



SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL Cabinet Report

Report of: Executive Director (Place) and
Executive Director (Children, Young People & Families)

Date: 08 May 2013

Subject: Future Use of Wisewood Secondary School &
Spider Park

Author of Report: Dave Mason (27 34617)

Summary:

Following the decision to close Wisewood Secondary School and subsequent community consultation regarding the site's future use, Cabinet authorised the Director of Property and Facilities Management (now Director of Capital & Major Projects) to develop a sustainable and suitable business case for the site that would deliver the priorities identified in the consultation.

This report outlines work undertaken so far and recommends a swap of land uses between part of the former school site, on which a new children's play area would be developed, and part of Spider Park, which would be sold and developed for housing to fund the new play area.

The report also recommends the adoption of a sustainable solution for continued community use of the former Wisewood Secondary School playing fields.

Reasons for Recommendations:

Implementing the proposals in this report would contribute towards the outcome of making Sheffield a Great Place to Live, as identified in Standing Up for Sheffield, the Council's Corporate Plan.

A swap of land uses between the former Wisewood Secondary School site and Spider Park would allow the creation of a better quality play area in a safer, more accessible location.

It would also allow the Council to realise a greater capital receipt than if it were to sell part of the former school site, which is not suitable for housing due to the proximity of the new floodlit sports pitch.

The development of a new children's play area on part of the former school site would help meet an identified shortage of children's play in the local area and complete the creation of a recreational hub including sports centre, artificial sports pitch and community garden.

The development of a small amount of housing at the top of Spider Park would provide natural surveillance over the remaining parkland and make the thoroughfare between Dial House Road and Sevenfields Lane safer to use.

Licensing or leasing the former Wisewood Secondary School playing fields to a Football Association endorsed football club will meet central government requirements regarding the protection of former school playing fields as a community resource and ensure that sufficient investment can be secured for the sustainable maintenance of the amenity for the people of Sheffield.

Recommendations:

- R1 That the former Wisewood Secondary School playing fields shown at Appendix A and those areas of the former school site shown edged red at Appendix B be declared surplus to the requirements of the Children, Young People and Families portfolio.
- R2 That subject to the outcome of public consultation and the provision of replacement open space the public open space at Spider Park shown edged red at Appendix C be declared surplus to the requirements of the City Council.
- R3 That the public open space at Spider Park shown edged red at Appendix C be disposed subject to advertising the same and no public objections being upheld.
- R4 That the former playing fields shown at Appendix A be licensed or leased to an appropriate junior football club endorsed by Sheffield and Hallamshire FA.
- R5 That the former school library building be leased to RIVA Project for use as a project base
- R6 That the land shown in green at Appendix B be leased to RIVA Project for use as a garden area to be developed and maintained for the use of the community

- R7 That the former Wisewood Secondary School caretaker's house be leased to the local District Nurses for use as a drop-in office base
- R8 That the Director of Capital and Major Projects be authorised to agree final terms for the disposals above, including the variation of any boundaries as required, and to instruct the Director of Legal Services to complete the necessary legal documentation
- R9 That the land shown in blue at Appendix B be developed as a new play area of the scale and quality indicated by the design now shown at Appendix E
- R10 That Cabinet notes that the Director of Culture & Environment will bring forward, as part of the monthly budget monitoring report, a capital approval submission to deliver the new play area using the resources identified in Section 8.3 of this report and taking into account any changes arising from public consultation.
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Background Papers:

Category of Report: OPEN except for Appendix G: CLOSED

Statutory and Council Policy Checklist

Financial Implications
YES Cleared by: Paul Schofield
Legal Implications
YES Cleared by: Andrea Simpson
Equality of Opportunity Implications
YES Cleared by: Ian Oldershaw
Culture and Environment Implications
YES Cleared by: James Barnes
Tackling Health Inequalities Implications
NO
Human rights Implications
NO
Environmental and Sustainability implications
YES
Economic impact
NO
Community safety implications
YES
Human resources implications
NO
Property implications
YES
Area(s) affected
Central Community Assembly
Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Leader
Cllr Isobel Bowler Cllr Jackie Drayton
Relevant Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee if decision called in
Economic and Environmental Wellbeing Children, Young People & Family Support
Is the item a matter which is reserved for approval by the City Council?
NO
Press release
YES

Future Use of Wisewood Secondary School & Spider Park

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 Following the decision to close Wisewood Secondary School and subsequent community consultation regarding the site's future use, Cabinet authorised the Director of Property and Facilities Management (now Director of Capital & Major Projects) to develop a sustainable and suitable business case for the site that would deliver the priorities identified in the consultation.
- 1.2 This report outlines work undertaken so far and recommends a swap of land uses between part of the former school site, on which a new children's play area would be developed, and part of Spider Park, which would be sold and developed for housing to fund the new play area.
- 1.3 The report also recommends the adoption of a sustainable solution for continued community use of the former Wisewood Secondary School playing fields.

2. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR SHEFFIELD PEOPLE

- 2.1 The proposals outlined in this report would improve local open space provision for the Wisewood and Wadsley neighbourhoods, provide new homes for sale in the same area, and potentially achieve a capital receipt for the City Council to invest in spending priorities for the city as a whole.

3. OUTCOME AND SUSTAINABILITY

- 3.1 The provision of a new play area would complete the formation of a "recreational hub" at the former Wisewood School site, complementing the existing Wisewood Sports Centre and floodlit artificial pitches and sitting alongside a planned community garden. Together, these uses represent a sustainable future for the site.
- 3.2 The development of housing at the top of Spider Park would provide natural surveillance over the remaining parkland, making it a safer area to use and less likely to suffer from anti-social behaviour. It would also improve safety for users of the footpath between Dial House Road and Sevenfields Lane.
- 3.3 Licensing or leasing the former Wisewood Secondary School playing fields to a Football Association endorsed football club would ensure that sufficient investment can be secured for the sustainable maintenance of the amenity for the people of Sheffield.

4. BACKGROUND & PROGRESS TO DATE

4.1 On 22 September 2010 Cabinet gave authority to consult with local people on the future use of the Wisewood School site. The report noted a commitment to retain part of the site for community use, the need for complementary uses that would help sustain the existing Wisewood Sports Centre and also the need for the Council to generate a receipt through the sale of part of the land.

4.2 Consultation took place in November and December 2010 and the results were reported to Cabinet on 27 April 2011. An indicative layout for the site was presented accommodating various preferences expressed during the consultation (see Appendix D). Cabinet supported the following:

- (i) The formation of a Management Board to ensure the community vision for the site is developed and delivered.
- (ii) Use of the playing field for wider community use via a suitable licence or lease to a suitable junior football club endorsed by Sheffield and Hallamshire FA.
- (iii) Proposals for an all-weather, floodlit multi-games area which supports the sustainability of the sports centre.
- (iv) Proposals for a community and youth space, and additional specialist indoor sports provision.
- (v) Proposals for a community garden (or similar).
- (vi) Proposals for appropriate car parking for the primary school, the existing sports centre and any additional facilities developed on site.
- (vii) Use of the Rural Lane building to provide a Police base for Police Community Safety Officers.
- (viii) Exploration of ownership of the site as a community owned asset.
- (ix) Disposal of area identified [this was an area shown as older persons housing]

Further feasibility work has taken place regarding these proposals and considerable progress has been made as outlined below.

4.3 Wisewood Stakeholder Group

The Wisewood Stakeholder Group was established partly to fulfil the role envisaged for a 'Management Board' in 4.2(i) above. The group comprises representatives of the local tenants & residents association, primary school, sports centre, church, neighbourhood watch, junior

football club, Pennine Housing and elected members as well as individual residents. The Group first met in December 2011 and has played a valuable role helping officers to develop a more detailed plan for the site.

