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Case Number	17/00161/FUL (Formerly PP-05744468)
Application Type	Full Planning Application
Proposal	Erection of 34x dwellings with associated access, parking and landscaping works
Location	Land At The Junction Of Oughtibridge Lane And Platts Lane Sheffield S35 0HP
Date Received	13/01/2017
Team	West and North
Applicant/Agent	Mrs Sarah Wills
Recommendation	Refuse

Refuse for the following reason(s):

- 1 The Local Planning Authority consider that the proposed highways improvements, which include signalling the rail bridge on Oughtibridge Lane, would have an unacceptable impact on the safety of pedestrians, cyclists, vehicles and other road users, and detrimentally effect the free and safe flow of traffic on Oughtibridge Lane and Station Lane. The development is therefore contrary to Policy IB9 (f) of the Sheffield Unitary Development Plan, Policy CS51 (e) of the Core Strategy and paragraphs 108 (b) and (c), 109 and 110 (c) of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 2 The Local Planning Authority considers that as the application site and the facilities and services in Oughtibridge (including public transport) cannot be accessed safely, the scheme represents an unsustainable and unsuitable form of residential development that does not take opportunities to prioritise and promote sustainable transport and access. The development is therefore contrary to Policies IB9 (f) and H15 (a) of the Sheffield Unitary Development Plan, Policies CS23, CS51 (b) and (e), CS53 (a) and CS63 (a), (c) and (h) of the Core Strategy and Paragraphs 8 (b), 91 (a) and (c), 102 (c), 108 (a) and (c), 110 (a) and (c) and 127 (f) of the National Planning Policy Framework.

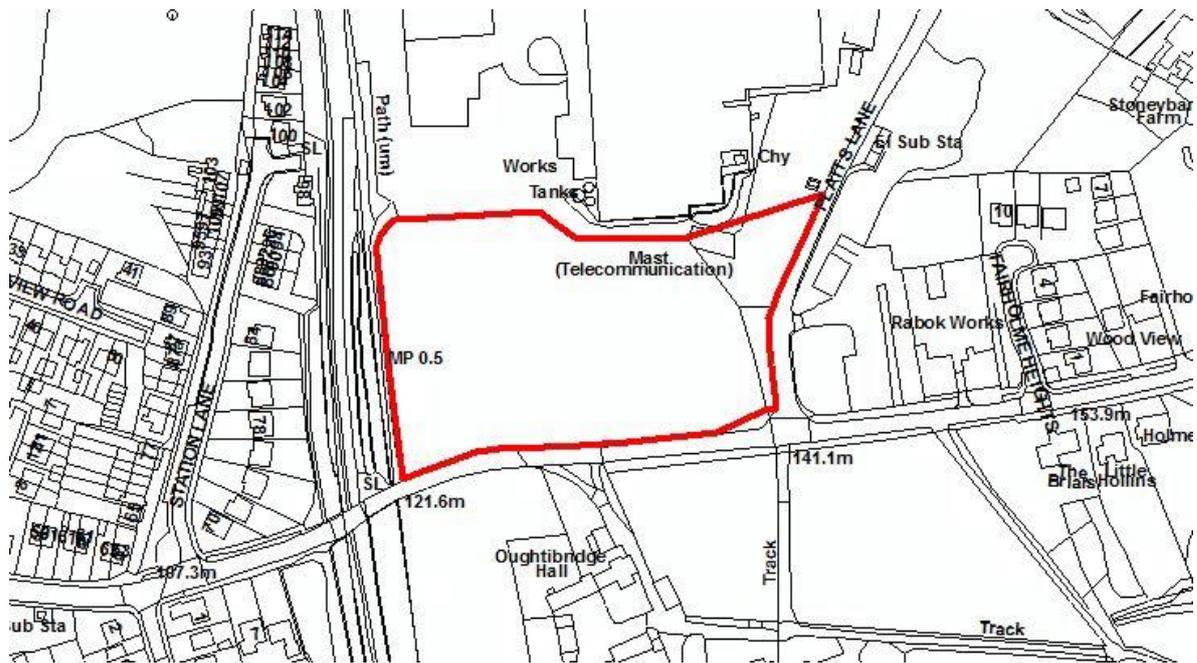
Attention is Drawn to the Following Directives:

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

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

PLO-16-02-02B - Proposed Site Plan (Amended layout);  
PLO-16-02-03B - Boundary Treatment Plan;  
PLO-16-02-04A - Materials Plan;  
PLO-16-02-11A - Site Sections;  
PLO-16-02-T2-901a - Type 2;  
PLO-16-02-T5-901a - Type 5;  
PLO-16-02-T8-901 - Type 8;  
PLO-16-02-T8-902 - Type 8;  
PLO-16-02-T8-903 - Type 8 - 3 Block;  
PLO-16-02-T8-904 -Type 8 - 3 Block;  
PLO-16-02-T10-901 - Type 10;  
PLO-16-02-T11-901a - Type 11;  
PLO-16-02-T12-901 - Type 12 - Semi;  
PLO-16-02-T12-902 - Type 12 - Semi;  
PLO-16-02-T12-903 - Type 12 - 3 Block;  
PLO-16-02-T12-904 - Type 12 - 3 Block;  
PLO-16-02-T13-901 - Type 13;  
PLO-16-02-T13-902 - Type 13;  
PLO-16-06-003-B - Proposed Level Strategy;  
PLO-16-06-004-B - Proposed Drainage Strategy;  
PLO-16-06-005-B - Surface Water Outfall Options;  
PLO-16-02-02B - Proposed Site Plan.

## Site Location



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## LOCATION AND PROPOSAL

The 1.4 hectare application site is located within the Oughtibridge district of Sheffield, off Oughtibridge Lane and at the junction with Platts Lane.

This greenfield site is currently being used by the tenant farmer for growing cereal crops. The topography of the site is such that it slopes steeply down from east to west. There are trees along the boundaries of the site to the east and west, but they are not protected by Tree Protection Orders (TPO).

The site is accessed off Oughtibridge Lane, which forms the southern site boundary and is lined with a drystone wall. To the south, beyond Oughtibridge Lane, are open fields and farm buildings. To the west of the site and beyond the trees is the Don Valley (freight) railway line. Oughtibridge Lane crosses over the railway line via a bridge to the south west. There is a footpath running along the western boundary of the site which connects Oughtibridge Lane to the ancient woodland beyond. This footpath is not visible from the site owing to the dense screening along the western boundary.

Beyond the railway line to the west is a residential estate accessed off Station Lane.

To the north is a site occupied by Internet Refractory Products which contains a series of large industrial buildings. Planning permission is sought for the erection of 70 dwellings on this site (18/01543/FUL).

To the east, and accessed off Oughtibridge Lane, is a small complex of commercial buildings known as Robak Works.

The application site is in a Fringe Industry and Business Area as defined on the Sheffield Unitary Development Plan (UDP) proposals map.

Planning permission is sought, as amended, for the erection of 34 dwellings comprising of a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced properties and which range between 2 and 4 bedrooms in size. The proposals include two new access roads off Oughtibridge Lane.

## PLANNING HISTORY

There is no relevant planning history for the application site but of relevance is the application for 70 dwellings on the adjoining land.

## SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

The application was advertised by way of press and site notices and by individual letters of neighbour consultation.

60 letters of representation and two petitions with 247 and 438 signatures respectively have been received. 59 of the letters raised objections and 1 was considered to raise neutral comments.

