

Report to Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

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an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

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PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004 (AS AMENDED)

SECTION 20

REPORT ON THE EXAMINATION INTO THE PUBLICATION ROTHERHAM CORE STRATEGY 2013-2028 (JUNE 2012) LOCAL PLAN

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2014

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GLOSSARY

AA	Appropriate Assessment
AHLV	Area of High Landscape Value
AMR	Annual Monitoring Report
AWP	Aggregates Working Party
CC	City Council
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
CS	Core Strategy
DCLG	Department of Communities and Local Government
DPD	Development Plan Document
EA	Environment Agency
FC	Focused Change
Framework	National Planning Policy Framework
HIA	Heritage Impact Assessment
HS2	High Speed 2
IDF	Infrastructure Delivery Forum
IDG	Infrastructure Delivery Group
IDS	Infrastructure Delivery Schedule
IIA	Integrated Impact Assessment
LAA	Local Aggregate Assessment
LDS	Local Development Scheme
LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
MBC	Metropolitan Borough Council
MM	Main Modification
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSA	Mineral Safeguarding Area
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PDL	Previously-developed (brownfield) land
RS	Regional Strategy
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SCI	Statement of Community Involvement
SCS	Sustainable Community Strategy
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
SHMA	Strategic Housing Market Assessment
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
UDP	Unitary Development Plan

Non-Technical Summary

This Report concludes that the Rotherham Publication Core Strategy 2013-2028 (June 2012) Local Plan provides an appropriate basis for the planning of the Borough during the next 15 years provided that a number of modifications are made to it. The Council has specifically requested that I recommend any Main Modifications necessary to enable it to adopt the plan. I have recommended their inclusion after considering the representations from other parties on these changes. The Main modifications can be summarised as follows: :

- **MM1** introduces a new Policy CS34 Housing Delivery and Ongoing Co-operation. This commits the Council to continue to co-operate with relevant bodies to produce as a matter of urgency a SHMA for the entire housing market area, the monitoring of performance in the delivery of housing, possible measures for rectifying any shortfalls (including the review of the Core Strategy) and the circumstances constituting under-performance in the delivery of housing;
- **MM2** identifies Waverley as a Principal Settlement. As proposed by the Council, it defines Bassingthorpe Farm as a Strategic Allocation as set out in **MM7**, requires the preparation of a Masterplan to guide its proper development and, like **MM8**, refers to the already prepared Concept Framework;
- **MM3** deletes the reference to phasing in Policy CS3 and in other ways better accords it with the Framework;
- **MM4** encourages the use of renewable, low carbon and decentralised energy and stipulates that all development should achieve, as a minimum, the appropriate carbon compliance targets as defined in the Building Regulations;
- **MM5** identifies the extent of the housing backlog and distributes it evenly throughout the plan period;
- **MM6** is a revised housing trajectory taking account of **MM5**;
- **MM9** & **MM10** set out useful guidance on matters of viability and commit the Council to seek every opportunity to work positively with developers and others to deliver affordable housing and a mix of housing types;
- **MM11** provides that land will be allocated for new sites for gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople with options for new allocations considered throughout the whole Borough.
- **MM12** provides for the relocation of employment uses which are ill-suited to their surroundings whilst protecting existing and potential employment opportunities;
- **MM13** encourages suitable new uses for vacant, under-used or derelict historic buildings;
- **MM14** brings the provision of accessible green space into conformity with national policy concerning planning obligations;
- **MM15** sets out the amended sub-regional apportionment and other most up to date data derived from the Draft Local Aggregate Assessment (LAA);
- **MM16** ensures that, for transport assessments, current national guidance at the time on thresholds for the type of development proposed

- will be taken into account;
- **MM17** sets up a mechanism to ensure the monitoring and delivery of the strategy and the timely provision of the infrastructure on which it depends;
- **MM18** draws attention to the provisional route of HS2 and to the Council's intention to protect it.

Introduction

1. This Report contains my assessment of the Rotherham Publication Core Strategy 2013-2028 (June 2012) Local Plan (the Plan) in terms of Section 20(5) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). It considers first whether the Plan's preparation has complied with the duty to co-operate, in recognition that there is no scope to remedy any failure in this regard. It then considers whether the Plan is sound and whether it is compliant with the legal requirements. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) (paragraph 182) makes clear that to be sound, a Local Plan should be positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy.
2. The starting point for the examination is the assumption that the Council has submitted what it considers to be a sound plan. The basis for my examination is the Rotherham Publication Core Strategy 2013-2028 (June 2012) Local Plan, together with the Core Strategy Focused Changes (January 2013) and the Rotherham Core Strategy Schedule of Additional Proposed Changes (June 2013). Together, these 3 documents comprise the Core Strategy submitted to the Secretary of State for examination.
3. My Report deals with the MMs that are needed to make the Plan sound and legally compliant and they are identified in bold in the Report (**MM**). In accordance with Section 20 (7C) of the 2004 Act the Council requested in its letter to me of 14 January 2014 that I should make any modifications needed to rectify matters that make the Plan unsound and/or not legally compliant and thus incapable of being adopted. Following and in accordance with my letter to the Council of 6 January 2014 (Document ED/79) in which I set out some preliminary thoughts on the Core Strategy and its Examination, the Council prepared 20 draft MMs which were the subject of public consultation. They, and the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of them, were discussed at the hearing held on 15 May 2014.
4. In the light of the evidence submitted for and at that hearing, I consider that 2 of those draft MMs should not proceed. They relate to overall housing numbers and to Waverley as a District Centre. Hence there are 18, rather than 20, recommended MMs. They do not entail any substantive amendments to the original set of MMs that would undermine the participatory processes or the SA that underpinned the basis upon which the MMs have been brought forward. In other words, full account has been taken of the representations made upon the 20 draft MMs and the SA. The 18

recommended MMs are set out in the Appendix to this Report and should be incorporated in the Core Strategy, thereby making it sound.

5. The Council intends to make a number of other, Additional Modifications which, in essence, would provide updating, clarification and minor amendments. They would usefully assist the full understanding of the Core Strategy and its objectives. For the most part they arise from discussions at the hearings and negotiations between the Council and other participants. I do not, however, refer to them in my Report because they do not go to the soundness of the Core Strategy and thus do not make an unsound plan sound.

Assessment of Duty to Co-operate

6. Section 20(5)(c) of the 2004 Act requires that I consider whether the Council has complied with any duty imposed on it by Section 33A of the 2004 Act in relation to the Plan's preparation. This Section imposes a duty on the Council to co-operate in relation to the planning of sustainable development *so far as relating to a strategic matter*. The Oxford English Dictionary defines *co-operate* as *to work together, act in conjunction with another person or thing, to an end, or in a work*. It is therefore more than mere consultation. This definition is a good start. Importantly, however, it does not demand that a consensus be achieved in all circumstances. The Framework explains that strategic matters relate in particular to a number of issues, including the homes and jobs needed for the area, the provision of retail, leisure and other commercial development, infrastructure in its various guises, the mitigation of climate change and the conservation of the natural and historic environment.
7. The Council has prepared a comprehensive Statement of Co-operation and, to assist me further in my task, I wrote to it on 11 July 2013 for its further views on the matter. It was discussed in some detail at the first hearing on 22 October 2013. The Statement sets out the names of the 9 relevant authorities and 9 prescribed bodies with which the Council has co-operated during the preparation of the Core Strategy. It has also co-operated with the Sheffield Region Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the South Yorkshire Nature Partnership. The Statement explains that co-operation at both member and officer level between the Council and, for example, neighbouring authorities is nothing new. It occurred during the preparation and review of the Regional Strategy (RS) for Yorkshire and the Humber and the Yorkshire and Humber Plan which replaced it in 2008.
8. There is ample documentary evidence to demonstrate the Council's commitment to co-operation. It includes the minutes of meetings held with neighbouring authorities and various statutory bodies including the Civil Aviation Authority, English Heritage, the Environment Agency, the Highways Agency and Natural England. Apart from initial representations from Sheffield City Council including an objection concerning housing targets to be consulted upon during the summer of 2011 in the Draft Core Strategy, the discussions for the most part revealed few concerns regarding the preparation of the Core Strategy. The Duty to Co-operate is not, however, just about process. It is equally important that, where possible, the co-operation results in effective policies and proposals concerning cross-boundary strategic issues. Nor does co-operation stop when a Core Strategy is submitted or adopted.

9. In accordance with this approach, the Council and Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (MBC) will continue to examine cross-boundary employment issues, particularly around the Dearne Valley and common public transport matters. Co-operation between the Council and Doncaster MBC and Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire County Councils has resulted in an agreement between them of a Joint Minerals Position Statement. The relevant Councils are working together to produce a joint Local Aggregates Assessment (LAA). The Council's co-operation with English Heritage and subsequent proposed modifications to the Core Strategy has resulted in the withdrawal of all its objections. Co-operation with Doncaster MBC, including the meeting of officers on 18 January 2012, concluded that land north of Maltby would not be needed for Rotherham's housing requirements and that its development would not accord with Doncaster's Core Strategy.
10. In its letter to me of 26 July 2013, the Council set out a number of ways in which co-operation with various bodies has had a significant effect upon the provisions of the Core Strategy. There is no need to repeat the contents of this letter, but of particular note are Core Strategy paragraph 4.3.21 and paragraph 25 in the Statement of Co-operation concerning the Chesterfield Canal. Focused Changes 12, 13, 20, 47, 86 and 123 resulted from discussions with English Heritage and better articulate the challenges and opportunities which the management of the historic environment is likely to present. Co-operation concerning Bassingthorpe Farm has resulted in the production of a Heritage Impact Assessment and the withdrawal of English Heritage's objection to this Core Strategy proposal.
11. Various policies and their supporting text have been shaped following co-operation with the Environment Agency. In particular, Core Strategy Policies CS24 Conserving and Enhancing the Water Environment and CS25 which deals with Flood Risk replace Draft Core Strategy Policies 21 and 26 concerning respectively Flood Risk within the Rotherham Regeneration Area and Managing the Water Environment. These are substantial changes. They bring a greater emphasis on water quality and the need to contribute towards the objectives of the Water Framework Directive, a hierarchy for the disposal of surface water and a more detailed approach to flood risk in the context of national planning policy and the Council's Flood Risk Toolkit. Other changes have been made as a result of co-operation with the South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive with reference to the City Region Transport Strategy.
12. The Council advises that, for all practical purposes, the housing market area comprises Rotherham Metropolitan Borough and the City of Sheffield. It acknowledges, however, that it includes small parts of other adjoining Boroughs and Districts, including those of Barnsley and North East Derbyshire. In this respect, and with particular regard to housing, co-operation with Sheffield City Council has been vital and will continue to be so. It is unfortunate that the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was prepared as long ago as 2007 and thus before the enactment of the Localism Act 2011 and the Duty to Co-operate. The Assessment was made in accordance with the Department of Communities and Local Government's (DCLG) practice guidance at the time and the Council worked with the City Council in preparing it. The SHMA applies only to Rotherham, but it acknowledges that the Borough forms part of a wider Rotherham/Sheffield housing market area and that the strong links with Sheffield need to be kept in

mind. This accorded with the now revoked RS for Yorkshire and Humber which acknowledged Rotherham and Sheffield as a joint housing market area. Sheffield City Council prepared its own SHMA, also in 2007.

13. The City Council's Core Strategy was adopted in 2009 and at the time of the hearings it was progressing with a Policies and Sites Development Plan Document (DPD). This plan was due to be submitted in late 2013 but it has since been withdrawn. The City Council intended to undertake an early review of its Core Strategy upon the expected adoption of this DPD in the autumn of 2014 and this review was intended to include an assessment of the City's housing requirements and land supply. The fact remains, however, that a single SHMA for Rotherham, Sheffield and small other parts of the housing market area is not in place. There is, however, a commitment set out in the Statement of Common Ground between the Council, the City Council and the University of Sheffield to consider the potential for a joint SHMA for the Rotherham/Sheffield housing market area or for the Sheffield City Region that fully addresses the need for a robust and shared evidence base of housing need and demand. The City Council's withdrawal of its Sites and Policies DPD provides an excellent opportunity for the Council, City Council and any appropriate adjoining authorities to co-operate to prepare a SHMA for the entire housing market area. This is of especial importance given the location of Sheffield and Rotherham in a wider City Region.
14. Paragraph 181 of the Framework expects local planning authorities to demonstrate evidence of having effectively co-operated to plan for issues with cross-boundary impacts, and this includes housing. This could be by way of a memorandum of understanding. The Council and the City Council have therefore published a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) (June 2013) between them. In it, the City Council considers that, despite the revocation of the RS and depressed market conditions, it would be premature to plan for less than the RS requirement for the strategic housing market area. The Councils therefore agree that to meet their overall housing requirements, the Borough Council should provide for a requirement lower than that set out in the RS but with the flexibility to meet the shortfall if the market recovers and that the City Council should continue with its Core Strategy requirement with its review in the near future.
15. The MoU acknowledges the potential capacity provided by commitments, allocations, windfalls on small sites and the use of some safeguarded land. It notes that the City Council agrees that there is enough land identified in the Core Strategy to meet the contingency of higher requirements should monitoring suggest that its early review is required. In co-operating with the City Council, the Council has instigated certain Focused Changes (FC). These include FC 29 which states that the figures at Policy CS1 are not ceilings and that windfalls on small sites, estimated to be about 100 dwellings each year, will provide additional flexibility. In FC 147 the Council sets out its commitment to work with other authorities within the Sheffield City Region on future development provision and that if that work indicates a need for further development it will undertake an early review of the plan. Reference is made in FCs 55 and 58 to safeguarded land to meet longer term needs.
16. In the 4 point agreement in the MoU, the Councils agree that the housing target in the Rotherham Local Plan is an appropriate one for both the Borough and its contribution to the wider Rotherham and Sheffield housing market

area. Commitments, proposed allocations, windfalls and safeguarded land are agreed to provide sufficient long term flexibility for the needs of the Borough and for a contribution to possible increases in those of the wider housing market area. Following the FCs, the City Council has agreed to withdraw its objection to the Council's Core Strategy. The MoU is more than an agreement to agree, as alleged at the hearings. It is a positive and pragmatic way forward which paves the way for a sound Core Strategy to be adopted. The Technical Note to the MoU (July 2013) confirms the detailed areas of agreement between the 2 Councils on housing matters. It states, for example, that future work will take account of the emerging results of the 2011 Census and the interim 2011-based DCLG projections. This is, it says, *likely to result in a significant excess in the planned provision for the City Region compared with the current projections*. It is clear that these 2 authorities have worked closely together and there is no reason to doubt their commitment, expressed at the hearings, to continue to do so.

17. In some circumstances, the absence of an up-to-date SHMA for the entire housing market area would be grounds for suspending the Examination until such time as one was available. Indeed, that was a course of action which several parties suggested at the hearings. This absence is, however, just one consideration, albeit an important one. A sound Core Strategy should provide certainty for the preparation and adoption of the Sites and Policies DPD so that the Council can approve sustainable development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay. Planning circumstances in the Borough are far from ideal at present, with a shortage in the 5 year supply of specific deliverable sites to which the Framework refers. This suggests the adoption of a pragmatic approach.
18. The matter was discussed further at the last hearing on 15 May 2014. An agreement has been reached with Sheffield City Council to produce jointly a SHMA for the entire housing market area to be completed by December 2014. The intention is to put together a SHMA for the Borough with another one, recently completed, for the City. The joining together of 2 parts for each Authority's area is not the same as the preparation of a SHMA for the overall area. The outcome of the sum of the 2 parts may not be the same as that for the entire housing market area, viewed as an overall area from the inception, and this is not an entirely satisfactory state of affairs. Nevertheless, the assessments would be recently prepared, it is understood that the consultants appointed would have access to the same base data and would adopt the same methodology, integrating matters of housing with employment. In these circumstances, the approach would not be so flawed to justify aborting the process and withdrawing the Core Strategy.
19. The emphasis should be on getting a sound Core Strategy adopted as soon as possible, if only to provide the certain basis for the Sites and Policies DPD and the house-building which the Borough so sorely needs. Delay caused by a suspension of the Examination would be all too likely to result in "planning by appeal" with permissions being granted for sites less sustainable than those which should be allocated in the Sites and Allocations DPD. The Council accepts that there has been a record of persistent under-delivery of housing in the Borough, and the Local Plan should provide enough land and choice of sites to stimulate housing development. The sooner it does so, the better. The Government urges local planning authorities to boost significantly the supply of housing, not at some time in the future, but now. It stresses the

need to house the nation. This is the context for urging the Core Strategy forward to adoption.

20. It takes more than one local planning authority to prepare a joint SHMA. Just after the Government announced its intention to revoke RSs, the Council approached Sheffield City Council with a view to undertaking a joint SHMA covering the Rotherham/Sheffield housing market area. The City Council did not, however, wish to take part, having recently adopted its Core Strategy and seeing no need for further evidence. The Council, wanting to press on with its Local Plan, reasonably decided to proceed with the production of a locally derived target rather than wait for some date in the future when the City Council might review its decision. It would be unfair to penalise the Council for circumstances beyond its control, even though it means that it has not been possible for the Council satisfactorily to address all cross-boundary issues.
21. The evidence shows that the Council has done, and continues to do, everything reasonable in co-operating with neighbouring authorities, especially Sheffield City Council, in preparing a Core Strategy which takes account as far as it can of needs generated beyond its boundaries. The Core Strategy should clearly set out the Council's commitment to use its best endeavours to co-operate with neighbouring authorities, especially Sheffield City Council, to produce jointly a SHMA for the entire housing market area, to be completed by December 2014. This is a matter of soundness, hence the need for **MM1** which makes this commitment. It is not, however, just about words in a document. It is clear from the exchanges at the last hearing from both the Council and Sheffield City Council that the political will exists to get the SHMA in place. Funding has been approved for it and a timetable agreed. There is no reason to doubt the Councils' commitment and their sense of urgency. Crucially **MM1** commits the Council to an immediate review of the Core Strategy should the updated SHMA demonstrate a need for housing additional to that which Policy CS6 provides.
22. The disadvantages stemming from the absence at present of a SHMA and the less than ideal process in its intended preparation is substantially outweighed by the prospect of a speedier adoption of the Core Strategy and the greater and sooner certainty brought to the planning of the Borough. In these circumstances, the Council is right to advise that it would be counter-productive to suspend the Examination and withdraw the Core Strategy. Continuing the process is the pragmatic way forward and, as Ivan Turgenev reminds us, *If we wait for the moment when everything, absolutely everything, is ready we shall never begin.*
23. It is significant that no body prescribed under Regulation 4 of the Local Planning (England) Regulations 2012 or any neighbouring local authority, has objected on the basis that the Council has not co-operated with it. I conclude that the Council has abided by the duty to co-operate and there is no reason to doubt its intention to continue to do so.

Assessment of Soundness

Preamble

24. The Regional Strategy for Yorkshire and Humber (Partial Revocation) Order

2013 came into force on 22 February 2013, nearly 4 months before the submission of the Core Strategy. The Framework, which sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how they are expected to be applied, was published in March 2012. It states that Local Plans must be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. To this end, they should be consistent with the principles and policies set out in the Framework, including the presumption in favour of sustainable development. This is the golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-making.