4.4 Former School Playing Fields (Ben Lane)

Former school playing fields enjoy considerable central government legal protection to ensure that they are available for continued community use even after they are no longer required for educational usage. However, the maintenance of land no longer required for education use cannot be funded from the education budget earmarked for the school so a sustainable solution for the continued maintenance of the land has to be provided. Local sports clubs were invited to express their interest in taking on a lease of the former Wisewood School playing fields, the income from the lease to be invested back into the enhancement and maintenance of the site. Following a comprehensive selection process it is the recommendation of the Director of Capital & Major Projects that the lease be awarded to Wisewood Junior Football Club and that Cabinet now formally declare the site as surplus to the requirements of the Children, Young People and Families portfolio.

4.5 All Weather Floodlit Multi-Use Games Area

A new artificial pitch has been developed using funding from the Football Foundation. The pitches are to be managed by Wisewood Sports Centre and will help sustain the sports centre in the long term.

4.6 Car Parking

Alongside the new pitch lie 90 car parking spaces, enough to accommodate users both of the pitch and sports centre and also of other facilities in the locality.

4.7 Rural Lane Building

Following further discussion with South Yorkshire Police, the original Rural Lane school building proved not to be physically suitable as a base for the Community Support Officers. Therefore, that proposal has not been implemented and the building has been demolished. However, there is another building on Rural Lane - the former Caretaker's House.

4.8 Former Caretaker's House

The local District Nurses for the Wisewood, Wadsley and Hillsborough area expressed their interest in taking this property on as a drop-in office base. It is proposed to agree a lease that would require that the property is brought back up to standard. The front garden of the house would be included within a larger community garden (see 4.12).

4.9 Additional Indoor Sports Provision

Wadsley Bridge Table Tennis Club expressed an interest in taking on the former school library building with a view to making it their base.

Unfortunately, it was not possible to produce a viable business plan and that idea was not progressed. However, an alternative use has emerged for the library (see 4.10).

4.10 Former School Library: the RIVA Project

RIVA stands for Recreational Imaginative Vocational Activities for people with disabilities. The RIVA Project is a new enterprise that has evolved from a long established social provision for young people with disabilities called Riva Club that has been running for over 15 years. It was set up to meet the need for work based training provision for disabled adults in the city. RIVA approached the Council with a proposal to turn the former library building into their project base. Their ambitious plans (see 4.11) were shared with the Stakeholder Group and met with the Group's approval. It is proposed to lease the building to RIVA.

4.11 Café, Charity Shop, IT Suite and Meeting Room

RIVA plan to offer their clients as wide a range of work-based training opportunities as possible. Their first project would be the creation of a charity shop and a café with outside terrace. Both of these would be staffed by RIVA's clients. They would refurbish the library's IT suite and create a meeting room, both of which would be for the use of their clients and the local community. Their aim is to integrate their work as much as possible with the wider community to derive the maximum benefit for local people from the new facilities they create.

4.12 Community Garden

The Stakeholder Group discussed the proposal for a community garden and suggested that the Rural Lane frontage would be a sensible location, capitalising on its existing mature trees and attractive boundary. Following discussion with RIVA, their proposed lease for the library building would also include this land (see Appendix B), which they would be required to maintain as a garden area in partnership with and for the use of the local community. Developing and maintaining the garden would offer further training opportunities for RIVA's clients as well as helping them engage with local people.

5. CURRENT SITUATION

5.1 The completion of the pitches and parking and the emerging solutions for the library, community garden and caretaker's house leaves only the north-western part of the site to be addressed, at the corner of Rural Lane and Laird Road. In the 2011 Cabinet report, this was to be the parcel of land sold to generate a capital receipt for the Council, and the indicative layout from that report shows a possible older persons housing development, which was a favoured option in the consultation.

5.2 However, given the presence of a new floodlit sports facility opening

late into the evening, this is no longer a desirable location for housing, certainly not for the suggested client group of older people. More detailed discussions with planners have confirmed that an application to develop housing in such close proximity to the pitch may not be supported. Indeed, planners sought assurances that the former Caretaker's House would not return to residential use before granting permission for the new pitch and floodlights.

- 5.3 Working with the Stakeholder Group it was concluded that it was more appropriate for the remainder of the site to be developed in line with the other emerging uses on the site to complete a 'recreational hub': it was agreed that a play area would be the most suitable use for this location. However, there is no funding identified for a new play area, and the original intention was to dispose of any remaining land to generate a capital receipt for the Council. In light of these issues, the Stakeholder Group has looked beyond the confines of the Wisewood School site and considered the future of Spider Park.

6. PROPOSED LANDSWAP: SPIDER PARK

- 6.1 Spider Park is an open space accessed via Sevenfields Lane, off Ben Lane. It sits behind Hallowmoor Reservoir. Until recently, it was used as a compound by Pennine Housing's contractors whilst they completed their improvement works to the Wisewood estate.
- 6.2 The position of the park in relation to neighbouring properties means that it suffers from a complete lack of natural surveillance. There is no lighting in and around the park, which has attracted anti-social behaviour and can feel unsafe both as a place for children to play but also as a thoroughfare from Dial House Road.
- 6.3 There used to be play equipment in the park but now there is only a poor quality Astroturf mini football pitch and a picnic table. Limited funds have previously been identified for potential investment in the park.
- 6.4 The proposal is that a swap of land uses takes place between Spider Park and the former Wisewood School site. This would involve approximately 0.32ha of parkland being developed for private housing for sale, with the resulting lost open space being re-provided as a play area on approximately 0.32ha of the Wisewood school site.
- 6.5 The planning issues this proposal presents are detailed in the attached draft Informal Planning Advice Note (Appendix F). However, in summary, the development of housing at Spider Park is potentially acceptable provided that replacement open space of sufficient scale and quality is provided elsewhere in the locality. Funding for replacement provision and future maintenance would be secured via a legal agreement with the developer of Spider Park. Discussions with planning colleagues suggest that a 'local equipped area for play'

(LEAP) would be an acceptable standard of replacement in planning policy terms, comprising a minimum of five pieces of play equipment and aimed at younger children. To enable this to progress, this report seeks approval to dispose of the open space shown at Appendix C.

- 6.6 However, the replacement play area as described above would not entirely meet the aspirations of the community as communicated through the Stakeholder Group. The Group is keen to see a play area that does not simply replace space lost at Spider Park (which is of relatively low quality), but makes full use of the available space at the former school site and provides opportunities for children of all ages. The Group has worked with council officers on a potential design (see Appendix E). The design is based on natural play with boulders for climbing and makes the most of the existing landscape with a zipwire on top of the hill and a slide coming down it. There is an informal kickabout area and a mini pump track for bikes, skateboards and scooters. A café terrace would be created by RIVA at the rear of the library building, from where parents would be able to sit and watch their children play. The new play area would be maintained by the City Council and future maintenance funding would be included as part of the legal agreement with the developer.
- 6.7 This design shown at Appendix E is beyond the minimum standard of provision required through the planning process. It is proposed that additional Section 106 funding is employed to achieve this standard of provision, including that previously identified for investment in Spider Park. The full funding proposal is outlined in the Financial Implications.
- 6.8 The benefits of the proposed landswap are:
- Funding for a new play area including future maintenance
 - A safer, more accessible location for a play area than Spider Park
 - Natural surveillance over the remaining parkland to improve safety and reduce anti-social behaviour
 - Street lighting for the footpath from Dial House Road to Sevenfields Lane
 - Greater capital receipt for reinvestment in City priorities
- 6.9 Although the development of sheltered / older persons housing was a popular option for the Wisewood school site, there is not sufficient space to develop such a scheme on the available land at Spider Park, which would be best suited to family housing. However, there may be an opportunity to develop older persons housing on the site of the former Sevenfields Resource Centre on Ben Lane. This option will be investigated further and, if appropriate, will be the subject of a future Cabinet report.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The Stakeholder Group released a local newsletter in July 2012 describing the proposals for the play area, Spider Park and the potential opportunity at Sevenfields. This was followed up with a presentation at the Wisewood TARA AGM in November 2012. Feedback from both was positive. Wisewood Primary School also undertook a consultation exercise with their pupils and the children's aspirations are reflected in the design shown at Appendix E.
- 7.2 Subject to Cabinet approval to dispose of the open space, the disposal would be advertised in the local press (see Legal Implications). At the same time, there would be an opportunity to consult on:
- the principle of the landscap as outlined in the Informal Planning Advice Note (Appendix F)
 - the draft design for the play area (Appendix E)
- This would take place during June 2013 at a number of local events as agreed with the Stakeholder Group.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Design, development and 15 years of future maintenance of a new play area would be funded by a contribution from a developer of housing on Spider Park, which would be secured via a legal agreement as part of the planning process, to provide replacement open space of sufficient scale and quality to compensate for the loss of part of Spider Park. As detailed in the draft Informal Planning Advice Note attached at Appendix F, this contribution would be £183,220, which assumes £117,101 for maintenance.
- 8.2 A developer contribution of £183,220 would be sufficient to deliver a 'local equipped area for play' (LEAP), but to achieve the desired standard of play area shown at Appendix E, the Council would need to employ two additional Section 106 contributions. The funding proposal for the new play area is shown below.

