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Case Number	17/03187/FUL (Formerly PP-06267141)
Application Type	Full Planning Application
Proposal	Change of use from grazing land to caravan and campsite, erection of plant and equipment, conversion of redundant agricultural buildings to create a reception area/managers flat, washing facilities, indoor play area and shire horse stud area (Amended Plans/Description/Supporting Submissions).
Location	Little Intake Farm Woodhead Road Grenoside Sheffield S35 8RS
Date Received	28/07/2017
Team	West and North
Applicant/Agent	Urbana Town Planning
Recommendation	Grant Conditionally

### **Time limit for Commencement of Development**

1. The development shall be begun not later than the expiration of three years from the date of this decision.

Reason: In order to comply with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning Act.

### **Approved/Refused Plan(s)**

2. The development must be carried out in complete accordance with the following approved documents:

Barn - Elevation and Floor plans - dwg ref: 2012-61-4 E (scanned 15/10/19)

Site layout - dwg ref: 2012-61-2G (scanned 15/10/19)

Shed - Elevation and Floor Plans - dwg ref: 2012-61-3B (scanned 28/7/17)

Reason: In order to define the permission.

### **Pre Commencement Condition(s) – ('true conditions precedent' – see notes for definition)**

3. Prior to the commencement of development, full details of the sewage treatment plant, solar panels, solar power storage battery, water bore hole and electrical and water supply infrastructure to the caravan and camping pitches, including detailed specifications (design and external appearance), shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter such plant and equipment shall be provided in accordance with approved details prior to the commencement of the use and retained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the locality.

4. No development shall commence until a minimum 15 metre wide landscape buffer to the adjoining ancient woodlands, as shown on plan drawing reference: 2012-61-2G (scanned 15/10/19), has been provided and thereafter retained. The detailed landscaping of these buffers including planting specifications, ecology and habitat enhancements and suitable boundary treatment shall have been submitted to and approved in writing before the development is commenced and thereafter implemented before the use commences. No development shall at any time encroach into the landscape buffers.

Reason: In order to mitigate the impacts of the development on adjoining areas of ancient woodland in accordance with Natural England advice on the protection of veteran trees and ancient woodland.

5. No development shall commence until a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan, including short, medium and long term aims and objectives, management responsibilities and maintenance schedules for all distinct areas, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Landscape and Ecological Management Plan shall thereafter be implemented as approved.

Reason: In the interests of protecting the biodiversity of the site. It is essential that this condition is complied with before any other works on site commence given that damage to existing habitats is irreversible.

6. No development shall commence until full details of finished levels of the touring caravan pitches and their associated access (including cross and long site sections) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved levels.

Reason: In the interest of an appropriate form of development.

7. No development shall commence until full details of measures to protect the existing trees to be retained and those that adjoin the site, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the approved measures have thereafter been implemented. These measures shall include a construction methodology statement and plan showing accurate root protection areas and the location and details of protective fencing and signs. Protection of trees shall be in accordance with BS 5837, 2012 (or its replacement) and the protected areas shall not be disturbed, compacted or used for any type of storage or fire, nor shall the retained trees, shrubs or hedges be damaged in any way. The Local Planning Authority shall be notified in writing when the protection measures are in place and the protection measures shall not be removed until the completion of the development.

Reason: In the interests of protecting the identified trees on site. It is essential that this condition is complied with before any other works on site commence given that damage to trees is irreversible.

8. No development shall commence until full details of the proposed surface water drainage design, including calculations and appropriate model results, have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. This shall include the arrangements and details for surface water infrastructure management for the life time of the development. The scheme shall detail phasing of the development and phasing of drainage provision, where appropriate. The scheme should be achieved by sustainable drainage methods whereby the management of water quantity and quality are provided. Should the design not include sustainable methods evidence must be provided to show why these methods are not feasible for this site. The surface water drainage scheme and its management shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details. No part of a phase shall be brought into use until the drainage works approved for that part have been completed.

Reason: In the interests of sustainable development and given that drainage works are one of the first elements of site infrastructure that must be installed it is essential that this condition is complied with before the development commences in order to ensure that the proposed drainage system will be fit for purpose.

#### **Other Pre-Commencement, Pre-Occupancy and other Stage of Development Condition(s)**

9. Prior to the commencement of the use, details of the method and management of the operation (opening/closing) of the Forestry Commission gate next to Woodhead Road car park shall have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the gate shall operate in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of pedestrian safety and to prevent unauthorised access to the adjoining woodlands.

10. A comprehensive and detailed hard and soft landscape scheme for the site, to include details of the natural childrens play space/area, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before any above ground works commence. Thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the locality.

11. The approved landscape works shall be implemented prior to the development being brought into use or within an alternative timescale to be first approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the landscaped areas shall be retained and they shall be cultivated and maintained for a period of 5 years from the date of implementation and any plant failures within that 5 year period shall be replaced.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the locality it is essential for these works to have been carried out before the use commences.

12. Prior to the commencement of development, the applicant shall submit a detailed lighting scheme (building and free standing) and a report on the impact of light from the development. The report shall demonstrate that the lighting scheme is designed in accordance with The Institution of Lighting Professionals document GN01: 2011 'Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light' with specific reference to minimising light spillage from the site and mitigating the effects on adjoining woodlands and habitat from obtrusive light and light spillage from the site. No lighting shall be installed other than in strict accordance with the approved lighting scheme which shall thereafter be retained.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the locality occupiers of adjoining property and to minimise the impacts on adjoining woodland.

13. The campsite shall not be used until full details of the proposed refuse and recycling storage facilities to be provided to serve the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include provision for recycling and a method statement indicating how the facilities will be managed and serviced and how users of the campsite will be encouraged to maximise the use of the proposed recycling facilities to reduce general waste arising. Prior to the use of the development commencing the approved facilities shall have been implemented in conjunction with the approved method statement and shall thereafter be retained.

Reason: In order to ensure that proper provision for refuse is made and to encourage the maximum use of recycling in the interests of protecting the environment.

14. Within 6 months of the commencement of development details of the number, location and specification of bird and bat boxes to be integrated into the development shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The bird and bat boxes shall be provided in accordance with the approved details prior to the first occupation of the development.

Reason: In the interest of biodiversity.

15. In relation to the works to existing buildings, the materials to be used externally shall match those of the existing building in colour, shape, size and texture.

Reason: In order to ensure an appropriate quality of development.

16. No amplified sound or live music shall be played at above background levels, nor shall loudspeakers be fixed externally nor directed to broadcast sound outside the buildings at any time. The specification, location and mountings of any loudspeakers affixed internally to the building shall be subject to written approval by the Local Planning Authority prior to installation.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the locality and occupiers of adjoining property.

17. No externally mounted plant or equipment for heating, cooling or ventilation purposes, nor grilles, ducts, vents for similar internal equipment, shall be fitted to the building or installed within the campsite unless full details thereof, including acoustic emissions data, have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Once installed such plant or equipment shall not be altered.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the locality and occupiers of adjoining property

18. Prior to the commencement of development exact details of the layout of the caravan pitches associated access tracks and surfacing and landscaping shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the use commencing.

Reasons: In the interests of the visual amenities of the locality.