Main Issues

25. I have taken into account all the representations comprising the written evidence and the discussions that took place at the examination hearings. I have also relied upon evidence gained from accompanied and unaccompanied site inspections. From this, I have identified 7 main issues upon which the soundness of the Core Strategy depends.

Issue 1 – Whether the general principles, the policies and proposals in the Core Strategy for sustainable development are clear, sufficiently justified, effective and consistent with all relevant national policy

Assets, problems, challenges and vision

26. The Core Strategy suitably and clearly sets out the main assets of the Borough. These include its attractive countryside with Areas of High Landscape Value, its historic assets, its good location close to the motorway system and to highly regarded higher education institutions, its ability to attract investment and thereby potential to diversify the local economy. The prospect of access to High Speed 2 should increase the attraction of the western parts of the Borough for further investment. Of especial charm are some of the villages including those located on the magnesium limestone in the more easterly parts of the Borough. Laughton en le Morthen with its spectacular church and other buildings is a good example of an attractive village. Also worthy of note are extensive areas of best and most versatile agricultural land, 6 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), 7 Local Nature Reserves (LNR) and 93 Local Wildlife Sites.
27. The Borough has a number of problems and hence challenges. These stem mainly from the decline in traditional industries particularly the manufacturing of steel products and coal mining. This has led to an unemployment rate often often well above the national average and the need for regeneration and the job opportunities which should result from it. Where regeneration has taken place, as at Rotherham and Dinnington, there is an urgent need for further development, especially residential development, to sustain renewal and support and enhance local services and facilities. Some parts of the Borough experience various aspects of deprivation, including low skills and welfare dependency. Residential development has not kept pace with the expectations expectations of the development plan, and particularly with the requirements of the now revoked RS. There is a serious shortage in the supply of housing land, the Council accepting that it cannot point to the 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites to which the Framework refers at its paragraph 49. Owing to the Government's determination to boost significantly the supply of housing, this is a serious deficiency and calls for the speedy adoption of a

sound Core Strategy.

28. The vision for the Borough is, in essence, to promote a vibrant, diverse, innovative and enterprising economy. It includes an acknowledgement of the close relationship with Sheffield and the Sheffield City Region. It seeks to provide a high quality of life for residents, to promote a sense of place, the conservation of the natural and historic environment, good quality homes and making the best use of existing infrastructure, services and facilities. The Core Strategy contains 17 strategic objectives, its Table 2 showing clear links between objectives, issues and the policies which are designed to achieve the vision. Whether they will all be achieved during the life of the plan is open to question, and much may depend upon the general state of the local and national economy during the plan period. There is, however, no reason to doubt the Council's commitment, although the provision and improvement of much of the infrastructure needed is outside the Council's direct control. Overall, the vision and objectives are realistic and should provide a useful basis for the annual monitoring and effectiveness of the plan.

The plan period

29. The plan period is 2013-2028, a 15 year period. Some representations call for a longer one, up to 2031 and 2033 in several cases. By the time that it is adopted it is likely to be a few years short of the preferably 15-year time horizon to which the Framework refers. The commitment in **MM1** to an immediate review of the Core Strategy in the circumstances described ensures that this shortcoming is not fatal to its soundness. There is no need for any modification on this count.

Settlement pattern

30. The Core Strategy rightly and clearly sets out a hierarchy of settlements with a certain amount of growth distributed to each level and to each named settlement in the hierarchy. Its Policy CS1 proposes that the urban area of Rotherham, the largest settlement in the Borough, will take 38% of the housing requirement during the plan period. This includes the contribution expected from Bassingthorpe Farm. This approach acknowledges the importance of Rotherham in the Borough, its existing services and facilities, particularly its public transport, and the need to support, strengthen and augment them, to the benefit of all. This substantial amount of new development, close and accessible to the town centre, should act as a catalyst for the regeneration of the town centre and neighbouring wards. This proportion would rise to 40% should the draft **MM2** be incorporated in the Core Strategy, together with increases of the same or similar proportions applied to all the other named settlements. The final **MM2** does not, however, increase the proportion of development in Rotherham Urban Area to 40%.
31. The hierarchy includes Principal Settlements for Growth. These are Dinnington/Anston/Laughton Common including the Dinnington East Broad Location for Growth. Together they are proposed to take 9% of the Borough's additional housing requirement of which 5% would be at this Broad Location for Growth. Wath-upon-Deerne/Brampton Bierlow/West Melton are proposed to take another 9% and Bramley/Wickersley/Ravenfield Common are proposed to take 6%. These are larger settlements and/or groups of settlements with a

good range of services which, in principle, are suitable for a significant amount of growth. Several of them, particularly Dinnington and Wath-on-Dearne, have the character of small, bustling towns with frequent bus services to Rotherham and Sheffield.

32. One party suggests that Wickersley/Bramley/Ravenfield Common be treated as part of the Rotherham Urban Area and with it the implication of more growth. These 3 settlements are close to Rotherham and linked to it and to each other by the A631 road. Wickersley and Bramley merge into each other physically to form a mainly urban area and it is hard to see the boundary between them. Nevertheless, there is an area of low density and openness between Rotherham and Wickersley at Listerdale and this gives a sense of change of character between the main urban area of Rotherham and this group of 3 settlements. Despite their proximity to it, they do not give the impression of being part of the far larger urban area.
33. Much of Wickersley is of a significantly less urban character than much of Rotherham. This is especially noticeable along Morthen Road where large rear gardens give the village a pronounced rural flavour. The tranquillity around the Parish Church emphasises the character and appearance of this village which contrasts with the larger, more built up parts of Rotherham in the Herringthorpe and Moorgate localities. Bramley, too, has the identity of a village, especially along Church Lane and Main Street. Ravenfield Common has an even more distinct rural character. There is scope for some growth in these settlements, albeit somewhat limited by the rather dispersed nature of their services, and there is no reason to dispute the submitted Core Strategy's proposals for them. Their identification as a Principal Settlement for Growth is a sound approach.
34. Principal Settlements comprise Maltby/Hellaby, Aston/Aughton/Swallownest, Swinton/Kilnhurst and Wales/Kiveton Park. As the Core Strategy notes and inspection confirms, these settlements provide services and facilities for their own communities and for people living in the villages and hamlets around them. Their somewhat restricted level and range of services and facilities including a relatively poor rail service between Wales/Kiveton Park to Rotherham and Sheffield, however, implies less scope for sustainable development. The Core Strategy allocates 5%, 4%, 4% and 3% respectively of the Borough's housing growth to them. From the evidence, this appears to be a reasonable provision.
35. Waverley does not have the character or identity of an established town or village but it should be included as a Principal Settlement in accordance with **MM2**. This would acknowledge its substantial contribution of 17% of this 300 300 ha former colliery site to the housing needs of the Borough and its potential number and range of services and facilities to serve the surrounding area. Planning permission has been granted for a new community of 3,900 homes of which 2,500 are expected to be built during the plan period. A comprehensive development has already started which includes the ambitious and exciting Advanced Manufacturing Park as well as other manufacturing, industrial, warehousing and office space. The Core Strategy proposes approximately 42 ha of land for employment at Waverley, but there appears to be some doubt about the accuracy of this figure. The Council should seek agreement with the parties concerned and make any necessary correction. This should be way of an Additional (Minor) Modification as should the

confirmation of the total employment land figure of 235 ha.

36. Catcliffe/Treeton/Orgreave, Thorpe Hesley and Thurgroft are identified as Local Service Centres and allocated 1%, 1% and 2% respectively of housing growth. Todwick, Harthill, Woodsetts, Laughton en le Morthen, Harley and other villages are together allocated no more than 1% of the housing growth. There is no reason to doubt the Council's evidence that these villages provide a limited range of services, serve essentially their own communities and provide few, if any, suitable opportunities for residential development. Site inspections support that conclusion, and they have distinct and attractive identities and characters which is well worth protecting. Green Belt villages are allocated 0%.
37. The hierarchy and the allocation of residential development to the named settlements are based upon a sure foundation of existing size, range of services and facilities including public transport, their location, character and identity, particular needs for regeneration and the protection of natural and historic assets. Proximity to Sheffield and good public transport services to the City is an important consideration, but not the only one. Apart from the anomaly of Waverley, corrected by **MM2**, making it a Principal Settlement instead of a Local Service Centre, the Core Strategy adopts a sound approach.
38. Some percentages may have to be refined in the light of the preparation of the Sites and Policies DPD and consultation upon it, and it should be confirmed that the figures in Policy CS1 for housing, employment and retail provision are indicative. The Core Strategy, modified as recommended, would provide a sound basis for the planning of the Borough in respect of the above matters examined.

The Green Belt

39. The Key Diagram, UDP Proposals Map and other documents show the extensive nature of the Green Belt. As a general rule, it extends up to the edge of the mainly built-up areas. There are some opportunities for development within settlements, especially the larger ones including Rotherham and Dinnington. But, as the Council decided through its preparation of the Core Strategy, if the Borough is to meet its housing and other needs during the plan period, there will be some loss of Green Belt land. It is not only the need for housing and other development, but the extent of that need, the urgency to provide for it, the dearth of deliverable previously-developed land in the urban areas and the benefits in terms of regeneration which are reasonably expected to flow from it. These matters constitute the exceptional circumstances to which paragraphs 82 and 83 of the Framework refer.
40. The Council has undertaken a Green Belt Review of all Green Belt land in the Borough as part of the preparation of the Core Strategy. This Review assessed 2 Broad Locations for growth at Bassingthorpe Farm and Dinnington for their contribution to fulfilling the purposes of Green Belt policy as set out in the Framework. This has enabled the identification of land to serve to meet the housing and employment targets and enable the delivery of appropriate infrastructure, supporting services and facilities. In undertaking the assessment of sites against sustainability credentials and Green Belt purposes, consideration has been given to areas of search on the urban fringe at these 2

localities. It is the Council's intention to make a more detailed assessment throughout the Borough of Green Belt land as part of the preparation of the Sites and Policies DPD. This is, and will no doubt continue to be, a thorough and constructive way forward.

41. Understandably, there is a considerable amount of local opposition to the prospect of development in the Green Belt. This is expressed by individuals and groups such as *Save our Green Belt Dinnington and Anston*. It should be borne in mind, however, that the work which has been, and will continue to be, undertaken as indicated above follows decisions made by the Council as a democratically elected local planning authority. It considers that it has made these decisions in the best interests of the Borough and its people, and particularly those who need a chance to have a home of their own.

Safeguarded land

42. The Core Strategy sets the scene for the identification of safeguarded land at the edge of settlements. This will be explored in more detail in the Sites and Policies DPD and would meet all or some possible longer term development needs beyond the plan period, hence after 2028. The Council's approach in this respect introduces a welcome element of flexibility in the supply of housing land. The reasons for identifying safeguarded land between the urban area and the Green Belt in accordance with the Framework are inextricably linked with the exceptional circumstances that justify the Council's decision to remove land from the Green Belt for housing development. Post-2028 can reasonably be regarded as longer term, and a 5-year supply at that time would appear to be a reasonable provision. Here, the Core Strategy is looking a long way into the future and, again, it accords with the Framework in this matter.

Reasonable alternative strategies

43. The *Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) of the Core Strategy* describes the full assessment of 3 Options undertaken in 2007. These were Option A – Responding to Market Forces, Option B – Matching Needs with Opportunities and Option 3 – Managing the Environment as a Key Resource. It was concluded that Option B performed best overall and was selected for addressing many of the Core Strategy's policy directions. The *Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of Core Strategy Revised Options (2009)* included an assessment of 3 options for growth. They were Option 1 – Urban Extensions and more Principal Towns, Option 2 – Development in Public Transport Corridors and Option 3 – Dispersed Development. Each was compared with a baseline provided by the RS which was extant at the time.
44. It was concluded that Option 1 would lead to improved access to services and facilities in the small number of key settlements selected and thereby benefit the local economy and employment. It would offer potential to tackle some of the problems of deprivation in those settlements. It would, however, miss a number of opportunities in that it would not encourage cycling, walking and the use of public transport throughout the Borough. Option 3 would provide the best opportunities for the provision of housing, jobs and services in both urban and rural areas but it would result in more pressure on rural areas, sensitive landscapes, Green Belt and other greenfield land and increase dependence on private transport.

45. Option 2 was preferred as it would have the potential to provide the optimum balance by promoting most development in the most sustainable places where services could be maintained and augmented. It would help to meet rural housing needs and improve service provision to smaller villages within the catchment of larger settlements. This Option was taken forward in the preparation of the Core Strategy.
46. Six Urban Extensions/Broad Locations for Growth were also assessed at this time. Following consultation upon them, a further 4 were identified and assessed. The IIA provides a comprehensive assessment of each one in both tabular and conventional form. It includes criteria relating to flood risk, scale of development, various types of infrastructure, townscape, accessibility, transport, access to the countryside and natural and historic assets. Each one has merit and can be treated as a reasonable alternative. Two, however, were regarded as the most suitable. They were Bassingthorpe Farm and Dinnington East. The advantages of the former stem from such considerations as its closeness to the main urban area of Rotherham with its range of services and job opportunities and its potential for regenerating the main settlement of the Borough. The advantages of the latter include the size of Dinnington in the settlement hierarchy, the number of dwellings needed in the Borough and the scope for providing them, the potential to alleviate deprivation and the relative ease of access to existing services, particularly of buses from the Interchange.
47. Following the choice and refinement of Option 2, the Council undertook a thorough analysis of settlements in the Borough. This drew on the results of its SA and IIA. It considered such criteria as their size, location, range of services, constraints, such Core Strategy objectives as the need for a substantial amount of new housing, support and augmentation of services and the urgent need for regeneration following the decline of traditional industries. This has resulted in a soundly-based spatial strategy which should be supported. It has also resulted in a clear vision of the future pattern of development with particular reference to housing, employment and transport proposals.
48. Policy CS1, as amended by Focused Changes 26 & 28 and modified to a limited extent by the recommended **MM2**, gives a clear indication of the amount and percentage of the total requirement of housing development proposed for each settlement. The general approach of stimulating new development in the larger settlements, taking account of their services, facilities, proximity to Sheffield and Rotherham and existing public transport services should promote the use of sustainable modes of transport, particularly buses, trams, cycling and walking. The strategy ensures that development takes place in the most sustainable locations, reducing the need to travel particularly by private transport. It should be supported.

Phasing

49. The Council explains that it has not prepared a detailed phasing policy to assist in delivering site allocations during the plan period but points to the need to prioritise the development of the most sustainable sites and the re-use of previously-developed land. This approach is set out in Policy CS3. It would appear, however, to be a phasing policy and, even though the Council considers that it would apply to no more than *a handful of sites*, it does not

accord with the Framework. The approach of the Framework is to promote sustainable development which should go ahead without delay. Sites should be tested to ascertain whether they are sufficiently sustainable and deliverable to justify their development rather than phased according to their degree of sustainability. A phasing policy holding back greenfield sites until all or some previously-developed land is suitably re-used would have a beguiling attraction, but the status of any site as previously-developed land should be seen as just one consideration, albeit in some cases an especially important one.

50. The Sites and Policies DPD should therefore identify sites which are sustainable in the round in accordance with the strategy set out in the Core Strategy. The Council should then encourage their suitable and speedy development, thereby eliminating an aspect of uncertainty. Where there is less than a 5 year supply of housing land, as in the Borough, this approach assumes even greater importance. As it stands, the Core Strategy is not sound in this respect, but **MM3** deletes the reference to phasing in Policy CS3 and in other respects renders it more in accord with the Framework.

Good design

51. The Framework emphasises the importance of good design which is indivisible from good planning. Good design is a strategic objective of the Core Strategy which is amplified in Policy CS28. It is not just about the pleasing appearance of buildings but also the enhancement of spaces and places to achieve a strong sense of identity with a high quality of public realm, taking full account of context. The Policy acknowledges these and other aims and it will be especially important to achieve them in such substantial schemes as at Bassingthorpe Farm and Waverley. There is no reason to doubt the Council's commitment in this important matter.

Climate Change

52. The proposed measures in the Core Strategy to tackle climate change are closely allied with the policies and proposals which seek to promote sustainable development and those which protect and enhance the built and natural environment. Others of particular relevance include Policies CS25 (Dealing with Flood Risk), CS27 (Air Pollution), CS28 (Sustainable Design and Construction and Energy Efficiency) and CS30 (Renewable Energy). The wide ranging Policy CS33 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development) complements them. There is no specific policy concerning climate change and that is how it should be. It is far better for the Core Strategy to adopt an overall vision to tackle climate change with a range of inter-related policies and proposals to achieve it. That is the Council's approach and it should be supported.
53. The progressive strengthening of the Building Regulations should complement these measures. The need, however, for Local Plans to set out additional carbon compliance and on-site renewable energy production standards should be reduced. For that reason **MM4** brings the Core Strategy into line with Government policy by encouraging the use of renewable, low carbon and decentralised energy and stipulates that all development should achieve, as a minimum, the appropriate carbon compliance targets as defined in the

Building Regulations.

Conclusion

54. Subject to the MMs set out above, the vision, general principles, policies and proposals in the Core Strategy for sustainable development are clear, sufficiently justified, effective and consistent with all relevant national policy. The Core Strategy is aspirational, but realistic. In these respects, it is sound.

Issue 2 – Whether the Core Strategy is effective in meeting local housing needs, including the provision of an appropriate mix of housing of suitable type and quality and at suitable densities

Population and household forecasts

55. Forecasting is an inexact science, or maybe an art, especially for a period of 15 or so years. The outcomes inevitably depend a great deal upon the information available at the time, its reliability, the assumptions upon which the forecast is based, the methodology employed and the length of the forecasted period. Not surprisingly, the outcomes can vary considerably. Those for Rotherham are no exception.
56. The now revoked RS set out a requirement for the building of 23,880 dwellings in the Borough during 2004-2026, an annual average requirement of 1,160 although up to 1,350 in the later years up to 2026. The 2008-based projections were published in May 2010; they indicate an increase in population of 19,000 or 1,267 annually. The latest population projections for the plan period, replacing the 2008-based projections, are ONS 2010-based data which were published in March 2012. They indicate a population increase in the Borough of 17,200 during 2010-2028, the great majority in the 60+ age groups. For the 15 year plan period, an increase of 14,400 is expected or 960 annually. The interim 2011-based population projections were published in September 2012 but, as they cover only the 10-year period 2011-2021, they are not entirely comparable. They indicate a population increase of 11,300 or 1,130 annually during that shorter period.
57. The Inspector who examined the Lichfield Local Plan noted that, *over the longer term, household representation rates have been rising and a fall in these rates identified in the 2011 projections is likely to have been driven by short term factors such as the impact of the recession, constraints on the housing supply and constraints on mortgage lending. It is reasonable, he concluded, to assume that beyond 2021 (the end of the period covered by the 2011 projections), household representation rates will resume their long term rise.* These considerations would appear similarly to apply to Rotherham, and they are persuasive of the conclusion that the 2008-based population projections are a better foundation for assessing housing requirements, as the Council proposes.
58. Perhaps the most difficult component of population change to estimate is migration from international, national and local sources. Such evidence as there is suggests that the increase in the Borough's population due to international migration is small. The 2010-based projections suggest that net

internal migration into Rotherham will be close to zero during the plan period. This is different from the 2008-based projections which suggest a net internal flow into Rotherham of about 6,000 people during the 15 year plan period, an annual average of 400. Locally, flows between Rotherham and Sheffield are particularly significant. The evidence is of a gradually decreasing net inflow into Rotherham from Sheffield, from 1,120 in 2001/02 to 240 in 2010/11. Whether this decline will continue for the foreseeable future is a matter of speculation. It may depend to a significant extent on the scale of provision of new housing and population change in the City and City Region. During the same period, the trend of internal (UK) migration has been from a net inflow into the Borough of 800 people in 2001/02 to a net outflow from it of 400 people in 2010/11.