8.3

Funding Source	£
<i>Funding to be derived from development of housing at Spider Park</i>	
• Developer Contribution to replacement and maintenance of open space lost at Spider Park	183,220
• Estimated s106 contribution to open space (<i>based on development of 8 four bedroom houses</i>)	16,356
<i>Existing funding previously identified for Spider Park</i>	
• Existing s106 contribution (ref. no. 579)	6,900
TOTAL	206,476

- 8.4 Based on current estimates, the funding identified above is sufficient to deliver the play area design shown at Appendix E.
- 8.5 The sale of the land at Spider Park should realise a capital receipt for the Council. A valuation has been undertaken and this is outlined in a Closed appendix to this report (Appendix G).
- 8.6 There are limited revenue implications relating to this proposal. Currently, there is an annual budget of £1,237 for grounds maintenance at Spider Park. This would reduce slightly following the sale of part of the park, but most of the parkland would remain to be maintained.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Council has the power to dispose of the land for the best consideration that can reasonably be obtained under section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 but section 123(2A) provides that no disposal of open space land can take place until notice of the intention to do so has been advertised for two consecutive weeks in a local newspaper and any objections to the proposed disposal have been considered.
- 9.2 Certain disposals relating to school sites are governed by specific legislation. Section 77 of the School Standards Framework Act 1998, as amended, protects school playing fields by requiring that the Secretary of State's consent is needed before disposing or changing the use of the school playing fields. A Class consent has been issued which covers the proposed lease to the junior football club so it is not necessary to apply for specific consent but the terms of the consent must be complied with by providing the Secretary of State with details of the disposal.

10. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Fundamentally this proposal is equality neutral, impacting all local people equally regardless of age, sex, race, faith, disability, sexuality, etc. However, it should prove particularly positive for young people and carers, many of whom should benefit from the proposals. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken. No negative equality impacts have been identified.

11. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 11.1 The alternative option is the original option: to dispose of part of the Wisewood school site and to invest limited funds in Spider Park. A masterplan for Spider Park was created in 2010 showing how the existing open space could potentially be developed following the removal of the compound that was then in place. However, to

implement that masterplan would cost more than the proposed play area at the Wisewood School site, and without the option to generate funding through residential development at Spider Park this would not be a viable proposition.

- 11.2 The potential to generate a significant receipt from the surplus land on the school site is limited given that housing would not be acceptable and retail use could threaten the existing local centre. In any event, the proposed play area at Wisewood would be superior to an enhanced Spider Park because of the safer, more accessible location.

12. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 12.1 Implementing the proposals in this report would contribute towards the outcome of making Sheffield a Great Place to Live, as identified in Standing Up for Sheffield, the Council's Corporate Plan.
- 12.2 A swap of land uses between the former Wisewood Secondary School site and Spider Park would allow the creation of a better quality play area in a safer, more accessible location.
- 12.3 It would also allow the Council to realise a greater capital receipt than if it were to sell part of the former school site, which is not suitable for housing due to the proximity of the new floodlit sports pitch.
- 12.4 The development of a new children's play area on part of the former school site would help meet an identified shortage of children's play in the local area and complete the creation of a recreational hub including sports centre, artificial sports pitch and community garden.
- 12.5 The development of a small amount of housing at the top of Spider Park would provide natural surveillance over the remaining parkland and make the thoroughfare between Dial House Road and Sevenfields Lane safer to use.
- 12.6 Licensing or leasing the former Wisewood Secondary School playing fields to a Football Association endorsed football club would meet central government requirements regarding the protection of former school playing fields as a community resource and ensure that sufficient investment can be secured for the sustainable maintenance of the amenity for the people of Sheffield.

