is in outline and access is the only matter under consideration. The appearance, landscaping, layout and scale of the development are reserved for subsequent approval.

During the course of the application the applicant has been in negotiations with Sheffield City Council over the purchase of a piece of land at Walshaw Road to the north of the site, which would enable an alternative access into the site to be provided. These negotiations have stalled and so the application is to be determined based on the redline boundary and amended plans which were published on the Council's website on 2nd September 2022.

PLANNING HISTORY

19/01970/OUT – Outline application for the erection of up to 67 dwellings (all matter reserved except for the means of access) – refused.

The application was refused by the Planning Committee in December 2020. It was considered that the proposed development would result in the loss of non-

designated heritage assets which would be harmful to the character of the local area and which would cause substantial harm to the setting of Grade II Listed Buildings (64 and 66 Towngate and Fox House on Top Road) to the south east of the application site.

Furthermore, the development did not provide clear and convincing justification for that harm and failed to show that the harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits.

As such the development was deemed to be contrary to Paragraphs 194 - 197 of the National Planning Policy Framework and to Policies BE15, BE19 and BE20 of Sheffield's adopted Unitary Development Plan.

99/01599/FUL – Erection of 47 dwelling houses with garages and provision of associated roads and drainage – refused.

This application was refused by the Planning Committee in July 2000. It was considered that the development would be contrary to PPG3, through the development of a greenfield site when at the time Sheffield had sufficient capacity through the development of brownfield and existing committed greenfield sites to meet housing target.

In addition the site was not considered to be sustainable in terms of accessibility to jobs, shops and services with no major transport links nearby. The layout of the development was considered to be unacceptable in terms of the effect it would have upon residential amenity, resulting in overlooking and overbearing effects upon existing dwellings surrounding the development as well as the proposed new dwellings.

The development was also felt to be unsympathetic to the neighbouring Grade II Listed buildings and the loss of the traditional farm buildings of Wiggan Farm was deemed to be harmful to the character and appearance of the area.

The proposal was deemed to be contrary to PPG3 as well as UDP Policies BE2, BE5, BE19, BE20 and H14.

An appeal against this decision was lodged and a Public Inquiry was due to be held; however the appeal was withdrawn prior to the Public Inquiry commencing.

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

The original submission sought to demolish all of the existing farm buildings to provide an access into the site from Towngate Road. The application was advertised by letter, site notices and a newspaper advert in December 2021 and as a result representations were received from 81 interested parties. 79 were objecting to the development and 1 was marked as neutral (but expressed objections) and 1 was in support.

Following the receipt of amended plans, (which altered the access to allow the farmhouse to be retained, but still involved the demolition of all the other buildings,

including the locally listed barn) a further 50 representations were received, again objecting to the development.

In total since the application was submitted representations have been received from 113 interested parties.

In addition the following representations have been received from Councillors, Bradfield Parish Council and local groups:

Cllrs Richard Williams, Penny Baker and Vickie Priestley (Stannington Ward Councillors) have written a joint letter. They acknowledge that only one of the two historic buildings will now be destroyed but set out that the proximity of the revised access road will destroy the historical character of the surviving building and will have a detrimental impact on the setting of the listed buildings and wider village character. They also feel that the development would have a detrimental impact on the amenity of the village as a whole and raise concerns about the viability of the access where the road and footpath narrow.

Bradfield Parish Council have raised concerns in regard to the number of houses proposed, this being over development; Lack of privacy due to the land heights on the site; Loss of trees, also resulting in loss of privacy; Loss of green open space; Possible loss of an historic building; Impact on wildlife; Wildlife corridor should be preserved; Single track access to the site, issues around access and egress; Increase in traffic accessing the site, to include residents vehicles but also delivery vehicles etc; Concerns regarding traffic/road safety for local people; Loss of character in the village; Concerns regarding infrastructure being unable to cope with demand, schools are at capacity; Concerns regarding flooding in exceptional circumstances.

It is felt the minor modifications to the development as shown in this most recent application do not affect Councillors previous objection.

Hallamshire Historic Buildings have set out that the revised plans still fail to address previous concerns. The development will cause substantial harm to the setting of listed buildings, there has been an insufficiently rigorous assessment of alternatives and the development still entails the loss of non-designated heritage assets without sufficient justification. The addition of the farmhouse and barn to the Local Heritage List gives greater weight to their historical significance. The applicant should pursue an alternative access, through the purchase of land owned by Sheffield City Council at Walshaw Road. The loss of the barn would erase the form and outline of the farm, entirely destroying the context of the farmhouse. Its loss would be highly visible, greatly degrading the character and appearance of the historic core of the village. The harm done by the revised proposal to designated and non-designated assets would be of a similar magnitude to that of the previous proposal.

The Friends of Loxley Valley have objected to the development and have set out that the development is essentially the same as the previous one already turned down by the Council. The FoLV support the detailed objections made by others and wish to point out that this is a greenfield site of ecological value as an open space and as agricultural land. 67 more houses would put strain on existing

services and the highway network and would be hazardous for pedestrians.