59. The 2008-based population projections include an element of migration from Sheffield to Rotherham despite the trend data and the indications of the 2010-based projections. The household projections are based upon the ONS mid-year population projections/estimates allowing for a change in household densities. The most recent full series data are 2008-based, published in November 2010. They show a decline from the previous 2006-based data in line with the more recent population projections. These projections suggest a net requirement of another 17,000 dwellings in the Borough during 2008-2028. This equates to an annual net requirement of 850 dwellings. The estimate for the 15 year plan period from 2013 is 13,000 dwellings or 867 annually. The expected 2010-based projections had not been released at the time of the hearings, but the interim 2011-based household projections for the period 2011-2021 show a significant fall in projected household numbers for both the Borough and the Sheffield City Region. They are the latest evidence available concerning household projections.

60. Rightly, the Council has had regard to other projections/estimates of household requirements. The *How Many Homes* website with its *What Homes Where* Excel toolkit suggests an annual net dwelling requirement of 837 and 866 for the periods 2008-2028 and 2013-2028 respectively. The 2011-based interim household projections which DCLG published in April 2013 show a lower growth in households compared with the 2008-based projections. This appears to be explained mainly by increasing household size and/or by household size decreasing at a slower rate than was previously the case. These projections show a net annual dwelling requirement of no more than 544 during 2011-2021. This compares with 902 dwellings for the same period as shown in the 2008-based projections. The 2007 Rotherham SHMA estimated the net annual dwelling requirement at 792 during 2008-2028. It is unfortunate that this part of the evidence base which applies to only part of the housing market area is about 6 years old. It was at this time, however, that the housing market was stronger than it is now, although at the time of writing it is generally improving. Its 2010 update which addressed affordable housing need and housing mix and tenure requirements estimated an annual affordable housing requirement of 1,100 dwellings. It did no more, however, than reflect the latest household projections at the time rather than seek to re-assess overall housing need.

61. Annual net dwelling completion rates since 1998/99 have varied greatly, from 414 in 2009/10 to 1,092 in 2001/02. The average during the 14 year period up to 2011/12 is 695. Barnsley MBC points out that *Rotherham has not delivered more than 688 dwellings in any one year since 2004 and has*

delivered 442 dwellings a year on average over this period. There were 525 gross completions in 2012/13. These figures imply a low level of demand, maybe a reflection of the mortgage market. Although outstanding planning permissions each year between September 2007 and September 2012 have varied between as many as 5,157 and 9,299 dwellings, the actual completions may also indicate a lack of suitable sites attractive to developers and there is reference in the representations to a Greenfield Moratorium in 2006. These factors suggest latent demand. Little reliance should be placed upon annual completion rates as an indication of housing requirements during the plan period. Other projected net annual dwelling requirements are founded on baseline economic growth, assuming no net change in commuting and a high economic growth scenario based upon a RS “uplift”. These suggest 850 and 910 respectively. Projected net annual dwelling requirements for the Borough thus vary widely from 544 to 1,350.

62. The Council considers that its local housing target during the plan period should be founded upon the DCLG 2008-based household projections. These are the most recent official household projections which cover the whole of the plan period. Compared with the RS targets, they are up-to-date and better reflect current economic and demographic conditions. These considerations outweigh any advantages claimed for the RS figures. Unlike the 2004 and 2006-based projections, they are not affected by high international migration into the Borough from Eastern Europe following the enlargement of the European Union. The 2010-based projections indicate a slowdown in population growth, from 258,800 as estimated in the 2004-based projections, to 255,000 and this implies a lower annual dwelling requirement than the Council proposes.
63. Compared with the 2008-based population projections, the 2010-based population projections show no net internal inward migration into the Borough. Although the 2011-based household projections are more up-to-date than those of 2008, the latter are preferable in that they should provide not only for the Borough’s housing needs but should contribute to the needs of Sheffield. The annual provision of 850 dwellings, as opposed to 544 or any other figure, would suitably accord with the Council’s employment strategy, the Government’s policy to boost significantly the supply of housing and the ambition to increase significantly annual completion rates. As the Council maintains, it reasonably reflects the full, objectively assessed need for market and affordable housing and is therefore a good starting point for the Borough’s housing requirements during the plan period. The objectively assessed need plus the backlog/shortfall is, therefore, the foundation for the housing requirement.

Shortfall and latent demand

64. Core Strategy Policy CS6 states that sufficient land will be allocated in the Sites and Policies DPD to meet Rotherham’s housing requirement of 850 net additional dwellings per annum or 12,750 for the period 2013 to 2028, plus any shortfall in the delivery against that annual target from April 2008 to the adoption of the Core Strategy, taking into account existing commitments and allocations. The shortfall is the difference between annual completions and the target of 850. Between 2008/09 and 2012/13 the difference varied from from 162 to 511, giving a total shortfall of 1,621 dwellings. According to the Council, these figures imply a total requirement in 2012/13 of 12,750 + 1,621

= 14,371 or 958 dwellings annually. The table on page 8 of the Council's response on Matter 3 Housing shows an under-delivery of net completions when judged against requirements for 12 of the 15 years up to 2012/13. This under-delivery should be treated as a persistent record, as the Council acknowledges. This means that the Council should increase the buffer to 20% (moved forward from later in the plan period) to provide a realistic prospect of achieving the planned supply and to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. This would be in line with the Framework paragraph 47 and should be reflected in the housing trajectory.

65. It is tempting to assess the shortfall according to the degree to which net housing completions have fallen short of the target set out in the development plan which was extant at the time. This included the RS. This implies taking account of the shortfall and latent demand during the 10 year period from 2004/05 to 2012/13, and RSD/14 Table 2 gives a total backlog during that period of 3,738 dwellings to which should be added the 2012/13 deficit of 645 (1160-515). This total shortfall of 4,383 dwellings equates to an annual provision of 292 dwellings and, on this approach, should be added to the target of 850 dwellings annually. Hence the total requirement at the time of writing would be $12,750 + 4,383 = 17,133$ which equates to an annual requirement of 1,142 dwellings. This is the approach taken in the proposed **MM3**, drafted by the Council in response to my preliminary thoughts set out in my letter to the Council of 6 January 2014. It was discussed at some length at the final hearing.
66. Coincidentally this estimated annual requirement of 1,142 dwellings is about the same as the RS annual requirement of 1,160 dwellings which several participants advocate. It would reflect the importance of the extant development plan at the time. It would better accord than would the more modest estimates with the Government's policy to boost significantly the supply of housing and provide for a greater choice of sites to stimulate both the housing market and the employment prospects for the Borough. It would also serve to accommodate further any unmet need of Sheffield and hence the City's unmet need can be taken into account, albeit the extent of that need is at present no more than a matter of conjecture. Presumably it will remain so until such time as the City Council, co-operating with other Authorities as appropriate, is able to quantify it. An annual provision for 1,142 dwellings or more implies the allocation of land for housing of such extent as to give developers choice of sites and should stimulate house-building in the Borough, much to be welcomed given the Council's admission that there is not at present a 5-year supply of deliverable sites. Crucially, however, the RS requirement was based upon the outdated 2004-based household projections and its evidence base has been superseded by the Council's more recent and more convincing evidence. Hence a provision of land for an annual delivery of 850 dwellings plus a shortfall compared to that provision represents the objectively assessed need.
67. Other estimated requirements are put forward, often substantially above the estimated annual requirement of 1,142. One estimate is for 1,433, another is for 19,262 – 24,135 (1,284 – 1,609 annually) net new dwellings during the plan period. They rely on assumptions about such factors as vacancy rates, the extent of internal and international migration into the Borough, job creation and commuting. There is reference to the well-respected Chelmer model in advocating some of these figures. There is thus a plethora and wide

range of estimated housing requirements for the Borough during the plan period, with evidence provided to adopt an annual requirement of about 1,142, or indeed of an even higher one as some participants advocate. It remains to be seen whether the SHMA, expected in December 2014, will substantiate estimates of this magnitude.

68. In considering these varying estimates, and particularly those in excess of the one adopted by the Council, it should be remembered that the Framework is not just about house-building and economic activity. It is strong on the environmental role of sustainable development, including its contribution to protecting and enhancing our natural environment, the need to protect Green Belts and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. The essential task of the Core Strategy is to balance the 3 dimensions of sustainable development. The provision of land for well over a thousand or more dwellings annually during an entire plan period, and for significantly more than for the objectively assessed need, implies a considerably greater loss of the countryside, including Green Belt land which may be difficult to justify.
69. There may be good reasons to account for the substantial and persistent under-delivery of housing during the last 10-15 years. The Core Strategy must, however, be credible, and it is much to be doubted whether the house-building industry would be able to increase annual delivery from recent averages to well over a thousand dwellings a year on a consistent basis. The bringing forward of a buffer of 20% brought forward from later in the plan period would strain credibility even further during its early years. My conclusion, having taken into account further evidence at the final hearing is that to provide enough land to deliver 850 or so dwellings a year for the foreseeable future, together with further land to provide for a backlog measured against that target as well as the 20% buffer during the first 5 years of the plan period would be challenging, to put it mildly. Even so, given the extent of need, latent demand and Government policy to increase the supply of deliverable and developable housing land, such an approach has much to commend it and should be adopted. Hence **MMs 5 and 6**.

Allocating the under-supply (backlog) and the housing trajectory

70. As mentioned, it would be better to calculate the backlog against the estimated annual requirement of 850 dwellings. The Guidance states that *local planning authorities should aim to deal with any undersupply within the first 5 years of the plan period where possible. Where this cannot be met in the first 5 years, local planning authorities will need to work with neighbouring authorities under the "Duty to Co-operate"*. As explained above, the recommended approach will be challenging enough. Bearing in mind the way in which the Council continues to co-operate, and particularly with Sheffield City Council in the preparation of a SHMA, it would be reasonable to distribute the backlog evenly throughout the plan period. Taking into account the 20% buffer, there is no guarantee that adequate infrastructure could be put in place, especially during the early years of the plan period, and it is significant that the Highways Agency advocates an even distribution. The extent of the backlog and its even distribution throughout the plan period is the subject of **MM5**. The housing trajectory is shown in **MM6**.

The Sheffield and Rotherham Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

(SHLAA)

71. The Council prepared this SHLAA with the full involvement of landowners and developers including a number of representatives provided by the Home Builders Federation. It does not allocate land for housing nor does it make policy decisions on which sites should be developed. It identifies a pool of potential housing sites in the Borough against which relevant policies should be considered. Such sites are not necessarily deliverable at present, nor in the future. The SHLAA is up-to-date and includes estimates of developable supply during 2012/13 (1,216 dwellings), of developable supply for the 5 year period 2013/14 to 2017/18 (4,558) and of developable supply during 2018/19 to 2027/28 (22,858). Thus the total supply of housing land during 2012/13 to 2027/28 is estimated to be sufficient for 28,632 dwellings. It is significant that this amount is more than 10,000 above the total requirement set out in paragraph 65 (17,133). It is considered that there is a supply of developable land for another 10,450 dwellings after 2027/28.

The 5 year supply

72. The Framework obliges a local planning authority to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years worth of housing against its housing requirements with an additional buffer of 5% or 20% (moved forward from later in the plan period) to ensure competition and choice in the market for land. As part of its Monitoring Report, the Council intends to update annually the SHLAA and the housing trajectory. In view of the great importance which the Government attaches to stimulating the house building industry, this is a vital part of the monitoring of the Core Strategy.
73. The Council should ascertain whether the 5 year supply and any appropriate addition to it is being maintained, assess the progress being made towards securing the total requirement, identify any problems of supply and set in motion any remedial action. It will bear in mind the admonition in the Framework that relevant policies for the supply of housing land should not be considered up-to-date if it cannot demonstrate a 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites. There is no reason to doubt the Council's diligence, commitment and political will in ensuring a continuous 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites. Part B of **MM1** provides a useful basis for this exercise. It is sufficiently robust and flexible without being unduly committed to specific requirements, an apt approach given the challenge of meeting the ambitious annual and total targets set out above. The Council should, however, be cautious about comparing performance with comparative authorities, whichever they might be. The comparison should be with authorities which perform well in meeting their targets.

Previously-developed (brownfield) land (pdl)

74. The redevelopment of well-located pdl, which should be regarded as a valuable resource, can play a crucial role in regeneration. The Council can point to an excellent record in encouraging its re-use, with 66% of dwellings completed on this type of land during the 10 year period 2003/04 to 2012/03. They accounted for as many as 80% of the total in 2008/09. Waverley, an exciting and ambitious scheme on former colliery land, is a good example of a proactive approach by the Council, developers and other parties. The Core

Strategy does not set a local pdl target, the Council rightly advising that the suitability and deliverability of sites as a whole is the more important consideration. It could also be misused to justify the phasing of land to achieve it.

Windfalls

75. Local planning authorities may make an allowance for windfalls in the 5-year supply if they have compelling evidence that such sites have consistently become available in their areas and will continue to provide a reliable source of supply. The SHLAA shows the trend in permissions and completions on sites of fewer than 10 dwellings during 2005-2011 and 2004/05 – 2011/12 respectively. During these periods, planning permissions for an annual average of 128 dwellings have been granted and an annual average of 116 dwellings have been completed. Although there have been variations from year to year, the overall pattern is of consistency. Maybe some windfalls in the past have been on garden land, and in principle the Council should not rely on this source in the future.
76. The SHLAA does not estimate likely future windfall rates, but the Borough is large, with large urban areas with potential sources of supply. From site inspections and the Council's evidence, these sources include the conversion and redevelopment of non-residential uses, the subdivision of large houses and infill on small unused sites. Observations around Rotherham town centre suggest that more space above ground floor shops might be brought into residential use, as has been the case with the Imperial Buildings. It is safe to assume that windfalls on small sites will continue to account for an annual average of 100 dwellings or so throughout the plan period. This should augment supply and provide more flexibility in meeting the total housing requirement.

Vacant dwellings and energy efficiency

77. During the 5 year period 2007/08 – 2011/12 the total number of long term vacant dwellings in the Borough was respectively 79, 124, 154, 111 and 50. These figures are not unduly high, but they represent a wasted asset. The Council agrees that bringing them back into good use does not increase the supply of housing. Even if vacant for years, they still form part of the existing housing stock. Nevertheless, the Framework encourages the better use of these dwellings, and the Council has a good record in this regard. Its Strategic Housing Team has identified £3,000,000 for, for example, the purchase from developers of unsold stock which they are willing to sell at a significant discount.
78. The Council sets out its commitment to improving energy efficiency and reducing fuel poverty where it is able to assist. It is, for example, preparing to enter into a partnership framework with Green Deal providers to bring its benefits to the Borough. The targeting of benefits may apply to 28,000 households as well as those in receipt of income related benefits and those living in hard-to-treat dwellings. The Council's efforts should be applauded.

Mix and choice of homes

79. The Core Strategy includes a number of policies which promote a wide choice of dwellings, both affordable and market homes. It promotes the development of a large number of sites of various sizes throughout the Borough which will be further identified in the Sites and Policies DPD. Policy CS7 seeks to ensure a mix of dwelling size, type and tenure to meet the present and future needs of the community. Policy CS28 aims to ensure high quality housing through good, sustainable design, taking all opportunities to improve the character and quality of the area and the way in which it functions.
80. The policies are in place to meet the reasonable expectations of existing and prospective residents, the house-building industry and other relevant parties. These policies and other local and national policies, including the modified Policy CS3, obviate the need for a policy preventing development on garden land which would seriously damage the character of an area and/or cause other harm. The Council's agreement to consider opportunities for self-build is welcome. Maybe it should be further explored in the Sites and Policies DPD.

Bassingthorpe Farm

81. The Core Strategy identifies Bassingthorpe Farm as a Broad Location for Growth, but the Council advises that sufficient work has been undertaken for it to be put forward as a Strategic Allocation. There is no reason to disagree. The discussions and negotiations which the Council has had with the landowners, of which it is one, instils confidence that the land will be brought forward sooner rather than later and this is an important factor when the shortage of deliverable land for housing is a challenge which should be met as a matter of urgency.
82. Core Strategy Policy CS 1 proposes that about 2,400 dwellings be built in this locality, of which about 1,700 would be built during the plan period. This amounts to about 12% of the Borough's requirement and is a substantial contribution to it. These figures may increase as development is brought forward as a result of the change in status of the proposal to that of a Strategic Allocation. It is expected that about 11 ha will be proposed for employment uses, equating to about 5% of overall requirements. This scale of development, in this location, reflects the prime position of Rotherham in the settlement hierarchy.
83. In terms of location, Bassingthorpe Farm performs well. It is close to the main built-up area of Rotherham with its town centre services and the employment uses there and in the inner urban area. Although land undulations are pronounced in some places, it should be possible to provide convenient access to and from the town centre by foot and cycle. This proximity should assist the regeneration of the town centre. A comprehensive development should provide opportunities for new social and community facilities to serve both its residents and others living nearby. It should also ensure the delivery of a good mix of dwelling types of both market and affordable homes.
84. No doubt prospective residents will do much of their shopping at Meadowhall and Parkgate, but there is no reason to doubt that many will avail themselves

of the services and facilities on offer in the town centre. The development should boost the local economy and support and enhance town centre shops and services. It should also enhance the town centre as a civic, cultural, recreational and leisure centre and with places of worship. Proximity to bus and railway stations with frequent services to Sheffield, Meadowhall and Doncaster with their employment opportunities is another advantage as is the juxtaposition of housing and employment land with its potential to reduce the need for travel. No other option as a Broad Location for Growth or Strategic Allocation benefits from this coincidence of advantages.