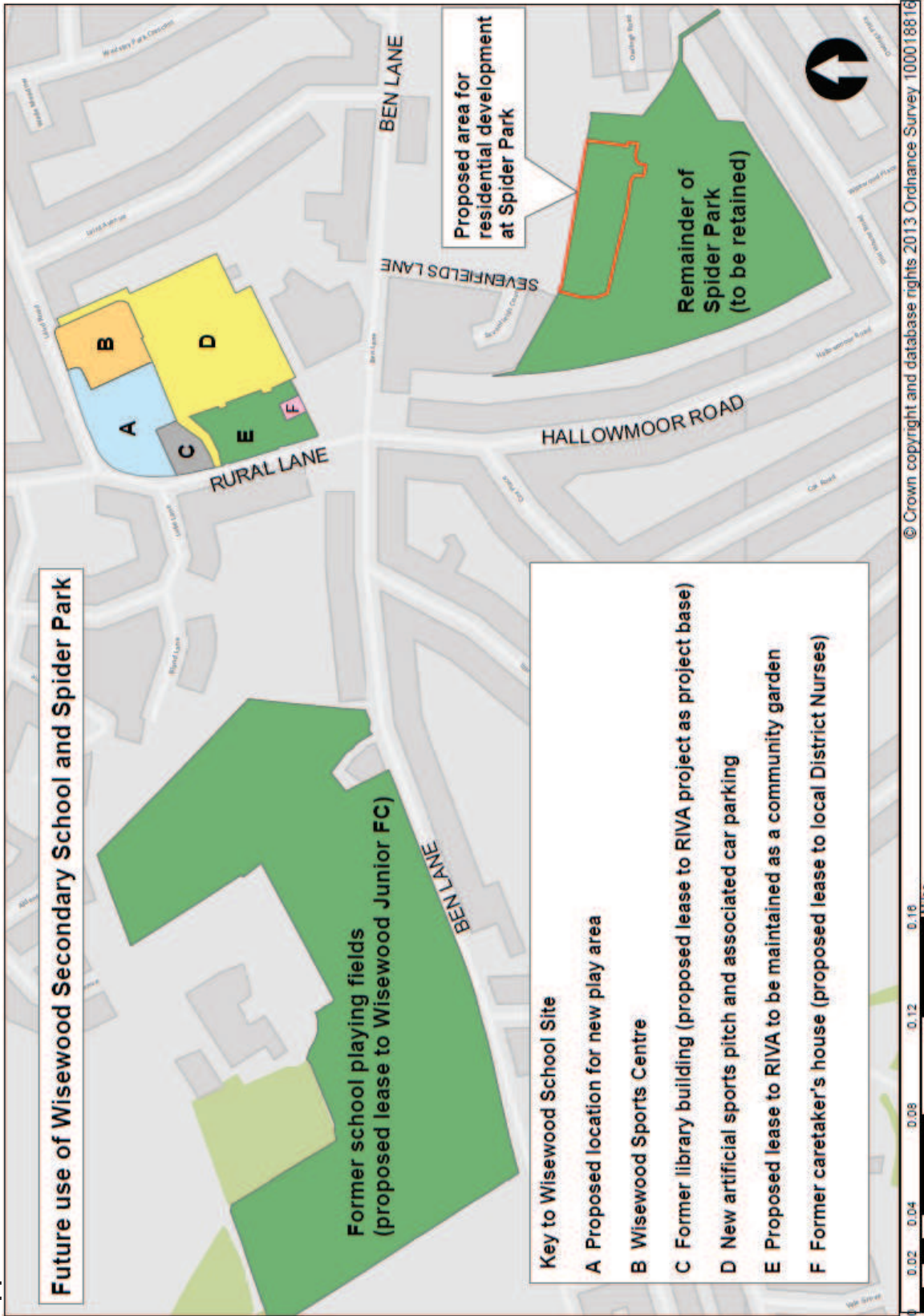
13. REASONS FOR EXEMPTION

- 13.1 Appendix G of this report is presented as an exempt item because it contains exempt information under paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended). The reason for its exemption is that the Appendix contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

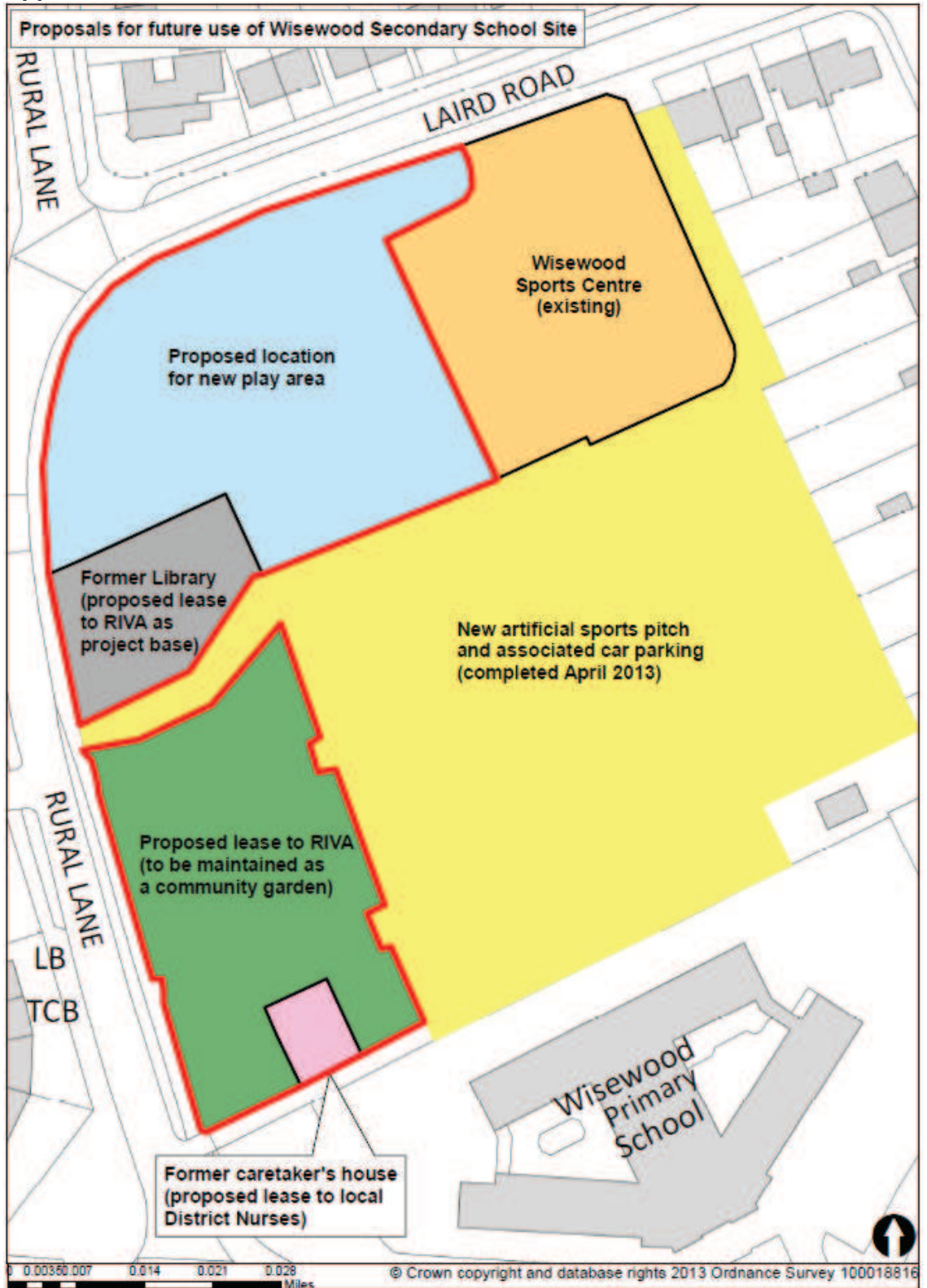
14. RECOMMENDATIONS

- R1 That the former Wisewood Secondary School playing fields shown at Appendix A and those areas of the former school site shown edged red at Appendix B be declared surplus to the requirements of the Children, Young People and Families portfolio.
- R2 That subject to the outcome of public consultation and the provision of replacement open space the public open space at Spider Park shown edged red at Appendix C be declared surplus to the requirements of the City Council.
- R3 That the public open space at Spider Park shown edged red at Appendix C be disposed subject to advertising the same and no public objections being upheld.
- R4 That the former playing fields shown at Appendix A be licensed or leased to an appropriate junior football club endorsed by Sheffield and Hallamshire FA.
- R5 That the former school library building be leased to RIVA Project for use as a project base
- R6 That the land shown in green at Appendix B be leased to RIVA Project for use as a garden area to be developed and maintained for the use of the community
- R7 That the former Wisewood Secondary School caretaker's house be leased to the local District Nurses for use as a drop-in office base
- R8 That the Director of Capital and Major Projects be authorised to agree final terms for the disposals above, including the variation of any boundaries as required, and to instruct the Director of Legal Services to complete the necessary legal documentation.
- R9 That the land shown in blue at Appendix B be developed as a new play area of the scale and quality indicated by the design now shown at Appendix E.
- R10 That Cabinet notes that the Director of Culture & Environment will bring forward, as part of the monthly budget monitoring report, a capital approval submission to deliver the new play area using the resources identified in Section 8.3 of this report and taking into account any changes arising from public consultation.