### **Other Compliance Conditions**

19. Should the clearance of site vegetation and/or trees take place within the bird nesting season (March to August inclusive) a pre site clearance check shall be carried out immediately before the commencement of development by a suitably qualified ecologist to establish the presence of nesting birds. If active bird nests are present clearance works can only proceed once all chicks have fledged.

Reason: In order to ensure that nesting birds are not adversely affected by the development.

20. The site shall accommodate a maximum of 31 touring caravan pitches/caravans at any time and no caravans shall, at any time, be stored permanently on site.

Reasons: In order to prevent the permanent occupation of the camp site for residential purposes this would be contrary to national and local planning policy.

21. The occupation of the flat shall be limited to a person solely or mainly employed or last employed in the camp site business occupying the plot edged red on plan ref: 2012-61-2G (scanned 15/10/19), or a widow or widower of such a person, or any resident dependants and shall not at any time be let, sold or occupied as a separate dwelling.

Reason: In order to defined the permission.

22. The campsite shall not be used, and no caravans or tents of any kind shall remain on the site, between 1st November in any one year and the 31st January in the succeeding year.

Reasons: In order to prevent the permanent occupation of the camp site for residential purposes as this would be contrary to national and local planning policy.

Attention is Drawn to the Following Directives:

1. The Local Planning Authority has dealt with the planning application in a positive and proactive manner and sought solutions to problems where necessary in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.
2. The applicants is advised that in addition to this planning consent you are required to gain a separate license from the Council under Section 3 of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 for a touring caravan site.

3. The applicant is advised that you will need to gain consent from the Environment Agency under the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2010 for any discharge of sewage or trade effluent made to either surface water or groundwater

Further advice is available at: Septic tanks and treatment plants: permits and general binding rules <https://www.gov.uk/permits-you-need-for-septic-tanks/you-have-a-septic-tank-or-small-sewage-treatment-plant>

4. The applicant is advised to contact the Forestry Commission and the City Council (as landowner) with respect to agreeing arrangements for the operation of the gate at the Woodhead Road car park.
5. As the proposed development will involve the closing/diversion of a public path(s) you are advised to contact the Highway Records team as soon as possible with a view to the necessary authority being obtained for the closure/diversion of the path(s) under Section 257 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This process can take several months to complete.

Principal Engineer, Highway Records  
Highways Maintenance Division  
Howden House, 1 Union Street  
Sheffield  
S1 2SH

Tel: (0114) 273 6301 or 273 6125  
Email: [highwayrecords@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:highwayrecords@sheffield.gov.uk)

6. Formal consent regarding works affecting the water course must be obtained from the Council's Development Services, Land Drainage, Howden House, 1 Union Street, Sheffield, S1 2SH (Telephone Sheffield 2735847) before work on site commence.
7. The applicant is advised that noise and vibration from demolition and construction sites can be controlled by Sheffield City Council under Section 60 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974. As a general rule, where residential occupiers are likely to be affected, it is expected that noisy works of demolition and construction will be carried out during normal working hours, i.e. 0800 to 1800 hours Monday to Friday, and 0800 to 1300 hours on Saturdays with no working on Sundays or Public Holidays. Further advice, including a copy of the Council's Code of Practice for Minimising Nuisance from Construction and Demolition Sites is available from the Environmental Protection Service, Howden House, Union Street, Sheffield, S1 2SH, tel. 0114 2734651.
8. As the proposed development abuts the public highway you are advised to contact the Highways Co-ordination Group prior to commencing works:

Telephone: 0114 273 6677  
Email: [highways@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:highways@sheffield.gov.uk)

They will be able to advise you of any pre-commencement condition surveys, permits, permissions or licences you may require in order to carry out your works.

9. By law, this development requires the allocation of official, registered address(es) by the Council's Street Naming and Numbering Officer. Please refer to the Street Naming and Numbering Guidelines on the Council website here:

<https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/content/sheffield/home/roads-pavements/address-management.html>

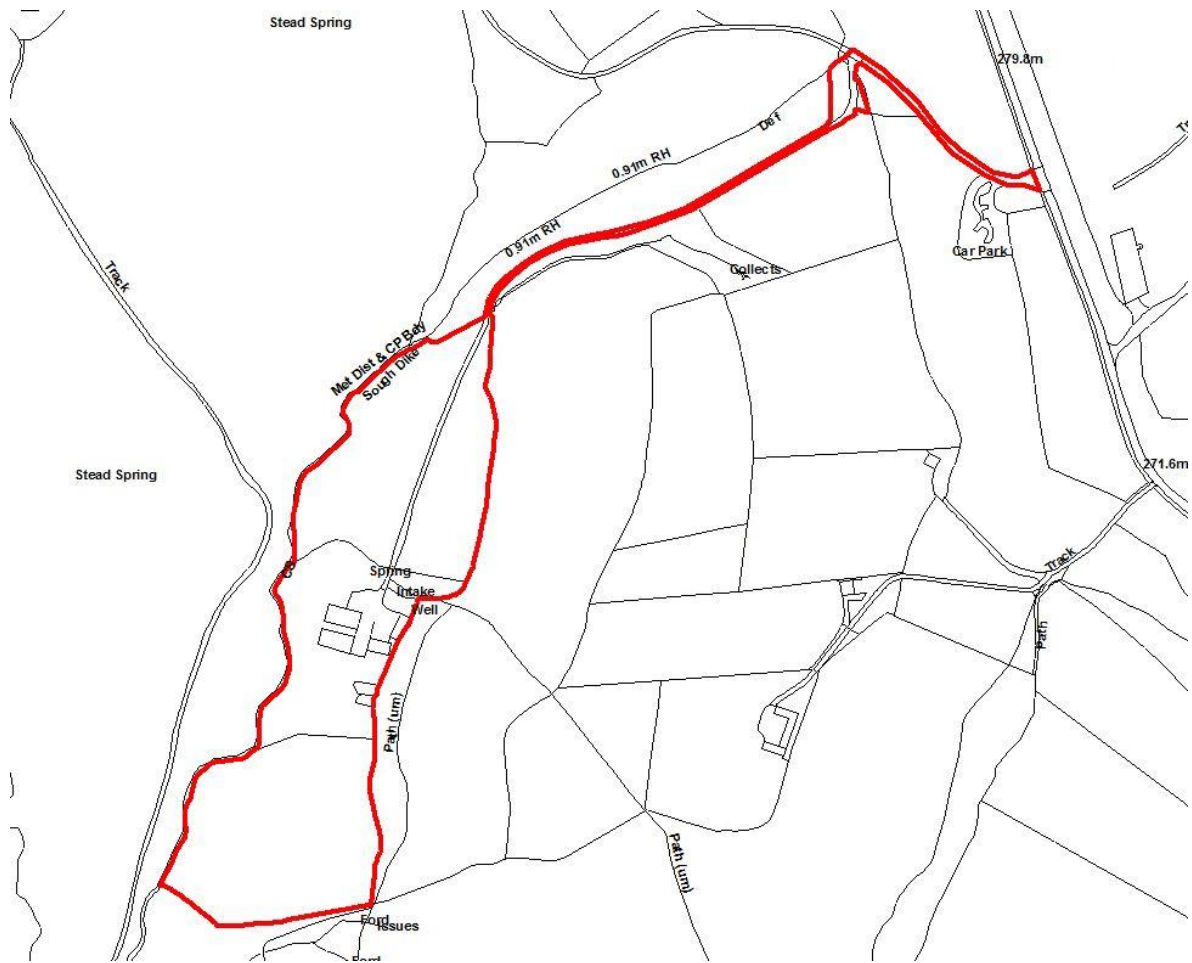
The guidance document on the website includes details of how to apply, and what information we require. For further help and advice please ring 0114 2736127 or email [snn@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:snn@sheffield.gov.uk)

Please be aware that failure to apply for addresses at the commencement of the works will result in the refusal of statutory undertakers to lay/connect services, delays in finding the premises in the event of an emergency and legal difficulties when selling or letting the properties.