Issues raised in the general representations are summarised as follows:

Highways

- The existing road network cannot cope with the volume of traffic and additional demands of this development.
- Since the pandemic fewer school children are using the bus and so traffic in the area has already increased.
- Haggstones and other surrounding roads are congested at busy times.
- The majority of Towngate Road is single carriageway and residents park making it hazardous for cars to pass each other
- There are safety issues on Towngate Road and Haggstones Road especially in bad weather (cars get stuck due to snow and ice),
- There is poor visibility to and from the proposed access.
- Top Road is only single width.
- Public transport services are inadequate and have been reduced to an hourly frequency. From October the bus service is to be withdrawn.
- An alternative access from Walshaw Road would be preferable from a safety and capacity perspective.
- The traffic surveys in the Transport Statement are misleading as they were carried out outside peak times.
- There is only a footway on one side of Towngate Road creating safety issues for pedestrians, children accessing Bradfield School and the elderly attending the Worrall Memorial Hall.
- There is a lot of commuter traffic in Worrall as drivers attempt to avoid congested areas of the city. The development at Oughtibridge Mill will make the situation worse.
- Inadequate parking is provided for future residents and there would be a loss of parking for local people.

Design and layout

- There will be a loss fields and the farm which contain historic buildings that contribute to the rural character of the village. The development does not maintain the local heritage of the village.
- The barn is in a poor state of repair but it could be restored. The applicant has deliberately neglected the barn.
- The development is out of character with existing dwellings
- The density is too high and results in an overdevelopment of the site.
- A previous application for around 40 houses was refused for overdevelopment
- Size, height and positioning of dwellings is unacceptable, particularly considering the sloping topography of the area.
- The presence of the farm and the open fields creates a sense of openness.
- The dwellings would be squeezed together with minimal gaps between properties to enhance views.

Ecology and Landscape issues

- Inadequate consideration of the impact on wildlife. The site provides a habitat for many species including bats, badgers, birds, hedgehogs, mice, shrews, voles.
- The development does not promote biodiversity net gain and does not provide adequate compensation within the development.
- Trees on the site boundary are protected by TPO and will be affected.

Amenity

- Adjoining properties would be overlooked and privacy reduced.
- Large dwellings would be overbearing because of the topography of the site.
- The loss of the greenspace would be detrimental to amenity (green neighbourhoods are associated with slower cognitive decline, reduced stress, mitigation of cancer risk and lower risk of developing mental health disorders).
- Noise would increase and air quality would be affected by increased vehicle movements.
- The construction process, associated traffic generation and movement of plant and equipment would have a negative impact on the amenities of residents.
- Lighting would affect the amenity of neighbours.

Other issues

- Planning consent has been refused on this site before and the current proposal is little different.
- Infrastructure in the village is inadequate to cope with additional demand.
- Extra pressure has already been put on local services from other recently built or planned developments.
- School places are limited, or oversubscribed, and local health care facilities are operating above capacity.
- The proposal will reduce opportunities for other children in the area to access local schools.
- Sufficient affordable housing is not being provided for young people. The affordable units may be bought by private landlords.
- Surface water run off causes waterlogging of adjoining properties garden.
- There are already significant housing development in progress in the Oughtibridge / Wharnccliffe Side areas.
- The development would bring about no public benefits for Worrall or its residents.
- There are more suitable Brownfield sites elsewhere.
- Increased demand on surface water and sewage infrastructure.
- The development does not benefit local people who want to stay in the area.
- Insufficient consultation has been carried out and the Council does not take account of resident's views.
- There has been no meaningful engagement with residents in advance of the submission of the application. Plans to redevelop the site have already been rejected twice, with representations having to be made for a third time.
- The development will affect property values.
- Retaining wall between house and garden and house foundations could be affected by heavy lorries and machinery.
- The development would result in a loss of views.

The representation in support of the scheme sets out that the site has not been a working farm for some time since there was an outcry in relation to the hazard it created, especially having to herd cows on Top Rd towards the top entrance to the farm. Consequently, the one field (proposed for development) is used to store silage bales which borders the public footpath through to Walshaw Road.

The silage bales are more unsightly than a well-conceived housing development.

Worrall has been developed steadily since the 1970's and is regarded as a desirable place to live.

Demolition of the cow sheds is desirable.

A sympathetic development at Wiggan Farm will be ideal.

Additional housing will help sustain the small businesses in the area that are suffering due to the economic decline.

The houses towards the top of the field could be single storey to give an uninhibited view for those using the public pathway which appears to be valued by those commenting on the outline planning application in general.

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Policy Context

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF/Framework) sets out the Government's planning priorities for England and describes how these are expected to be applied. The key principle of the Framework is the pursuit of sustainable development, which involves seeking positive improvements to the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life. The following assessment will have due regard to these overarching principles.

The documents forming the Council's Development Plan (UDP and Core Strategy) date back some time and substantially predate The Framework. Paragraph 12 of the Framework makes it clear that where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan, permission should not usually be granted.

The Framework (paragraph 219) also identifies that existing development plan policies should not simply be considered out-of-date because they were adopted or made prior to its publication. Weight should be given to relevant policies, according to their degree of consistency with the Framework. The closer a policy in the development plan is to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight it may be given.

The assessment of this development also needs to be considered in light of paragraph 11 of the Framework, which states that for the purposes of decision making, where there are no relevant development plan policies, or where the

policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, planning permission should be granted unless:

11 di) The application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the proposed development, or

11 dii) Any adverse impacts of granting planning permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole. This is referred to as the “tilted balance”.