Signatories of the smaller petition called upon the Council to assess the cumulative impact of the development on traffic levels in Oughtibridge, specifically the ability of Station and Oughtibridge Lanes to cope if the proposal to site traffic lights on the railway bridge were to go ahead, and the safety of an existing zebra crossing on Low Road. They asked the Council to find a safe solution to their concerns, namely a separate foot/cycle bridge, over the railway and a light controlled crossing on Low Road.

Signatories of the larger petition raised a range of concerns which are summarised, with those of the letters, as follows:

- No significant objection to the development of houses to this site.
- There will be a backlog of traffic on all routes into and out of Oughtibridge
- It will be unsafe for pedestrians to use Oughtibridge Lane.
- The siting of the crossing on Low Road is in a terrible position and with the extra traffic there will be more confusion leading to more accidents.
- We need a transport strategy for the north side of Sheffield.
- Infrastructure, both physical and social, in the area needs careful consideration in light of these proposals.
- It would be beneficial to expand medical/school facilities in the village prior to building new houses.
- The proposed access roads lead onto an already busy road.
- Traffic lights on this road are not the answer. They will lead to chaos.
- A new bridge/ footbridge is needed over the train line.
- A much safer route for pedestrians should be insisted upon. There is no safe footpath from the site.
- The proposed 34 dwellings are unnecessary.
- The site is green belt and shouldn't be built upon.
- The development will result in increased air pollution.
- The development, in particular the highway proposals, will impact negatively upon the safety of cyclists.
- The proposed designs are unimaginative.
- The proposals raise flooding concerns.
- The transport assessment is incomplete.
- The discussions at the meeting with the developer have not been included in the application.
- The development will impact on the listed Oughtibridge Hall.
- A bat survey should have been undertaken.
- The deeds of the neighbouring house clearly show a small strip of land next to the bridge that was retained to provide access to the proposed footbridge. If a footbridge was thought to be the best solution 15 years ago what has changed to make the applicant discount it now, when vehicle movements have certainly increased during that time.
- The adjacent site should be developed in tandem to achieve an appropriate and acceptable development.
- There is limited access to the nearby woodland.

- The route between Oughtibridge/Bradfield & Grenoside is dangerous when driving past walkers and cyclists when this part of the road narrows. There really should be a proper footpath to make this safe for all who use this valuable route
- An increase in traffic will be dangerous and give rise to highways safety issues.
- The junction of Station Lane and Low Road/A6102 is an accident black spot.
- Measures should be included to reduce traffic speeds.
- Access across the existing railway bridge and along Oughtibridge Lane is already dangerous due to the alignment of the road, position of boundary walls and because there is no dedicated walkway or footpath.
- The development will increase traffic on Oughtibridge Lane and as such a dedicated footpath is required so pedestrians can safely access Oughtibridge.
- Road users (cars) often have to cross on to the wrong side of the road to avoid pedestrian walking in the road which is dangerous.
- The applicant's supporting transportation information underestimates the highways safety issues.
- The development should be limited to the brownfield part of the site only.
- There is no public transport that will link the site to Oughtibridge.
- Walkers and cyclists park vehicle on Oughtibridge Lane which reduces visibility for drivers.
- The site contains asbestos and as such demolition should be carried out correctly.
- The development will detrimentally affect the amenities of adjoining properties.
- Detrimental impact on the adjoining woodland as a result of the development.

Chairman of South Yorkshire (woodhead) Heritage Rail Group and partner to the Don Valley railway Group:

- Concern that the planning application does not consider the fact that the Arup feasibility study concluded this to be next to the proposed railway station.

No plan has been placed allowing parking for a possible park and ride scheme.

The chair is working alongside Don Valley Railway group, and would be bitterly disappointed if the council did not consider this, especially as currently working on increasing efforts to secure progress on our scheme right now.

Bradfield Parish Council:

- No objections raised to the development of the land but serious concerns regarding infrastructure and traffic management in the local area.
- Affordable housing should be included in the plans for this site.
- The proposals fail to properly address the impact on local schools, both primary and secondary and take no account of the future provision of local NHS services to the expanded community. School places in the area are already limited and the housing developments currently proposed in the area are going to make demand outstrip supply very quickly.
- It is imperative that traffic management issues surrounding this application are given thought.

- The developers refer to the route on Oughtibridge Lane being a rat run. This is incorrect, it is a well used main route to the M1 for many commuters who live in the north of Sheffield.
- Poor traffic management at this site will have major impact on the wider area, stretching as far as Deepcar and Stocksbridge which are themselves undergoing major builds.
- The creation of two additional access points to and from Oughtibridge Lane, at the steepest part of the road and just above a narrow bend on a bridge over the railway line, could prove dangerous for both pedestrians and cyclists.
- The ideas put forward seem to be the cheapest option.
- The Developers should provide a footpath from the railway bridge to Platts Lane.
- The proposed traffic/ pedestrian management plan of using the railway bridge as a traffic light controlled single carriageway with part of the existing carriageway reformed as a footway is an unacceptable suggestion. It will not be a safe route for pedestrians. A separate footway is required.
- The developers have not even entered into a conversation with Network Rail about this opportunity. In the past few years traffic using this route has increased considerably and due to the amount of new build in the surrounding area this is only going to increase further.
- Residents in the local area have no desire to have queuing traffic on Station Lane blocking access to existing established estates particularly at peak travel times.
- The route in question is heavily frequented by cyclists who have been actively encouraged to the area by SCC following the success of the Tour de France.
- Cyclists in standing traffic who then have to be overtaken by a line of faster moving vehicles can only cause further disruption in the area plus this has serious safety implications for the cyclists.

Councillor Trevor Bagshaw:

- The housing development proposals would mark a significant expansion of Oughtibridge and its further transformation from rural village to suburban dormitory for Sheffield.
- Likely for additional proposals to expand the village and particularly on sites along Oughtibridge Lane, therefore essential that clarity of thought in respect of traffic pressures and management along this important gateway to the village is required.
- Whilst agree that the development of the Platts Lane site for housing is appropriate, the development should only be approved if:
  - Actual affordable or starter homes are built as part of the development. Simply providing a cash sum to the local authority in lieu of built dwellings is not acceptable.
  - The creation of two additional accesses on to and from Oughtibridge Lane at the steepest part of that road and just above a narrow and unsighted bend on a bridge over the railway line is in my view dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists in particular. The fact that there exists an unused (for many years) field access to/ from the site is no response to permitting the creation of additional roads/ vehicle accesses. Modern engineering techniques could effect a service road to the proposed estate and enable Platts Lane to be the development's access. What seems to be on offer is the cheapest (most profitable) option.
  - There should also be provided a footway from the railway bridge along the Oughtibridge Lane frontage of the site to Platts Lane. It should be positioned

behind the existing gritstone field wall boundary. The wall needs to be rebuilt and strengthened without detriment to its appearance/character which is a defining aspect of field boundaries in the area.

- The proposed traffic/ pedestrian management plan of using the railway bridge as a traffic light controlled single carriageway with part of the existing carriageway reformed as a footway is a retrograde proposal. It will not stand the test of future traffic growth on this route in and out of Oughtibridge nor will it be safe for pedestrians. A separate footway is required.

- Over recent years there has been a considerable growth in traffic using this route to the motorway. It is in fact an un-recognized (by the council's traffic managers) partial outer ring road. Traffic on this road is bound to increase considerably as the extant housing permissions are delivered in Oughtibridge, Wharnccliffe Side, Deepcar and even Stannington. The developer's narrow "quick fix" view of this issue is unacceptable. There is no wish to have queuing traffic on Station Lane blocking access to existing established estates particularly at peak travel times.