10. You are advised that any information which is subject to the Environmental Information Regulations and is contained in the ecological reports will be held on the Local Records Centre database, and will be dealt with according to the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR). This will be subject to the removal of economically sensitive data. Information regarding protected species will be dealt with in compliance with the EIR. Should you have any queries concerning the above, please contact:

Ecology Unit  
Sheffield City Council  
West Wing, Level 3  
Moorfoot  
Sheffield  
S1 4PL  
Tel: 0114 2734481/2053618  
E-mail: [parksandcountryside@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:parksandcountryside@sheffield.gov.uk)

## Site Location



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## LOCATION AND PROPOSAL

This application relates to a parcel of land surrounding Little Intake Farm which is located approximately 1.5 km to the north west of Grenoside.

The application site covers an area of approximately 2.6 hectares, 0.6 hectares of which comprises of an access road. The main part of the application site is positioned approximately 400 metres to the west of Woodhead Road, beyond a public car park and area of established woodland.

Within the adopted Sheffield Unitary Development Plan (UDP), the application site is designated as part of the Green Belt and is also within an Area of High Landscape Value. The adjoining woodland to the south and east and part of the access track is also designated as an Area of Natural History Interest.

To the north and west the site is bordered by Stead Woods and to the east by further areas of woodland. To the south is open grazing land. The main part of the site comprises grazing land located on either side of an existing access track. At the southern end of the site is Little Intake Farm, which comprises of a collection of buildings including a two storey stone barn, a stable block, two more modern (stone built) agricultural sheds and the partial remains (walls) of a building which is completely covered in vegetation.

This application seeks permission to change the use of the land to a caravan and campsite. The plans indicate the creation of a caravan area for up to 31 touring caravans on the west side of the access track and an area for tents to the east of the track. An informal amenity area is indicated to the north of the caravan pitches. The camping area for tents is indicated to be informal with no pitches marked out. No permanent or static/caravan pitches are proposed.

The application also seeks permission to convert the existing agricultural buildings on site to create a reception area/managers flat, indoor play area and a toilet/shower block. Some minor alterations to the land levels to the rear of the managers flat/reception area and the erection of a wall are proposed. Ancillary plant necessary to facilitate the use is also required; this includes a sewage treatment plant, solar panels, solar panel batteries and a water bore hole all of which are located adjacent to the two larger existing agricultural shed buildings.

An existing stable block on site is to be remain unchanged, and will be used as shire horse stud which does not require any formal planning permission.

Members may recall that the Sheffield Planning and Highways Committee resolved to grant planning consent for the use of the land at Little Intake farm as a campsite and conversion of the existing buildings as ancillary facilities under application 13/03412/FUL. The permission was not implemented and has now expired. This new application is effectively a resubmission of the previously approved scheme incorporating some minor changes.

The applicant has previously used parts of the site and adjoining land for camping purposes under the permitted development rights afforded to him by Part 5 Class A of the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 2015 which allows the use of land for 28 days in any calendar year for camping purposes subject to a number of restrictions. It is understood that the site was last used for camping purposes around the time the Tour de France visited Sheffield in July 2014.

In addition to planning consent the applicant is also required to gain a separate license from the Council under Section 3 of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 for a touring caravan site.

## RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

There is an extensive planning history to the application site. The applicant also owns some of the adjoining land; however this does not form part of the current application. The most relevant applications to this site and the adjoining land are summarised below:

- 14/03837/LU1 - Application to establish the lawful use of the building as agricultural as amended 11.12.14, 5.1.15, 12.1.15, 23.7.15 and 17.11.15 (Application under section 191) – Granted.
- 13/03412/FUL - Change of use from grazing land to caravan and campsite, conversion of redundant agricultural buildings to create a reception area, indoor play area and Shire Horse stud area – Granted Conditionally.
- 07/00376/CHU: Alterations to clubhouse to form a café – Refused.  
This application was refused on the grounds that it represented inappropriate development within the Green Belt and the use would have a materially greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the present use of the building leading to more activity and traffic in the area and there were no special circumstances to justify a departure.
- 07/00371/FUL: Formation of horse riding exercise area – Granted Conditionally.
- 04/03904/FUL: Conversion of barn to form dwellinghouse – Refused and dismissed at appeal.
- 03/02923/FUL: Conversion of barn to form dwellinghouse – Withdrawn.
- 03/01061/FUL: Retention of improvements to access road – Granted conditionally.
- 02/01658/FUL: Erection of stable block - Granted conditionally.
- 00/00478/FUL: Erection of agricultural buildings or livestock housing & agricultural storage (application for determination as to whether approval of details is required) – Granted.
- 01/01533/FUL: Erection of 6 stables in one single storey block – Granted.
- 00/01070/FUL: Erection of an equestrian centre and disabled riding facility - Refused: 26.09.2000.
- 97/00765/FUL: Erection of agricultural building (application for determination if approval of details required for agricultural p.d.) – Granted.

## REPRESENTATIONS

The application has been advertised by means of site notice, press notice and widespread neighbour notification.

17 letters of objection including comments from Ecclesfield and Bradfield Parish Councils have been received, the issues raised are summarised as follows:

- The roads are unsuitable for caravans, refuse and service vehicles associated with a camp site – tarmac roads and construction work would spoil the area.
- There are no pavements in the locality and more traffic will spoil the peace and give rise to increased pollution.
- Increased visitor numbers will lead to erosion and impact wildlife and the adjoining woodlands.
- There will be increased traffic in a residential area where there are schools.
- The area is already used as a rat run from Oughtibridge and Wortley.
- No parking provision shown within the site, where would 70 plus cars park?
- The sight line onto Woodhead Road (a 60 mph road) is frequently blocked due to parking overspill for the existing forestry commission car park.
- No detailed consideration of public footpaths affected by the development has been undertaken.
- Noise and disturbance will be increased associated with the campsite and customers who will frequent the public houses and other amenities in the area.
- The proposal will put increased pressure on local amenities.
- Malfunction of the waste treatment plant could give rise to pollution of the local water environment.
- When the previous permission was granted various other events including weddings and parties took place/were advertised.
- It appears that a second phase of development is being considered which would be accessed via a bad bend.
- A similar application was previously granted around the time of the 2014 Tour de France, none of the site improvements were made other than to the barn.
- The barn resembles a farmhouse and there have been a number of previous refusals to build a farmhouse on this site before and this application should not be used to circumvent previous refusals.
- The proposal will spoil this area of outstanding natural beauty forever and will impact wildlife.
- The site is totally unsuitable for the proposed use due to the topography of the land.
- This development is being used as a way of using the barns for residential purposes, which would set a precedent for other dwellings in the countryside.
- The site is in the Greenbelt and an Area of High Landscape Value and as such only a low key use should be allowed in accordance with local and national policy.
- The site lies within Wheata Woods Nature Reserve and immediately borders Wheata Wood, Prior Royd and Birkin Royd Local Wildlife Site.