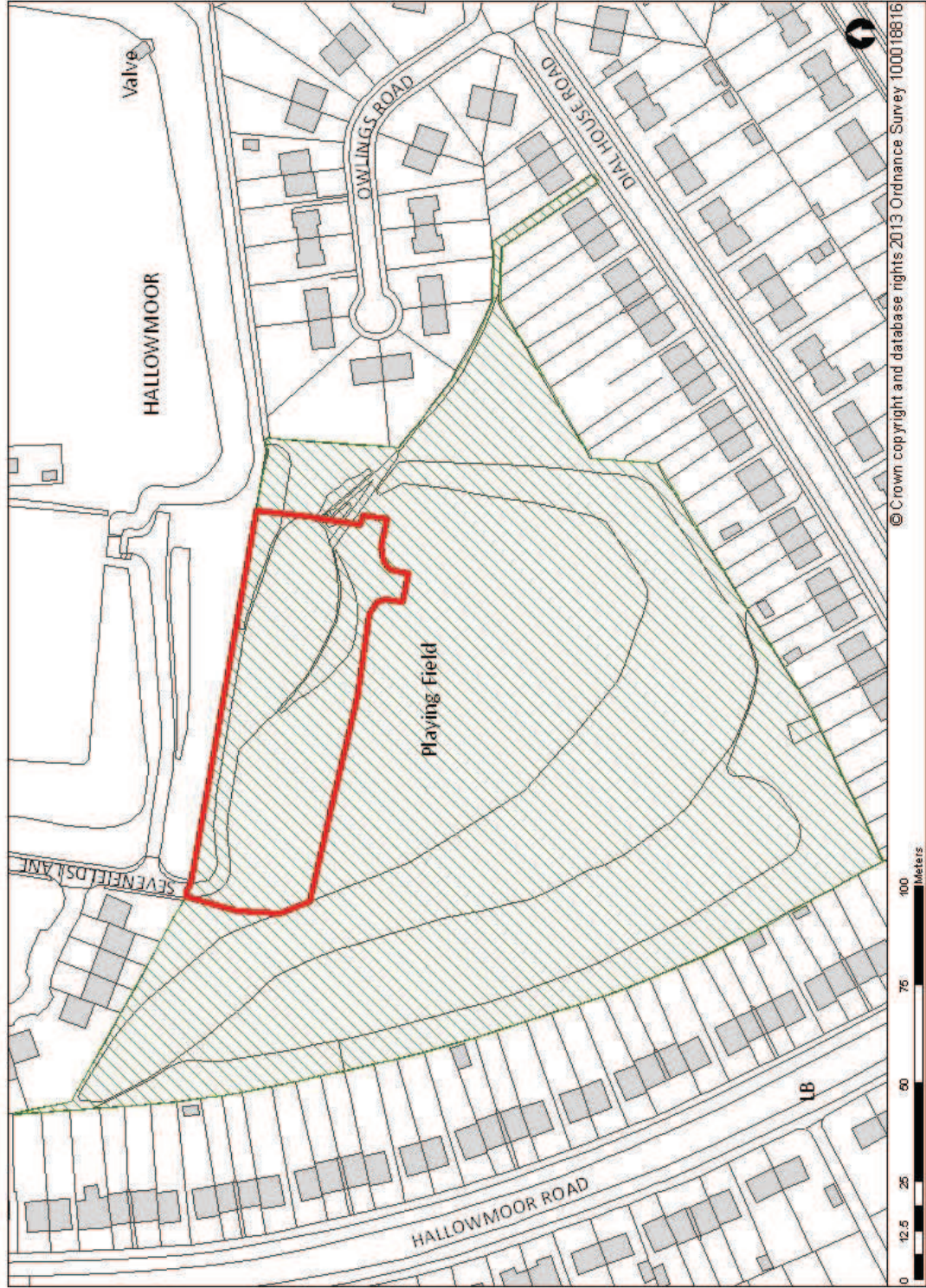
Appendix A



Appendix B



Appendix C: Proposed site for disposal at Spider Park (0.32ha)



Appendix D: Indicative layout from previous cabinet report (27/04/11). This is superseded by proposals within this report.



Appendix E: proposed design for new play area on former Wisewood School site – separate document

Appendix F: Draft Informal Planning Advice Note – separate document

Appendix G (CLOSED)

INFORMAL PLANNING AND DESIGN ADVICE NOTE March 2013

Land at Spider Park, Sevenfields Lane, Wisewood

Introduction

1. This note provides general planning advice on the development potential of the above site. It includes some design guidance based on planning policies, and indicative illustrations to demonstrate potential development capacity. It is an informal officer view given without prejudice to any decision made in the formal determination of a planning application.

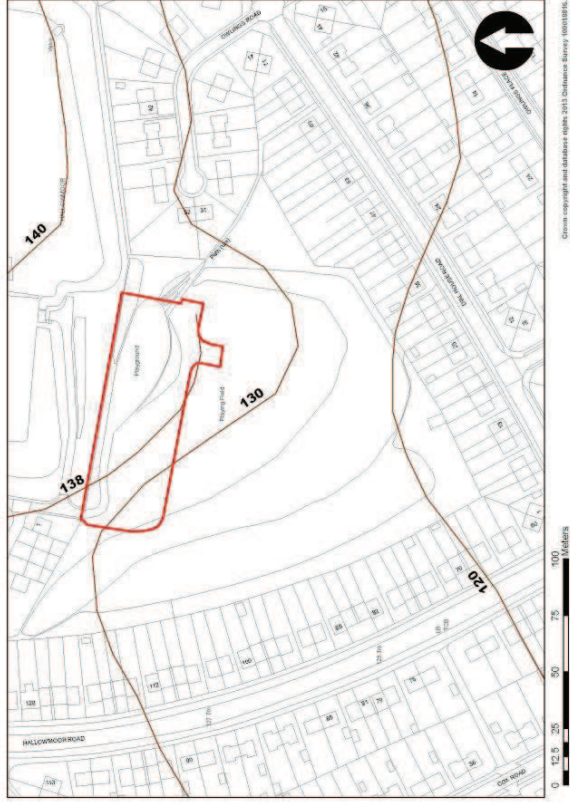
Executive Summary

2. Development of this land will result in the loss of open space which is unacceptable in principle. For a proposal to be acceptable a developer must provide an equivalent, or better, replacement open space within the local area. Standards in terms of quantity and quality are expected and are detailed in the body of this note and at Appendix 3. Further issues to consider are also highlighted including Highways, access and ground conditions.

Site Description

3. The site is 0.32 hectares and located off Sevenfields Lane on land that forms part of Spider Park. It is bounded to the north by an embankment forming part of a reservoir owned by Yorkshire Water. Spider Park is flat immediately in front of the site but drops steeply towards the back gardens of houses on Hallowmoor Road and Dial House Road.
4. Sevenfields Lane is the only vehicular access into the site and there is a pedestrian footpath from Dial House Road.
5. The site has been used in recent years as a site compound by Pennine Housing as part of their Decent Homes work in the local area. This ended in April 2012 and the site is now vacant and surfaced with tarmac.

Fig. 1 Red Line Plan



Assessment of Planning Issues

6. The following section discusses the principle issues relating to the risks for gaining planning consent for residential development. A detailed list of the relevant planning policies is included at Appendix 1.

Principle of Development

7. The loss of designated Open Space in an area that already has a shortage means that, in principle, the local planning authority would not support development here. If, however, a proposal could demonstrate that an equivalent, or better, open space, in terms of quantity and quality, could be replaced within the local area then a proposal for residential development may be acceptable.

Open Space

8. At 2.1 hectares, Spider Park is recognised in the Council's Open Space Audit (2008) as a 'Local Park'. Although the Audit gives it a 'poor' rating there is a quantitative shortage of Open Space per 1000 of the population in the local area (see Appendix 2: Open Space Assessment).
9. There is what appears to be a cricket wicket with goals at each end and the site is marked on the Ordnance Survey base map as a playing field. Sport England has been consulted. They have confirmed that they would not object to the loss of the open space because the site is not large enough to accommodate a formal cricket field and the 'pitch' does not meet any recommended football pitch dimensions.
10. Regardless of its quality a proposal which causes a further reduction in the amount of Open Space would be considered unacceptable by the local planning authority. The only way it could be considered acceptable is if an equivalent, or better, replacement of Open Space in terms of quality and quantity, within 400m of the site, could be provided.

The potential to replace the Open Space

11. The former Wisewood School site on Rural Lane provides an opportunity to replace the Open Space that would be lost at Spider Park; both in terms of quantity and quality. Fig. 2 shows the location of the two sites (370m apart) and Fig.5:

Illustrative Layout shows that there is enough land in area 'A1' to potentially convert to open space as a result of potential development on Spider Park.