- The proposals fail, as have other recent proposals, to properly address the likely impact on local schools, both primary and secondary, or in regard to the future provision of locally provided NHS services to the expanded community.

South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue:

No objections provided that development fully complies with approved document B5 for fire service access.

## PLANNING ASSESSMENT

### Policy Context

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 require that planning applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Council's development plan comprises the Core Strategy (CS) which was adopted in 2009 and the saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) which was adopted in 1998. The National Planning Policy Framework published in 2018 and revised in February 2019 (NPPF) is a material consideration.

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

Paragraph 12 of the NPPF makes it clear that a presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. Paragraph 12 continues that where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan permission should not usually be granted.

Paragraph 213 of the NPPF confirms that policies should not be considered as out-of-date simply because they were adopted or made prior to the publication of the Framework. Due weight should be given to them, according to their degree of consistency with the Framework. Therefore the closer a policy in the development plan is to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given.

The assessment of this development proposal also needs to be considered in light of paragraph 11 of the NPPF, which states that for the purposes of decision making, where there are no relevant development plan policies, or where the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, planning permission should be granted unless:

- The application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the proposed development, or
- Any adverse impacts of granting planning permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

In this context the following assessment will:

- Assess the proposals compliance against existing local policies as this is the starting point for the decision making process. For Sheffield this is the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and the Sheffield Development Framework Core Strategy (CS).
- Consider the degree of consistency these policies have with the Framework and attribute appropriate weight accordingly.
- Consider the schemes compliance with the NPPF as this forms a separate material consideration in its own right.
- Consider the application of the two Paragraph 11 d) tests of the NPPF – sometimes referred to as ‘the tilted balance’.

## Land Use

The site is in a Fringe Industry and Business Area (FIBA) as defined by the adopted Sheffield Unitary Development Plan (UDP).

Policy IB6 of the UDP identifies that residential uses are not a preferred use in Fringe Industry and Business Areas; they are however identified as acceptable uses in principle subject to a number of other policy considerations including:

Policy IB8, which identifies that preferred uses (as specified in IB6) will only be permitted on the specific sites listed in the policy.

Policy IB9, which states that new development should not lead to a concentration of uses that would prejudice the dominance of industry and business in the area and be adequately served by transport facilities, whilst providing safe access to the highway network.

Policy IB11 states that housing in such areas will be permitted only where it would not further constrain industrial or business development and be next to an existing residential areas and when it would not suffer from unacceptable living conditions including air pollution, ground contamination noise or other nuisance.

The proposal does not conflict with IB8 as this is not a site where only preferred (industry and business) uses should be permitted.

The application site and the adjoining proposal for 70 dwellinghouses form part of a larger Fringe Industry and Business Area (FIBA) and encompass the majority of the developable land in the FIBA. The remainder of the policy area, with the exception of Robak works, is both steeply sloping or has already been developed for housing. Planning consent was granted to redevelop part of the former Farrar Engineering site in 2011.

Considering the recent residential development that has taken place in the locality it is clear that this FIBA is not considered to be a priority employment area anymore. This approach is reflected in Core Strategy Policy CS5, which does not identify the area as a key strategic location for manufacturing, distribution / warehousing or other non-office businesses and it is not identified in the spatial strategy as having a key city-wide role.

In 2013 the draft City Policies and Sites document designated the site as part of a Housing Area. This proposed designation carries no weight, but does indicate how the updated policy approach to the area in the Core Strategy could have been reflected in a new policy area designation.

The Framework (paragraph 117) clearly promotes the effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses and gives substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs (paragraph 118 c).

These aims of national policy are reflected in Policies CS23 and CS24 which seek to focus new housing where it would support urban regeneration and make efficient use of previously developed (brownfield) land. Whilst the weight attributed to CS23 and CS24 can be open to question as they are restrictive policies based on outdated housing need figures, the promotion of sustainable brownfield development aligns strongly with the Framework and in this regard CS23 and CS24 can be offered substantial weight.

Core Strategy Policy CS23 (Locations for New Housing) states that new housing will be concentrated where it would support urban regeneration and make efficient use of land and infrastructure, specifically stating that housing in Oughtibridge will be limited to suitable, sustainable sites within the existing built up area.

Whilst the application site lies adjacent to the built up area and might be considered sustainable in terms of its geographical location, there are specific concerns about the sustainability and consequently the suitability of developing the site for residential purposes due to access and highways issues. Further detailed consideration will be given to these matters and their compliance with the

Framework and the relevant sections of IB9 and CS23 and other relevant policy in the transport and highways section of this report.

Policy CS24 gives priority to previously developed sites but there is no record of or evidence submitted to show that the site is previously developed. It is currently used for farming and as such this site is classed as a greenfield site.

Policy CS24 states that no more than 12% of dwelling completions will be on greenfield sites in the period between 2004/05 and 2025/26, going on to state that housing on greenfield sites will only be developed b) on small sites within existing urban areas and larger villages where it can be justified on sustainability grounds, or d) in sustainably located larger sites within or adjoining urban areas and larger villages, if annual monitoring shows that there is less than a 5 year supply of deliverable sites.

The application site is not a small site, that would be anything with less than 15 homes, so the applicable part of policy CS24 is part (d).

Between 2004/05 and 2018/19, 95% of new homes have been delivered on previously developed land, so only 5 % of dwelling completions have been on greenfield sites. The small scale of the proposal is unlikely to prejudice the continued achievement of this target meaning that the first part of policy, to prioritise previously developed land, can be complied with.

In geographical terms the site is a sustainably located larger site adjoining a larger village though, as described above, there are specific concerns about the sustainability and consequently the suitability of developing the site for residential purposes due to access and highways issues.

Part d) suggests that, if annual monitoring shows that there is less than a 5 year supply of deliverable sites, then this larger greenfield site could be developed in line with Policy CS24.

The NPPF requires local authorities to identify a 5 year supply of specific 'deliverable' sites for housing with an additional 5% buffer.

Core Strategy Policy CS22 relates to the scale of the requirement for new housing and sets out Sheffield's housing targets until 2026; identifying that a 5 year supply of deliverable sites will be maintained. However, the NPPF (2019) now requires that where a Local Plan is more than 5 years old, the calculation of the 5-year housing requirement should be based on local housing need calculated using the Government's standard method.

The Local Planning Authority has recently updated its five year housing land supply position based on the changed assessment regime identified in the revised NPPF (2019) and associated Practice Guidance. The Local Planning Authority has reached this figure by undertaking additional work, including engagement with stakeholders, to reflect the requirements of national policy and guidance before publishing the conclusions in a monitoring report.

Sheffield now has a 5.1 year supply of deliverable housing units and can therefore demonstrate a five year supply, meaning the proposal does not satisfy part d) of Policy CS24.

However, regardless of the 5 year housing land supply position and given that our updated housing land supply is only marginally over 5 years, paragraph 59 of the NPPF still attaches great weight to continuing to boost the supply of housing. The provision of 34 additional dwellings would make a small, but not insignificant, contribution to meeting the City's obligation to maintain a 5 year supply of housing land in the future and, on this basis, it is considered that this should be given weight in the balance of this decision.

### Housing Density

Core Strategy Policy CS26 seeks to make efficient use of land for new housing and identifies that a density of between 30-40 dwellings per hectare is appropriate in this location. It also advises that new developments should be in-keeping with the character of the area and support the development of sustainable balanced communities. More up to date guidance on the efficient use of land is however contained in the NPPF which is considered to carry increased weight over Policy CS26 given that Sheffield's housing need is now greater than it was when the Core Strategy was published.