- Required drainage and infrastructure works would impact the open countryside.
- Increased access and use of the adjoining woods must be controlled.
- Lighting needed to support the use will negatively impact the area and wildlife.
- Opening the gated access to the woods to serve the development will allow unauthorised access to all vehicles.
- No details of waste management or emergency access have been provided.
- Reported job creation is not substantiated.
- The proposal builds on an area currently used for grazing.
- Concerns with the need to level the site and erect hardstanding.
- Lack of clarity with regard to the solar panels, the number likely to be required would be substantial and look out of character.
- Full year round use should not be allowed and permanent residential use must be controlled.
- Washroom and reception facilities are disproportionate to the size of the proposed use.
- There are other camp sites in the area and these are considered adequate to satisfy demand for camping in the area.
- Proposals show a new access into the adjoining forest, the applicant has no right to make a new access into the woods.
- Concerns with emergency access, water supply and suitability of the existing ground conditions.
- The agricultural buildings on site are not used for their intended purposes and are being used to store building materials without consent.
- Alterations to various buildings on site have taken place without consent.
- The installation of infrastructure needed to support the site would be significant.
- The adjoining areas are managed by the Sheffield Wildlife Trust and no mention of discussion with local volunteer groups that help to manage the area has taken place.
- The proposal will give rise to more anti-social behaviour issues in the local area.
- The proposal will have an impact on the openness of the Green Belt.
- Noise and pollution from service and infrastructure plant.
- Access required across other people's land.
- If people are unable to access the site after 10pm people who visit local amenities will leave vehicles on the road which will harm highway safety.
- Previous use of the site as a music venue has led to noise disturbance issues.
- Works have already been carried to the barns by the applicants.

#### Bradfield Parish Council

- Bradfield Parish Council objects to the application noting the planning history of the site and refusals of planning consent in the past.

#### Ecclesfield Parish Council

- The parish council identified that two local residents attended the parish council meeting and voiced concerns in relation to highways and access issues, emergency vehicle access, ecology concerns, Green Belt and woodland issues and various policy concerns with the application.
- It was noted that there were discrepancies between plans and it is not clear how the sewage treatment works will be serviced and how water will be supplied for washing and drinking. There are concerns with a general lack of detail provided.
- No car parking provision is made within the application site.
- The land slopes and becomes boggy made worse by cars entering the site in the winter.
- If permission is granted the site should only be open between the 31<sup>st</sup> March and the 1<sup>st</sup> November and the site should only be used for touring caravans with no static caravans allowed. The site should be operated under the guidelines of the caravan club.
- Concerns with access for towing caravans due to the narrowness of the access tracking.
- There is extensive planning history to the site and a number of changes to the site since the last application. Events and have taken place and works have been carried out without planning consent.
- Members of the Committee support the residents in their objections and request that the development be decided by the Planning Board rather than a delegated officer and a site visit is undertaken.

The Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust and the Ecology Officer from Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (the neighbouring planning authority) have also commented on the application. They do not object in principle to the development, but have flagged some concerns with the proposal relating to the site designation in the Green Belt, its status as a Local Nature Reserve and impacts on adjoining woodland and existing ecology. These issues are discussed in the ecology section of the report.

In support

Four separate petitions which together contain a total of 98 signatures have been submitted in support of the application.

20 individual letters of support have also been submitted, the issues raised are summarised as follows:

- The proposal will help to support local business and help to increase employment locally.
- Local business can support and offer services to campsite guests.
- Increased tourism and spending in the village will support local business and the economy.
- Campsite facilities will benefit locals as well as visitors helping the village to thrive.
- It is about time this beautiful part of Grenoside is put to use for the benefit of families.

- It will provide a much needed attraction that will support the local area.
- The campsite provides a platform for the north of Sheffield to be enjoyed.
- A campsite would enable visitors to stay longer and enjoy the area and enable them to access reasonably priced holiday accommodation.
- There have been no policy changes since the previous application was granted.
- The RDPE Growth Programme for Rural Areas are investing £300m into projects like these, to enable Rural Areas to encourage more tourists to come, to stay longer and to spend more money in rural areas. This proposal would support these aims

The Country Land and Business Association (which the applicant is a member of) have submitted the following comments in support of the application:

- The NPPF supports economic growth in rural areas to create jobs by supporting rural business. Sustainable rural tourism that benefits local business should be supported.
- The development will have little visual impact on the Green Belt as it is located in a secluded valley.
- The site is located adjacent to woodland with numerous local trails which will attract visitors
- There is little camping/caravanning provision in the area and increased demand nationally for this type of holiday accommodation which the development can accommodate.

The Head of Economic Strategy and Marketing Sheffield submitted the following comments in support of the application:

- Sheffield is the Outdoor City; the UK's leading destination for people seeking outdoor adventure, city culture and rural escapes. The Outdoor City is a reason to visit or stay in the city and a route to conserve and maintain green space and improve wellbeing by driving greater participation in outdoor activities.
- To capitalise on Sheffield's unique 'outdoor' offer, and realise the economic value of outdoor recreation, we need to ensure greater accessibility and improve the supply of high quality facilities that attract visitors to holiday in or visit the city. There is currently very little provision for camping and caravanning in the area and a permanent camp site would broaden the accommodation offer. It would also increase opportunities to market the City as an 'outdoor' short-break destination and realise the increasing national demand for this type of holiday.
- We support sustainable rural tourism and recognise that increasing visitor numbers will increase spend in the nearby shops, food outlets, pubs and with activity providers; benefiting local businesses and making a positive contribution to the economy. The additional choice of a well-managed permanent camping facility is likely to appeal to a wider audience and enhance the visitor experience for walkers, cyclists and climbers attracted to Sheffield's fantastic outdoor recreation offer.

- It is not anticipated there would be any notable displacement from existing bed and breakfast and hotel businesses nearby, as the camping offer is likely to attract new additional customers.
- We welcome the proposal for a quality camping facility that will enable more people and businesses to enjoy and benefit from Sheffield's Outdoor City.

Welcome to Yorkshire have also written in support of the application, there comments are summarised as follows:

- This is an exciting proposal and one which would give a unique offer to visitors in the Sheffield and beyond, enabling campers to stay for longer than the weekend, which will bring in additional revenue to the local economy.
- Welcome to Yorkshire has the responsibility to market the county's tourism industry for the sole purpose of economic well-being and depends on high quality tourism products such as this proposal to aid its success. For this reason, we are delighted to offer this proposal our full support.