12. Assessing the existing quality of the Open Space that would be lost at Spider Park will form the basis for how we judge what quality a replacement should be. We have assessed the landscape quality of Spider Park in order to identify the requirements for an equivalent, or better, replacement at the former Wisewood School site.
13. The Open Space Audit gives the site a 'poor' rating; out of 8 assessment criteria the quality of the paths, grass and mature trees were rated 'poor' and signage, bins, seats and information board did not receive any score at all due to their absence or very poor quality. In addition, the following observations have been made:
 - a) Generally the park has a poor landscape value with large areas of uncut amenity rank grassland, some mature trees around the boundary and dense areas of shrub planting creating visibility issues to some areas of the park.
 - b) The space has no real play provision and has a semi derelict feel from the condition of past equipment installed on the site
 - c) Parts of the park have a semi-natural feel and its elevated position affords views across the Loxley Valley
 - d) The entire space suffers from a complete lack of natural surveillance from both passing routes and from the surrounding housing giving the impression of a left over space after a housing development has been laid out.
 - e) Access for pedestrians is generally poor partly due to the negotiation of steep topography but it's also made worse by

the tight uncomfortable corridors that have to be negotiated to enter the space from the lower side.

- f) During a site visit in the spring of 2012, after a prolonged period of dry conditions, it had very wet ground conditions especially on the top flat area of the site, thus making it unsuitable for formal sports and discouraging general play.
- g) The general topography of the site doesn't allow for any potential formal sports activities.

14. In conclusion, although the overall quality of Spider Park is poor the site's open space setting is important. This relates to the perception of the space; its openness, aspect and sense of boundary. This setting cannot be easily replaced and providing a grassed area of land at the former Wisewood School site would not be a sufficient replacement. However, with some investment, the replacement site could be improved to compensate for the loss of Open Space and also meet an identified local need. The Open Space Assessment identifies a lack of children's play in the local area which the site at the former school could accommodate. Developing Spider Park will also improve its quality by introducing natural surveillance and ownership of the remaining Open Space.

Children's Play Area - Specification

15. We would recommend a 'local equipped area for play' (LEAP) to serve a wide range of abilities, containing at least 5 items of equipment offering a range of activities. It should be designed inclusively with regards to seating, firm surface access to equipment and seats, and (as far as possible depending on availability) inclusive play equipment. Appendix 3 shows the outline estimate costs of a LEAP that the local planning authority would expect to be achieved at Wisewood. The Council is unable to undertake the future maintenance of the replacement open space due to financial constraints. As a result the children's play area will need to be supported by a funded maintenance plan. The size of the open space offers the potential to create a larger 'neighbourhood equipped area for play' (NEAP), offering a greater number of play experiences, subject to the employment of additional funds to be agreed with the Council.

16. Depending on the extent of groundworks, the site at the former Wisewood School may need to be checked for its archaeological potential.

Legal Agreement to replace the Open Space

17. The local planning authority would require a bi-lateral agreement between the Council and the developer to ensure that the Open Space lost at Spider Park was adequately replaced at the former Wisewood School site.
18. Additional S106 costs will also be incurred and are detailed at Appendix 1.

Highways and Rights of Way

19. Sevenfields Lane is an adopted public highway all the way to the proposed development site, although it narrows as it approaches Spider Park which may require some improvements. There's a footway along one side of the carriageway, which terminates at the vehicular entrance of the reservoir, from thence creating a shared surface for pedestrians and vehicles. Sevenfields Court joins the shared section of Sevenfields Lane and serves a number of residential properties.
20. In principle, Highways advise that small-scale residential development would be acceptable on the site as it wouldn't generate too many additional vehicular trips. However, there are some issues to consider as part of a design, outlined below.
21. The footway at the entrance to Spider Park will need upgrading to allow safe access for all users, including dropped curbs across the entrance to the reservoir. The footway will need to extend to the length of Sevenfields Lane and upgraded to a width of 2000mm to allow two wheelchairs to pass one another comfortably.
22. A new road within the site should be to an adoptable standard. It will not be necessary to have a footway on both sides of a new road but the footway should be 2000mm wide to accommodate the Public Right of Way which runs across Spider Park from Owlings Road to Sevenfields Lane. Any change to the alignment of the footpath or any closure thereof is likely to warrant a Highways Order and would be a cost implication for a developer. Only the Council can process a Highways Order and approximately 9 months should be built into any works programme to take account of the decision making and closure process.
23. The other side of the road should include a 700mm margin to accommodate street lighting and to soften the transition from road to grass. A landscaping scheme will be expected to accompany a planning application specifying details of materials and boundary treatments.

24. The footpath from Dial House Road will need some improvements to allow access for all pedestrians and additional lighting to promote personal safety and security.

Geo-technical and Geo-environmental Issues

25. A Phase 1 Geo-environmental and Geotechnical Assessment (Desk Study) and intrusive investigations have been carried out. They conclude that, at present, there do not appear to be any major geotechnical constraints to developing the site. There are, however, a number of aspects that should be taken into consideration when assessing the feasibility and design of a scheme.

26. The key issues relating to the principle of development are:

- The made ground has been obtained from cut and fill activity and is highly variable and not suitable for founding upon and it is recommended that piled foundations are used.
- The results of the intrusive investigation recommends that the site is unsuitable for soakaways and consideration will have to be given to discharging surface water to a piped system. However, the potential for Sustainable Urban Drainage should still be factored into a scheme in line with Sheffield City Council's "Core Strategy CS67 Flood Risk Management", and the "Climate Change and Design Supplementary Planning Document Practice Guide March 2011" should be referred to.
- The site is not in an area where radon protection measures are required for new properties, and no elevated levels of ground or landfill gases have been found on the site.
- Laboratory testing has recorded no contamination to date and no special precautions are necessary in this regard.
- The Intrusive Investigation report stresses that there is no direct evidence of the reservoir leaking, which is anecdotal at present. Nevertheless it is recommended that this is discussed with Yorkshire Water as leakage may have implications for the overall stability of the embankment.

27. The Council's Environmental Protection Service has no significant concerns with the findings of the reports, and considers that the made ground is unlikely to present a risk to end users due to chemical contamination.

Housing

28. The location of the site in the urban area suggests that a density between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare (dph) would be most suitable. Based on a net area of 0.32ha the minimum capacity of the site would be 7 dwellings with a maximum of 12 dwellings. Densities outside of this range may be allowed where they achieve good design or reflect the character of the area. A proposal for new housing should seek to increase the mix of new housing, homes for larger households, especially families.

Ecology

29. A proposal for development of this site should have a Bat Scoping Assessment and any clearing of shrubs should be outside of the bird breeding season to prevent breeding birds from being disturbed (Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)).
30. A method statement should be drawn up as to how Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) on the site will be dealt with. Japanese Knotweed is classified as controlled waste and has to go to a licensed landfill site registered to deal with this type of waste. Care should be taken not to spread it across the site as it can regenerate from tiny fragments of stem and root.

Urban Design Framework

31. The Urban Design Framework should be used to help design a scheme for the site. The illustrative layout is one idea based on 8 no. 4-bed family houses but is not the only option. The garden lengths should be long enough to ensure that there is a 12m distance from the reservoir embankment to the dwellinghouse in order to avoid any issues of overbearing. The driveways are shown as 3.3m wide along their full length to accommodate up to 2 cars and are compliant with Lifetime Homes Standards.

Fig. 3 - Site Appraisal



Fig. 4 - Urban Design Framework



Fig. 5 - Development capacity study – illustrative layout
 This has Development Management in principle support but is not the only option.



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Appendix 1: Development Plan Policy Current Planning Policy Documents

The UDP was adopted in 1998 as the statutory development plan for Sheffield. The Core Strategy was adopted in 2009 and supersedes some of the policies in the UDP but the rest are still part of the development plan.