In addition to the potential for a policy to be out of date by virtue of inconsistency with the Framework, paragraph 11 makes specific reference to applications involving housing. It states that where a Local Planning Authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites with the appropriate buffer the policies which are most important for determining the application will automatically be considered to be out of date.

The Council has released its revised 5-Year Housing Land Supply Monitoring Report. This new figure includes the updated Government’s standard methodology which includes a 35% uplift to be applied to the 20 largest cities and urban centres, including Sheffield.

The monitoring report released in August 2021 sets out the position as of 1st April 2021 – 31st March 2026 and concludes that there is evidence of a 4-year supply of deliverable supply of housing land. Therefore, the Council is currently unable to demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites.

Consequently, the most important Local Plan policies for the determination of schemes which include housing should be considered as out-of-date according to paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF. The so called ‘tilted balance’ is therefore triggered, and as such, planning permission should be granted unless the application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.

In this context the following assessment will:

- Assess the proposals compliance against existing local policies as this is the starting point for the decision-making process. For Sheffield this is the UDP and Core Strategy.
- Consider the degree of consistency these policies have with the NPPF and attribute appropriate weight accordingly, while accounting for the most important policies automatically being considered as out of date.
- Apply ‘the tilted balance’ test, including considering if the adverse impacts of granting planning permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

Land Use

The entire site is in an allocated Housing Area as defined in the UDP. The development accords with Policy H10 of UDP which identifies housing (use class C3) as the preferred use of land in the policy area.

Policy CS23 states that in the larger villages of Oughtibridge, Worrall and Wharnccliffe Side housing development will be limited to suitable, sustainable sites within the existing built-up area. The site is within the built up area of Worrall. The sustainability of the site is considered elsewhere in the report. The principle of the development is acceptable subject to compliance with relevant local and national policies and other material considerations.

Brownfield/Greenfield Issues

The section of the site that accommodates the existing farmhouse building is classed as brownfield land. The field is a greenfield site. Land last occupied by agricultural buildings including the barn, sheds and related structures on site are excluded from the definition of previously developed land (Annex 2 of the Framework) and are therefore greenfield.

Core Strategy Policy CS24 identifies that no more than 12% of dwelling completions will be on greenfield sites between 2004/05 and 2025/26. In the period to 2025/26, greenfield sites should also only be developed for housing in certain circumstances, including on small sites in urban areas or larger villages where it can be justified on sustainability grounds, and on sustainably located larger sites within or adjoining urban areas provided annual monitoring shows that there is less than a five year supply of deliverable sites.

Completions of properties on greenfield sites have not reached the 12% stated in CS24 and are closer to 5%. Moreover, this is considered to be a reasonably sustainably located site, which makes efficient use of land.

Unlike CS24, which stipulates a proportionate prioritisation of brownfield land, the Framework at Paragraph 120 actively promotes the reuse of brownfield (previously developed land) but does not specifically advocate a 'brownfield first' approach. Given this, policy CS24 carries reduced weight.

Nevertheless, the proposals are considered to comply with both CS24 and the Framework, which places great emphasis on boosting the supply of homes (Paragraph 60) and attaches weight to the development of suitable windfall sites within existing settlements (paragraph 69)(such as this for the important contribution they can make to meeting housing requirements).

Housing Density

Core Strategy Policy CS26 encourages making efficient use of land to deliver new homes at a density appropriate to the location depending on relative accessibility. The highest density of development is promoted in the most sustainable/accessible locations. In areas such as this density should be within the region of 30 to 50

dwellings.

The policy is considered consistent with paragraph 124 of the Framework which promotes the efficient use of land subject to the consideration of a variety of factors including housing need, availability of infrastructure/sustainable travel modes, desirability of maintaining the areas prevailing character and setting, promoting regeneration and the importance of securing well designed and attractive places.

The site is approximately 2 hectares and if 67 dwellings are developed this would equate to a density of approximately 33.5 dwellings per hectare. The layout as submitted would achieve the density requirements set out in policy, however it is noted that this density may need to be reduced as a result of issues in relation to the layout, amenity issues and biodiversity issues.

Loss of Agricultural Land

The site contains 1.7 hectares of agricultural land primarily used for grazing. Policy GE7 of the UDP is concerned with the protection of the rural economy and agriculture. The permanent loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land should not be permitted and neither should development that seriously harms agricultural activities or the viability of a farm. More up to date policy in the Framework (paragraph 174) requires the wider benefits of natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land - to be recognised.

Footnote 58 of the Framework clarifies that where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of a higher quality.

The best and most versatile agricultural land lies in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC).

The weight attributed to GE7 is reduced as a result of the more flexible approach advocated by the Framework.

Considering the sites limited size and location in the centre of a village there would be no significant loss of agricultural land. Farming activities at the site have dwindled over the years. Only some of the building are used for storage and the field for occasional grazing / silage.

Furthermore as the land is grade 4 (poor quality) in accordance with the ACL, the development would not result in the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land that the Framework seeks to protect.

In principle there are no policy objections to the loss of this small parcel of agricultural land for residential development.

Impact on Heritage Assets.