85. The Concept Framework sets out details of the constraints to development and the opportunities which apply to the land, the level of mitigation required and impact upon development capacity and viability. It examines its visual and landscape character, noting that *a more detailed Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) is required and work is on-going to complete the HIA that will propose appropriate mitigation to minimise/remove the impact of new development on the historic environment*. It comments that *in the wider Study Area the parkland of Wentworth Woodhouse is punctuated by a series of landmark structures and follies*. It accepts the loss of Green Belt land but considers that *there is an opportunity to compensate by enhancing the features and facilities through the creation or improvement of existing green infrastructure*. Of the 219 ha comprising the site, only about 90 ha is proposed for development and this indicates the importance of open space as a key component of the overall scheme.
86. For the heritage assessment, it advises that *the HIA is being prepared following detailed discussion with English Heritage* but draws attention to the many heritage assets within the Study Area which is larger than the Bassingthorpe Farm Broad Location for Growth. Those assets include Grade II Listed Buildings at Bassingthorpe Farm, Barbot Hall, Barbot Hall Farm and Glossop Lodge, Greasbrough Conservation Area, the Grade I Wentworth Woodhouse Listed Building and the Grade II* Wentworth Woodhouse Parkland Registered Historic Park and Garden. These are important parts of the Borough's heritage. A key finding is that there are no archaeological objections to development but that future investigations will be required in certain areas should development be required.
87. Further analysis includes greenspace requirements, ecology including the need to retain the ancient and semi-natural woodland of Bassingthorpe Springs, drainage, movement and transport and contamination and land stability. There are 4 geological faults crossing the land and open cast mining for coal has taken place in about 11 areas. A ribbon of land alongside Greasbrough Dyke is Flood Zone 3. The Council draws attention to a former household refuse tip now restored to grazing land and advises that investigations are taking place concerning the likely impact which any leachate and/or gases could have on the development and the suitable means of prevention of harm. The site is close to a chemical plant and any development will require the Health and Safety Executive Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) Zone to be respected.
88. There is concern about the potential of development on the scale envisaged to harm the setting of Listed Buildings, particularly at Wentworth Woodhouse and its Registered Park and Gardens, bearing in mind that the park and gardens

should be appreciated within a wider landscape. Their impressive character demonstrates the contribution which the protection of heritage assets plays in terms of promoting sustainable development. An accompanied site inspection was therefore undertaken to judge the matter. The crucial point is the distance which would remain between these historic assets and the development proposed at Bassingthorpe Farm. Some views of the scheme might be gained from certain parts of the wider setting of the Listed Building and Registered Park and Gardens. Nevertheless, with a good deal of planting along the boundaries of the development parcels and within them, it is difficult to envisage any substantial harm being visited on these valuable assets.

89. English Heritage advises the Government and other bodies on heritage assets. It exists to make sure the best of the past is kept to enrich our lives today and in the future. Substantial weight should therefore be given to its advice. Essentially, its view is that *if the necessary mitigation measures are implemented, the broad location of growth at Bassingthorpe Farm could be developed in a manner which did not result in substantial harm to any designated heritage assets in its vicinity*. It did, however, raise concerns about whether measures of mitigation put forward in the HIA could be guaranteed and sought modifications to the Core Strategy to ensure their implementation. It endorses *all the mitigation measures which the Assessment proposes especially those which help to reduce harm to Wentworth Woodhouse and its parkland*. They include the retention of open areas within certain parcels of land and ensuring that development in Parcel EMP1 is kept below the ridge line of the hill to the west of the proposed allocation. It confirms its agreement with the Council on the modifications to Policy CS 1 and its supporting text in so far as Bassingthorpe Farm is concerned.
90. A substantial amount of work has been undertaken on this proposal. There is a large number of constraints which are not entirely unexpected on a site of this size, but the comprehensive evidence demonstrates that there are no critical constraints that would prevent development at Bassingthorpe Farm identified in the Core Strategy as a strategic allocation. The land is in the Green Belt and the resistance of many local people to its use for housing and other development is understandable. Owing to such considerations as the shortage of land for housing in the Borough, the extent of that shortage and the assistance which the development should give to the urgent need for regeneration in the town, exceptional circumstances apply. The Core Strategy should include the proposal as the Council intends and the development should proceed.
91. In conclusion and as the Council proposes, Bassingthorpe Farm would become a Strategic Allocation as a result of **MM2**. Hence, again as the Council proposes, the land concerned is removed from the Green Belt in line with **MM7** and **MM8**, the latter referring also to the level of agreement reached in preparing the Concept Framework. These changes affecting the Green Belt all accord with the Council's intentions.

Dinnington

92. Dinnington serves a wider area and is a suitable settlement for growth for both

its own needs and for the Borough as a whole. The Core Strategy proposes about 1,300 additional dwellings equating to 9% of the Borough's requirement during the plan period. Although the town has no rail station and hence does not benefit from frequent, or any, train service to Rotherham or Sheffield, it has a transport interchange with a good bus service to these and other centres. The town is towards the south-eastern edge of the Borough and thus at some distance from Rotherham and Sheffield, but other considerations outweigh any consequent disadvantage with regard to its location.

93. A good deal of housing and employment development has taken place on extensive former colliery land, but the town is in urgent need of more regeneration and substantial additional housing development to support that regeneration, boost the local economy and enhance it as a service centre. As the *Dinnington St John's Town Council* says, parts of the town have the highest levels of deprivation in the Borough and there is a need to encourage investment and development. Although the town is within the Green Belt, the Core Strategy suitably proposes land to the east of the town as a Broad Location for Growth to account for about 700 dwellings equating to 5% of the Borough's total housing requirement.
94. A significant scale of development either to the east or west of the main built-up area would have both advantages and disadvantages. Development to the west, as put forward for Anston Brook, could provide up to 1,200 or so new homes during the plan period together with a commensurate range of services including school, community facilities and shops. About 32 ha of employment land is suggested. It is near a range of existing employment uses at the North Anston Trading Estate, Brooklands Park Industrial Estate and Dinnington Business Centre. Good access could be provided to the Motorway system with convenient access by private car and other means of road transport to Rotherham, Sheffield and Doncaster. A comprehensive, well landscaped scheme need not result in coalescence with Todwick. Mitigation and management should protect the habitat of golden plovers.
95. The land is not within or adjacent to any Area of High Landscape Value (AHLV), Ancient Woodland or SSSI. It comprises lower grade (Grade 3) agricultural land than land to the east of the town. Much of the land lies within Flood Zone 1 (low risk of flooding). No doubt a comprehensive scheme could be phased to bring land forward before the development of the bulk of the land. Nevertheless, the entire project would need to be the subject of a Masterplan or similar which would take some time to prepare, consult upon, and maybe amend in the light of representations. When there is a shortage of deliverable sites, this is a distinct disadvantage. Moreover, it would constitute an excessive and damaging intrusion into the surrounding Green Belt countryside. For a town of modest size as here, a development of the scale envisaged is beyond the scope of exceptional circumstances.
96. Land to the east of the mainly built-up area adjoins what appears to be a popular and attractive residential neighbourhood. Suitable sites would be closer to the town centre, the transport interchange, local schools and further education facilities. Provided that good footpath access is put in place, this proximity should encourage sustainable means of transport, particularly walking and cycling. Like land to the west of the town, it is in Flood Zone 1. The Council envisages the identification of a number of small and medium size

sites, but their exact number, scale and location would no doubt be ascertained at the time of the adoption of the Sites and Policies DPD and are therefore not endorsed in this Report.

97. Sites of this size with convenient access to a good range of amenities should provide choice to developers and prospective purchasers alike and speedily contribute to the Borough's urgent housing requirements. The identification of sustainable sites such as these is likely to be the key to getting the Local Plan's strategy started. Depending upon their location, they could encroach somewhat into the open, rural landscape which is designated as an AHLV but the small to modest size of each one, suitably landscaped and with a good design of development, should not cause undue harm to the swathe of countryside which stretches further to the east. Their development should be far enough away from an Ancient Woodland and Local Wildlife Site (Swinston Hill Woods), Anston Stones Wood SSSI and other natural features not to cause serious harm to such interests. It should be able to integrate better with the existing urban form. The main disadvantage, and it is a serious one, is that land to the east of the town comprises Grade 2 agricultural land, defined as the best and most versatile, and a national resource.
98. Land to the east of the town is further away from the M1 and M18 Motorways and this could encourage commuters and others to drive through the town centre to work in Rotherham, Doncaster and Sheffield. On the other hand, it may be more convenient location for access to the A57 and A1 to Newark and other destinations to the south. The disadvantages of land quality and less convenient access to Motorways is outweighed by the advantage of access to the town centre, the small and modest size of sites envisaged and their speedier contribution to the Borough's housing requirements. The Council's preference for the identification of land to the east of the town for development should be supported.

Conclusion

99. The Core Strategy as submitted is not sound on various matters outlined above. Anything which proposes or implies the phasing of a site or sites in preference to others should be excised. Bassingthorpe Farm should be a Strategic Allocation, not a Broad Location for Growth. Coupled with the commitment to an immediate review should circumstances warrant it, the MMs set out above (**MMs 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 & 8**) address these shortcomings and their incorporation in the Core Strategy will serve to make it sound. The objectively assessed need for 850 dwellings annually, plus provision for the shortfall based upon that requirement, is endorsed.

Issue 3 – Whether the Core Strategy is effective in meeting special housing needs including for affordable accommodation and for gypsies and travellers

Affordable housing

100. Policy CS7 in the Core Strategy explains that new housing will be expected to deliver a mix of dwelling sizes, type and tenure informed by the most up to date SHMA or its successor. The SHMA for Rotherham, published in October 2007, estimated an annual Borough-wide need for 411 affordable dwellings. It

It was updated in 2010 and demonstrates a considerable increase in the need for this type of accommodation. It estimates an annual need for 1,155 affordable dwellings, principally due to a reduction in its supply since 2007. It would be better if more recent evidence were available and applied to the entire housing market area. Even so, this estimate is reasonably up-to-date and there is no reason to believe that the need has diminished. It has probably increased during the last 4 years or so. Indeed, there is a waiting list of 19,493 households wanting social housing, although some may already be accommodated in it, but their needs have changed. Suffice it to say that the 1,155 roughly equates with various estimates of the total annual requirement.

101. The provisions in the Policy of 25% of affordable housing on sites suitable for 15 or more dwellings of 0.5 ha or more has been adopted on the basis of the research set out in the updated SHMA. This Assessment is detailed and convincing, although the Council has reasonably and more realistically adopted the 25% target rather than the 35% suggested in the SHMA. Sites of the sizes specified underwent further examination for viability in 2012 using up-to-date house prices, building and finance costs and sensitivity testing but on the assumption that there would be no grant aid for any scheme. It showed that all but the most contaminated sites were still viable at 25% delivery and there was also evidence to justify a commuted sum being levied on smaller sites accommodating 5 or more dwellings. The Policy is broadly in line with those of Barnsley and Doncaster MBCs and Sheffield City Council which seek 15/25%, 26% and up to 40% respectively.
102. Owing to the substantial need for affordable homes in the Borough, the Council is right to seek the delivery of as many as possible in as reasonable a way as possible. Every site is unique and so the viability of a proposed development will change from one site to another depending upon the circumstances relating to it. As the Council agrees, the thresholds in the Policy should therefore be regarded as no more than a basis for negotiation between the parties. Policy CS7 does not make that important point sufficiently clear, but **MM9** puts the matter right by stating that *The Council will seek the provision of affordable housing on all housing development...* and there is further reference to agreements with regard to commuted sums and a payment scheme.
103. As submitted, the Policy and its Explanation does not give enough guidance to prospective developers about the viability assessment and the matters which should be examined in its preparation. The guidance is detailed and is likely to be regarded with apprehension by some developers as it implies additional costs, and may probably be particularly onerous for the small house-building companies. Nevertheless, it is reasonable for the Council to be provided with all relevant information to justify a departure from the targets set out in the Policy, particularly in view of the extent of need for affordable homes. The Policy as modified by **MM9** and **MM10** usefully refers to the importance of viability issues and the raising of them at the pre-application stage. The provision of affordable homes is a good example of the need for a Council and a prospective developer to work together positively to achieve a scheme beneficial to all parties.
104. The Council must always bear in mind that the costs of any requirements likely

to be applied to a scheme should ensure competitive returns to a willing land owner and willing developer to enable it to be deliverable. There will be instances where a residential scheme, most likely on previously-developed land, cannot deliver 25% of the homes as affordable owing to viability issues stemming from such factors as building costs, site characteristics, contamination, the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and planning policies and obligations. The Policy and Explanation as modified positively anticipates these considerations but suitably combines aspiration with flexibility. It makes the policy sound. Even so, the Council should regularly review the extent to which land is coming forward for development and affordable homes delivered. The likely reasons for any significant reduction in the number of affordable homes being delivered should be identified and this may mean a review of the targets at present included in the Policy.

105. The Council relies on Policy CS7 to secure affordable accommodation rather than setting a target. The policy was adopted in 2008 and, to quote the Council, *we are getting 25%*. The Council's letter to me of 31 January 2014 explains that since 2008 23 applications which triggered the policy have been determined with conditions stipulating 25% affordability. Of these, 8 schemes are delivering 25%, one scheme 15% and 6 schemes are delivering 10% affordability. Development of the remaining 8 sites is yet to start. This evidence shows that 25% affordability is achievable in favourable circumstances and that the Council is prepared to be flexible and get a lower percentage in different circumstances.
106. The Council's approach should be supported. It is a realistic way forward and should achieve a good number of affordable homes on the basis of an adopted procedure. At the same time, however, the Council has undertaken a Local Authority New Build Programme and built 132 Council houses during 2010/11. It intends to continue this programme. And there is further evidence of the Council's commitment to providing affordable homes. During 2007/08 – 2012/13, a total of 1021 affordable homes were provided from various sources, an annual average of 170 dwellings. At present there are 685 affordable homes being provided as a result of Section 106 Agreements. This is a good record and instils confidence in the future.

The elderly and students

107. The evidence refers to the ageing population of the Borough and this implies challenges for the Council and the house builders. Policy CS7 acknowledges the increasing needs of the elderly in its reference to a mix of dwelling sizes and type. The Council should also bear in mind that, with the recent expansion of institutions of higher education, which may well continue, the particular needs of students are likely to assume greater importance. Much the same applies with regard to the needs of people with special requirements including those with disabilities and people from minority ethnic backgrounds. The Policy suitably acknowledges these needs.

Gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople

108. The Council completed a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Survey in 2007 for the period 2006-2011 and accepts that it requires updating. This is being undertaken by the Doncaster MBC Strategic Housing Team, co-operating

with the Council, Sheffield City Council and Barnsley MBC. It will assess needs for gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople for the period 2011-2016. The latest draft (July 2012) provides an analysis of pitch requirements during these 5 years, taking account of the existing shortfall and household growth in these parts of the community. The estimated need for gypsies and travellers throughout South Yorkshire is 134 pitches, 8 of which should be provided in Rotherham with the largest allocation, 47, to be provided in Sheffield. No specific need has been identified for pitches for travelling show people in the Borough.

109. It is clear the Council is taking steps to assess need and to provide for it. The Government's Planning Policy for Traveller Sites requires Councils to take such steps as making their own assessment of need for the purposes of planning, working collaboratively with other Authorities and planning for sites over a reasonable timescale, maintaining an appropriate level of supply. Its paragraph 9 a) & b) refers to 5 years' worth of specific deliverable sites and to a provision for years 6 to 10 and 11 to 15. The Core Strategy does not go as far as it should in these respects. Nevertheless, an assessment has been undertaken to provide for the next 2 or so years and there is no reason to doubt the Council's stated intention to press on with this aspect of its Local Plan and to allocate a suitable number of sites for the plan period in its Sites and Policies DPD.

110. Where there is an identified need, as has been established in the latest draft assessment, national policy requires criteria to be set to guide land supply allocations. This will be set out in the Sites and Policies DPD, but in the meantime Policy CS3 as modified by **MM3** should provide a useful basis for the determination of any planning applications for these proposals. Of especial note in this context is its criterion of contribution to the creation of mixed and balanced communities. Its reference to environmental matters should preclude an undue amount of traffic through residential areas. In addition, **MM11** provides that land will be allocated for new sites with options for new allocations considered throughout the whole Borough. This should ensure satisfactory provision, in line with the Framework.

Conclusion

111. The Core Strategy as submitted is not sound in these matters owing to the shortcomings of Policy CS7 and its Explanation. It does not sufficiently emphasise the need for negotiation and agreement between the relevant parties, nor is there enough information and guidance about the Council's expectations about viability testing. This is put right by **MM9 & MM10**, and their inclusion in the Core Strategy makes it sound. Similar considerations apply to **MM3** and **MM11**.

Issue 4 – Whether the approach in the Core Strategy to economic development, the protection of employment land and vitality and viability of town centres clearly articulated, sufficiently justified and suitably in line with national policy

Introduction

112. The Core Strategy sets out an ambitious vision for the Borough, seeking a prosperous, diverse innovative and enterprising economy. It acknowledges

the part which it plays in the Sheffield City Region and the close economic, commercial and housing market links with Sheffield. In particular, Policy CS9 provides for 235 ha of land to be distributed around the Borough to support sustainable economic growth, the protection of existing viable employment sites and the regeneration of industrial and business areas. A visit to the Waverley Advanced Manufacturing Park, which includes the University of Sheffield and Boeing's Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre, puts beyond doubt the Council's commitment to these worthy aims. Other policies seek to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of town centres as retail and service providers. Policy CS14 promotes ease of movement and accessibility around the Borough and beyond it with choice in the mode of transport. The Council has co-operated with neighbouring authorities and other relevant bodies including the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the Chamber of Commerce in formulating these objectives and the policies which seek to achieve them.

Land for employment purposes

113. The Employment Land Review (ELR) (2010) is a comprehensive document. It considers the local economy, changes in the employment rate, the creation of additional jobs and employment structure, noting that jobs in manufacturing and the public sector accounted for 40% of total employment. It notes the large amount of land allocated for employment uses yet to be developed (188 ha) and the extent of vacant premises (11% - 13.77%). A similar approach is adopted for office floorspace. In estimating future requirements, it considers various factors including historic land take-up, the possible number of future jobs translated into floorspace requirements, vacant premises and long term employment rates. Inevitably it relies upon a number of assumptions, but it is convincing in its recommendation that the Core Strategy should provide for 230 ha of land for new economic development and up to 5 ha for new office floorspace. This is to meet the broad requirements of 12,000 – 15,000 additional jobs (including 3,000 – 5,000 office jobs) during the plan period.
114. These additional jobs should ease unemployment, there being at present as many as about 13,000 people unemployed in the Borough. Hence the new jobs will not be solely for migrants with their attendant need for housing. There are many uncertainties during a 15 year period. They include those pertaining to migration, the extent to which the new jobs might be suitable for people who are unemployed, the rate at which employment land is developed and the number of people working from home. Taking all the figures and estimates into account, however, there is a reasonable prospect of a balance between jobs and housing being achieved, provided that the challenge of providing sufficient housing can be met. It is a matter which the Council should regularly monitor.
115. The Economy and Retail Background Paper (June 2012) updates the local economic situation and confirms the recommended provision. The Housing and Economic Growth Background Paper reviews these recommendations, takes account of changes in the definition of the working age in line with changes to pension age, the possible implications for the size of the workforce and different employment target scenarios. These changes will probably have little effect on overall employment land requirements during the plan period and the recommendations and Core Strategy proposals are still convincing.