The applicant has also written two letters in support of his application and to clarify points raised in objection to the proposal. The comments are summarised as follows:

- The application follows a previous approval in 2014 and there have been no planning policy changes which should result in a different outcome for this application.
- The campsite will enhance the local economy and an area that is already well used by walkers, cyclists and for outdoor pursuits.
- National and local policy supports economically sustainable proposals such as this that promote growth and tourism.
- Outdoor sport and recreation uses are acceptable in the Green Belt under local and national policy.
- The application should be approved for the betterment of the local economy.
- A new water bore hole and filtration system on site will give a constant water supply which is more than enough for the campsite.
- There is a solar panel system which is to be put on the shed roof with a battery storage system removes the need to be connected to national grid.
- We will be purchasing an electric powered vehicle which will charge from our battery storage.
- The use of led lighting throughout the site will make the proposal eco-friendly.
- Different parts of the site can be used as a camp site for 28 days per year without planning permission.
- Permission for a clean water sewerage system was granted under a previous planning permission.

## PLANNING ASSESSMENT

### Policy and Land Use

This site is in the Green Belt. The NPPF confirms at Paragraph 133 that the Government attaches great importance to the Green Belt and confirms that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. It also confirms that the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

Paragraph 134 of the NPPF clarifies that the Green Belt serves five purposes:

- (a) To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- (b) To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- (c) To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- (d) To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- (e) To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Paragraph 143 of the NPPF advises that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

Paragraph 144 then advises that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. It states that 'very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Paragraph 145 of the NPPF identifies that the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt should be regarded as inappropriate development subject to a list of identified exceptions. Although no new permanent structures other than plant and equipment are proposed as part of this application para 145 b) of the NPPF does identify that the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation) as long as they preserve the openness of the green belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land it, is not inappropriate development.

Paragraph 146 of the NPPF goes on to identify a number of other forms of development that are not inappropriate development in the Green Belt, which includes engineering operations, the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction; and material changes in the use of land for purposes including outdoor sport or recreation provision, as long as they preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.

This application proposes the change of use of grazing land surrounding Little Intake Farm to create a camping and touring caravan site. It includes the conversion of an existing vacant barn to create a reception which also incorporates a manager's flat, and the conversion of two other existing agricultural buildings to create a children's play area and shower/WC facilities. Some ancillary plant including sewage treatment, water bore hole, roof mounted solar panels and a solar panel battery storage container also from part of the proposal. Some minor



alterations are also proposed to ground levels to the rear of the proposed campsite reception/managers flat.

It is determined that the camping and caravan site and associated facilities proposed within this application, constitutes inappropriate development within the Green Belt and can only be permitted in very special circumstances. Furthermore, 'very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

At a local level Policy CS71 of the CS identifies that the Green Belt Countryside and other open land around the existing built-up areas of the city will be safeguarded by maintaining the Green Belt. It goes on to say that development needs will be met principally through the re-use of land and buildings rather than through expansion of the urban areas and villages.

Policies GE1 of the UDP seeks to direct new development to previously developed sites in order to protect the Green Belt from the encroachment of urban development. GE2 seeks to protect and improve the Green Belt environment by maintaining and enhancing those areas with a generally high landscape value by improving poor landscapes in priority areas.

UDP policy GE3 deals with new building in the Green Belt and the construction of new buildings will not be permitted, except in very special circumstances, for purposes other than, amongst other things, outdoor recreation.

The scheme is limited to converting existing farm buildings and the erection of a small amount of ancillary plant and equipment necessary to support the camping and caravanning use. The application, as originally submitted did propose the rebuilding of the remains of a very dilapidated building, but this has since been removed from the proposal.

Policy GE4 seeks to ensure that the scale and character of any development permitted in or conspicuous from the Green Belt should be in keeping and conserve and enhance the landscape and natural environment of the Green Belt.

UDP policy GE7 deals with the rural economy and says that development will not be permitted which would result in the permanent loss of the best agricultural land or harm the viability of a farm. The value of the land is limited and used for grazing. The loss of the land would not affect the viability of a farm.

UDP policy GE8 deals with Areas of High Landscape Value (AHLV) and seeks to protect and enhance good quality landscape.

UDP policy GE9 deals with the re-use and adaptation of rural buildings and this is permitted particularly where this would help to diversify the rural economy provided that the existing building is capable of such conversion without significant alteration or extension, there would be no harm to the countryside, any harmful impacts of the existing building are remedied and any historic character would not be compromised.

As noted above the proposal does involve the re-use of three existing buildings.

#### Impact on the openness of Green Belt and Area of High Landscape Value

Policy guidance says that very special circumstances need to be demonstrated to allow new development so that policy criteria might be satisfied. The effect on the openness of the Green Belt must also be considered. Openness is not defined in the NPPF, however it is generally accepted that openness means the absence of development.

In this case, the essence of the application is the change of use. There are existing buildings on the site but these will be re-used as part of the proposal, which will incorporate visual improvements. It is also the case that the existing buildings have to an extent suffered from neglect and vandalism, and whilst this is not a justification for the development itself, the re-use of the buildings will improve their appearance. The works to the external envelope of the two storey barn building, including the insertion of windows and doors have already been carried out by the applicant, as has some re-profiling of the land immediately to the rear of the barn. Some external changes to the two larger agricultural buildings are proposed to facilitate their conversion, which includes the formation of window and door openings and blocking up of some of the existing larger full height openings. The external changes are considered acceptable from a design perspective, particularly when considered in the context of the camp site use proposed.

No new buildings, with the exception of necessary plant and equipment to facilitate the use, are proposed. The small on-site sewage plant has been relocated to the rear of the agricultural sheds; under the previous application it was located in the woodland buffer to the west of the site. The solar panels are to be roof mounted on one of the larger existing buildings and the batteries and associated plant will be located between the two existing sheds which helps to minimise their visual impact.

The existing access track serving the site leads from Woodhead Road which will be retained and improved to serve as the access to the site. Improvements will include two passing places within the site and the existing route will be retained through the middle of the site, the camping and caravan sites being located at either side.

The creation of grasscrete (or suitable equivalent) access tracks within the site serving caravan pitches and the introduction of electric power points and water supply for touring caravans are also proposed. Some minor land re-profiling works may be necessary to accommodate level pitches for the caravans, details of which will be secured by condition.

The areas used for camping and caravans are centrally located within the site, the retained and converted buildings being to the south of this. To the west and north of the larger sheds is a natural children's play space/area and along the site edges would be a 15 metre wide landscape buffer zone between the new development and the adjoining woodland. At the north end would be an informal amenity area that would remain as grass.

Landscaping will be provided within the site and the existing rural and woodland setting would be supplemented with additional planting of native species, particularly around the caravan pitches and play area. The 15 metre wide woodland buffer zones will screen and soften the impact of caravans when present at the site.

There would be no permanent caravan pitches and the fluidity attached to the use of caravan and camping sites means that the visual impact at different times of the year would be variable. At times there would be heavy use and at others, particularly over the winter months when seasonal use restrictions are in force, there would be no tents or caravans at all. During periods of low use the applicant has advised that the camping area could again be used for grazing.

The site is set within a valley with mature woodland on all sides except to the south but at this point there are the buildings which would screen the site from the grazing land beyond. Consequently, the visual impact of the proposed use and its effect on the open character of the Green Belt would be restricted to this enclosed area.