The Framework attaches great weight to the conservation, protection and

preservation of heritage assets (Chapter 16 of the Framework). They are identified as irreplaceable resources that should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. Annex 2 of the Framework provides a definition of a 'designated heritage' asset. It includes listed buildings, conservation areas and ancient monuments.

The more important the designated heritage asset, the greater the weight should be given to its protection. This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to the asset's significance.

Clear and convincing justification is required for any development that causes harm to, or the loss of significance of a designated heritage (including its setting).

Permission should be refused where development results in substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm or loss, as set out by paragraph 201 of the Framework.

Where a development results in less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, the harm must be considered against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use (paragraph 202).

At a local level UDP policy BE19 aims to protect the setting and appearance of listed buildings. BE20 identifies that the retention of other historic building which are of local interest but not listed will be encouraged wherever practicable. BE15 seeks to preserve and enhance buildings which are important parts of the Sheffield's heritage.

Whilst these local policies seek to preserve heritage assets they do not include reference to considering the public benefits as set out the NPPF and so can only be offered limited weight.

Policy CS74 of the Core Strategy also identifies that high-quality development is expected and development should respect the distinctive heritage of the city including historic village centres and the city's rural setting.

In addition to identified local and national policy requirements, when making a decision on a planning application for development that affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority must have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Preservation in this context means not harming the interest in the building, as opposed to keeping it utterly unchanged.

These obligations are set out in sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and have been considered in the determination of this application.

There are no designated heritage assets within the redline boundary of the site;

however during the course of the application the traditional stone barn adjacent to Towngate Road has been locally listed and this and the farmhouse are considered to be non-designated heritage assets.

Paragraph 203 of the NPPF sets out that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. A balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

There are also three Grade II listed buildings (dwellings) within the vicinity. Nos 64 and 66 Towngate Road are located immediately to the west of the site and Fox House is some 50 metres to the south west on Top Road. The effect on the setting of these designated heritage assets must also be considered.

Historic England have stated that the barn forms part of a great local significance and therefore harm to this significance would be caused by its loss. The NPPF doesn't state what might justify the harm to such non designated assets but public benefit is a consideration in terms of harm to designated assets. Here the public benefit would be the creation of housing, at a time when the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year housing land supply. The development would also have an economic benefit through the creation of jobs and increased spending in the area.

However, the development has previously been found to be contrary to the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF which deal with heritage assets and this now is a material planning consideration.

The proposed development, although now retaining the farmhouse would still see the loss of the stone barn and development sited close to the listed buildings that border the site.

The loss of the associated open land is also considered to have a negative effect on the setting of the grade II listed buildings, nos. 64 and 66 Towngate Road and Fox House on Top Road which make a positive contribution to the historic landscape character of the settlement.

The applicant has submitted a viability appraisal for the barn which demonstrates that it may not be financially viable to restore the barn and put it back into use (the report looks into a variety of uses including residential, offices, restaurant and gym), however the report looks at the viability of reuse of the barn in isolation rather than as part of the overall viability of the site.

The viability report is not considered to be sufficient justification for the development and it is considered that overall the development would be harmful to the historic character and appearance of the site and wider area.

All things considered, when weighed in the balance the development is still considered to be contrary to paragraphs 199 - 203 of the National Planning Policy Framework and to Policies BE15, BE19 and BE20 of Sheffield's adopted Unitary Development Plan.

South Yorkshire Archaeology Service have commented that the submitted geophysical survey report by Archaeological Research Services suggests it is unlikely that earlier remains of significance are present in the open area of the site, although SYAS always recommend that such results are tested by a phase of trial trenching, to establish archaeological potential with more certainty. This further evaluation work could potentially be considered and addressed at a reserved matters stage.

The Heritage Statement by The JESSOP Consultancy also refers to archaeological interest in the farm buildings complex - both in the standing buildings themselves and the potential for buried evidence relating to their use, preserved below-ground.

The application is outline, with all matters reserved except access – with the proposed access sited through the current farm buildings complex. As such, consideration of archaeological impact in relation to the farm complex would have to be considered and addressed in relation to the current outline application.

SYAS supports the retention and re-use of historic buildings – such an approach reduces the impact on and loss of archaeological evidence. The applicant does not control additional land that could afford alternative access to the site, mitigating the need to demolish the existing historic building on site. The current proposal has therefore been considered on its merits.

Design and Layout

Chapter 12 of the Framework is concerned with achieving well-designed places and paragraph 126 identifies that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.

Paragraph 130 of the Framework which is concerned with design sets out a series of expectations including ensuring that developments:

- add to the quality of the area;
- are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and landscaping;
- are sympathetic to the local character and surrounding built environment;
- establish and maintain a strong sense of place;
- optimise the potential of a site and create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible.

Policies CS74 of the CS and UDP policies BE5, H14 and H15 all seek to secure high quality developments which are of an appropriate scale and which enhance the character and appearance of the area. These policies are reflective of the aims of the Framework and are considered to carry substantial weight.

The detailed design of the scheme including the layout, scale, external appearance and landscaping are reserved for separate approval. However an indicative site layout drawing has been submitted along with formal details of the access from Towngate Road.

This site is enclosed by development on all sides and the site slopes steeply to the

east. As discussed above the development would necessitate the removal of the stone barn on the site frontage. Putting this issue to one side, there are a variety of styles of housing of differing character and appearance in the locality.