Paragraph 122 of the NPPF identifies that development which makes efficient use of land should be supported taking account of various factors including housing need, viability, availability of infrastructure and scope to promote sustainable travel modes, desirability of maintaining the areas prevailing character and setting, promoting regeneration, and the importance of securing well designed and attractive places.

The application site is approximately 1.4 hectares in area, and the 34 dwellings proposed results in a density of approximately 24 dwellings per hectare. This falls below the recommended density identified in policy CS26; however there are a number of reasons for this. A substantial part of the application site comprises of the two access roads, whilst the sloping nature of the site as well as the requirements to protect trees and to incorporate a pumping station and stormwater attenuation have reduced the developable area of the site.

Therefore whilst the development falls short of the recommended density for this site, taking account of the site constraints, the provision of 34 dwelling houses is considered to be acceptable from a density perspective.

### Design and Layout

Chapter 12 of the NPPF is concerned with achieving well-designed places and paragraph 124 identifies that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.

Paragraph 127 of the NPPF, which is concerned with design, sets out a series of expectations including:

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

Policies CS74 of the CS and UDP policies BE5, IB9 and H15 all seek to secure high quality developments which are of an appropriate scale and which enhance the character and appearance of the area. These policies are reflective of the aims of the NPPF and are considered to carry substantial weight.

The plans have been amended since the application was submitted. The agents have worked with SCC officers and revised the layout and house design to achieve a scheme which has been designed to take into account the specific characteristics of the development site, the surrounding area and the wider context of its location on the edge of Oughtibridge.

The sloping topography of the site is a constraint and as such a retaining wall is necessary in order to dissect the site, creating a scheme with two access roads. The original submission lacked active frontage and was laid out formally. It was considered to be desirable to achieve a more active streetscene and so dwellings were introduced to address the Oughtibridge Lane street frontage. The access roads were also slightly curved giving the scheme a degree of informality, with the built form clustered around streets and spaces, and landscaping and steps in the built form were introduced to create more visual interest.

The site sits amidst pockets of residential development which vary in style, including the grade II listed Oughtibridge Hall located on the southern side of Oughtibridge Lane. Unlike the neighbouring proposal, in this context it was felt that a more traditional approach to the design of the housing was acceptable. Houses step to follow the natural contours of the land and characteristic stone boundary treatments respect the rural context.

It is considered that the development, as amended, creates a more positive relationship with and is more reflective of the site's semi-rural setting.

The overall scale and massing of properties is acceptable and relates to the site and its immediate surroundings. Whilst a simple, contextual palette of materials would be preferred, this could be conditioned should the application be approved.

Overall it is concluded that the scheme comprises of a quality residential development in terms of design, which is compliant with Core Strategy policy CS74, and UDP policies BE5, IB9 and H15.

Amenity Issues

UDP Policy GE23 says that development will only be permitted where it would not locate sensitive uses where they would be adversely affected by air pollution, while Policy IB9 says that residents should not suffer from unacceptable living conditions.

Policy H15 (Design of New Housing Developments) within the UDP states that the design of new housing developments will be expected to provide adequate private gardens or communal open space to ensure that basic standards of daylight, privacy, security and outlook are met for all residents.

Policy IB14 within the UDP requires an environmental buffer to be provided between industry and sensitive (residential) uses.

Core Strategy Policy CS74 says that new development should contribute to the creation of a healthy, safe and sustainable environment.

Paragraph 127(f) identifies that development should create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. In addition paragraph 180 identifies that planning decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account effects of pollution on health and living conditions, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development.

Local policy seeks to ensure existing and future users are offered a good standard of amenity and this is robustly reflected within the NPPF. These local policies can therefore be attributed substantial weight.

The amended scheme incorporates separation distances between the dwellings which meet the requirements contained in the local policies and guidelines, as well as the South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide, and properties benefit from good sized private gardens and communal amenity areas, with clear demarcations between the public and private realm.

The arrangement and position of the proposed dwellings has also been considered in light of the proposed development of 70 dwellings on the neighbouring site and does not result in any amenity concerns.

The adjacent industrial premises and railway line are the main sources of noise affecting the site. The rail line (in part) is located at a lower level and is irregularly used by freight traffic only.

The northern section of the site is located in relatively close proximity to the Internet Refractory Products site, for which planning permission is sought as previously described for 70 dwellinghouses. Should planning permission be granted on the application site and not for the neighbouring site, noise from the industrial premises would also be a concern. However, it is considered that future residents could be protected (through boundary treatments, enhanced glazing and ventilation) from unacceptable noise or other environmental conditions, should the scheme be considered acceptable in all other respects.

Issues to do with noise and general disturbance during the construction and demolition period can be adequately controlled by a condition requiring the submission of a Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). The proposal is considered to be acceptable from an amenity perspective.

### Landscape and Ecology Issues

Paragraph 170 (a) and (d) of the NPPF identifies that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment, minimise impacts on and provide net gains in biodiversity.

Paragraph 175( a) states 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, while 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 respects, take advantage of and enhances 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 a Local Nature Site, that decrease must be kept to a minimum and compensated for by the creation or enhancement of wildlife habitats elsewhere, within the site or local area.

UDP Policy BE6 requires new development to provide a suitable landscape scheme with regards to new planting and/or hard landscaping and details of existing vegetation that is to be removed or retained. Development should also try to integrate existing landscape features and use native species where appropriate.

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

The site is not covered by any ecological or landscape designations in the UDP.

The site comprises largely of intensively managed habitats. There is extensive tree cover located on land adjacent to the site boundaries which is protected by Tree

Preservation Orders (TPOs), however trees within the site boundary are not protected.

Obtrusive lighting and light spillage onto the adjoining woodland has the potential to affect existing habitats and contribute to a decline in biodiversity. However it is considered that the proposed layout incorporates a reasonable buffer between built form and existing trees such that, along with a sensitively design lighting scheme secured by condition, the impacts of the development could be suitably mitigated.

It is also considered that suitable mitigation measures are proposed to offset the impact of the development and to enhance the biodiversity of the site. These measures include the installation of bird and bat boxes, the retention of mature trees and the provision of new tree planting and landscaping. Consequently, it is concluded that there would be no harm to the natural environment within or adjacent to the site in accordance with policy criteria.

## Highways

Policy CS51 (Transport Priorities) within the CS sets out six strategic priorities including developing alternatives to the car, containing congestions levels and supporting economic growth through demand management measures and sustainable travel initiatives.

Policy CS53 (Management of Demand for Travel) within the CS seeks to make the best use of the road network, promote good quality public transport, walking and cycling. This includes the use of measures such as travel plans to maximise use of sustainable forms of travel and mitigate any negative impacts on transport.

H15 (Design of New Housing Developments) within the UDP states that the design of new housing developments will be expected to provide easy access to homes and circulation around the site for people with disabilities or with prams.

UDP Policy IB9 says that new development should be adequately served by transport services, provide safe access to the highway and provide appropriate off street parking.

CS23 of the Core Strategy also specifically identifies that in Oughtibridge housing development will be limited to suitable, sustainable sites within the existing built up area.

The NPPF (paragraphs 102 to 111) promotes sustainable transport and as such these local plan policies can be considered to have substantial weight in this context.

The NPPF also makes it clear that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impact on the road network would be severe.

## Access, Parking and Layout

The two new site access roads off Oughtibridge Lane would have acceptable visibility and do not give rise to any highways safety issues.

The road layout within the site has been designed to take account of the sites constraints, particularly levels which fall significantly from east to west. The layout facilitates access for emergency and refuse vehicles and does not raise any access or safety concerns.