It is not the case, therefore, that there would be long range views into and out of the site to or from the wider Green Belt and AHLV because of the enclosed nature of the site. However, it remains that there would be a change to the character of the application site and it is also relevant that that three public footpaths either cross or run adjacent to the site where the camp site would be visible from. The character of a walk in this part of Sheffield would change at the site from a quiet grazing field to a camp site but the character of the woodland around the site is not considered to be significantly impacted. Walkers crossing or walking past the site would experience the change for a very short period only. Once the perimeter landscaping is established visibility of the site would be further reduced.

Your officers conclude that there would be an impact on the openness of the Green Belt and AHLV. However the impacts of the development would be limited to the confines of the site and the nature of the use means that the level of impact would fluctuate so that during winter, in particular, the use of the site is likely to be very low key. During these times, it is likely that part of the site could return to grazing.

#### Green Belt - Very Special Circumstances

In considering very special circumstances, and as with the previously approved application (13/03412/FUL), the applicant has undertaken a review of camp site facilities in and around the locality and advised that very few facilities actually exist.

Within the locality, only two small camp sites have been identified. Both are located within the Rivelin Valley – one off Roscoe Bank Close to the edge of Stannington and the other at Fox Hagg Farm off Lodge lane. Both sites are within the Green Belt.

Wortley Hall campsite, Barnsley, is located within the grounds of a Grade II\* listed building, approximately 4 miles to the north of the application site, and only accommodates 5 pitches.

The next nearest site is the Hesley Wood Scout Activity centre at White Lane Chapeltown, which is a large campsite but is not open to the general public as it is operated by the Scout Association.

Windy Bank Hall camping and caravan site, Barnsley, is located approximately 6 miles from the site, to the north of Stocksbridge within the Green Belt and is a fairly small site accommodating tents and touring caravans.

There are other sites within the area, however a majority of these are further afield than the above sites and/or lie in adjoining areas including North East Derbyshire, the Peak Park, Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham and so would not serve those wanting to visit the locality and Sheffield itself.

A number of the sites identified in the applicant's previous assessment of alternative campsites submitted with the application ref: 13/03412/FUL were temporary, associated with the Tour de France which came to Yorkshire in the summer of 2014, and as such are no longer operating. This has reduced the availability of camp sites since the previous application was granted.

The applicant's assessment is consistent with a response provided by the Head of Economic Strategy and Marketing Sheffield, who represents the service responsible for promoting the city and its services.

They advise that there is very little provision for camping and caravanning in the area and that a permanent camp site would broaden the accommodation offer, increase Sheffield's appeal as a short break destination and capitalise on increased national demand for this type of holiday, and promoting Sheffield as the 'Outdoor city'.

They therefore consider that there is a need for such a facility to be available within the city, and which can then be used in support of marketing the city to a wider audience. They support rural tourism and recognise that increasing visitor numbers will increase spend in nearby shops, food and drink facilities and other activity providers.

They state that additional choice of a well-managed permanent camping facility is likely to appeal to a wider audience and enhance the visitor experience for walkers, cyclists and climbers attracted to Sheffield's outdoor recreation offer. They do not anticipate that there would be any notable displacement from existing bed and breakfast and hotel businesses nearby, as the camping offer is considered to attract new additional customers.

Welcome to Yorkshire who are responsible for promoting the county as a tourist destination have also written in support of the proposal identifying that the development would provide a unique offer to visitors of Sheffield and enable people to stay longer and bring in additional revenue to the local economy.

UDP policy GE7 says that the rural economy will be maintained and enhanced but also says that this should not result in the permanent loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land or seriously harm agricultural activities or the viability of a farm. Furthermore paragraph 83 of the NPPF identifies how planning policies and decisions will support a prosperous rural economy by enabling the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, the development and diversification of land-based rural businesses; and sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside.

This is an isolated area of grazing land and its use as a caravan and camping site would not harm the viability of the farm. Indeed, in general terms, it may be the case that the principal of the use of grazing land for such purposes could improve the viability of farms. The proposal would not result in the permanent loss of grazing land across the whole site as the camp site would be available for grazing when the site is not being used for camping.

It is clear from the details set out in the Summary of Representations section of this report that there is support for the proposal and much of this support relates to the assistance and boost to the wider local economy as well as providing new jobs. It is also pointed out within representations that there is a good opportunity to promote the enjoyment of the countryside.

In further support, it is noted that the Head of Economic Strategy and Marketing Sheffield, a Council service, considers the proposal to meet a definite need for such a facility in this part of the city. It would also support the local economy and enable visitors to stay longer by providing a different accommodation offer.

It is considered that the local rural economy would be enhanced by the proposal and provides for rural tourism that respects the country side. The application fully satisfies policy GE7 and accords with the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF in this regard.

Green Belt - Other harm/purpose of including land in the Green Belt

Consideration must also be given to whether the proposal conflicts with the five purposes of including land in Green Belt and gives rise to any other harm as identified in Paragraph 134 and 144 of the NPPF.

The development would not result in urban sprawl, lead to the merging of neighbouring towns, undermine the setting and special character of historic towns or harm urban regeneration. However as a result of the change of use of land to provide a campsite the proposals do result in the encroachment of development in to the countryside. Therefore the development does conflict with part c of paragraph 134 of the NPPF, however very special circumstances are considered to exist which outweigh and conflict with paragraph 134 of the NPPF.

The proposal is not considered to give rise to any other harm to the Green Belt that cannot be adequately mitigated by the imposition of conditions.

## Green Belt – Conclusion

The evidence submitted by the applicant and independently supported by the response to the application submitted by the Head of Economic Strategy and Marketing Sheffield and Welcome to Yorkshire indicates that there is a shortage of camping and caravan facilities within the locality. The facility would contribute to the promotion of tourism within the City and would enhance the rural economy. It is considered that this constitutes very special circumstances in this instance which outweighs the limited harm caused to the openness of the green, conflict with the purpose of including land within the Green Belt and any other harm arising as a result of the development.

## Amenity Issues/occupancy restrictions

The characteristics of a camp and caravan site is such that at times of high levels of use, there would be noise and activity associated with operation of the site, however as there are no existing residential properties nearby the proposal is not considered to give rise to any particular amenity issues.

The application includes a managers flat as part of the conversion of an existing two storey stone built barn. Planning permission has previously been refused and dismissed at appeal for the conversion of this building to a standalone dwelling largely due to impact of the conversion and use of the property as a dwelling would have on the openness of the Green Belt.

The principle of providing a managers flat associated with the operation of the campsite is considered acceptable in this case. The managers flat is an intrinsic part of the campsite operation, the ground floor of the building in which the flat is located is also to be used as a camp site reception and includes some communal kitchen facilities and toilets/showers. This existing barn and consequently the managers flat contained within it and campsite reception is adjacent to the proposed washing and showering facilities block, indoor play area building and plant and equipment associated with the wider camp site use.

If the flat was occupied unconnected with the campsite it is considered that the amenities of future residents would be unacceptably affected by the day to day operations, noise, disturbance and general amenity issues associated with the camp site use. As such it is necessary to impose an occupancy condition requiring the flat to be used by someone directly employed in the operation and day to day running of the site. Full details will be secured by condition.