Whilst a self-contained development such as this could be designed so as not to harm the character and appearance of the area, it is considered that the current indicative layout is too dense leaving little room for the neighbouring listed buildings to breathe and the development as indicated may impinge upon the mature trees, which are protected by TPO to the east of the site.

To accommodate the number of properties within the site the development has resulted in car dominated frontages.

The proposed access cutting across in front of the farmhouse and the narrowing of the access to squeeze between the farmhouse and No.20 Towngate Road point to an overdevelopment of the site. As the proposed access will be the only means of accessing the site significant volumes of traffic (vehicular and pedestrian) would be brought into very close proximity of the farmhouse as well as rear garden of No.20 (which is at a considerably lower level).

The development as a whole would not be sympathetic to the local character and surrounding built environment, however given this is an outline application, these issues could be addressed at reserved matters stage.

Highway Issues

The Framework (paragraphs 104 to 113) promotes sustainable transport. Paragraph 110 specifically requires that when assessing applications for development it should be ensured that a) appropriate opportunities have been taken up to promote sustainable transport modes given the type of development and the location, b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users and c) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network or highway safety can be cost effectively mitigated.

Policy CS51 'Transport Priorities' within the CS sets out six strategic transport priorities for Sheffield and CS53 'Management of Demand for Travel' identifies a variety of ways in which increased demand for travel will be managed across the City.

Policy H14 part (d) requires development to not endanger pedestrians, provide safe access to the highways network and appropriate off-street parking. Policy H15 (Design of New Housing Developments) identifies that easy access to homes and circulation around the site for people with disabilities or with prams should be provided.

These local plan policies can be considered to have substantial weight as they are in broad conformity with the NPPF. Paragraph 111 of the Framework does however make it clear that 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.

Access

The site is currently accessed from Towngate Road. Outside the site entrance and just to its west the carriageway is narrow, the impact of which can be compounded by on-street parking. In order to accommodate access for a 12 metre long refuse/removal vehicle, a parking layby is proposed to be constructed in the grass verge on the opposite side of the road (with porous paving) which would allow existing residents to park their cars completely clear of the carriageway. To accommodate the access some of the farm buildings including the barn which sits on the northern edge of the carriage way are to be demolished.

The applicant has been looking at whether the access could be taken from the eastern end of Walshaw Road, where there is a gap in the housing. However, this land is not within the applicant's control and the proposed access arrangements must be considered on their merits.

The proposed access road would be 7 metres wide for the initial 10 metre length, before tapering down with 2 footways provided each side of the access road and a section of new 2.0m wide footway provided across the site frontage to Towngate Road.

The access narrows to get past the farmhouse; however this localised narrowing of the access road is some 28 to 30 metres into the site. Narrowing's or 'pinch-points' with give-way markings to oncoming traffic are a common traffic calming technique and can be found on much busier roads than would be the case for the development site, such as on Fraser Road in Woodseats and on Richmond Park Road.

Subsequently, as with the previous application, highway officers raise no objections to the access arrangements indicated in this fresh submission.

Parking

No details of vehicle parking are provided as part of this application; however suitable provision for future residents will need to be accommodated within the site at reserved matters stage.

This resubmission has attracted a considerable number of representations raising the following highways related objections/concerns:

- A lack of local facilities and poor bus services will push an additional 130 vehicle movements onto the local highway network.
- Access would be taken from a narrow road, where on-street parking creates a bottleneck. Increased traffic will compromise the safety of young people walking to and attending Bradfield School.
- The barn should be retained. Access should be taken from Walshaw Road.
- Towngate Road is a racetrack. A large number of cars use it. It is dangerous owing to the on-street parking that occurs.
- This represents overdevelopment of the site.

- The safety of pedestrians, especially school children, horse riders, and motorists will be compromised.
- Walking distances quoted in the submitted documents to local facilities from the centre of the site are ‘as the crow flies’. They are not the actual walking distances. They are an underestimate.
- The Walshaw Road traffic surveys used to predict the peak hour trip rates for the development are not representative.
- Traffic volumes on Towngate Road will be increased by 150%.
- 37 metres is the stopping sight distance for 25 mph. Such a sight-line might not be achievable onto Towngate Road from the new access.
- The roads are dangerous with ice and snow in winter.
- There are no spaces in the local schools.
- The number 57 bus service through Worrall is to be cancelled from the 2nd of October 2022, forcing more people into their cars.

In response, the proposal is to build houses on what is currently farmland, situated within the village of Worrall. All matters are reserved for subsequent approval apart from the access arrangements. The application has been supported by a transport statement and framework travel plan.

Traffic generation for the development has been derived by undertaking traffic surveys of movements into and out of Walshaw Road, which provides access to 57 family sized houses. Based on data from these surveys (factored for 69 houses at Wiggan Farm) the AM weekday peak hour would be 27 departures, 11 arrivals (38 two-way movements). The PM weekday peak hour would be 13 departures, 24 arrivals (37 two-way movements). This generation would have a negligible (if any) impact on the local highway network.

An updated review of personal injury accidents has taken place for the years 2016 to 2020. During that period, 1 accident occurred on Walshaw Road, whereby a car drove into two other parked-up cars. All the occupants (5) received slight injuries. No accidents were recorded on Towngate Road, which has a continuous footway to the rear of the grass verge for school pupils to use. Given the modest increase in traffic generated by the development, there is no reason to believe that the safety of pupils walking to school would be compromised.