116. There is a clear relationship between the number of additional jobs created and the need for additional housing to accommodate any additional workforce in the Borough. The Background Paper explores this relationship, looking at the potential impact of various additional job numbers on the housing requirement. Much depends upon the level of the future unemployment rate in the Borough, the rate at which it changes during the plan period, the type of jobs created and the suitability of those jobs for local people, employed or otherwise.
117. The Council considers that, to return to the Borough's pre-recession unemployment rate by 2028 with an attendant 13,000 additional jobs and with about 7,000 additional people of working age (16-66) due to the increasing state retirement age, there would be no need for more housing land than the submitted Core Strategy proposes. Maybe the Council is right, but only time will tell. Provisions dealing with the supply of housing land to account for the backlog and to bring forward the 20% buffer to which the Framework refers should ease any imbalance between housing and employment, at least during the early stages of the plan period.
118. There is a limit to the extent to which the Council can stimulate the local economy. Much will depend upon wider economic conditions. It does, however, have a good record in promoting and supporting start-up and small businesses. New businesses often begin in old premises, and the general protection which the Core Strategy provides for existing premises is helpful. Public administration, education and health are likely to continue to play an important role in the local economy at around 28% of all jobs in the Borough. Innovation takes place in these sectors, but the Council is seeking to stimulate a more modern, diverse and enterprising economy, as is already taking place at Waverley. The Borough is fortunate in its number of further education institutions, including the Rotherham College of Arts & Technology and in its proximity to such key higher education institutions as the University of Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam University.
119. A crucial objective must be to equip local people in search of work with the skills which innovation and new industries require. Policy CS10 commits the Council to work with its partners, which should include these education institutions, to improve skills through better access to training. All reasonable means should be brought to bear to improve the links between local communities, developers and employers. It is clear from the evidence that the Council will do all it can to promote skills, training and employment opportunities in the Borough. The expansion of a number of existing schools has recently taken place and there is no reason to doubt the Council's assurance that it is actively seeking to ensure that there will be enough school places to meet planned growth in the Borough.
120. Policy CS1 sets out the distribution of new employment land throughout the Borough. The approach is to allocate it generally in proportion to the existing and proposed population of the settlement. For example, Rotherham is already by far the largest settlement in the Borough, and with Bassingthorpe Farm is proposed to take 38% and 30% of the Borough's housing and employment requirements respectively. The Principal Settlements for Growth are proposed to take 9%, 9% and 6% of the housing requirement and 16%, 7% and 7% of the employment requirement. Proportionality is not the only criterion. Others include the need for regeneration, the potential for it, good

public transport and other services and facilities and the creation of a balanced community in terms of range of jobs and ease of access to them. This is the sensible approach which the Council adopts.

121. Owing to my conclusions concerning about overall housing land requirements, the proposed MM12, a map showing the distribution of the 17,140 homes during the plan period and which the Council does not support, should not proceed. Map 5 in the Core Strategy gives a good indication of the proposed housing and employment land distribution during the plan period, and it should be retained.

Office floorspace

122. Much of the office floorspace in Rotherham town centre is old and not always of high quality. One of the objectives of the Economic Plan for Rotherham 2008 – 2020 is to secure a *vibrant town centre with a high quality office market*. This is a worthy ambition and should result in a greater range of employment opportunities and less commuting to, for example, Sheffield. Of note is the Council's interest in the possibility of a Public Sector Hub whereby public sector departments would share accommodation on an office campus. This, the Council considers, could result in an additional 5,000 jobs in the town.
123. Some employment uses are ill-suited to their surroundings causing, for example, disturbance as a result of heavy traffic intruding into residential areas. The Council should assist in their relocation, as the recommended **MM12** provides, whilst at the same time protecting existing and potential employment opportunities.
124. Any planning applications concerning land not allocated for a specific purpose should continue to be determined in accordance with the provisions of the development plan and any material considerations. There is no need for any policy to say so.

Vitality and viability of town centres

125. Policy CS12 sets out a hierarchy of service centres. This is informed by the up-to-date and comprehensive Rotherham Town Centre Retail & Leisure Study (2010) and the Borough-wide Retail and Leisure Study (2011). The importance of Rotherham is acknowledged by its status as the Principal Town Centre where the majority of new comparison and convenience shopping floorspace will be located. This makes sense. It should reinforce the town centre as a provider of goods and services for the town and its surroundings, enhancing its vitality and viability. The Council realistically accepts that Rotherham town centre will not be able to compete effectively with Meadowhall or Sheffield City Centre, but that is no reason to thwart its potential, particularly as Bassingthorpe Farm progresses.
126. Three Town Centres are identified at Dinnington, Maltby and Wath-upon-Wath-upon-Deerne and 5 District Centres at Kiveton Park, Parkgate, Swallownest, Swinton and Wickersley. They do not include Waverley. The scale of development proposed here, including the planning permission granted for 5,900 sq m of retail floorspace as part of its New Community, might suggest that this centre be identified as a District Centre. Mixed uses

are proposed to be promoted in 2 separate parts of the centre so the settlement would not have the character or appearance of a more traditional centre as, for example, at Swallownest or Swinton. Bearing in mind the evidence provided at the final Hearing, it would better for Waverley to stay as a Local Centre as the Council intends. Hence the proposed **MM14** which shows it as a District Centre should not proceed.

127. The smaller Local Centres are to be defined in the Sites and Policies Document. This approach reflects the present and future modest size of these settlements and their more limited range of services and facilities.
128. The impression gained from walking around some of these centres, and particularly of Rotherham and Dinnington, is that they are fragile in terms of their shopping offer with an often undue preponderance of vacant units and charity and value shops and, in the case of Rotherham, loss of multiple retailers. Whilst charity and value shops can be beneficial and offer good bargains, too many of them can indicate a lack of investment in their surroundings and the vulnerability of the centre itself.
129. Policy CS12 (as amended by Focused Change 81) sets a floorspace of 500 sq m above which an impact assessment should be submitted for retail, leisure or office development proposed at the edge of, or outside, designated centres. This threshold is a good deal less than the default 2,500 sq m to which the Framework refers, but the Council's reasons for this difference in setting this local floorspace threshold is convincing. Furthermore, as a general rule the re-use of vacant floorspace in both shopping centres and retail parks is in most cases likely to be preferable to the creation of new floorspace which is not within or on the edge of defined centres.
130. Inspection of these centres serves to confirm this approach. They include the fragility of certain centres, the limited size of both themselves and of many of the units within them and the cumulative effect of recent developments beyond the centres. Another reason is the urgent need in some cases for regeneration which in principle implies the attraction of as much investment as possible in the centres themselves. A good sign is that vacancy levels in Rotherham town centre and the prime shopping streets have now returned to those which prevailed in 2010 and 2011 respectively.
131. The Retail & Leisure Study calculates a quantitative and qualitative need for about 45,000 sq m gross of retail floorspace. The Core Strategy accepts the recommended 9,000 sq m gross of convenience goods floorspace and the 3,000 sq m gross of non-bulky comparison goods floorspace, but proposes 8,000 instead of the recommended 33,000 sq m gross of bulky comparison goods floorspace. The qualitative component is excluded. This is a realistic approach. It accepts that there is already a good choice in shopping for bulky comparison goods within and just outside the Borough, especially at Meadowhall with its ease of access and generous amount of parking space. Similar considerations apply to Parkgate. There is no compelling evidence of over-trading at any of the bulky comparison goods outlets in the Borough stemming from over-crowding and congestion. The up-to-date evidence of the Council's independent retail consultant, Dr Richard Doidge, on this matter is persuasive (LEB/20 November 2012).
132. Town centres are not just about shopping. Throughout history, at home and

abroad, town centres have been places where people come together, to mingle, hold markets, exchange ideas, learn, live, eat, drink and generally seek to enhance the human condition. The Council is well aware of the potential threats to, and opportunities in, its town centres. Out-of-town centres with their ease of parking and internet shopping with home delivery are amongst such threats. The emphasis must continue to be on making these centres places to which people will want to come because of their inherent attractiveness and safety and generally welcoming environment. This is why the Council's complementary policies of regeneration and conservation are so important.

133. The Council's track record in these endeavours should be applauded. They include the pedestrianisation of much of the area around the Minster, the enhancement of the Minster Yard and Minster Gardens and other projects to which reference is made in Issue 6. Over £500,000 has been provided for various "Business Vitality" projects which provide financial incentives for specialist niche retailers. The Portas Pilot status has ensured an additional £200,000 to support the growth and development of existing town centre retailers and another £268,000 of Government High Street Renewal Funds has been secured for such schemes as incubation space for new retailers. Plans are in hand to improve the outdoor market area and completely refurbish the indoor market hall. The Council is hopeful of attracting a cinema to the town centre which should serve to support the evening economy.

134. Rotherham is the Borough's main retail and service centre, but there is potential for schemes elsewhere. Of note is the extension of the Gallery Town project to Dinnington. This includes improvement works to the outer market roofs, doors/shutters and windows to the shopping parade and a mini art trail of Children's and Students' artwork. The Council may wish to consider using funds from sources including the New Homes Bonus for further improvements.

Tourism

135. Policy CS11 acknowledges the importance of the tourist industry in the Borough and seeks to enhance the offer. There is a good deal to attract visitors. It includes an impressive medieval heritage with the Minster and its environs and the Chapel-on-the-Bridge, one of only 4 in the country. There is a rich industrial past and a number of Registered Parks and Gardens. The Council's Mini Guide and website lists many attractions and, as it says, *Visit Rotherham and prepare to be amazed!*

Conclusion

136. Provided the recommended **MM12** is incorporated in the Core Strategy it will, in matters of the economy, be sound.

Issue 5 – Whether the Core Strategy provides sufficient protection, preservation, enhancement and management of the built and natural environment and introduces measures of sufficient force to mitigate any potentially adverse effects upon these interests

The built environment

137. The Core Strategy rightly acknowledges the value of the Borough's historic

environment, drawing especial attention to such Grade I Listed Buildings as the Minster and the Chapel-on-the-Bridge in Rotherham and All Saints Church at Laughten en le Morthen. They date respectively from the 14th/15th century, 1483 and Saxon times. An information board notes that the Minster *is considered to be one of the finest examples of medieval Perpendicular architecture in England*. These buildings, as well as many others in the Borough, are an inspiring presence and a useful reminder of the importance of the historic environment in both its urban and rural parts. Also of special note are the historic buildings and designated landscape of the Wentworth Woodhouse Estate and Clifton Park in Rotherham with its 23 hectares of beautiful historic gardens and parkland. The legacy of the industrial past is also of value, and the Core Strategy helpfully refers to Catcliffe Glassworks, Swinton Pottery, the Chesterfield Canal and early 20th century developments including planned colliery villages.

138. The Core Strategy is re-assuring about the value which the Council places on these vital assets. Policy CS23 and its supporting text provide a good basis for the protection, preservation, enhancement and management of the historic environment. This approach is necessary not just because these assets exist, but due to such reasons as their contribution to the present and future quality of life and the ways in which they complement economic development, tourism, regeneration, leisure and cultural pursuits. There are 524 Listed Buildings in the Borough, 10% of which are either Grade I or Grade II*, 37 Scheduled Ancient Monuments, 5 Registered Parks and Gardens and 26 Conservation Areas. These designations bring statutory protection additional to that provided by the Core Strategy.
139. The Council's track record in caring for the historic environment is good and, at a time of financial constraints, worthy of much praise. Its Townscape Heritage Initiative, now in its 5th of an expected 7 year period, seeks to enhance the High Street in Rotherham town centre. Its aim is to help owners and long term tenants with the cost of improving historic buildings and thereby contribute to the wider regeneration of the town centre, bringing vacant and under-used floorspace into better use and further enhancing the setting of the Minster. Good examples of the scheme in operation are the George Wright Building, the 14th century Grade II* Three Cranes Building and Nos 29-29a High Street. It is important, and a matter of soundness, to encourage suitable new uses for vacant, under-used or derelict historic buildings, and this is the subject of **MM13**.
140. There are, unfortunately, 6 Listed Buildings, 13 Scheduled Ancient Monuments and 4 Conservation Areas on the English Heritage at Risk Register. The Council's conservation staff regularly monitor all these Listed Buildings with progress meetings to secure their future. Progress may be slow, but sure. The Three Cranes Building is being restored at the time of writing and work should be completed by the end of 2014. Rawmarsh Rectory was recently removed from the Register following its restoration and conversion to apartments, a project which involved a considerable amount of staff time. The Council is currently investigating the prospect of a suitable mixed use development at the Guest and Chrimes buildings, and a favourable outcome is much to be desired.
141. The Council intends to prepare its own Register of Grade II Listed Buildings at Risk and it is expected that this will be a public document by the end of 2014

and lead to a Heritage at Risk Strategy. There is no reason to doubt the Council's assertion that it works tirelessly with such bodies as SAVE Britain's Heritage which produces an annual catalogue designed to connect potential owners with buildings at risk. Its resort where necessary to Urgent Works and and Repairs Notices demonstrates further commitment.

142. English Heritage, with which the Council has co-operated, advises that the Core Strategy sets out an appropriate strategic framework and that it fully accords with national policy. There is no reason to disagree with this conclusion.

The natural environment

143. The Core Strategy sets out a clear commitment for the protection, preservation, enhancement and management of the natural environment. This does not mean, of course, that built development can never take place on green belt or other greenfield land, close to existing development or further afield. A balance must be struck between the competing objectives of protection of such land and the need to provide housing and employment for the people of the Borough and further afield. In that context, the Core Strategy sets the framework for the protection and improvement of the Borough's green infrastructure which includes woodlands, gardens, allotments, playing pitches and parks. This accords with the Framework.
144. Similar considerations apply to the conservation and enhancement of bio-diversity and geo-diversity resources and to the safeguarding of the quality, character, distinctiveness and amenity value of the landscape. Policy CS20 sets out a good number of priorities including the management and protection of nationally, regionally and locally designated sites for nature conservation. Policy CS21 includes a requirement of developers to put in place effective landscape management schemes including for long term landscape maintenance during the lifetime of the development. Policy CS22 seeks to protect and improve the quality and accessibility of green spaces available to the local community. No doubt the Sites and Policies DPD and/or other suitable documents will set out the clear guidance which is required on the nature and scale of contributions which will be sought from developers.
145. Policy CS24 ensures the protection of watercourses and water quality, acknowledging the value of watercourses for wildlife, leisure and the alleviation of flood risk. Other provisions in the Core Strategy seek to reduce pollution in air and water and on land. This objective has a strong relationship with the proposed settlement pattern with its emphasis on public transport, better use of existing services and adaptation to climate change.

Conclusion

146. The Framework highlights the importance of the environmental dimension of sustainable development. The Core Strategy suitably amplifies this environmental role. In this way, and in incorporating **MM13**, it would accord with national policy and in all other respects concerning this issue it is sound.

Issue 6 – Whether the Core Strategy is sufficiently in accord with national policy with regard to such matters as recreation, leisure, culture and minerals

Recreation

147. Core Strategy Policy CS22 seeks to protect and improve the quality and accessibility of green spaces available to the local community. It requires development proposals to address gaps in provision and local deficiencies in accessible green space. The Council will appreciate, however, that the tests set out in the Framework at its paragraph 204 will apply in its seeking to enter into any planning obligations in this matter. This is an important point and suitably acknowledged in **MM14**. The Framework seeks to promote healthy communities in a variety of ways including the provision of high quality public space and the guarding against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities. They include allotments, playing fields and other green space which contributes more generally towards the amenity of the neighbourhood.
148. The evidence convinces that the Council takes a responsible approach in serving the community in the provision and enhancement of these valuable assets. For example, the Sites and Policies DPD will include standards for the provision of allotments. Consultants have undertaken an independent, comprehensive audit of accessible green spaces of more than 0.2 ha in extent as a basis for the determination of green space standards. A similar approach is set out in the Council's Playing Pitch Strategy 2009 for the development of playing pitches with community access to them. These studies encourage the Council to consider the needs of local voluntary clubs and other groups when planning future recreation provision. There is no reason to doubt the Council's intentions to do so, or of its seeking to develop effective co-operation and partnership with relevant parties.

Leisure and culture

149. The Retail and Leisure Study 2011 assesses the need for more intensive indoor leisure uses, but accepts that it is impossible to quantify it in floorspace terms. High order leisure and cultural facilities are all available in Sheffield which serves a wide catchment area including Rotherham. Perhaps the most pressing need in Rotherham at present is for a cinema, preferably in the town centre. There are 4 modern leisure centres at Aston, Maltby, Rotherham town centre and Wath-upon-Deane which are expected to meet the needs of the Borough up to at least 2040 when the current contract for their operation ends. The Council's general approach is the promotion of leisure facilities in the most appropriate centres in line with their scale and type and in accordance with the status of the centre in the settlement hierarchy. This makes good sense and accords with the policy in the Framework of promoting the vitality of town centres.

Minerals

150. Core Strategy Policy CS26 provides for the definition of Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSA) in the Sites and Policies DPD. Like the Core Strategy, this document will be part of the Local Plan for the Borough. It would be useful in the meantime, however, for the broad areas of mineral resources (coal, aggregate limestone and brick clay) to be illustrated by the inclusion in the Core Strategy of an indicative plan. The Council agrees to do so. The MSAs, when defined in the Sites and Policies DPD, will show with more precision the extent of these minerals which are considered to be of current or future economic use. It is also worthy of note that Focused Change No 122 adds the

criterion that *development would not prevent the future extraction of minerals beneath or adjacent to the site*. This 2-stage approach should be effective in safeguarding mineral reserves, but the sooner the DPD is adopted as sound, the better.

151. A draft Local Aggregate Assessment (LAA) has been produced jointly with Doncaster MBC and the Council participates in the newly reconstituted Yorkshire & Humber Regional Aggregates Working Party (AWP). Based upon the rolling average of 10 years sales data, the LAA calculates the sub-regional apportionment for the plan period of 41.1 m tonnes of limestone aggregates, somewhat less than the previously calculated 50.1 m tonnes average approach set out in the Framework. The Core Strategy should be modified accordingly to reflect the substantially amended sub-regional apportionment and other most up to date data derived from the Draft LAA. This is the subject of **MM15**. Moreover, there is a healthy surplus of reserves with additional supplies in Doncaster MB and in Derbyshire where there is about 80 years supply.
152. It is unfortunate that the LAA is in no more than in draft form and has yet to be agreed by the AWP. The Minerals Products Association Ltd expresses reservations about it in its letter to the Council of 1 November 2013, noting that the AWP can give an opinion on the adequacy of the LAA only after due consideration of all the LAAs in the Yorkshire and Humber area so that the overall picture can be clearly seen and any adjustments to apportionments duly recommended. So far, it has assessed only 6 of the LAAs produced by the 17 constituent Mineral Planning Authorities. The Association suggests that, due to falling output due to a declining resource base, a simple reliance on the 10 years average is not a reliable indicator of effective demand during that period, and hence not for the plan period. The figures produced by the Council, it says, have not gone through the proper process.
153. The Council considers that there is no good reason to change any of the figures. Even with the draft status of the LAA, it would serve little purpose to delay the adoption of the Core Strategy, especially as these figures could be re-assessed as part of the early review of the plan. This is a pragmatic way forward and should be supported. The Policy sets out the approach to other minerals including energy minerals and natural building stone. This includes the protection of the remaining supplies of brick clay at Maltby where there is an extant planning permission for the winning and working of minerals until 2042.
154. The Council seeks to promote the efficient use of minerals, substitutes and recycled materials and the recovery of material from waste tips. This accords with policies in the Framework for facilitating the sustainable use of minerals and should contribute to the overall supply of minerals.
155. There are considerable reserves of coal in the Borough and a long history of its extraction. The Council co-operates with the Coal Authority on these matters and refers to the published guidance which it takes into account in the determination of planning applications on land where there has been mining activity. The Council and other parties will note the Coal Authority's comment about surface coal resources, unstable land and a significant mining legacy at Bassingthorpe Farm.