The following provides a link to the UDP page on the Council's website:

<http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/planning-and-city-development/planning-documents/udp>

The link allows the relevant chapter of the Unitary Development Plan to be downloaded as an Adobe Reader file (pdf).

The draft City Policies and Sites and Proposals Map will supersede the UDP and accompany the Core Strategy. It has material weight at this stage according to:

- The stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced the preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- The degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the NPPF (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

The City Policies and Sites is at the pre-submission stage and was considered by Cabinet on 27th February 2013 and will be considered by full Council on 3rd April 2013. Following this a statutory 6-week call for representations on its 'soundness' will be held before it is submitted to the Planning Inspector. The document and Proposals Map can be viewed here: <http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/planning-and-city-development/planning-documents/sdf/city-policies-and-sites>

Wherever possible, this Planning Brief is based on the adopted policies rather than the emerging policies. References are made to the emerging policies where it could significantly impact a proposal for development, together with a footnote explaining the weight that could be afforded to it both now and after the representations stage in May 2013.

Supplementary guidance interprets, expands and applies the Unitary Development Plan while interim planning guidance anticipates Supplementary Planning Documents that will be part of the Sheffield Local Plan. www.sheffield.gov.uk/sppg

UDP Proposals Map (NB: there is no proposed change in the emerging Proposals Map)



The following table is a list of policies that are relevant to the site.

Policy Area policies – the principle of development	The relevant part of the policy
Core Strategy Policy CS47 – Safeguarding of Open Space	Development of open space will not be permitted where it would (a) result in a quantitative shortage of either informal or formal open space in the local area. Development that would still result in the loss of open space will only be permitted where (e) as soon as practicable, equivalent or better replacement open space would be provided in the local area.
Housing policies	The relevant part of the policy
Core Strategy policy CS26	In this location Policy CS26 requires a density of between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare (dph). Based on a net area of 0.32ha the minimum capacity of the site would be 7 dwellings with a maximum of 12 dwellings. Densities outside this range may be justified where the development achieves good design, reflects the character of an area or protects a sensitive area.
Core Strategy policy CS41	Part (b) of the policy requires a greater mix of housing, including homes for larger households, especially families.
Pre-submission Policy C2(a) ¹	Be designed and laid out to ensure that a range of different dwelling sizes, types and tenures are well distributed throughout the site.
UDP Policy H7	Encourages 25% of all new homes in a scheme (spread across all types and tenure) to be built to the Council's Mobility Housing standard, except where the physical characteristics of the site make this impracticable.
Pre-submission Policy C2(f) ²	Requires 100% Lifetime Homes across a new housing scheme.

¹ No objections were received to this policy in 2010 and although there will be some minor rewording for the pre-submission version it holds some weight

² No objections were received to this policy so it holds significant weight. The pre-submission version retains the proposal for 100% Lifetime Homes.

Design Principles	The relevant part of the policy
South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide	Used by residential developers and their design professionals, consultants and agents in formulating designs for residential development - http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/roads/about/transport-and-highways/development-and-adoptions/design-guide
UDP Policy H15 Design of New Developments	Residential design should provide easy access for people with disabilities and provide an adequate private garden to ensure that basic standards of daylight privacy, security and outlook are met.
CS 74 Design Principles	High quality development is expected that respects and takes advantage of the distinctive features of the city, its districts and neighbourhoods; and Enabling all people to gain access safely and conveniently, providing for the needs of disabled and older people.
UDP Policy BE5 Building Design and Siting	Good design and good quality materials expected in all new developments. Policy sets out criteria for physical design and user requirements.
UDP Policy BE6 Landscape Design	Good quality landscape design is expected in new developments.
UDP Policy BE9 Design for Vehicles	New development to provide a safe, efficient and environmentally acceptable site layout for all vehicles (including cycles) and pedestrians.
Sustainability and Climate Change	The relevant part of the policy
CS 64 Climate Change, Resources and Sustainable Design of Developments	All new buildings must be designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and must function in a changing climate. Includes policy on energy efficiency, renewable energy generation, water consumption, flexible design, use of sustainable materials and waste recycling. All developments of 5 or more houses should achieve Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 (or

	equivalent) as a minimum.
CS 65 Renewable Energy and Carbon Reduction	Any new developments must take into account the energy efficiency requirements and design standards. Developments of 5 or more dwellings should provide 10% of predicted energy needs from renewable/low carbon sources, unless it is not feasible or viable to do so.
CS 67 Flood Risk Management; GE19 Water Resources; and GE20 Flood Defence.	All developments have a responsibility to reduce the extent and impact of flooding via a variety of ways through permeable surfaces and integration of sustainable urban drainage systems as appropriate.
Traffic, Transport and Highways	The relevant part of the policy
Parking Standards	<p>The site is in an accessible location within easy reach of a route with buses per hour. An adequate amount of on-site parking must be provided for however, although the following maximum number of spaces not exceeded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 bedroom 1 space • 2 - 3 bedrooms 2 spaces • 4 - 5 bedrooms 2 - 3 spaces • + 1 space per 4 dwellings for visitors
Pre-submission Policy E3: Design for Roads and Movement ³	<p>Roads and streets, pedestrian routes and areas, cycleways and public spaces should be designed, or their environment improved, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure levels and gradients that maximise access for disabled people, subject to the topography including ramps where needed; and • maximise the personal safety of users, particularly at night, providing appropriate lighting and ensuring that, wherever possible, pedestrian and cycle routes are well

³ Some objections were received to some parts of this policy in 2010 but those parts that have weight are listed.

	<p>overlooked and, where viable, segregated: new residential streets should be designed for travel at 20mph or less; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • remove the need for traffic movements do not result in unacceptable contributions to air or noise pollution; and • meet current or anticipated operational requirements for buses, where they need to run through the area to meet public transport accessibility standards; and • contribute to sustainable drainage.
Developer Contributions⁴	The relevant part of the policy or SPG/SPD
H16 Open Space in New Housing Developments & Open Space Provision in New Housing Development SPD	<p>The site is less than 1 hectare but for proposals of more than 5 houses the developer will be expected to make an appropriate contribution to the provision or enhancement of recreation space in the catchment area of the site; this is because the provision of recreation space within the catchment area is below the minimum guideline.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on 8no. 4 bed detached dwellings the total contribution will be £16,356.40 including a 3% admin charge (using Table 1 for informal open space and children's play in the SPD)
Affordable Housing	There would be no contribution required towards the provision of affordable housing (fewer than 15 dwellings)
Education	The Council's Inclusion and Learning Service has confirmed that they would not claim for education contributions on developments of fewer than 10 dwellings. They might reassess this position if a number of smaller developments came forward in the area at the same time causing a cumulative effect on the demand for school places.

Relevant Planning History

⁴ Planning contributions and obligations (S106) will be mostly replaced by the Community Infrastructure Levy, which is expected to be in place by 2014 subject to the approval of Sheffield City Council's Cabinet.