Speed measurements have been taken along Towngate Road, revealing an 85th percentile of 25 mph. This would accord with visibility splays from the site access of 2.4 metres x 32 metres. In fact, greater than 32 metres has been achieved, as a consequence of providing a 2 metres wide footway along the development site frontage.

Facilities within the village, including Bradfield School, are within acceptable walking distances of the site. The bus service is one per hour (where the buses pass each other two-way) connecting with the City Centre to the south, and in a northerly direction up through Oughtibridge. The stops are on Haggstones Road, close to the junction with Walshaw Road. There’s a public footpath running along the western boundary of the site. A spur would be created into the site from it, offering a route to the bus stops via Walshaw Road. A framework travel plan has been submitted with the application, upon which a detailed travel plan will be

based, and operated upon occupation.

Regarding the 57-bus service passing through Worrall, this is due to be axed from 02/10/2022. However, due to public reaction, Stagecoach has, at short notice, agreed to run the Stocksbridge Flyer through Worrall on a trial basis to assess demand, which will be the 57a service.

Highways Conclusion

The amount of traffic generated by the development can be readily accommodated on the adjoining highways without threatening highway safety or giving rise to any residual cumulative impacts on the road network that are considered to be severe (Framework paragraph 111). The proposal is considered to be acceptable from a highway perspective and in accordance with UDP Policy H14 and H15 as well as the Framework.

Residential Amenity

Paragraph 130(f) of the Framework identifies that development should create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. Development should also be appropriate for its location taking account of the effects of pollution on health and living conditions, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development (paragraph 185).

Policies H14 (Conditions on Development in Housing Areas) and H15 (Design of New Housing Developments) are considered to align with the Framework as they expect new housing developments to provide good quality living accommodation to ensure that basic standards of daylight, privacy, security and outlook are met for existing and future residents.

Policy H15 (Design of New Housing Developments) expects developments to provide adequate private gardens or communal open space to ensure that basic standards of daylight, privacy, security and outlook are met for all residents. These local policies retain weight as they seek to ensure existing and future users are offered a good standard of amenity which accords with the aims of the Framework.

The indicative layout plans seek to show that the site could accommodate up to 67 dwellings. The dwellings are shown to be a mixture of 2 bedroomed detached and semi-detached bungalows, 3 bedroomed semi-detached and terraced housing, 4 bedroomed 2.5 storey semi-detached and detached dwellings, and 4 bedroomed 2 storey detached and semi-detached dwellings.

Some of the rear gardens of the properties appear small, particularly for 4 bedroomed properties and some of the plots appear to be very close to the protected trees that bound the site; and may potentially result in calls for their removal due to overshadowing.

The revised proposal, retaining the farmhouse would squeeze the development further, with no space for development forward of the farmhouse.

It is acknowledged that the plans are only indicative and that the site layout is reserved for subsequent approval; however as indicated it is considered that on balance the proposal would pose an overdevelopment of the site.

It is however, considered that a residential development could be devised that protects the amenities of existing residents from overlooking, overshadowing, overbearing while providing suitable living conditions for future residents.

However, traffic movements associated with the scheme would not be insignificant and it is considered that the narrowing of the access in close proximity to both the farmhouse and No.20 Towngate Road would be likely to have an unacceptable effect upon the residential amenity of occupiers of these properties, through noise and general disturbance from vehicle and pedestrian movements. No. 20 is set at a lower level and people accessing the site would be able to overlook the rear garden and windows of this property.

The indicative layout shows some of the properties to have small rear amenity areas, particularly for the size of the properties. The application seeks permission for up to 67 dwellings, it is anticipated that in order to ensure adequate amenity levels, the development would need to have less than this maximum number.

On balance the development would not be considerate to the residential amenity of occupiers of neighbouring dwellings and the amenity of occupiers of the proposed development is potentially not as good as it could be if a less dense layout were to be pursued.

Landscape and Ecology Issues

Policy CS74 of the Core Strategy expects high-quality development that respects and enhances the distinctive features of the city including its Green Networks, important habitats, waterways, woodlands, and other natural features.

Policy GE11 of the UDP seeks to protect and enhance the natural environment and promote nature conservation. UDP Policy BE6 requires new development to provide a suitable landscape scheme with regards to new planting and/or hard landscaping and details of existing vegetation that is to be removed or retained.

Paragraph 174 (a) and (d) of the Framework identifies that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment, mitigating harm on and provide net gains in biodiversity. If significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused.

It is considered that the local policy aims of protecting and enhancing ecology are compatible with the Framework and therefore retain substantial weight.

The application is accompanied by an Ecological Impact Assessment report (EclA), dated October 2021, which identifies those habitats and species present on site and assesses the potential impact on the identified habitats.

An updated bat survey was undertaken and this found two of the buildings to be the site of summer bat roosts. As such a Natural England licensing would be required for the destruction of the day roosts.

Trees on site have been assessed as having bat roost potential, but are expected to be retained.

Hedgehogs are confirmed as present in the general Worrall area and local residents have confirmed that they have been seen on site. Hedgehogs have suffered significant declines in recent decades and are considered a conservation priority. The measures proposed by the consultants are acceptable (sections 6.2.6.1 and 6.2.6.2 of the EclA).