156. The Coal Authority does not consider that a MSA for surface coal resource should exclude urban areas as opportunities for its prior extraction as part of a regeneration scheme would be lost. This suggestion is worthy of serious consideration and is commended to the Council.
157. In conclusion, **MM14** and **MM15** should be incorporated in the Core Strategy. That would make it sound in such matters as recreation, leisure, culture and minerals.

Issue 7 – Whether the Core Strategy provides satisfactorily for the delivery of development, particularly its required infrastructure for public transport and other services and convincingly demonstrates adequate arrangements for the monitoring of its provision and measures designed to rectify any shortcomings

The Infrastructure Delivery Schedule (IDS) and its implementation

158. The Core Strategy includes an IDS which is based upon the Council's Infrastructure Study 2012. The evidence is convincing that it has been prepared in consultation with infrastructure providers and this should ensure that the proposals are realistic in terms of delivery and take account of future infrastructure requirements. It was last updated to inform the Council's CIL (Viability and Infrastructure) Study 2013 and will be updated on an annual basis. The Infrastructure Costs by Category Schedule estimates the cost of various types of infrastructure and gives a broad picture of the amount of money likely to be spent on infrastructure in the Borough during the plan period. No doubt more refined estimates will be produced as the preparation of the Sites and Policies DPD progresses.
159. Transport is the largest component, and the more detailed IDS sets out the various highway improvements and all other bus, cycle and parking schemes which will be required, their estimated cost and expected year of commencement. The same approach is used for Education, Health and other services. It will be a useful basis for monitoring the delivery of infrastructure necessary to provide for the Core Strategy's proposals. There is, however, a limit to the extent to which the Council can provide the necessary infrastructure. For example, Policy CS14 commits the Council to work with relevant bodies to promote park and ride schemes where appropriate, thereby encouraging travel by train and sustainable means of transport in general. Transport Assessments will be required for schemes of a suitable size, and **MM16** ensures that national guidance extant at the time on thresholds for the type of development proposed will be taken into account.
160. It is vital to have in place a strong mechanism to ensure the monitoring and delivery of the strategy and the timely provision of the infrastructure on which it depends. For that reason, the Council has appointed a lead officer with special responsibility for this crucial role. He or she will head the Infrastructure Delivery Group (IDG) of officers, members and service providers. The Group's functions will include assessing the progress of the strategy, identifying risks and priorities and the resolution of any problems. This approach will focus on actual and potential departures from the strategy and will recommend to the Council any actions needed to keep the strategy on track and/or bringing it back on track. The lead officer will liaise with the external Infrastructure Delivery Forum (IDF), setting up meetings on a regular

basis to promote the effectiveness and implementation of the Core Strategy. The matter is the subject of **MM17** which should be incorporated in the Core Strategy.

161. These arrangements instil confidence in the Council's undoubted commitment to ensure that the policies and proposals of the Core Strategy are not thwarted by delays in the provision of, or the absence of, infrastructure required to support them. For example, consultations have already established that there should be enough resources in principle, including of gas, electricity and potable and waste water to support the scale and distribution of the envisaged growth. Even so, much will no doubt depend upon the resources which the Council and other providers will have at their disposal during the plan period. Priorities may change, but the Council's proposals in this regard constitute a useful basis for promoting the effectiveness of the Core Strategy.
162. The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) includes a list of indicators and of targets/aims where they can be specified. This will be updated annually and will enable the IDG to assess the progress of the Core Strategy, ascertaining whether targets have been met, the extent to which delivery has fallen short of expectations and whether that extent is so significant that it calls for remedial action. This might include the steering of CIL and/or Section 106 funding towards the provision of infrastructure to enable development to take place. This assessment against targets is likely to be especially important in so far as housing is concerned. For that reason, the AMR includes a housing trajectory so that delivery can be measured against requirements.
163. The Core Strategy has been prepared in uncertain times and it would be rash to predict certainty in the future, especially during a 15 year period. Indeed, the IDS notes that it *has been prepared against a backdrop of the current economic climate*. It identifies a funding gap of nearly £55,000,000. As, however, it estimates the likely infrastructure costs during the life of the plan but not the funding to accompany all of it, this is not surprising. Most infrastructure providers allocate funding for no more than periods a good deal less than 15 years. Moreover, as the Council explains, they increasingly rely on grants, particularly where infrastructure for transport is concerned. These circumstances do not invalidate the Core Strategy's provisions for infrastructure and its funding, and it is significant that no infrastructure provider has maintained an objection to the Core Strategy.
164. The Council has a good track record in the provision of infrastructure. Although not necessarily always the main funding body, it has promoted a number of major schemes in the Borough in recent years. These include improvements to Rotherham Central Station, the bus station, bus corridors along key routes, the easing of congestion with general flow improvements, new and/or extended libraries, schools, surgeries, neighbourhood centres and flood defences. It should be congratulated on the amount of consultation which it has undertaken with the infrastructure providers and its detailed and comprehensive examination of the infrastructure and its costs likely to be required to support the policies and proposals of the Core Strategy. The setting up of relevant groups should assist the process, as should continued consultation and co-operation and a willingness to take account of change. This instils confidence in the future. In these circumstances, its policies and proposals constitute a deliverable, confidently funded plan of action.

The Rotherham – Sheffield Tram Train trial

165. This scheme, the funding for which has been confirmed by the Department of Transport, is for tram-train vehicles to operate from the Cathedral tram stop in Sheffield calling at all existing stops between there and Meadowhall South. Thence the vehicles will switch on to the heavy rail system passing under the M1 Motorway Tinsley Viaduct to Rotherham Central Station to a terminus at Parkgate Retail World. It is due to operate from January 2016. It will complement regular train services between Sheffield and Rotherham and the trams which operate between Meadowhall and through the City Centre to Hillsborough, Malin Bridge and Middlewood.

High Speed 2 (HS2)

166. Policy CS17 sets out the Council's support of passenger rail connections, safeguarding land for rail projects including HS2. Phase 2 of this major national infrastructure project includes an eastern branch connecting Birmingham with Leeds via a new station at Meadowhall. As explained in **MM18**, the initial preferred route runs immediately to the west of Aston, Aughton, Swallownest and Treeton before passing through Catcliffe and Waverley and to the west of Brinsworth. From Meadowhall the route passes to the west of Thorpe Hesley. Consultations on this route will take place, but separate from those on the Core Strategy. The importance of the principle of the project justifies the MM.

CIL, Section 106 Agreements and the New Homes Bonus

167. The Council is not, at present, a charging authority with regard to CIL but it intends to be one. It has consulted on a Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule and will no doubt take account of the representations received on it. It envisages that most of the infrastructure requirements in the Borough will be part funded by CIL with the use of Section 106 Agreements scaled back in accordance with CIL Regulation 122. The Council will note, and will no doubt clarify where need be in the Core Strategy, that a planning obligation is sought rather than required, entered into by the relevant parties and must meet the tests set out in the Framework.

168. The Council may wish to explore the contribution which the New Homes Bonus might make towards mitigating the impact of the proposed level of development.

Flooding

169. Policies CS24 and CS25 have been drafted in consultation with the Environment Agency. The former sets out a hierarchy for the disposal of surface water and promotes the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). Policy CS25 deals with flood risk. It requires demonstration that development takes place in areas of lowest probability of flooding by way of the sequential approach. It explains that proposals will be supported where it would not be at risk of unacceptable risks of flooding, would not result in an increased risk of flooding elsewhere and, where possible, achieves reductions in flood risk overall. It sets out how the extent and impact of flooding will be reduced.

170. Over £15,000,000 has been spent in conjunction with the Environment Agency

on the first phase of a Community Wide Flood Alleviation Scheme to provide new flood defences in the Templeborough area. Other funding totalling 95,000 euros has been secured to continue with various research and feasibility studies. The Core Strategy accords with national policy in matters of flooding, and these schemes and the funding found for them demonstrate the Council's commitment with dealing with a problem which has been challenging in the Borough in the recent past.

Conclusion

171. Despite a host of uncertainties, the Council's policies and proposals are as realistic as they can be. There is a reasonable prospect that the planned infrastructure will be deliverable in a timely fashion. The Core Strategy's provisions relating to CIL, Section 106 Agreements and flooding accord with national policy. Provided that the recommended **MMs 16, 17 and 18** are incorporated in the Core Strategy, it will, in matters of infrastructure and delivery, be sound.

Assessment of Legal Compliance

172. My examination of the compliance of the Plan with the legal requirements is summarised in the table below. I conclude that the Plan meets them all.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS	
Local Development Scheme (LDS)	The Core Strategy is identified within the approved Revised LDS (April 2013) which sets out an expected adoption date of February 2014. The Core Strategy's timing is not compliant with the LDS, but this is due mainly to the need to propose, and consult upon, Main Modifications. The delay should not undermine the content of the Core Strategy nor thwart its eventual adoption
Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and relevant regulations	The SCI was adopted in June 2006 and consultation has been compliant with the requirements therein, including consultation on the post-submission proposed Main Modifications
Sustainability Appraisal (SA)	The SA of the Core Strategy and the Main Modifications has been carried out and is adequate.
Appropriate Assessment (AA)	The Habitats Regulations AA Screening Report (June 2013) sets out why an AA is not necessary.
National Policy	The Core Strategy complies with national policy except where indicated and Main Modifications are recommended.
Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)	Satisfactory regard has been paid to the SCS.
2004 Act (as amended) and 2012 Regulations.	The Core Strategy complies with the Act and the Regulations.

Overall Conclusion and Recommendation

173. The Plan has a number of deficiencies in relation to soundness for the reasons set out above which mean that I recommend non-adoption of it as submitted, in accordance with Section 20(7A) of the Act. These deficiencies have been explored in the main issues set out above.

174. The Council has requested that I recommend Main Modifications to make the Core Strategy sound and capable of adoption. I conclude that with the recommended Main Modifications set out in the Appendix the Publication Rotherham Core Strategy 2013-2028 June 2012 satisfies the requirements of Section 20(5) of the 2004 Act and meets the criteria for soundness in the National Planning Policy Framework.

175. This report is accompanied by the Appendix containing the Main Modifications.

Richard E Hollox

Inspector

REPORT ON THE EXAMINATION INTO THE PUBLICATION ROTHERHAM CORE STRATEGY 2013-2012 (JUNE 2012) LOCAL PLAN

APPENDIX - SCHEDULE OF MAIN MODIFICATIONS

Within the Schedule of Main Modifications below the text incorporates the amendments set out in the Focused Changes document except where noted. It also supersedes Additional Proposed Changes in RSD/10 where appropriate. Additions to text are shown bold and underlined. Text to be deleted is shown as ~~strikethrough~~. All paragraphs, policies, figures, tables, appendices and cross-referencing throughout the plan will be renumbered to take account of the modifications. The Schedule should be read in conjunction with Publication Core Strategy (examination library ref: RSD/1), the Core Strategy Focused Changes (RSD/2) and the Schedule of Minor Modifications which the Council intends to make.

Reference: MM1

Publication Core Strategy text reference: Insert new policy after 5.8.13

Policy CS34: Housing Delivery and Ongoing Co-operation

A. The Council will continue to co-operate with relevant bodies, including neighbouring local authorities and other partners in the City Region on strategic planning issues. In particular the Council will:

(i) use its best endeavours to co-operate with neighbouring local authorities, especially Sheffield City Council, to produce jointly a Strategic Housing Market Assessment for the entire housing market area, to be completed in December 2014: and

(ii) undertake an immediate review of the Core Strategy should the updated Strategic Housing Market Assessment demonstrate a need for additional housing provision to that provided for in Policy CS6

B. The Council, through its Annual Monitoring Report and the Infrastructure Delivery Group, will continue to monitor actual supply against the requirement. Where a five year supply of deliverable sites cannot be demonstrated and analysis of the information provided by the SHLAA suggests that this is not likely to improve in the next year then consideration will be given to the causes of the situation and the actions required to rectify it. Should monitoring demonstrate that development of residential sites is slower than anticipated or that site development is not commencing when expected, then further analysis of the causes will be undertaken and appropriate positive action, depending on the findings, could include:

(i) comparing performance with comparative authorities to see if the problems are specific or generic;

(ii) surveying and meeting house builders/landowners to identify causes of supply problems and acting on feedback received;

(iii) investigating potential funding streams and considering the need to use compulsory purchase or other powers available to the council to remove barriers to the delivery of specific identified sites;

(iv) reviewing the five year land supply;

(v) reviewing the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and producing a new Strategic Housing Market Assessment for the whole of the Housing Market Area;

(vi) reviewing the Core Strategy (in whole or in part);

(vii) reviewing the Sites and Policies document, to see whether there is the need to bring forward alternative sites for development.

Explanation

The Core Strategy must be deliverable over the plan period. As far as possible the policies provide flexibility, recognising that circumstances may alter over the next 15 years and situations may arise that the Council cannot foresee which influence the Core Strategy policies. Policy 34 sets out how the Council will monitor and address under performance in housing delivery. Under performance will constitute a shortfall in the delivery of housing of 20% of the annual target for 2 consecutive years and/or a 20% deficit in the 5 year land supply for more than 2 consecutive years. Such an under performance would trigger the Core Strategy's provisions for contingency and/or flexibility set out below.

In line with the Duty to Co-operate the Council will continue to work with relevant bodies, including neighbouring local authorities and other partners in the City Region on strategic planning issues. The Council will work with partners to produce an updated Strategic Housing Market Assessment for Rotherham's housing market area. This work will commence as soon as possible and be completed in December 2014. Where this work, in conjunction with discussion with neighbouring local authorities and City Region partners, demonstrates a need for additional housing provision in Rotherham to that provided for in Policy CS6, the Council will undertake an immediate review of the Core Strategy.

Throughout the Plan period the Council will monitor the Plan and its policies, including the supply and delivery of housing development, through its Annual Monitoring Report and the Infrastructure Delivery Group. Where housing delivery is slower than anticipated then the Council will undertake a critical appraisal of the market and any issues with delivery of sites to determine the causes and identify the appropriate positive action to be taken.

This could include comparing housing performance with other comparable authorities and undertaking research with house builders and land owners to determine the cause of any supply / delivery problems. Identifying the cause will allow the appropriate action to be taken, which could include considering the support the Council could give to removing barriers to delivery and reviewing the 5 year land supply, reviewing and, if necessary, updating the SHMA . Depending upon the outcomes of these actions, or the severity of the issue identified, the Council may review the Core Strategy (either comprehensively or in part) or the Sites and Policies document. The table below highlights the flexibility and / or contingency in place to mitigate the key risks associated with delivering the Core Strategy over the plan period.

<u>Risk</u>	<u>Contingency / flexibility</u>
<u>Lack of capacity within settlements to accommodate growth set out in CS1</u>	<u>Where new development cannot be accommodated in a sustainable way to meet the needs of the settlement as determined by the settlement hierarchy, then consideration will be given to identifying sites in other appropriate settlements within the same tier or within or on the edge of a higher order settlement before searching for sites in settlements of a lower order in the hierarchy.</u>
<u>Development within the strategic allocation and broad location for growth cannot be delivered</u>	<u>In these circumstances the Council will adopt a plan, monitor and manage approach to meeting needs within the Borough. This approach will identify whether there is a shortfall in meeting the housing and employment needs in the Borough during the Plan period. The Plan, Monitor, Manage approach will also enable windfall completions to be counted against the identified housing need. Where it is clear that there will be a problem in meeting the identified target within the Plan period and every effort has been made to overcome identified obstacles to delivery and this has not closed the gap in delivery terms, then consideration will need to be given to an early Review of the Plan and the allocation of deliverable sites. The SHLAA will identify suitable sites that could potentially be allocated on a partial Review of the Local Plan if there is a shortfall.</u>
<u>Difficulties encountered in delivering the infrastructure required to support the Core Strategy Under provision of housing / economic development</u>	<u>The Council will investigate the potential for alternative funding streams to enable the appropriate level of infrastructure to be provided and will negotiate with landowners and developers to unlock any possible obstacles where this is possible. Consideration could be given to utilising the New Homes Bonus and the Community Infrastructure Levy to close essential gaps in the supply of appropriate infrastructure to meet the essential needs of the new and existing communities. Although some sites may not come forward for development due to the current economic circumstances, any impact is largely considered to be in the short to medium term rather than extend across the full fifteen year plan period. The evidence base will continue to be regularly reviewed, while the AMR will provide regular monitoring updates. Delivery of employment land is not as critical as delivery of housing numbers. The Council actively promotes economic regeneration and development within the Borough but economic investment is difficult in the current fragile economy.</u>
<u>Market improvement / rate</u>	<u>The Council could encourage higher density developments</u>

<u>of development improves significantly in future years</u>	<u>where appropriate which would increase capacity on development sites.</u> <u>The Council is committed to joint working with other authorities within the Sheffield City Region on future provision. If future circumstances indicate a need for further development then the Council will undertake an early review of the plan.</u>
<u>Current market conditions</u>	<u>The Council recognises the current fragile nature of the economy and that recovery over the short to medium term is expected to be modest. However the Council considers that the Local Plan contains sufficient flexibility to adapt to changing economic circumstances, and acknowledges that if market recovery takes place faster than expected and monitoring indicates a need for additional land for development purposes, then an early review of the Local Plan will be required.</u> <u>The current market could affect the quality of development proposals. However, the requirements contained in national and local policy and guidance means that there are be clear mechanisms to reject poor design ensure that design quality is maintained.</u>
<u>Climate change</u>	<u>The use of planning conditions and obligations could be reviewed to consider whether a different approach should be taken in order to secure mitigation and/or aid in the monitoring of some of the areas that planning can directly influence.</u>
<u>Change to legislation and national policy</u>	<u>The Core Strategy may need to be reviewed if major changes were proposed, however this is likely to apply to all local authorities and not be exclusive to Rotherham.</u>
<u>Changes to the evidence base</u>	<u>The Core Strategy has been prepared with regard to the local evidence base. This evidence base will continue to be reviewed and where necessary updated to respond to changing circumstances. This may lead to the need to change or alter policy. This process will be managed through the Annual Monitoring Report and where necessary changes will be introduced through a review of the Local Plan.</u> <u>The Council will produce an updated Strategic Housing Market Assessment and will undertake an immediate review of the Core Strategy where this demonstrates a need for additional housing provision in Rotherham.</u>

Delivery

Delivery of this policy will be through annual monitoring of the Core Strategy, the operation of the Infrastructure Delivery Group, and, where necessary, undertaking analysis and implementing appropriate mitigation measures.

