

STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND
SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL
NORFOLK ESTATE
DATE: SEPTEMBER 2025

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been produced in order to set out the areas of agreement between the Council and land promoter in respect of proposed site allocation NES38, known as Holme Lane Farm in the emerging Sheffield Local Plan. The SoCG is between the parties consisting of Sheffield City Council (SCC) and the Norfolk Estate (the landowner with controlling interest of the proposed site allocation). A site map is attached in Appendix 1 showing the proposed allocation.
- 1.2 Paragraph 35 of the National Planning Policy Framework, under which the Plan is being examined¹, requires that the Sheffield Plan is found 'sound' through the examination process. Critically, evidence must be provided that the land to be allocated in the Sheffield Plan is suitable for the proposed use(s) and is available and deliverable/developable at the point envisaged during the plan period. This SoCG addresses these issues with respect to proposed site allocation NES38 and ensures any potential constraints/issues are identified and dealt with where possible, rather than deferred.
- 1.3 The statement sets out the confirmed points of agreement and disagreement between the parties regarding any issues of suitability, availability and deliverability of site NES38. A summary is provided in section 12 at the end of this statement.

2. Background and Governance

- 2.1 SCC is the local planning authority responsible for preparing an up-to-date local plan for Sheffield City Council's administrative area outside the Peak District National Park.
- 2.2 JEH Planning (consultant) is advising the Norfolk Estate (landowner/promoter) regarding the delivery of site NES38.
- 2.3 Site NES38 is identified as a proposed allocation within the Sheffield Plan: Proposed Additional Site Allocations (2025) for approximately 188 dwellings. Norfolk Estate believes the allocation could deliver around 200 units. These units and associated infrastructure will be delivered during the plan period between 2029/30 and 2031/32 (see paragraph 12.7 below). Site NES38 covers 6.72 ha,

¹ NPPF (Sept 2023).

with a net housing area of 5.38 ha, and is located east of Fox Hill Road, south of Salt Box Lane.

- 2.4 Norfolk Estate has formally submitted representations that promote this site during the 2014 call for sites and during two subsequent consultations on the Sheffield Plan, with the most recent being in 2023, on the Regulation 19 submission draft plan. These responses have been considered by SCC and, where appropriate, informed the development of the Sheffield Plan: Proposed Additional Site Allocations (2025). The Norfolk Estate have supported the site's allocation within the Proposed Additional Site Allocations consultation document.
- 2.5 This SoCG reflects the current position between SCC and the Norfolk Estate. It will be updated as and when required.
- 2.6 SCC and the Norfolk Estate will continue to meet to discuss the availability and deliverability of NES38 as the Sheffield Plan progresses through examination and beyond.

3 Site Ownership

- 3.1 As shown in Appendix 1, NES38 comprises land in two separate ownerships. Norfolk Estate is the larger landowner and is promoting the site with agreement from the second, smaller landowner. The second landowner controls the southeastern portion of NES38. They have provided a letter which expresses their support for: the inclusion of the site as a housing allocation, the Norfolk Estate as the lead promoter; and that they will work collaboratively and constructively with the Norfolk Estate. This letter was provided as part of the Norfolk Estate's representation on the Proposed Additional Site Allocations.
- 3.2 SCC and the Norfolk Estate agree that the whole of NES38 as shown within the Sheffield Plan: Proposed Additional Sites Allocations (2025) consultation document is available.

4 Boundaries (allocation or other)

- 4.1 The allocation excludes the Cowper Avenue Greenspace Local Wildlife Site (LWS) which extends partway through the centre of site (north and south). It also excludes the converted farm buildings at Holme Lane Farm. This does result in an irregular boundary and Norfolk Estate believes the exclusion of the LWS and its protection has implications for delivering a comprehensive development especially

the ability to provide permeable access links across the site. This is discussed further within section 7.

5 Strategic matters

5.1 There are no strategic matters associated with this site.

6 Housing matters

6.1 Sheffield Plan: Proposed Additional Site Allocations (2025) identifies 6.72 ha for approximately 188 dwellings by 2039.

6.2 In accordance with paragraphs 67, 155 and 156 of the December 2024 NPPF, the 'Golden Rules' require a higher level of affordable housing on sites released from the Green Belt than would otherwise be applied (required within policy NC3 of the Sheffield Plan). This requirement is included within the second condition on development for site NES38.