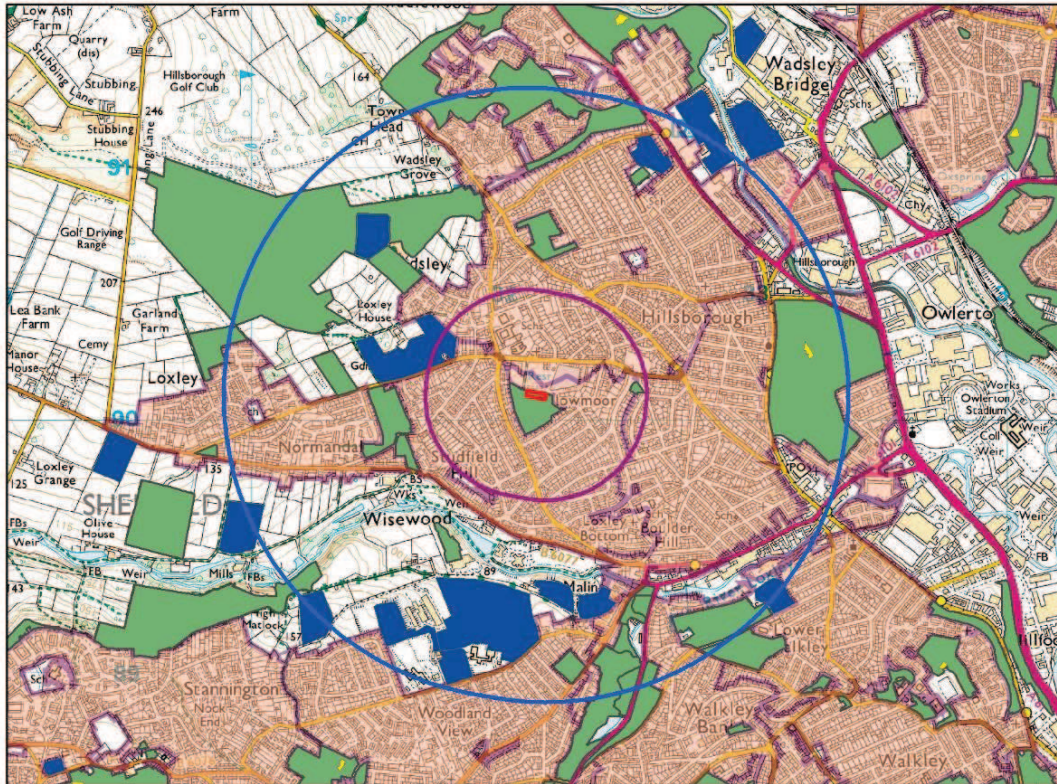
11/00831/ENUJ – Enforcement enquiry into potential unauthorised development concerning the site compound operated by Pennine Housing. No breach had been made and no action taken.

There is no other recent planning history for the site. To obtain further details regarding relevant planning applications, please contact Planning Records and Enquiries at the address below:

Planning Records and Enquiries
Development Management
Planning Division
Sheffield City Council
Howden House
1 Union Street
Sheffield S1 2SH

Email: planningdc@sheffield.gov.uk
Telephone: 0114 203 9179

Appendix 2: Open Space Assessment



0 100 200 400 Meters

Spider Park CS47

Open Space Type	Current Quantity (Hectares)	Population within catchment (1)	Current Ha. / 1000 Population	Net Loss (Ha)	New Ha. / 1000 Population	Recommended Standard (2) (ha/1000)
Informal			0.63	0.16	0.59	
Parks & Gardens	2.26	3846	0.59	0.16	0.55	1.55
Natural & Semi-Natural Greenspace	0		0.0	0	0.0	3.04
Amenity Greenspace	0.16		0.04	0	0.04	0.56
Allotments	0		0.0	0	0.0	0.32
Cemeteries & Churchyards	0		0.0	0	0.0	0.27
Formal			1.35	0	1.35	
Children's Play	0	3846	0.0	0	0.0	0.16
Outdoor Sport	27.45	20327	1.35	0	1.35	1.12
Overall			1.98	0.16	1.94	7.02

(1) As defined in CS47

(2) As determined through "PPG17 Audit of Open Space, Sport and Recreation" (2009)

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Appendix 3: Outline Estimate Costs of a LEAP

Wisewood LEAP - Outline Cost Estimate

Item	Amount	Unit	Rate	Surfacing area (m2)	Surface type	Cost / sq.m.	Surfacing cost	Total
Toddler swings x2	1	Nr	£ 1,400	21	mats	£ 25	£ 525	£ 1,925
Inclusive basket swing	1	Nr	£ 3,000	21	carpet	£ 70	£ 1,470	£ 4,470
Roundabout	1	Nr	£ 2,500	25	carpet	£ 70	£ 1,750	£ 4,250
Slide	1	Nr	£ 2,500	10	mats	£ 25	£ 250	£ 2,750
Multiplay climbing unit	1	Nr	£ 16,000	60	carpet	£ 70	£ 4,200	£ 20,200
Equipment and surfacing sub total								£ 33,595
Benches	2	Nr	£ 800	0			£ -	£ 1,600
Bin	1	Nr	£ 800	0			£ -	£ 800
Soft landscape works - topsoiling, excavations, grassing and planting	1	Item	£ 4,000	0			£ -	£ 4,000
Hard landscape works - new paths and minimal tarmac surfacing	1	Item	£ 5,000	0			£ -	£ 5,000
Soiling and grassing to remaining demolition area	1	Item	£ 9,000	0			£ -	£ 9,000
Contract prelims	1	Item	£ 3,500	0			£ -	£ 3,500
								£ 57,495

Fees (Design and Delivery) 15% **£ 8,624**

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Maintenance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	YEARS 1 - 15
% of capital cost for equipment maintenance	0%	2%	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	Total Maintenance
Equipment maintenance cost	£ -	£ 672	£ 1,008	£ 1,344	£ 1,344	£ 1,344	£ 1,344	£ 1,344	£ 1,344	£ 1,680	£ 1,680	£ 1,680	£ 1,680	£ 1,680	£ 1,680	£ 19,821
Grass cutting (14 cuts per year)	£ 1,569	£ 1,569	£ 1,569	£ 1,569	£ 1,569	£ 1,569	£ 1,569	£ 1,569	£ 1,569	£ 1,569	£ 1,569	£ 1,569	£ 1,569	£ 1,569	£ 1,569	£ 23,540
Perimeter spraying (2 per year @ £25.54)	£ 50	£ 50	£ 50	£ 50	£ 50	£ 50	£ 50	£ 50	£ 50	£ 50	£ 50	£ 50	£ 50	£ 50	£ 50	£ 751
Weekly litter picking (£17.50 + £2.50)	£ 520	£ 520	£ 520	£ 520	£ 520	£ 520	£ 520	£ 520	£ 520	£ 520	£ 520	£ 520	£ 520	£ 520	£ 520	£ 7,800
Weekly bin emptying (£13.23)	£ 688	£ 688	£ 688	£ 688	£ 688	£ 688	£ 688	£ 688	£ 688	£ 688	£ 688	£ 688	£ 688	£ 688	£ 688	£ 10,319
																£ 62,231

Inspections	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	YEARS 1 - 15
(Yrs 1 - 5: Dally, Quarterly and Annual inspections (£5,700); Yrs 6 - 10: Twice weekly, Quarterly and Annual (£3,150); Yrs 11 - 15: Weekly, Quarterly and Annual (£2,124))	£ 5,700	£ 5,700	£ 5,700	£ 5,700	£ 5,700	£ 5,700	£ 3,150	£ 3,150	£ 3,150	£ 3,150	£ 2,124	£ 2,124	£ 2,124	£ 2,124	£ 2,124	Total Inspections
Inspection cost	£ 5,700	£ 5,700	£ 5,700	£ 5,700	£ 5,700	£ 5,700	£ 3,150	£ 3,150	£ 3,150	£ 3,150	£ 2,124	£ 2,124	£ 2,124	£ 2,124	£ 2,124	£ 54,870

OVERALL COSTS

Year 0 (capital + fees) £ 66,119
 Years 1 - 15 (maintenance + inspections) £ 117,101
£ 183,220

Contact Details

The Sheffield City Council contacts for this Informal Planning Advice note are:

Area Planner Matthew Gregg matthew.gregg@sheffield.gov.uk
Development Management Case Officer Eleanor Parker eleanor.parker@sheffield.gov.uk

The land owner is represented by Nigel Cunis nigel.cunis@sheffield.gov.uk

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