At least 2 vehicle parking spaces per dwelling are provided for all properties.

#### Traffic Generation and Highways Capacity

The application is supported by a transport assessment. The predicted increase in vehicle trips associated with the proposed 34 houses (derived from the TRICS database) is in the order of 30 two-way movements during the morning peak hour, which is repeated again during the evening peak. There is some concern that the sites selected within the Transport Assessment to derive these trips are not fully representative of the application site in terms of location and accessibility.

Regardless, a manual traffic count undertaken during 2019 showed the morning peak two-way flow on Oughtibridge Lane to be 851 vehicles, with a two-way evening peak of 922 vehicles. Against these background flows, the development trips are not significant. Even when added to the hypothetical trips generated from the neighbouring Berkeley DeVeer site, they would not materially alter the way traffic circulates on the local highway network.

#### Highways Safety

The application site is separated from Oughtibridge by an existing railway bridge. Currently pedestrians are required to walk in the carriageway, often into on coming traffic in order to cross the bridge. From a highways safety perspective the existing arrangements are far from ideal and it is not considered acceptable for the occupants of an additional 34 (104 including the neighbouring development) family homes to have to cross the bridge in the same way to access Oughtibridge and the application site on foot.

In order to try and address safety concerns relating to access over the rail bridge the applicants are proposing to install traffic lights, reduce the carriageway to single-file for vehicles and provide a footway. Whilst accepting that the current arrangements are far from ideal (even hazardous), the applicant's proposals to overcome pedestrian severance are actually considered to create other, multiple safety concerns.

The applicant's original highway scheme proposed a 1.5 metre wide footway, a 1.0 metre wide eastbound cycle lane at carriageway level, and a 3.5 metre wide carriageway. This scheme was subject to a Road safety Audit (RSA) and owing to unresolvable RSA issues, it has been re-designed.

The revised scheme includes a footway width varying between 1.5 metres and 1.9 metres, and a carriageway width of 4.5 metres. The distance between the stop-

lines of the proposed traffic signals which are positioned to the east and west of the bridge remains at 75 metres. This second iteration of the design has had a fresh Road Safety Audit which raised 7 safety concerns. 4 of these concerns have been addressed by the developers design team however the following 3 issues remain unresolved, and officers feel these represent fundamental flaws in the design of the scheme:

- 1) The swept-path analysis for vehicles passing over the bridge eastbound shows little margin for error. The alignment of the road is unnatural and if the S-shape of the turning envelope is flattened by speeding traffic, a vehicle/cyclist may be struck standing at the westbound stop-line. Over-run of the footway and potential collision with pedestrians (particularly from larger vehicles) is also a valid concern raised by the audit team.
- 2) Proposals to move the 30 mph speed limit further to the east of the site access is unlikely to have any meaningful impact in reducing vehicle speeds in such a rural setting. The police also tend not to support traffic regulation orders in these types of situation.
- 3) The audit team have stated there is a steep uphill gradient for eastbound cyclists to negotiate whilst travelling through the signalised section. Cyclists using this section may be minimal; nevertheless there may be insufficient time for slow moving cyclists to travel through the signalised section during their 'green' signal. This could result in cyclists (or following vehicles) being at risk of colliding with an oncoming westbound vehicle.

As potential solutions to the concerns raised in point 3 above, the audit team has suggested:

- a) detection equipment be provided as part of signalisation to accommodate slow moving cyclists during the 'green' signal; or
- b) a formal facility is provided by widening the footway to provide a shared path for pedestrians and cyclists; or
- c) intergreen timings (time period between each signal changing) are adjusted to allow more time for cyclists.

In responding to the above, officers have referred to the Sustrans handbook for cycle friendly design, in which it is recommended that for motorcars overtaking cyclists, a width of 4.8 metres is required where the vehicle is travelling at 30 mph. Actual speed surveys have shown average speeds to be 32.3 mph, and 85th percentile speeds to be 38 mph. The Sustrans guidance also indicates that 200 mm should be added to the carriageway width for a 150 mm upstand kerf face, which is what the footway would have. Furthermore, 500 mm should be added to the width for a vertical feature above 600 mm in height (the parapet wall of the bridge exceeds this).

The reason for these additional widths is that cars shy-away from walls/parapets and cyclists shy-away from kerb upstands. These widths give a total carriageway width of 5.5 metres. Adding in the gradient, which reduces cycling speed and potentially induces wobbling, coupled with the distance between signal stop-lines (75 metres), the 4.5 metres carriageway width proposed by the design team is

considered too much of a departure from the Sustrans advice and gives rise to safety concerns.

In relation to the design suggestions of the audit team identified above (a, b & c): Officers consider that cyclists travelling eastbound will feel intimidated by traffic travelling behind owing to the width of the carriageway not being conducive to overtaking safely. This situation wouldn't be helped by implementing the audit team suggestion of option a) 'providing detection equipment'.

For option b) 'widen the footway to provide a formal facility shared by pedestrians and cyclists', this was considered and discarded on safety grounds within the original scheme.

For option c) 'adjust the intergreen timings' again this does nothing to resolve the issue of cyclists being chased by motorised traffic up the hill eastbound between stop-lines. Extending the intergreen would also extend queue lengths during the morning and evening peaks, increasing driver frustration.

In addition to the above, officers have raised concerns with the following issues which have not been picked up in the Road Safety Audit

Vehicles potentially racing signals before they change to red (particularly westbound with the downhill gradient) and failing to stop at the stop-line and colliding with a car/cyclist travelling eastbound. From a point 25 metres before the stop-line (westbound) there is approximately 45 metres forwards visibility. In accordance with the 'Manual for Street's' the surveyed average speed of 32.3 mph requires a stopping distance of 43 to 45 metres which is right on the cusp of the available forward visibility. The 85th percentile recorded speed was 38 mph which in accordance with 'Manual for Street's' requires a stopping distance of 56 to 59 metres, which exceeds the available forward visibility.

Temporary traffic lights (similar in type and in broadly the same location as the ones being proposed by the developer) were operated during the spring of 2018, accompanying some drainage repairs in the road. Motorists were observed racing the lights.

The provision of traffic lights will inevitably introduce delay where previously there has been none. The modelling submitted by the developer suggests average queue lengths of up to 14 vehicles during the peak periods. Looking at the input data, 12 seconds has been selected for the intergreens (time between signals changing). This means if a cyclist crosses the uphill stop-line with the signals on green, but they change to red just after passing the signal-head, there are only 12 seconds to cycle through the system (75 metres). This is considered insufficient time for a cyclist to safely navigate the traffic lights taking account of the distance between the signals and the significant gradients involved.

Officers have also observed the impact on traffic flows from the installation of temporary traffic lights on the bridge. During this period queues were observed to range between 20 and 33 vehicles long. Often, the queue length didn't completely

dissipate within one change of the signals, resulting in drivers tagging on the end of the car in front and ignoring the red signal.

Queues and delays cause driver frustration and increase the potential of risk taking. The cycling survey submitted with the application showed an AM peak of 0 eastbound cyclists and 3 westbound. The PM peak was 3 eastbound cyclists and 4 westbound. The daily two-way cycle flow crossing the bridge was 47 (on Wednesday 22nd May 2019). These cycling flows are not high, but with the queue lengths indicated in the transport assessment possibly being significantly underestimated, any associated driver frustration and risk taking puts cyclists in an extremely vulnerable position. There is also likely to be an increase in cycle activity over the weekend as Oughtibridge Lane (cote de Oughtibridge) formed part of the route used when the Tour de France visited Yorkshire in 2016, and so is attractive to recreational cyclists.