Insert new row in table 16:

<u>Policy Area</u>	<u>Indicator</u>	<u>Target / Aim</u>	<u>Delivery / Implementation</u>
<u>Policy CS34: Housing Delivery and Ongoing Co-operation</u>	<u>Plan Period and housing targets (DCLG Core output indicator)</u>	<u>Housing Trajectory – maintain build rate over the plan period</u>	<u>Delivered through house builders / Registered Social Landlords and RMBC - active management of planning applications, allocation of land through the Local Plan,</u>

	<u>Net additional dwellings during the year (DCLG Core output indicator)</u>	<u>To ensure dwellings built reach 100% of annual housing requirement.</u>	<u>and undertaking appropriate positive action, depending upon the outcome of any monitoring analysis.</u>
	<u>Five year supply of land for housing (DCLG Core output indicator)</u>	<u>Have deliverable land to accommodate at least five times the annual housing requirement plus an additional 20% until it can be demonstrated that the housing target is being met (when an additional 5% will be included)</u>	

Reference: MM2

Publication Core Strategy text reference: Policy CS1 Delivering Rotherham's Spatial Strategy

Indicative Housing Provision, **Indicative** Employment Provision and **Indicative** Retail Provision

Rotherham urban area (including Bassingthorpe Farm **Strategic Allocation** Broad Location For Growth)

Principal settlements

<u>Waverley</u>	<u>17%</u>	<u>2,500</u>	<u>18%</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>0</u>
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Two broad locations for growth are identified: Bassingthorpe Farm on the north western edge of Rotherham Urban Area

2 Strategic Allocation

A strategic allocation is identified at Bassingthorpe Farm on the north western edge of Rotherham Urban Area for future development as shown on the key diagram. The revised Green Belt boundary and indicative extent of developable areas and distribution of proposed uses is illustrated on map x: Strategic Allocation Policies Map.

Development will provide for around 2,400 new dwellings on site with around 1,700 new dwellings **expected** to be developed in the Plan period (**12%** of Rotherham's housing requirement) with a mix of housing tenures, types and sizes **and will also provide opportunities to allow people to work from home.** Around 11 hectares (5%) of Rotherham's employment requirement will be developed in this area. **A new primary school and a local centre with a mix of community facilities integrated with the new neighbourhoods are required.**

A green infrastructure corridor located between new development and the existing northern edge of the town will be maintained for the purposes of avoiding the joining together of settlements, promoting their identity and character, maintaining amenity space, access to the countryside, and biodiversity.

A concept framework has been prepared jointly by the landowner/s and Rotherham Council; this will be used as a basis for further comprehensive masterplanning. Design quality will be secured through the application and use of appropriate design controls (e.g. design codes), Building for Life Assessment and a design review process.

Planning permission will be granted provided:

- a. **Any application for development is preceded by, and is consistent with, a comprehensive masterplan prepared collaboratively with and approved by the Council. The masterplan will include the whole site which integrates the site with its surrounding communities, wider countryside and town centre.**
- b. **The proposals relate to the whole allocated development or if less do not in any way prejudice the implementation of the whole development;**
- c. **The proposals include a phasing and delivery strategy that identifies the timing, funding and provision of green, social and physical infrastructure, including the primary school and the local centre.**
- d. **An access and transport strategy is developed that maximises the potential for walking, cycling and use of public transport, especially to the town centre, (including along Rodger Street and the Thornhill Recreation Ground) and provides a connected, legible network of streets with the proposed primary route extending from Fenton Road to Carr Hill which will provide a public transport corridor.**
- e. **A multifunctional green infrastructure strategy is developed that retains, enhances, connects and increases the biodiversity of Bassingthorpe Spring Ancient Woodland, Clough Streamside and Greasborough Dyke, retains and enhances any important hedgerows or tree belts, provides well-integrated green space (formal, natural and allotments), ensures that any displaced allotment spaces are re-provided at an appropriate and suitable location, provides well integrated sustainable drainage systems and provides cycle and pedestrian links through the site that connect to the existing network and town centre**
- f. **A heritage management strategy is provided that is informed by the mitigation measures proposed in the Bassingthorpe Farm Heritage Impact Assessment which safeguards and where possible enhances those elements which contribute towards the significance of heritage assets in the area especially the character and setting of Wentworth Woodhouse and the Registered Park and Gardens.**

g. Where the site benefits from an undulating topography, notable ridgelines and some important viewpoints into and from the site (e.g. from the town centre), proposals will need to demonstrate an appropriate design response (e.g. the location, orientation, density of development), and landscape/planting treatment in these sensitive areas, including appropriate landscape treatment to the new green belt boundary to avoid or minimise any negative landscape or visual impact.

h. Appropriate remediation and mitigation measures for new development has been agreed to address the site's ground conditions (e.g. areas of previous open cast mining and any identified contamination of land).

Access to the site will be from the existing local road network at a number of suitable locations yet to be determined, which will enable the new community to be well integrated with existing communities

A mix of community facilities and services will be provided on site including a new primary school, health facilities and other facilities to meet the needs of the incoming community.

Greenspace will be provided in conjunction with the development to meet local recreational needs and to positively contribute to the health and well being of the community. Pedestrian and cycle ways will be incorporated into the development which, along with new greenspace, will provide links to the Green Infrastructure Corridor identified in this locality.

A "Concept Framework" is currently being prepared with the landowners of this area, which will be produced in conjunction with appropriate consultation with local communities, key stakeholders, utility and other infrastructure providers. It will determine the size, form and layout of the overall development, including the mix and location of uses, pedestrian and vehicular access arrangements, the consideration of constraints including mitigation measures, and the timing of each aspect of development, including trigger points for the delivery of essential services and facilities. The "Concept Framework" will support the Core Strategy and provide more detailed guidance for the preparation of the Sites and Policies document. This will include site specific land use allocations at Bassingthorpe Farm and criteria by which planning applications in the area will be assessed.

Dinnington East

3 Broad Location for Growth

A Broad Location for Growth is identified at Dinnington East.

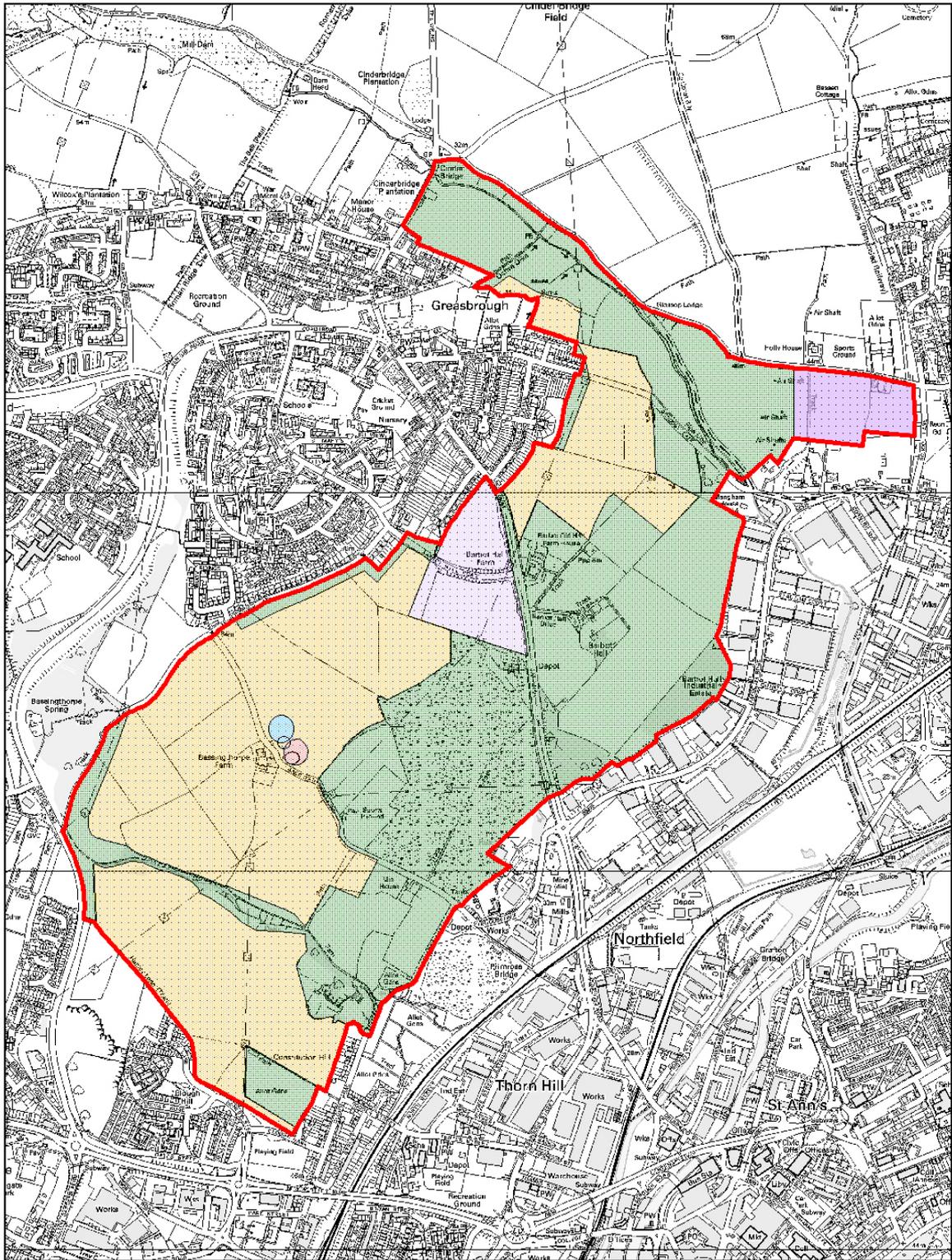
4 New Community at Waverley

In addition to the above broad locations for growth, Waverley is identified as a **Principal settlement**, local service centre with significant potential for growth. In this respect, planning permission has been granted for the creation of a new community of 3,900 homes with supporting services and facilities. It is expected that

in the Pplan period 2,500 dwellings will be built on the site and approximately ~~45~~42 hectares of employment land developed.

Insert new map:

Map x: Strategic Allocation Policies Map



					
Land removed from Greenbelt	Indicative Residential	Indicative Greenspace	Indicative Industrial and Business Use	Indicative Business Use	Indicative local centre community use - Education

Scale 1:25000

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Insert new paragraphs within explanatory text after paragraph 5.2.45:

Bassingthorpe Farm is identified as a Strategic Allocation and Policy CS1 refers to the detailed land use allocations and supporting services and facilities required on site. The Strategic Allocation Policies Map x provides an indicative layout of proposed uses on site and also identifies the land removed from the Green Belt and the new Green Belt boundary. It is important that the Policies Map provides certainty to developers bringing forward planning applications to develop the site in the future as to the likely extent of development and a clear indication of the green infrastructure corridor that the Policy expects to be retained and appropriately managed.

The Strategic Allocation Policies Map reflects the level of agreement reached in preparing the concept framework at the time of adoption. The Council is mindful that the map is indicative at this stage, however the Policy makes clear that the map identifies the indicative extent of developable areas and the distribution of proposed uses. In moving forward with more detailed masterplanning and planning applications, the location of specific uses on site may change to reflect ongoing discussions and negotiation. The broad mix of uses is required to be delivered by the Strategic Allocation.

Reference: MM3

Location of New Development

Publication Core Strategy text reference: Policy CS3 (as amended by Focused Changes 46, 47 and 48, and APC4)

~~In allocating and determining which sites are the most sustainable, for the purposes of phasing in the Sites and Policies document, as described in Policy CS6, regard shall be given to the following considerations:~~

- ~~a. The need to prioritise the development of the most sustainable sites~~
- ~~b. The need to encourage the re-use of previously developed land~~
- ~~c. Maximising the proximity and accessibility of housing to service and employment centres~~
- ~~d. Maximising accessibility to public and private transport networks~~
- ~~e. Maximising the opportunities to meet the needs of Rotherham's areas of highest deprivation~~
- ~~f. Maximising the opportunities for new development to make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness and ensuring that sites create a coherent built form and that impact on heritage assets and the open countryside~~
- ~~g. Ensuring that sites would not result in unacceptable environmental harm~~
- ~~h. Maximising the opportunities to maintain and create links to green infrastructure~~

~~i. Maximise the use of existing infrastructure and the potential to create the necessary infrastructure to support the new allocation.~~

~~j. Minimise the loss of 'best and most versatile' soils (Grades 1, 2 and 3a)~~

~~-~~

~~The suitability of windfall sites for which planning applications are submitted shall also be assessed against the above criteria.~~

In allocating a site for development the Council will have regard to relevant sustainability criteria, including its:

a) status as previously-developed (brownfield) land

b) proximity as prospective housing land to services, facilities and employment opportunities

c) access to public transport routes and the frequency of services

d) potential to relieve deprivation

e) quality of design and its respect for heritage assets and the open countryside

f) effect on other environmental matters

g) potential to maintain and create links to green infrastructure

h) potential to benefit from, support and improve existing infrastructure

i) ability to limit the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land (Grades 1,2 and 3a)

j) contribution to the creation of mixed and balanced communities

k) ability to avoid, or suitably reduce the risk of, flooding

- These considerations are not in any order of priority. Due weight will be accorded to each one in the particular circumstance of the case. The sustainability of windfall and Traveller's sites for development will also be assessed against the above criteria.

Reference: MM4

Publication Core Strategy text reference: Policy CS30 Low Carbon & Renewable Energy Generation and supporting text (as amended by Focused Changes 134 to 144)

1 Energy

Developments should seek to reduce carbon dioxide emissions through the inclusion of mitigation measures in accordance with the following energy hierarchy:

- a. Minimising energy requirements through sustainable design and construction;
- b. ~~Incorporating renewable energy sources~~ **Maximising Energy Efficiency**;
- c. Using **Incorporating** low carbon **and renewable** energy sources.

Developments will be supported which encourage the use of renewable, low carbon and decentralised energy. All development should achieve, as a minimum, the appropriate carbon compliance targets as defined in the Building Regulations.

2 Residential Development

~~All residential development will be required, unless this can be shown not to be feasible or viable, to achieve the following carbon compliance targets:~~

~~a. From 2013 – All dwellings to achieve a minimum standard of no more than 14 kgCO₂/m²/yr~~

~~b. From 2016 – Detached houses to achieve a minimum standard of no more than 10 kgCO₂/m²/yr;~~

~~Attached houses to achieve a minimum standard of no more than 11 kgCO₂/m²/yr;
Low Rise Apartment blocks to achieve a minimum standard of no more than 14 kgCO₂/m²/yr.~~

~~Carbon compliance levels are applicable to the development as a whole and may be offset by allowable solutions (developer contributions).~~

3 Non Residential Development

~~All non-residential development of more than 1000m² will be required, unless this can be shown not to be feasible or viable, to:~~

~~a. Provide a minimum of 10%, plus 1% uplift per annum, of their predicted energy needs on-site from renewable energy sources, in accordance with the following:~~

~~Development Year Renewable Energy Target~~

2013 10%
2014 11%
2015 12%
2016 13%
2017 14%
2018 15%
2019 16%
2020 17%
2021 18%*

-
and

-
b. ~~Generate further renewable or low carbon energy, or incorporate appropriate design measures, to reduce the development's overall predicted carbon dioxide emissions by 20% [including requirements to satisfy (a)].~~

-
~~Where it is not appropriate to incorporate such provisions within the development, an off-site scheme, or contribution to such (both of which could support centralised renewable energy schemes) may be acceptable.~~

4.2 Developments that produce renewable energy

~~Careful consideration will be given to the capacity of the landscape to accommodate renewable energy developments, the ability to mitigate visual intrusion and the cumulative impact of individual sites.~~

~~Proposals for the development of renewable and low carbon sources of energy, particularly from community owned projects, will be encouraged provided that there are no unacceptable adverse effects on:~~

- a. Residential living conditions, amenity and quality of life
- b. Character and appearance of the landscape and surrounding area
- c. Biodiversity, geodiversity and water quality
- d. Historical, archaeological and cultural heritage assets
- e. Highway safety and infrastructure

Careful consideration will be given to the capacity of the landscape to accommodate renewable energy developments, the ability to mitigate visual intrusion and the cumulative impact of individual sites.

Any proposals will be accompanied by supporting information to clearly show how the surrounding environment will be protected and how site restoration will be carried out when production ends.

~~*Maximum available renewable energy resource within Rotherham Borough (after Wardell Armstrong (2011) "Rotherham Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Study".~~

Explanation

There is compelling evidence that greenhouse gas emissions (particularly Carbon Dioxide - CO₂) from domestic, industrial and transport-related energy uses are causing climate change, and will continue to do so for decades to come. This has potentially devastating consequences to the global environment and poses a significant threat to social cohesion and economic systems.

One of the Core Planning principles set out in the National Planning Policy Framework is to support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, and to encourage the reuse of existing resources and the use of renewable resources. It also indicates that planning plays a key role seeking to secure radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimising vulnerability and providing resilience to the impacts of climate change, and supporting the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.

Action to reduce the impact of climate change is therefore a key part of the overall vision of the Core Strategy and two key strands towards mitigating these impacts are through a reduction in carbon emissions and by increasing the amount of renewable energy produced. This policy, allied to sustainable design (see Policy CS28) and management of the demand for travel (see Policy CS14), will play a significant role in attaining these ambitions.

Taking account of the energy hierarchy, new buildings and conversions should in the first instance be designed and constructed to be energy efficient, in particular through using the principles of passive design, including high insulation levels, solar heating, natural lighting and ventilation, thermal mass and passive cooling.

Having achieved a reduced energy demand through energy efficient design, the second stage is to consider the use of decentralised, renewable and low or zero carbon technologies. The type of renewable energy is not prescribed but instead it is advocated that a range of technologies be explored choosing the one that gives the best environmental performance, is cost efficient and has no adverse impacts on the surrounding area.

In all cases flexibility will be exercised where viability and deliverability are critical factors, however, schemes are encouraged to seek higher standards ahead of the trajectory in this policy where viability allows. This policy aspect will be monitored closely and potentially reviewed in light of national policy and ongoing economic conditions with the underlying objective of ensuring as high a standard as possible is achieved. It is also envisaged that increased public awareness, technological advances and economies of scale will play an important role in achieving our stated aims.

~~When it is considered that achieving the carbon compliance and renewable energy targets is unfeasible or unviable taking account of the development as a whole, evidence should be supplied demonstrating that the range of available technologies has been explored. In such circumstances, where a sufficient case is put forward a reduced figure may be negotiated or a contribution made towards off-site carbon reduction schemes in lieu of part or all of the requirement. An energy statement~~

should be submitted with the planning application explaining the approach to energy on the development.

Two studies underpin Policy CS30:

AECOM (2011) "Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Capacity in Yorkshire and Humber" for Local Government Yorkshire and Humber
Wardell Armstrong (2011) "Rotherham Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Study" for Rotherham Borough Council.

Together the studies' conclude that Rotherham Borough has potential renewable energy resources in hydro, solar, heat pumps, biomass and energy from waste but that the most significant potential lies in commercial scale wind power - both large (55 MW Potential Electricity Resource) and medium scale (66.5MW Potential Electricity Resource).