The site is to be used by touring caravans and tents only. However in order to guard against the establishment of permanent residential occupation of the site by a caravan, it is considered necessary to restrict the use of the site on a seasonal basis, preventing it from being used for approximately 3 months of the year over the winter period (1st November in any one year and the 31st January in the succeeding year).

Full details will be secured by condition.

Highways, Access, Transportation and Parking.

Policy CS53 'Management of Demand for Travel' seeks to make the best use of the road network, promote good quality public transport walking and cycling and use travel plans to maximise use of sustainable forms of travel and mitigate the negative impacts of transport.

Paragraph 108 of the NPPF identifies that decisions should take account of promoting sustainable transport, whether safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people; and any significant impacts from developments on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highways safety can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.

Para 109 of the NPPF states 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 of development are severe.

Access to the site would be taken from Woodhead Road along what is classified as a public footpath that leads directly into the site. The existing definitive footpaths currently serve the application site and are of well compacted stone and gravel. They also accommodate Forestry Commission vehicles including articulated vehicles. Consequently, they would be able to support cars and caravans. Part of the access track would be amended by way of two passing places being introduced to allow vehicles to pass comfortably.

The amount of traffic expected can be accommodated by the access and the junction of the access with Woodhead Road is considered to be safe with appropriate visibility in both directions.

The site is crossed by a definitive public footpath which is retained in its current position.

Car parking would be provided on an informal basis on the camping and caravanning areas with cars being parked next to tents and vans. A small area of car parking is proposed adjacent to the reception building which is likely to be used by staff and customers when they first arrive.

There is an existing car park adjacent to Woodhead Road used by walkers and cyclists utilising the facilities in the adjoining woodland. This car park is served by the same access that currently provides access to the site. To the rear of the car park is a controlled access gate that campers and caravanners will need to pass through. The applicant would need to reach agreement with the Forestry Commission and the Local Planning Authority regarding the operation of the gate and such agreement would need to ensure that it would not be left open for prolonged periods which might lead to abuse by non-authorized vehicles. This would be controlled by an appropriate condition.

The proposal is considered acceptable from a highways perspective.

Flood Risk

Core Strategy policy CS67 deals with flood risk management and restricts development in areas where there is a high probability of flooding.

The applicant has submitted a Flood Risk Assessment in support of the proposal. According to the Environment Agency Flood map, the whole site is located within Flood Zone 1 where the risk of flooding is low and accordingly all forms of development are considered acceptable in line with the guidance contained in the NPPG and NPPF.

The possibility of surface water flooding has been assessed. There is a gradient of up to about 1 in 10 which falls from east to west across the site and surface water run-off from the existing open fields and farm area currently discharges into Sough Dike which flows from north to south along the western boundary.

The higher land to the east is woodland which would create minimal run off and the drier areas in the camp site would be covered in permeable material ensuring that the effects of the development on natural drainage would be minimal. New buildings and infrastructure is limited to that required to support the use including a water bore hole for fresh water supply. Waste water would be controlled by the small sewage treatment plant proposed. The Environment Agency (EA) have been consulted on the application, they raise no objection to the proposals however they have indicated that a separate license for the sewage treatment facility will need to be gained from the EA direct.

As such the proposals are not considered to give rise to any significant flooding or drainage issues.

## Ecology

Paragraph 170 a) and d) of the NPPF identifies that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and sites of biodiversity value; and minimise impacts on and providing net gains in biodiversity; including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.

Paragraph 175 a) of the NPPF identifies that if significant harm resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused. Part d) of paragraph 175 goes on to state that opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.

At a local level Policy CS74 of the Core Strategy identifies that high-quality development will be expected, which would respect, take advantage of and enhance the distinctive features of the city, its districts and neighbourhoods, including: the topography, landforms, river corridors, Green Network, important habitats, waterways, woodlands, other natural features and open spaces;



Policy GE11 of the UDP seeks to protect and enhance the natural environment ensuring that the design, siting and landscaping of development respects and promotes nature conservation and includes measures to reduce any potentially harmful effects of development.

Policy GE13 also seeks to ensure that development affecting areas of natural history interest and local nature sites should, wherever possible, be sited and designed so as to protect and enhance the most important features. Where development would decrease the nature conservation value of an area of Natural History Interest or a Local Nature Site, that decrease must be kept to a minimum and compensated for by creation or enhancement of wildlife habitats elsewhere, within the site or local area.

The UDP proposals map indicates that a large majority of the application site with the exception of part of the existing access track leading from Woodhead Road is not designated as an Area of Natural History Interest. Part of the site is shown to lie within the Wheata Woods Local Nature Reserve (LNR). The extent of the LNR is identified on the MAGIC mapping system, which is a website (maintained by Natural England) that provides geographical information on the natural environment from various government resources.

It was concluded as part of the consideration of the previous planning application (13/03412/FUL) in consultation with the Council's Ecology section that the site did not in fact form part of a Local Nature Reserve as the site is open grassland and does not form part of the adjoining woodlands. The LNR area as represented on the magic map is therefore considered to be erroneous and the applicants have identified that they will be approaching Natural England to correct the designation/mapping.

Regardless the site borders Wheata Wood, Prior Royd and Birkin Royd Local Wildlife Site (LWS) and lies approximately 135m from a Sheffield Wildlife Trust Nature Reserve. The impacts on these designations are therefore considered as part of this application.

The applicants have submitted an Ecology Survey (as amended) in support of the application. The Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust and Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Councils Ecology section raised some concerns with the findings of the reports and subsequently further survey work (birds and bats) and reporting has been carried out and submitted.

The survey identified the habitats within the site as being improved grassland, scattered scrub, a narrow stream flowing along the western boundary, hedgerow, scattered and bare earth along two farm access tracks.

No evidence of protected species has been found on the site, however it was noted that the site was used by bats for foraging purposes. It is the case that they are likely to be evident in surrounding woodland but there were no indications of habitats within the application site. There are some scattered mature trees within, and on the site's edge which have potential for roosting bats. The existing building has been assessed and is not considered to accommodate any bat roosting

habitat. The site has previously been grazed by horses, which has significantly reduced the ecological value of the site, and it is considered unsuitable for reptiles or ground nesting birds.

The report found that the proposed works would affect only a small proportion of the site, the impact of the change of use on the site and the adjoining LNR and LWS's would be low and there are no protected species on the site.

The site layout has been amended to retain the alignment of the existing footpath that crosses the site and as such the hedgerow that runs alongside it can be retained.

The proposed use of the site as a caravan and camp site will lead to a seasonal increase use of the surrounding woodlands and countryside; however it is considered that given the restricted size of the site which accommodates up to 31 caravan pitches, the development will have a limited effect on the wider surrounding area from an ecological perspective. In addition the 15 metre buffer strip which extends around the camping and caravan site will minimise any affects beyond the site boundary.

In accordance with the requirements of the NPPF, measurable net gains in biodiversity will be secured by way of condition, requiring the submission of a biodiversity and ecological management plan, substantial native tree planting will be secured in the site buffers, and the provision for nesting birds and bats boxes on site.