A cyclist setting off from the stop-line eastbound with a stream of cars behind, the cars are likely to be tempted to overtake the cyclist before the road width funnels down, most likely resulting in conflict at that location.

If the westbound nearside primary signal-head and eastbound offside primary signal-head fail, they appear extremely hazardous to access for maintenance personnel trying to repair them. If there was a major outage and all the signal-heads fail, it would be impossible for anyone to proceed safely across the bridge.

Officers consider that a separate footbridge over the railway line would afford safe access to the application site and Oughtibridge. Measures to support the provision of a footbridge including extending the footway on Station Lane (up to the bridge) and safeguarding a parcel of land to facilitate a bridge landing were secured as part of an adjoining residential development. Had the developer agreed to provide the footbridge the existing footpath on the eastern side of the rail line, which flanks the top of the railway cutting and connects to the site, could be brought up to adoptable standards and lit, thus providing convenient and direct pedestrian access between the application site and Oughtibridge.

Any structure spanning the railway requires the consent of Network Rail. Officers facilitated and attended a meeting (in York) with Network Rail, the applicants and developers of the adjoining site to discuss the provision of a footbridge. Network Rail raised no in principle objection to a footbridge being provided, subject to the developer(s) gaining the necessary technical approvals to carry out the works.

It is clear that there is no in principle or practical reason why a footbridge could not be delivered by the developer. Particularly in light of officers concerns that proposals to signalise the bridge give rise to clear highway safety issues that cannot be resolved. The proposal is therefore considered contrary to adopted local and national planning policy.

Concerns have been raised by residents about a potential increase in highway safety issues should planning permission be granted, particularly on the existing one-way system in Oughtibridge (Low Road). Notwithstanding the comments above about trips generated by the development, a danger reduction scheme is

already committed (along with the funding) at the Station Lane/Low Road/Bridge Hill junction.

A traffic regulation order has been advertised to prevent motorised traffic passing down Bridge Hill from Langsett Road South to Low Road. This will simplify operation of the Station Lane/Low Road junction, to the overall benefit of highway safety.

#### Sustainability and access to public transport services

The government is clear that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development within which there are three overarching objectives (economic, social and environmental). These objectives are interrelated but with specific regard to this scheme, paragraph 8 b) of the Framework identifies that fostering a well designed and safe built environment with accessible services is a key part of the social objective of achieving sustainable development.

Paragraph 91 a) and c) of the Framework identify that development should allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods and layouts should encourage walking and cycling in the interests of promoting healthy and safe communities.

Chapter 9 of the Framework is specifically focused on promoting sustainable transport. There are a number of key paragraphs in this section of the Framework that are directly relevant to this proposal.

Paragraph 102 c) identifies that opportunities to promote sustainable transport (walking, cycling and public transport) are identified and pursued. Paragraph 108 also identifies that opportunities to promote sustainable modes of transport should be taken up, safe and suitable access to the site achieved and any significant impacts on the transport network (capacity and congestion) should be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.

Paragraph 109 clearly identifies that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be unacceptable highways impacts on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. In this context paragraph 110 a) states that first priority should be given to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas and as far as possible facilitate access to high quality public transport. Part c) of para 110 clearly indicates that development should create places that are safe, secure and attractive which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclist and vehicles.

Section 12 of the NPPF which is concerned with achieving well designed places states at paragraph 127 f) that developments should create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being.

At a local level policy CS23 identifies that only suitable and sustainable sites should be developed in Oughtibridge. IB9 requires development to be adequately

served by transport services and provide safe access to the highway network while H15 states that new housing developments will be expected to provide easy access to homes.

Parts a, c and h of CS63 specifically promote development that is accessibly located, which can take advantage of sustainable modes of transport and which promotes walking and cycling. These policies are attributed weight in the determination of this application as they accord with the above highlighted sections of the NPPF.

Objections have been raised regarding the lack of public transport links from the development site to Oughtibridge. The Institute of Highways & Transportation document (Guidelines for Providing for Journeys on Foot) advises that 800 metres is an acceptable walking distance. The bus stops on Low Road are approximately 730 metres away. Services to these stops terminate at the Supertram Park & Ride on Middlewood Road, where you can switch from bus to tram and access the rest of the City. These services provide a reasonably high level of public transport connectivity.

However, without a safe crossing over the railway bridge for pedestrians and cyclists, these sustainable forms of travel are not accessible or considered to be a viable alternative option to the private car.

There are clear highways safety issues with this scheme as identified above. The applicant's proposal to signalise the bridge is not considered to be safe. Without the ability to safely access the application site and the facilities (local services and public transport) in Oughtibridge, the scheme is considered to represent an unsuitable and unsustainable form of development. The development does not therefore meet the requirements of the above highlighted local and national planning policies.

#### Rail Issues

A number of objections have been submitted from local residents and other interest groups who consider the application should be refused as the proposal would remove land that could support the future passenger use of the old Oughtibridge station and platforms. The group would also like provision for a bus stop, a taxi drop-off and turning space within the application site.

The principle of providing passenger rail services on the adjoining line could potentially afford residents of Oughtibridge with access to a more sustainable form of transport; however, there is currently no programme entry, no confirmed status or funding in place to open up the existing freight route for passenger services, or for the construction of stations and platforms.

UDP Policy T4, which relates to improvements to the local rail network including the provision for new stations, mentions investigating the possibility of re-opening passenger services to Stocksbridge and developing new stations at Wadsley Bridge, Deepcar and Stannington. No mention is made of Oughtibridge, even though the route passes through it. Furthermore Policy T4 was not saved following the publication of the Core Strategy and therefore carries no weight.

UDP Policy T5 was however saved. It states that the existing network of rail freight and passenger routes will be safeguarded and that disused railway alignments will be protected for transport uses including recreational uses, and that this includes the protection of a network of routes from development which might prejudice existing or future transport services, but not to ensure operation of those services. The policy goes on to say that the linear nature of railway routes offers opportunities for improving transport facilities. This could include extending the Supertram network, introducing guided-bus, or expanding the pedestrian and cycle network. These opportunities should be protected.

With regard Core Strategy Policy CS16, it states that the existing track-bed of the rail route between Sheffield and Dore stations and the freight line from the City Centre to Stocksbridge will be safeguarded for transport uses.

In summary, policy T4 has not been saved and the development does not conflict with Policy T5 or CS16. Combined with this, the former Oughtibridge station has already been subsumed into a residential development to the west. In light of the above, it is considered that refusing this planning application to safeguard building a potential station, platforms and parking could not be substantiated.

#### Flooding and Drainage

The NPPF (para 163) seeks to ensure that development does not give rise to increased flood risks elsewhere and that the most vulnerable development is located in areas at the lowest risk of flooding. Paragraph 165 also requires the provision of sustainable drainage systems in major developments, unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate.

Policy CS 67 'Flood Risk Management' of the CS seeks to reduce the extent and impact of flooding by guiding development to areas at the lowest flood risk and through a series of measures which include: limiting surface water runoff; requiring the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs); and de-culverting watercourses where ever possible. This policy accords with the guidance contained in the NPPF and is therefore afforded weight in the consideration of the application.

The application site is located in Flood Zone 1 (the lowest risk of flooding). The applicant's Flood Risk Assessment does not identify any significant flooding issues affecting the site. The Environment Agency's surface water flood maps do however identify the potential for some low risk surface water flooding.

Yorkshire Water advised that surface water may discharge to the public sewer system only as a last resort if soakaways are not viable and if a connection to a watercourse is not possible. Following this advice the agent commissioned site investigation works to address the suitability of soakaways.