Delivery

This policy will be delivered through the determination of planning applications, updating of building regulations and the Sites and Policies document will set out more detailed guidance.

Reference: MM5

Publication Core Strategy text reference: Policy CS6

Sufficient land will be allocated in the Sites and Policies document to meet Rotherham's housing requirement of 850 net additional dwellings per annum or 12,750 for the period 2013 to 2028, plus any shortfall in the delivery against that annual target from April 2008 to March 2013, ~~taking into account existing commitments and allocations.~~ **That shortfall or backlog is estimated to be 1,621 dwellings, and the Council will aim to distribute it evenly throughout the plan period (108 per annum).**

The following principles will be applied to the allocation and release of these sites:

- a. New allocations will be distributed according to the Spatial Strategy set out in Policy CS1 Delivering Rotherham's Spatial Strategy
- b. In each settlement site allocations shall be made that would promote sustainable growth, having regard to the criteria laid down in Policy CS3 Location of New Development
- c. ~~Allocations will normally be released according to the phasing set out below, subject to maintaining a five year (plus 20%) supply of deliverable sites:~~
 - i. ~~Development within the broad locations for growth identified in Policy CS1 Delivering Rotherham's Spatial Strategy will be supported after the first five years of the plan period. Development in these locations within the first five years of the plan period will only be supported where this is required to meet the supply of deliverable sites set out above or it has been demonstrated that sites are deliverable and make a significant contribution to achieving the objectives of the Core Strategy.~~

~~ii. Phasing for the release of sites not within broad locations for growth will be set out in the Sites and Policies document, having regard to the principles set out in Policy CS3 Location of New Development.~~

~~e. c.~~ Housing development will be expected to make efficient use of land while protecting or enhancing the character of the local area.

Reference: MM6

Publication Core Strategy text reference: New paragraph after 5.3.12

Insert new figure and tables based on aiming to meet the housing backlog distributed evenly throughout the plan period.

Reference: MM7

Publication Core Strategy text reference: Policy CS4 Green Belt

Land within the Rotherham Green Belt will be protected from inappropriate development as set out in national planning policy.

In line with Policy CS1, land within the Strategic Allocation at Bassingthorpe Farm is removed from the Green Belt, as shown in map x: Strategic Allocation Policies Map.

A comprehensive review of the **remaining** boundaries of the Green Belt will be undertaken and shown on the Policies Map to accompany the Sites & Policies Development Plan Document. This Review will assess land against the national purposes of Green Belt and, together with sustainability and constraints considerations, will identify sufficient land to meet housing, employment and other development needs in the borough.

Changes to the Green Belt will be considered in the following locations:

- The wider Rotherham Urban Area
- Principal Settlements for Growth
- Principal Settlements
- Thurcroft
- ~~Two A~~ **A** broad locations for growth are **is** identified at ~~Bassingthorpe Farm on the north western edge of Rotherham Urban Area, and at Dinnington East,~~ which will be removed from the Green Belt by way of the Sites and Policies Document. The detailed Green Belt boundaries will be defined in the Sites and Policies Document and accompanying Policies Map.
- Consideration will be given to a limited review of the Green Belt in other locations, as necessary, to deliver the spatial growth strategy established in CS1 and to ensure the long-term sustainability of all communities.

Land will also be removed from the Green Belt and identified as Safeguarded Land available for longer term development beyond the Plan period.

Opportunities to support and enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt will be pursued in the future through compensatory measures including the creation or enhancement of Green Infrastructure.

Reference: MM8

Publication Core Strategy text reference: Insert new paragraphs within explanatory text after paragraph 5.2.45

Bassingthorpe Farm is identified as a Strategic Allocation and Policy CS1 refers to the detailed land use allocations and supporting services and facilities required on site. The Strategic Allocation Policies Map x provides an indicative layout of proposed uses on site and also identifies the land removed from the Green Belt and the new Green Belt boundary. It is important that the Policies Map provides certainty to developers bringing forward planning applications to develop the site in the future as to the likely extent of development and a clear indication of the green infrastructure corridor that the Policy expects to be retained and appropriately managed.

The Strategic Allocation Policies Map reflects the level of agreement reached in preparing the concept framework at the time of adoption. The Council is mindful that the map is indicative at this stage, however the Policy makes clear that the map identifies the indicative extent of developable areas and the distribution of proposed uses. In moving forward with more detailed masterplanning and planning applications, the location of specific uses on site may change to reflect ongoing discussions and negotiation. The broad mix of uses is required to be delivered by the Strategic Allocation.

Reference: MM9

Publication Core Strategy text reference: Policy CS7 Housing Mix and Affordability

a. Proposals for new housing will be expected to deliver a mix of house **dwelling** sizes, type and tenure informed by the most **taking into account an** up to date Strategic Housing Market Assessment **for the entire housing market area and the needs of the market**, or its successor, in order to meet the present and future needs of all members of the community

b. All housing development will normally include **The Council will seek** the provision of affordable housing **on all housing development** according to the targets set out below, subject to ~~to~~ this being consistent with the economic viability of the development:

i. Sites of 15 dwellings or more **or developments with a gross site area of 0.5 hectares or more** ; 25% affordable houses **homes** on site

ii. Sites of less than 15 dwellings or developments with a gross site area of less than 0.5 hectares ; 25% affordable houses homes on site or a commuted sum of £10,000 per dwelling to contribute towards provision off site. Any agreed commuted sum would be subject to the provision of a payment scheme agreed between the Council and the applicant.

Where it can be demonstrated that these targets would prevent the delivery of a viable scheme ~~not be consistent with the viability of the development~~, the precise level of provision will be negotiated, based on a viability assessment. Any viability assessment shall be carried out at the expense of the applicant, according to the principles set out below:

The applicant will raise any viability issues with the Council during the pre-application stage. If a third party appraisal is required the applicant, the Council and the third party consultant will meet to scope the details of the appraisal.

An “open book” approach is required, whereby development finances and their underlying assumptions are subject to appraisal in order to support a claim.

At the very least the applicant will need to provide evidence for the following items:

- Projected Gross Development Value (GDV) (e.g. rents, prices, yields; discounted values)
- Construction costs and programme (e.g. £/m², unit size (m²), build period)
- Finance, fees and all other associated costs (e.g. rate of interest, fee rates, lump sums)
- Gross Profit margins (e.g. % on costs; % of GDV)
- Residual Land Value (i.e. the budget to buy the land) or Land Price (if already purchased)

New self-build homes will be exempt from the requirement to provide affordable housing. This exemption will apply to homes built or commissioned by individuals, families or groups of individuals for their own use and that will be owner-occupied.

c. Where the need for affordable housing has been identified in local service centres and Green Belt villages, which cannot be met on infill sites or in nearby larger settlements, small scale rural exception sites will be supported either within the village or as small extensions to the village, as a means of providing affordable housing.

The Council will seek every opportunity to work positively with developers and other partners to deliver affordable housing and a mix of houses housing types to meet local needs through use of its own land , all available funding opportunities, innovative development models and other initiatives available means . Detailed implementation guidance shall will be laid provided out in an the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document.

When considering the mix of house types to be included in any proposal, regard shall be given to the identified needs of people with special requirements including disabled people, older people, students and people from minority ethnic backgrounds.

Reference: MM10

Publication Core Strategy text reference: 5.3.17 – 5.3.22

Government Policy seeks to achieve a wide choice of high quality homes, both affordable and market housing and requires Local Planning authorities levels of affordable housing need. Rotherham's Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) provides the main body of evidence in relation to the required mix of housing and affordable housing need. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment of Rotherham's housing markets, was published in October 2007, and updated in respect of affordable housing need and housing mix in 2010. Overall it was calculated that the total (net) annual affordable housing need estimate is 1,155 at this time. This is higher than the figure of 411 recorded in the original SHMA report. This is a snapshot of the current position and is much larger than can **viably** be met through developer contributions. However, the update examines how best to improve market balance in the long-term, **through its Balancing Housing Markets model** and suggests that around 35-40% of the new accommodation required to adequately house the future population should be affordable. It further states that a target of 35% still seems appropriate in the borough.

The 2010 SHMA update suggests that 35-40% of all new housing in the plan period needs to be affordable. We can realistically expect 25% of new homes developed by the open market to be affordable, provided either on-site or off site depending on the size of the development, as set out in policy CS7. There is therefore an accumulating shortfall of 10-15% of the total annual housing requirement that should be affordable but is unlikely to be met by open market housing, Section 106 agreements and Community Infrastructure Levy. Alternative delivery mechanisms for this need will be sought.

5.3.18 The Council's Housing Viability Study 2011 examined the impact of various levels of affordable housing on the viability of housing development, **including the 35% suggested by the 2010 SHMA update**, across the borough and demonstrated that 25% would be a realistic level for larger sites and that commuted sums of up to **£10,000** to £20,000 per dwelling could be achieved on smaller sites. For larger sites the Council requires provision of affordable units on site. The Council does however acknowledge that, with smaller sites, it can **be** impractical to provide units on site and will allow either units on site or a commuted sum in lieu of this.

5.3.19 Local Planning Authorities should ensure that the proposed mix of housing on large strategic sites reflects the proportions of households that require housing and achieves a mix of households, tenure and price. Policies in a Supplementary Planning Document will give detailed guidance on what is expected across the borough, in terms of the mix of house types required, including how the needs of

minority ethnic communities and people with special needs are to be met and the actual level of the commuted sum required on smaller sites.

5.3.20 The Council acknowledges that, in certain circumstances, a development may not be able to address all of the required planning obligations without the overall scheme becoming unviable. If an applicant considers that this is the case, then an assessment of development viability can be conducted but at their own cost. The Council acknowledges that in some cases, the target level of affordable housing would not be viable and will consider evidence in relation to what level of affordable housing would be possible.

If the applicant and the Council agree that a development appraisal will be a basis for discussions, a model and its inputs will be made known to both parties. When an applicant provides their own model or a third party model, it should be in a format that enables the Council to interrogate its underlying structure and assumptions.

Abnormal costs should be reflected in the price paid for the site. Demolition of existing structures, site clearance and decontamination costs should be reflected in the land value. In the event that the Council has further questions, the applicant will provide supporting evidence. This could include Building Cost Information Service [BCIS], SPON's Architects' and Builders' Price Book or Valuation Office Agency [VOA] data and local market transactions.

The starting point for any discussion should be based on a model that illustrates a development's viability in the light of the Council's existing policies with regard to affordable housing and the Council's planning obligation requirements. Further satisfactory evidence may be required.

In the event that the initial appraisal finds the site unviable, the next step is for the applicant and the Council to use the appraisal model to discuss solutions for delivering a viable scheme such as phased payments. A cash flow model may help in assessing this.

5.3.21 Under Section "C" of the policy sites can be released for proposals either solely for affordable housing or for the mainly affordable housing with a small percentage of market housing allowed as enabling development, even in areas of policy restraint such as the Green Belt. The means for determining the level of market housing allowed will be defined in the Sites and Policies document. Smaller rural settlements often do not have land remaining within the village envelope, making it difficult to provide affordable housing. A rural exceptions policy allows land to be released for affordable housing where there is identified local need that cannot be met within the village or in a nearby larger settlement. In the case of local services centres this would mean an extension beyond the existing boundary. For villages washed over by the Green Belt this policy could apply to land either within or on the edge of the existing settlement.

Reference: MM11

Publication Core Strategy text reference: Policy CS8

Sufficient land will be allocated in the Sites and Policies document to provide for eight Gypsy and Traveller pitches, taking into account any sites that have already been granted planning permission or developed. Land will be allocated for new sites, **with options for new allocations considered throughout the whole Borough,** in accordance with the aims of Policy CS3 Location of New Development in light of the level of unmet need in the Borough, the particular requirements of the Gypsies and Travellers and the need for integration with the wider community. Applications for new sites will also be determined in accordance with the aims of Policy CS3, in light of the level of unmet need and detailed criteria set out in the Sites and Policies document.

Reference: MM12

Publication Core Strategy text reference: Policy CS9 new point 9

9. Assisting the relocation of uses which are ill-suited to their surroundings and which prejudice the satisfactory planning of the area, whilst protecting existing and potential employment opportunities.

Reference: MM13

Publication Core Strategy text reference: Policy CS23, part a.

v) encouraging suitable new uses for vacant, under-used and derelict historic buildings

Reference: MM14

Publication Core Strategy text reference: Policy CS22

a. Requiring development proposals to provide new or upgrade existing provision of accessible green space **where it is necessary to do so as a direct result of the new development**

Reference: MM15

Publication Core Strategy text reference: Policy CS26

2 Limestone Aggregates

Provision will be made to ensure an appropriate contribution towards the ~~South Yorkshire~~ **sub regional** apportionment figure of ~~50.1 Million Tonnes of~~ **for crushed rock (identified in the Local Aggregate Assessment)** for the plan period and

jointly with Doncaster Council will aim to maintain a minimum land bank equivalent to ten years' **sales** production for the South Yorkshire area at a rate of 3.34 Million Tonnes per Annum.

5.6.132 The policy **sets out how Rotherham will contribute jointly with Doncaster to meeting the sub-regional apportionment for Limestone** accounts for the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Aggregate Working Party sub-regional apportionment for South Yorkshire which is summarised below for limestone (sand and gravel resources exist only in Doncaster) from the 2008 Monitoring Report.

Table 9 South Yorkshire's **Sub Regional** Limestone Aggregates Apportionment

Table 9 South Yorkshire's Limestone Aggregates Apportionment					
Annual Apportionment (million tonnes)	Current Reserve (2008) (million tonnes)	Estimated reserve in 2012 (million tonnes)*	15 Year requirement (plan period) (million tonnes)	Additional requirement to cover the plan period (million tonnes)	
3.34	58.8	45.44	50.1	4.66	
* Equates to four years extraction at the annual apportionment rate					
<u>Sub-regional apportionment (mt)</u>	<u>Requirement for the plan period (mt)</u>	<u>Estimated reserve 2013 (mt)</u>	<u>Additional requirement (mt)</u>	<u>Additional supply (mt)</u>	<u>Surplus (mt)</u>
<u>2.54</u>	<u>38.1</u>	<u>54.38</u>	<u>0 (16.28 surplus)</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>41.28</u>
<u>Figures based on sub-regional apportionment (NPPF 10 year average sales 2001 to 2010)</u>	<u>2.54 times 15 years</u>	-	<u>Based on estimated reserve minus requirement over plan period</u>	<u>Former Industrial mineral within Doncaster</u>	<u>Surplus over plan period plus additional supply</u>

5.6.133 The most substantial resources of limestone aggregates exist within the magnesian limestone belt stragglng the Doncaster / Rotherham administrative boundaries. By far the largest resource occurs in Doncaster (figures for Rotherham alone are not available to respect commercial confidentiality) and **as table 9 shows in comparison to the 38.1m tonne requirement there is a surplus of reserves over the plan period** given only a minor shortfall this situation is likely to continue during the course of the Plan period. Rotherham's contribution will continue to be met from the remaining permitted reserves at the borough's only quarry at Harry Crofts, being supplemented by Preferred Areas comprising possible future extension(s) at Harry Crofts.

5.6.134 It is not therefore considered appropriate to identify Areas of Search for limestone aggregates in Rotherham due to the current levels of reserves that exist in Doncaster. However, in exceptional circumstances, proposals for additional new quarries will be considered. Provision is made to contribute to a land bank of at least 10 years of permitted reserves for aggregate limestone, with provision for an

adequate and steady phased supply of aggregate limestone based on the most up to date information available and in continuing consultation with the industry and Doncaster Council as adjacent Minerals Planning Authority.

Reference: MM16

Publication Core Strategy text reference: Policy CS14

g) the use of Transport Assessments for appropriate size developments **, taking into account current national guidance on the thresholds for the type of development(s) proposed.**

Reference MM17

Publication Core Strategy text reference: Policy CS32 Infrastructure Delivery and Developer Contributions

It is essential to have in place a strong mechanism to ensure the monitoring and delivery of the strategy and the timely provision of the infrastructure on which it depends. For that reason, the Council has appointed a lead officer to head the Infrastructure Delivery Group of officers, members and service providers. Its functions will include assessing the progress of the strategy, identifying risks and priorities and the resolution of any problems. This approach will focus on actual and potential departures from the strategy and recommending to the Council any actions needed to keep the strategy on track, and/or bringing it back on track. The lead officer will liaise with the external Infrastructure Delivery Forum, setting up meetings on a regular basis to promote the effectiveness and implementation of the Core Strategy.

The Council will work with infrastructure providers and developers to ensure timely delivery of infrastructure is provided to support growth. An assessment of the infrastructure required to support the delivery of the growth strategy is set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule contained in Appendix A. The Schedule will be subject to regular review and update by the Council through liaison with providers reflecting the capacity and requirement at any point in time.

Development will be required to contribute to funding all or part of the items of infrastructure listed in the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule, through a combination of mechanisms such as a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and S106 Planning obligations. The Infrastructure Delivery Schedule is indicative and final requirements will be assessed based on the specific requirements stemming from each development, taking account of capacity and legislation concerning developer contributions.

It is acknowledged that in some instances there may be a need for negotiation and prioritisation of the overall developer contribution requirements (based on what is needed to make the development acceptable and what the development can afford to contribute). Any negotiation will need to take account of all policy requirements

stemming from this plan, including requirements such as affordable housing and renewable energy generation.

Where there is a need to negotiate on the level of developer contribution, the onus will be on the developer to fund and submit an independent viability appraisal and valuation of costs. The appraisal should set out the residual land value based on policy compliant requirements, and additional scenarios should demonstrate the variations in contributions to achieve a neutral and positive residual land value.

This viability appraisal will be based on jointly agreed input assumptions (agreed by the Council and the developer). The developer will need to submit evidence of the amount paid for the land – noting that any abnormal payments beyond current market values will not be accepted. All assumptions will be based on current market conditions as at the date of the grant of planning permission.

Reference: MM18

Publication Core Strategy text reference: Policy CS17 Passenger Rail Connections

The Council will support development of the rail network, **including High Speed 2**, and will safeguard land for local rail projects including:

- a. Rotherham mainline rail capacity improvements – principally the doubling of Holmes Chord on the Sheffield Main Line near Tinsley.
- b. Increases in train frequency and rolling stock capacity.
- c. Examination of new stations where appropriate.
- d. Improvements to existing stations and park and ride facilities
- e. The Sheffield – Rotherham Tram Train trial route.
- f. Land within and adjacent to existing and historical rail alignments for rail, cycleway and/or walking route development.

g. the route of the High Speed Two rail line

Insert new paragraphs in explanatory text after paragraph 5.5.32:

The High Speed 2 rail network is a major national infrastructure project. Phase 2 includes an eastern branch connecting Birmingham with Leeds via a new station in Sheffield at Meadowhall. The initial preferred route runs immediately to the west of Aston, Aughton and Swallownest, and Treeton before passing through Catcliffe and Waverley and to the west of Brinsworth. From Meadowhall the route passes to the west of Thorpe Hesley. The route will be subject to consultation prior to being finalised by the Government in 2014. Construction could begin within the Local Plan period, with the route potentially opening around 2032- 33.