The proposals need to demonstrate compliance with the NPPF and the mitigation hierarchy: the principles of 'avoid, mitigate, compensate'.

Whilst it is agreed that the habitats found on site could be considered to be of 'low value', the scheme will still need to deliver a measurable 'net gain' in biodiversity in line with the Environment Act 2021.

The current indicative plan shows a densely laid out development with no communal green-space or area that could be considered as an enhancement for wildlife.

The loss of buildings on site is a significant concern. These are used by bats (albeit low numbers) and feral pigeons and clearly have potential for species such as swallow, house martin, house sparrow and barn owl. Enhancement measures in an approved scheme should provide extensive compensatory habitat provision for species such as these. These would be set out in a Biodiversity Enhancement Management Plan (BEMP).

In its current form the development does not demonstrate how a net gain for biodiversity may be brought about and given the dense form of development on site the layout as indicated would not be conducive to net gain. However, the proposal is outline only and it is considered that a development which did secure net gain could be achieved at outline stage and through the imposition of appropriate condition. As such it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in relation to biodiversity.

Sustainability

Chapter 14 of the Framework deals with the challenges of climate change and identifies the planning system as playing a key role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and supporting renewable and low carbon energy. Paragraph 157 of the Framework makes it clear that new development should comply with local requirements for decentralised energy supply unless it is not feasible and viable, and take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption.

The Climate Change and Design Supplementary Planning Document and Practice

Guide 2011 supports Policy CS63 of the Core Strategy which sets out the overarching approach to reducing the city's impact on climate change which includes prioritising sustainably located development well served by public transport, development of previously developed land and the adoption of sustainable drainage systems.

Policy CS64 of the Core Strategy seeks to ensure that new buildings are designed to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases through high standards of energy efficient design. Policy CS65 promotes renewable energy and carbon reduction and requires developments to provide a minimum of 10% of their predicted energy needs from decentralised and renewable or low carbon energy. An equivalent reduction in energy demands via a fabric first approach is now also accepted.

These local policies are considered to robustly align with the Framework and are afforded substantial weight.

The site is sustainably located within the existing built up area of Worrall. As this is an outline application the applicant has not provided any detailed information on how they intend to meet the requirements of CS65, however such details could be secured by condition.

Drainage and Flooding

Core Strategy Policy CS 67 (Flood Risk Management) seeks to reduce the extent and impact of flooding and requires the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems or sustainable drainage techniques, where feasible and practicable. Policy CS 63 (Responses to Climate Change) also promotes the adoption of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS).

The Framework seeks to ensure that areas at little or no risk of flooding are developed (Flood Zone 1) in preference to areas at higher risk (Flood Zones 2 and 3). It also seeks to reduce the effects of flooding through the use of sustainable drainage systems. CS 63 and 67 are considered to be compatible with the Framework in terms of reducing the impacts of flooding and therefore retain substantial weight.

The site is in Flood Zone 1 (the lowest risk of flooding). The management of surface water is therefore the primary consideration. The Environment Agency's surface water flooding maps show that a small part of the site, where some of the existing buildings are located, is at low risk of surface water flooding.

The applicant's FRA identifies that the use of SUDS is not appropriate for this site.

The Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) concur with the applicant's assessment that ground conditions (infiltration), site gradients and the absence of watercourses may rule out the use of SuDs.

Surface water is proposed to discharge, at a restricted rate, to the combined sewer on Walshaw Road. Below ground tanks are indicated to provide surface water storage. Yorkshire Water has no objection to the scheme subject to conditions

requiring the discharge of surface water to be reduced, the submission of detailed drainage design and for further detailed assessment of all available SuDs methods. Yorkshire Water have also set out that a water main crosses the red line site boundary. The presence of the main may affect the layout of the site and no obstruction should encroach within 3 metres on either side of the main i.e. a protected strip width of 6 metres. It may be possible for the main to be diverted under s.185 of the Water Industry Act 1991. These works would be carried out at the developer's expense.

It is considered that the site could be appropriately developed in relation to drainage and flooding subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions.

Land Contamination

Para 183 of the NPPF identifies that planning decisions should ensure that a site is suitable for its proposed use taking account of ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability and contamination. This includes risks arising from natural hazards or former activities such as mining.

As part of the previous application, a Phase 1 site investigation report was submitted which recommended that further site investigations are required to establish potential of ground contamination. The report confirmed that the development is unlikely to be influenced by ground gas associated with coal seams or historic landfill.

The Council's Environmental Protection Service recommend that a series of conditions are attached to secure further site investigations and any remediation measures necessary to protect future residents.

Affordable Housing

The site falls in the Rural Upper Don Housing Market Area. The Council's CIL and Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) requires 10% of the gross internal floor area of the development to be transferred to a Registered Provider at the Transfer Price, subject to viability. Affordable housing should be delivered on site unless a robust justification for an off-site financial contribution is made in accordance with the Framework (Paragraph 63).

As this application has been submitted in outline with all matters, except access reserved, the exact number of dwellings, design and layout of the scheme is not known.

The applicant has set out in their planning statement that the proposed development will meet the full 10% affordable housing requirement. The mix of house types and tenure proposed will be determined at the subsequent detailed reserved matters. Should permission be granted a S106 agreement would need to be completed to secure the affordable housing provision.