The geo-environmental report found that infiltration drainage is not appropriate because the ground conditions, i.e. the underlying cohesive deposits, mean that soakaways would not be viable, and because surface water discharged into the ground could migrate and re-emerge out of the cutting and onto the railway line.

Given that soakaways are not a viable means for surface water disposal the possibility of discharging surface water flows to the watercourse located in Oughtibridge Lane, at a point approximately 50m east of Platts Lane, was explored.

This did provide a technically viable solution, but ground levels in the vicinity of the outfall position are some 22m higher than the lowest proposed floor level. As such, a pumped surface water discharge is required.

In order to discharge foul water to the combined sewer in Oughtibridge Lane a pumping station is proposed in the north western corner of the site.

Yorkshire Water has recommended a series of conditions in relation to mains drainage, as have the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), in order to reduce surface water discharge.

Given the above, the proposals are considered to be acceptable in principle from a drainage perspective.

### Sustainability

Chapter 14 of the NPPF deals with the challenges of climate change and identifies the planning system as playing a key role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and supporting renewable and low carbon energy.

When determining planning applications paragraph 153 of the NPPF makes it clear that local planning authorities should expect new development to comply with local requirements for decentralised energy supply unless it is not feasible and viable, and that buildings are designed to minimise energy consumption.

Policy CS63 sets out the overarching approach to reduce the city's impact on climate change. These actions include:

- Giving priority to development in the city centre and other areas that are well served by sustainable forms of transport.
- Giving preference to development on previously developed land where this is sustainably located.
- Adopting sustainable drainage systems.

Policy CS64 of the Core Strategy seeks to ensure that new buildings are designed to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases through high standards of energy efficient design.

Policy CS65 seeks to promote renewable energy and carbon reduction and requires developments to provide a minimum of 10% of their predicted energy needs from decentralised and renewable or low carbon energy. An equivalent reduction in energy demands via a fabric first approach is now also accepted.

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

In relation to the requirements of CS63, the site is located on the edge of the village of Oughtibridge where local amenities and high frequency public transport links to into Hillsborough and connection to the tram are available. However future residents will not be able to safely access these facilities, other than in a vehicle, as the developer is not prepared to provide a dedicated footbridge over the railway line. In this regard the development is not considered to be sustainably located.

The site is not previously developed, but the scheme will incorporate sustainable drainage systems that will result in a reduced surface water run-off rate.

Policy CS64 requires residential developments to achieve Code for Sustainable Homes Level Three. This has however been superseded by the Technical Housing Standards (2015), which removes the requirement to achieve this standard.

The applicants have confirmed that the proposed development will meet the 10% target identified in CS65 by reducing energy demand via a fabric first approach. In addition, it is calculated that the use of Photo Voltaic Panels could reduce energy demand by up to 16%.

It is considered that the proposal meets some specific parts of local and national policy requirements in relation to sustainability and that conditions would secure sustainable features. However, fundamentally, the development is not considered to be sustainable or sustainably located as future residents cannot safely access the facilities and amenities in Oughtibridge, other than in a private car.

#### Affordable Housing

Policy CS40 (Affordable Housing) within the CS states that developers of all new housing schemes of 15 units or greater will be required to contribute towards the provision of affordable housing where this is practical and financially viable.

The target within Policy CS40 is between 30 & 40% of the units, but a more spatial approach to affordable housing provision is now adopted within the Community Infrastructure Levy and Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (2015) (SPD). The SPD identifies affordable housing provision based on viability across a particular area. This site falls within the Rural Upper Don Area and sites within this area have a maximum target of 10% for affordable housing provision.

Paragraph 62 of the NPPF states that planning policies should specify the type of affordable housing required. Furthermore paragraph 57 notes that an applicant is able to demonstrate that the need for a viability assessment exists and it is for the decision maker, having regard to all the circumstances in the case, to offer this weight.

As such, within the provisions of affordable housing policy at both a national and local level the individual viability of a scheme is a material planning consideration

with local authorities able to accept a reduced or even a nil contribution on these grounds.

In this case a financial appraisal was submitted with the application which required further assessment by the District Valuer (DV) along with further information to investigate the details of the suggested abnormalities. In the absence of the necessary information, the assessment was not completed.

More recently the agent has confirmed in writing that the applicant, Redrow Homes, is now willing to offer the full 10% affordable Housing contribution in accordance with the SPD.

Paragraph 68 of the NPPF identifies that affordable housing should be provided on site as part of a development unless there is robust reasons why it cannot. The council's Strategic Housing section have identified a strong demand for affordable housing units of all sizes in the area.

Should Members consider the scheme to be acceptable in all other regards the applicant would be required to specify the nature of the on site provision. Details of the delivery of the affordable housing (or an alternative financial contribution) would need to be secured through a Section 106 agreement.

#### Land contamination and Coal Mining Issues

Paragraph 178 of the NPPF identifies that planning decisions should ensure that a site is suitable for its proposed use taking account of ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability and contamination. This includes risks arising from natural hazards or former activities such as mining.

This is a greenfield site used for agricultural purposes. However a Geo-environmental Investigation Report indicated that there is a potential risk posed to the development by past coal mining activity. The Coal Authority have no objections subject to a condition requiring further site investigation and remediation of the site to remove the risk of encountering historic below ground coal mining features. These matters can be secured via planning conditions should member be minded to approve this application.

#### Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The site falls within CIL Charging Zone 3. Within this zone there is a CIL charge of £30 per square metre, plus an additional charge associated with the national All-in Tender Price Index for the calendar year in which planning permission is granted, in accordance with Schedule 1 of The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010.

#### Health Issues

Local residents have raised concerns about the capacity of existing medical practices and schools in the locality to accommodate additional demand from new residents.

These concerns are noted however the proposed development falls well below the 1000 dwellings threshold where contributions towards health related infrastructure will be required as set out in the CIL and Planning Obligations SPD). Any requirement for the enhancement of health facilities will be delivered through CIL or other funding streams.

### Education Issues

The School Organisation Team have identified that the site is in the catchment area for Oughtibridge Infant and Junior School (primary) and Bradfield School (secondary).

Oughtibridge Primary School is currently full and oversubscribed in all year groups. The potential additional yield of school age children generated from this development is anticipated to exacerbate existing capacity issues. Forecasts show there will be continuing capacity issues at primary level in the catchment in the coming years.

The situation is slightly different at secondary level. Bradfield Secondary School is currently full and oversubscribed and forecasts show this trend is likely to continue. However the majority of the pupils accessing the school are from within its own catchment area and forecasts suggest the school would continue to be able to accommodate catchment demand when the pupils yielded from this development are taken into account. This does however mean that some pupils (from out of catchment) who may want a place at Bradfield would be unable to access one. Forecasts suggest these pupils should however be able to be accommodated at other local schools.

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

### Public Art

Policy BE12 of the UDP identifies that public art should be an integral part of the design of major developments. Details will be secured by condition should Members be minded to approve the application.

### Archaeology

Policy BE22: Archaeological Sites and Monuments within the UDP sets out how archaeological interest will be safeguarded from the impacts of development.

This site accommodated the former Congress Steel Works which dates back to the 19th century. Elements of this and other past industrial use, including buildings and industrial structures, could still survive on site, both above and below ground.

The applicants have submitted a desk based Archaeology and Heritage Statement in support of the application which indicated that there are no known nationally important archaeological remains located on the site, however as the site is undeveloped and agricultural in nature it is possible that sub-surface archaeological deposits are present. As such it is recommended that a condition is attached requiring the developer to undertake further archaeological investigations prior to the commencement of development, should members be minded to grant the application.

#### Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

The Council, in its Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), and the Government (in paragraphs 39 to 42 of the NPPF) encourage applicants to undertake pre application discussions with the Local Authority and to engage with the local community and statutory and non-statutory consultees before submitting an application.

The applicant did initially engage with the Council's paid pre-application enquiry service prior to the submission of this application, but the process was not completed.

The applicant also delivered 240 letters to properties off Oughtibridge Lane, Fairholme Heights, Station Lane, Waterside Gardens and Clough Grove. In addition, a poster containing the letter was put up on the community notice board in Coronation Park off Station Lane. The same letter was distributed to Bradfield Parish Council Members.

Residents were advised of the scheme in the aforementioned letter and were invited to attend a consultation event held on the 7th December 2016 at the Community Centre on Church Street in Oughtibridge. At the event verbal and written comments were collected and collated. The agents also confirmed that some members of the public who were unable to attend the event had telephone conversations and email exchanges with them subsequent to the event. 41 residents were recorded as attending the event. 9 written comment forms were completed at the event and a further 5 written responses in the form of an email were received after the event. 11 telephone calls were received from members of the public. The main issues raised related to highway concerns, pollution, capacity within the school and local services, boundary treatment to Platts Lane being significant to protect horses, and trees on the western boarder should be contained.

In principle the pre-application consultation process undertaken by the applicants accords with the adopted SCI.

#### RESPONSE TO REPRESENTATIONS

The safe removal and disposal of asbestos is dealt with under separate legislation.

Property and any associated rights of access across land to access a property are private matters between the developer and the owner of the property concerned.

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

The application was advertised by way of press and site notices and individual letters of notification to adjoining neighbours. The level of consultation is appropriate for the scale of development proposed and accords with Council's code of practice.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The site is located to the immediate east of Oughtibridge and comprises of approximately 1.4 hectares of greenfield land used for agricultural purposes. This application proposes to erect 34 two and four bedroom dwellinghouses. The proposals include two new access roads, areas of landscaping and a water pumping station.

The site lies within a designated Fringe Industry and Business Area (FIBA) as defined by the adopted Sheffield Unitary Development Plan. The above assessment has determined that the proposed use is appropriate in relation to this land use.

Residential uses are not a preferred use in FIBAs (Policy IB6), but they are identified as acceptable uses in principle subject to other policy considerations including Policy IB9, which states that new development should not lead to a concentration of uses that would prejudice the dominance of industry and business in the area.

The application site and the adjoining proposal for 70 dwellinghouses form part of a larger FIBA, encompassing the majority of the developable land as the remainder (with the exception of Robak works) is largely steeply sloping or has already been developed for housing. As such, this FIBA is no longer considered to be a priority employment area, an approach reflected in Core Strategy Policy CS5, which does not identify the area as a key strategic location for manufacturing, distribution / warehousing or other non-office business use.

Whilst it holds no weight, the 2013 draft City Policies and Sites document designated the site as part of a Housing Area.

The NPPF (paragraph 117) clearly promotes the effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses and gives substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs (paragraph 118 c).

Similarly, UDP Policies CS23 and CS24 seek to focus new housing where it would support urban regeneration and make efficient use of previously developed (brownfield) land.

Policy CS23 specifically states that housing in Oughtibridge will be limited to suitable, sustainable sites within the existing built up area. The application site lies

adjacent to the built up area and is sustainable in terms of its geographical location.

Policy CS24 gives priority to previously developed sites and states that no more than 12% of dwelling completions will be on greenfield sites in the period up to 2025/26. It goes on to state in part d) that housing on greenfield sites will only be developed in sustainably located larger sites within or adjoining urban areas and larger villages, if annual monitoring shows that there is less than a 5 year supply of deliverable sites.

Up to 2018/19, only 5 % of dwelling completions have been on greenfield sites and the proposed development would not prejudice the continued achievement of this target. The site is also a sustainably located larger site adjoining a larger village.

Sheffield now has a 5.1 year supply of deliverable housing units meaning the proposal does not satisfy part d) of Policy CS24. However, our updated housing land supply is only marginally over 5 years, and the 2019 NPPF continues attaches great weight to boosting the supply of housing. The provision of 34 additional dwellings would make a small, but not insignificant, contribution to meeting the City's obligation to maintain a 5 year supply of housing land in the future and should be given weight in the balance of this decision.

The design and layout of the proposed development, as amended, is considered to be acceptable. The scheme provides open spaces areas and tree planting, there will be no adverse impact upon trees which adjoin the site and future residents will be afforded acceptable levels of amenity.

The scheme will comply with local and national policy requirements in relation to sustainability which includes providing a 10% improvement on target energy efficiency levels and on site renewables.

The applicant has offered the full 10% affordable Housing contribution in accordance with the SPD.

The two vehicle access onto the site via Oughtibridge Lane is acceptable and there are appropriate levels of car parking for future residents.

The proposals will also result in a reduction in surface water run-off via a sustainable urban drainage system.

As highlighted above there are a number of positive elements to this scheme. However, following extensive discussions with the applicants an acceptable solution to providing residents with safe access to and from the site has not been found.

The existing arrangements, which involve pedestrians having to walk in the carriageway to cross the existing rail bridge on Oughtibridge Lane, are considered hazardous. The applicant's proposals to signalise the bridge has been considered by officers and independently reviewed through a Road Safety Audit. The proposed scheme gives rise to multiple safety concerns for pedestrians, cyclists

and vehicles and detrimentally affects the free and safe flow of traffic on Oughtibridge Lane. In line with the guidance contained in paragraph 109 of the Framework the highways safety impacts of the development are considered to be severe and have not been reasonably mitigated by the applicant's design solution.

A separate footbridge could be delivered which would provide a safe route for pedestrians and cyclists and minimise the need to signalise or make any major changes to the existing road bridge and carriageway (Oughtibridge Lane). Network Rail have no in principle objection to a footbridge crossing the rail line, and as part of an adjoining housing development land has been reserved, and a connecting footway provided to allow a footbridge to be constructed which would serve the application site.

The pursuit of sustainable development is the overriding aim of national planning policy. However, opportunities to promote and improve safe and sustainable access to the site have not been adequately addressed by the developer.

Various facilities and public transport services are available in Oughtibridge.

However as the site (and Oughtibridge) cannot be accessed safely, officers consider this proposal for 34 dwellings to represent an unsuitable and unsustainable form of development that is contrary to the aims and objectives of local and national planning policy.

In relation to paragraph 11 of the NPPF, as Sheffield can demonstrate a five year housing supply the most important policies in the determination of this application are not automatically considered to be out of date.

It is considered that the most important local policies in the determination of this application, which in this case revolve around housing land supply, highway related impacts, sustainability, amenity, ecology and landscape impacts, affordable housing/viability and flooding, do, when considered as a collection, align with the Framework. As such section d) of paragraph 11 is not applied in this instance. For the above reasons it is however recommended that the application be refused for the following reason:

- The Local Planning Authority consider that the proposed highways improvements, which include signalising the rail bridge on Oughtibridge Lane, would have an unacceptable impact on the safety of pedestrians, cyclists, vehicles and other road users, and detrimentally effect the free and safe flow of traffic on Oughtibridge Lane and Station Lane. The development is therefore contrary to Policy IB9 (f) of the Sheffield Unitary Development Plan, Policy CS51 (e) of the Core Strategy and paragraphs 108 (b) and (c), 109 and 110 (c) of the National Planning Policy Framework.

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