Obtrusive lighting and light spillage to the adjoining woodland edges has the potential to affect existing habitats and contribute to a decline in biodiversity. However it is considered that, subject to a sensitively designed lighting scheme and use of modern lighting systems, including the careful consideration of the location and need for lighting, the impacts of the development can be suitably mitigated. A condition will be attached requiring details of a comprehensive lighting scheme to be submitted for approval.

Consequently, there would be no harm to the natural environment at the site in accordance with policy criteria.

Impact on trees and ancient woodland.

UDP policy GE14 says that support will be given for the creation of part of South Yorkshire Forest on the north and eastern sides of the city. This is supported by UDP policy GE15 which encourages the planting of native woodland trees and Core Strategy policy CS74.

Para 170 b) of the NPPF states that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland.

The application site is an open area of grazing land which does not contain substantial areas of tree planting. However the east and west boundaries of the site adjoin established areas of ancient woodland.

Natural England and the Forestry Commission's standing advice for protecting ancient woodland and veteran trees recommends a minimum 15 metre buffer between ancient woodland and new development to protect it from any harmful effects.

In accordance with the above guidance the scheme includes a substantial 15 metre buffer around a large majority of the camping areas. The buffer is located entirely within the application site and will be landscaped to include new native species. This buffer is considered to provide suitable protection to the ancient woodlands and overtime would form an extension of the woodlands.

The proposal is considered to be acceptable from a landscape perspective.

### Planning Balance

The assessment of this development proposal needs to be considered in light of paragraph 11 of the NPPF, which identifies that when making decisions, a presumption in favour of sustainable development should be applied. Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or where the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, in this particular case it means that planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of granting planning permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.

For the reasons described above, it has been demonstrated that very special circumstances exist to permit a caravan and camp site in the Green Belt and any harm caused to the Green Belt is outweighed by the benefits of the development indicated above.

Furthermore, it is considered that the relevant development policies that are most important for determining this application are not out of date in their own right and so have been afforded appropriate weight in consideration and determination of this application.

### RESPONSE TO REPRESENTATIONS

A number of representations have been received in both support and objection; the issues raised are largely addressed in the main body of the report. In response to the representations not addressed above:

- The conversion of the barn to include accommodation for a worker is in line with policy criteria. This would not set a precedent for future residential development.
- Any increases in traffic could be absorbed without detrimentally affecting the existing highways network around the site.
- Vehicle movements associated with the development are not considered to generate any significant pollution and disturbance.

- The council cannot insist that this is a caravan club operated site. This is a matter for the applicants to decide.
- Occupancy conditions will prevent permanent residential occupation by caravans and the use of the site by touring (removable) caravans only.
- The track would be suitable for heavy vehicles because large Forestry Commission vehicles already use the access.
- Issues to do with rights of access of parcels of land are private matters for applicants to resolve.
- Public footpaths are not considered to be affected by the proposals.
- The proposal would not have an impact on Wheata Woods. A 15 metre buffer strip would be incorporated.
- It is considered that the impact of any noise or light from the proposal would not adversely affect wildlife in the area and details of appropriate site lighting are secured by condition.
- The applicants will need to ensure that appropriate measures are in place for emergency access to the site, it is however noted that the site benefits from established access from the public highway.
- Full details of the solar panel array and other associated plant will be secured by condition.
- Details of waste management and recycling provision are secured by planning condition.
- Showering and WC facilities are contained in an existing building and considered appropriate for the development proposed.
- It is not considered necessary to impose time restrictions on the operation and access to the camp site – these are considered to be management issues for the applicants.
- The Wildlife Trust felt that a traffic impact study should be carried out but given the level of activity, this is not considered to be necessary.
- The technical specifications of sewage treatment facility to ensure that it does not pollute the local water environment are controlled by separate legislation controlled by the Environment Agency.
- With respect to the potential for associated uses such as barn dances, hog roasts and live music, conditions are imposed on the control of amplified noise from the site. Small scale events would be considered ancillary to the operation of the campsite and separate licensing controls would apply.
- The proposal is not considered to put any undue strain on local amenities or create any anti-social behaviour issues and will contribute to the local economy as a direct result of the development.
- Details of site drainage is secured by condition.

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

## ENFORCEMENT

It is noted that a caravan has recently been placed on site close to the existing barn buildings and is occupied. The applicant has indicated that this is required for security purposes. The retention of the caravan does not form part of this application and is subject to separate enforcement proceedings.

The applicants are seeking to regularise the previous unauthorised works to the external fabric of the two storey barn as part of this application.

## SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

This application seeks planning permission for the change of use of an area of land located between two existing areas of woodland at Little Intake Farm to a touring caravan and camping site.

Members may recall that the Planning and Highways Committee resolved to grant planning consent for a very similar campsite in May 2014 (ref: 13/03412/FUL), that permission was not however implemented. This application is principally a resubmission of the previous proposal.

Three existing buildings are to be converted to uses which would be ancillary to the campsite including washing/showering facilities, indoor play area and a campsite reception/managers flats. Some ancillary plant and equipment to facilitate the use is also proposed including a sewage treatment facility, roof mounted solar panels, a solar panel battery container and a water bore hole, all of which are located adjacent to the existing buildings on site. Alterations to the site levels to the rear of the managers flat are also proposed to facilitate access from the rear of the property.

The caravan site would be on the west of the access track and an area for tents to the east.

The site benefits from an established access track which leads from Woodhead Road. This track will be used and within the application site it will be improved by the introduction of two passing places.

The detailed land use policy assessment set out earlier in this report makes it clear that, in line with advice contained in the NPPF and the UDP, the proposal constitutes inappropriate development within the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Consequently, it has to be demonstrated that very special circumstances exist and any potential harm to the Green Belt associated with the development by reason of inappropriateness, conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt or other harm is outweighed by other considerations.

There are considered to be clear benefits arising from the proposal including the refurbishment and long term use of the former agricultural buildings at the farm. As well as benefits to the local rural economy, the proposal has support from local businesses that will benefit from the proposal as well as the use creating additional employment. The facility would contribute to the promotion of tourism within the City and would also enhance the rural economy, which aligns with the objectives of the local and national planning policy.

The evidence submitted by the applicant and independently supported by the response to the application submitted by the Head of Economic Strategy and

Marketing Sheffield and Welcome to Yorkshire indicates that there is a shortage of camping and caravan facilities within the locality.

The application site would be enclosed by a buffer strip which would to an extent screen the site and prevent any encroachment into the adjoining areas of ancient woodland. The seasonal characteristics of camping would mean that there would be periods of increased activity on the site during the summer, while over the winter months much lower levels of activity would take place, with no activity at all between the 1st November in any one year and the 31st January in the succeeding year due to imposition of occupancy conditions. During these times that part of the site could revert back to grazing.

The impact of the development on the openness of the Green Belt is considered limited as the site is located in a valley and screened by existing buildings and mature woodland, which is to be supplemented by a new 15 metre wide landscape buffer.

Adequate car parking is provided within the site and the traffic associated with the development is not considered to have a severe highways impacts or affect the safe and efficient operation of the highways network. The proposal is not considered to give rise to any harmful amenity, landscape, ecological or flooding issues.

In light of the above very special circumstances are considered to exist which outweigh any potential for harm to the Green Belt and Area of High Landscape Value.

For the above reasons it is recommended that planning consent is granted conditionally.