The Council's housing are recommending additional social-rented properties with four or more bedrooms to address the current extremely low provision of this type

in the area. The Government now requires 25% of the affordable units to be made available as First Homes (which are discounted home ownership), so the development should provide a mix of affordable tenures. Such matters could be addressed at reserved matters stage.

Health Facility Issues

Residents and the NHS trust have raised concerns with the existing capacity of medical practices and their ability to cope with additional service demands associated with this and other recently permitted schemes in the Oughtibridge area.

The perceived capacity issues are acknowledged however a development such as this, for up to 67 dwellings, falls well below the threshold (1000 dwellings) identified in the CIL and planning obligations SPD where financial contributions, beyond those secured through CIL, are required for health-related infrastructure. Any enhancement of local health care facilities will need to be delivered through the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Education Issues

The Councils School Organisation Team have been consulted on the application and have not provided a response; however in dealing with the previous outline application for 67 dwellings which was determined in December 2020, they identified that the site is in the catchment area for Oughtibridge Infant and Junior School (primary) and Bradfield School (secondary).

The potential additional yield of school age children generated from this development is anticipated to exacerbate existing capacity issues. Forecasts show there will be continuing capacity issues at primary and secondary level in the catchment in the coming years; however forecasts suggest that secondary school pupils at least can be accommodated at other local schools.

The above information is out of date, potential education capacity issues are acknowledged, however the development of this site falls well below the thresholds (500+ dwellings for primary and 1000+ for secondary) set out in the CIL and Planning Obligations SPD whereby section 106 education contributions are required. Any additional education provision will therefore need to be funded through CIL or other funding streams.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Sheffield has an adopted Community Infrastructure Charging schedule. The site falls within CIL Charging Zone 3. Within this zone there is a CIL charge of £30 per square metre, plus an additional charge associated with the national All-in Tender Price Index for the calendar year in which planning permission is granted, in accordance with Schedule 1 of The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010. The funds generated through CIL will be used in connection with strategic infrastructure needs.

Public Art

Policy BE12 of the UDP identifies that public art should be an integral part of the design of major developments.

As this is an outline application no details of the inclusion of public art are provided at this stage but they could be secured by condition.

RESPONSE TO REPRESENTATIONS

Measures to mitigate the impacts of the construction phase can be secured by requiring the submission of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

Any impact on property values, whether perceived to be positive or negative, is not a planning matter.

The application was advertised in accordance with the Council's adopted Code of Best Practice for consultation on planning application. Individual letters of notification were sent out, notices were posted on site and a press notice was published in the Sheffield Telegraph.

In planning legislation there is no right to a view across another person's land.

The structural stability of boundary walls is a private matter.

The development falls below the threshold where an air quality assessment is required.

All other issues are covered in the main body of the report.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Outline planning permission to erect up to 67 dwelling houses is proposed. Access is the only matter under consideration. The external appearance, layout, scale and landscaping (reserved matters) of the site are reserved for subsequent approval.

The site comprises of a number of farm buildings and low quality agricultural land. In principle the redevelopment of the farmland does not conflict with local or more up to date national policy which seeks to protect the highest quality agricultural land.

The site is in an established Housing Area in the UDP where the principle of housing development is supported. The site is in part previously developed land but is largely a greenfield site. It is located within the built up area of Worrall where development is supported by policy CS24 as completions of properties on greenfield sites have not reached the 12% and are closer to 5%.

The Council is unable to demonstrate a five year supply of housing land and so the 'tilted balance' comes into play whereby sustainable development should be

supported. The redevelopment of suitably located windfall sites such as this is supported by the Framework as they can make an important contribution to boosting the supply of new housing.

The benefits of the scheme include the provision of housing in the absence of a 5 year housing land supply on a sustainably located site in the existing urban area. There are also economic benefits from the construction of the development and increased spending in the local area, as well as social benefits in creating new homes.

The harm includes the loss of a non-designated heritage asset, through the demolition of the stone barn on the road frontage which would be removed to provide the access into the site. The barn has a high local heritage value and has been locally listed. There are also three grade II listed buildings in the vicinity.

It is considered that the development would cause harm to the designated and non-designated heritage assets, through the demolition of the barn and the close proximity of the development to the farmhouse and neighbouring listed buildings, and so this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the scheme.

Whilst the amended plans which seek the retention of the farm building go some way to reduce harm caused it is still considered that the development would overall be harmful to the character and appearance of the area.

The proximity of the access to both the farmhouse and No.20 Towngate Road would be detrimental to the residential amenity of occupiers of those properties as there would be unacceptable overlooking, noise and general disturbance.

The proposal is largely similar to the previous 2020 refusal and this is a material planning consideration. In the period since that decision was issued the Council is now unable to demonstrate a 5 year Housing Land Supply and thus the tilted balance is engaged.

Overall when weighed in the balance the benefits of the scheme are not considered to significantly outweigh the harm that the proposed development would bring about.

The scheme is considered to be contrary to UDP Policy BE5, BE15, BE19, BE20 and H14 of the Unitary Development Plan and guidance contained within the revised National Planning Policy Framework. Notably paragraphs 130, and 199 - 203.

It is recommended that planning permission be refused.