6.3 In accordance with the NPPF, it is anticipated that the site will comprise 30% affordable housing provision. This is justified within the Whole Plan Viability Assessment Further Note (2025) which supported the Proposed Additional Site Allocations. Norfolk Estates acknowledge the importance of delivering a greater proportion of social rent compared to other forms of tenure. However, they consider the tenure split of these affordable homes between social rent and affordable home ownership should be examined further at the planning application stage having regard to housing need and viability considerations.

6.4 As required by draft Policy NC5 within the Sheffield Plan, the allocation will deliver a mix of house types, comprising 2, 3 and 4+ bedroom homes.

7 Green/Blue infrastructure and Environmental matters

Green Space, Golden Rules and Compensatory Improvements

7.1 The proposed allocated site is formally designated as Green Belt, so the 'Golden Rules' set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 156 will apply. This includes the provision of new, or improvements to existing, green spaces that are accessible to the public. New residents should be able to access good quality green spaces within a short walk of their home, whether through

onsite provision or through access to offsite spaces. The development of NES38 would, in accordance with the Golden Rules, provide good quality and accessible green space as part of a well-planned comprehensive development.

- 7.2 In terms of satisfying paragraph 142 of the NPPF (2023) and the requirement to provide compensatory improvements, there is an opportunity to improve the existing public footpath network that crosses the site to increase accessibility to the wider Green Belt area to the west to the benefit of both residents of the new development and the existing neighborhoods, in particular to the east of Halifax Road.
- 7.3 The site's capacity for new homes has been estimated using the rules of thumb set out in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. This estimates that on sites of this size the net to gross site ratio is 80%, meaning that 20% of the site would be non-developed. That 20% would include accessible open space as well as other non-housing uses such as green/blue infrastructure or BNG provision.

Cowper Avenue Greenspace Local Wildlife Site

- 7.4 As indicated in section 4 above, the Norfolk Estate has concerns regarding the boundary of the site and the implication that protecting the LWS from any development would have upon the delivery of a comprehensive and connected development. The Norfolk Estate believe that it is important to acknowledge in the wording of a condition on development that, subject to further specific assessment work, there should be an opportunity to provide in principle a suitable infrastructure provision within the LWS and Urban Green Space Zone designation to ensure the site can be delivered in a well-planned and coordinated manner.
- 7.5 The Norfolk Estate are freehold landowners of the LWS. A recent Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report (2025) indicates that the LWS contains a mix of grassland, scrub and woodland habitats of low to medium distinctiveness.
- 7.6 The Norfolk Estate suggest the following wording for a new Condition on Development:

Essential infrastructure such as roads, cycleway, footpaths and drainage provision required to support the delivery of the allocation would be allowed within Cowper Avenue Greenspace Local Wildlife Site and Urban Green Space Zone provided it can be demonstrated these elements would not have an adverse impact on the ecology value of this designation.

- 7.7 SCC consider this condition inconsistent with National Policy and policy GS5 within the Sheffield Plan (both of which require the 'mitigation hierarchy' is applied and compensation provided). SCC propose the following alternative condition on development:

Unless there are no reasonable alternative locations/solutions, which avoid or adequately reduce harm to the Cowper Avenue Greenspace Local Wildlife Site, essential infrastructure, which is required to deliver the allocation, will be permitted within the grassland and scrub area of the Local Wildlife Site (or its buffer). In accordance with Policy GS5, any unavoidable harm to the Local Wildlife Site should be kept to a minimum through design and layout and must be fully compensated through the provision and safeguarding of replacement alternative land on site. This should be contiguous with the Local Wildlife Site and be suitable for the creation of habitats of a similar character, quality and size.

Local Wildlife Buffer

- 7.8 Within their representation on the Proposed Additional Site Allocations, the Norfolk Estate refers to the Urban Green Space Zone 'bleeding' out into the allocation. SCC have consistently included buffers to protect LWS. The seventh condition on development requires this buffer extends 15m from the edge of the woodland canopy.
- 7.9 Norfolk Estate believes the 15m buffer is overly cautious and is too prescriptive. The wording should be more flexible to allow these matters to be determined at the application stage and allow the development to proceed as efficiently as possible.

Protection of Hedgerows

- 7.10 Norfolk Estate also considers the proposed condition relating to the protection of hedgerow requires an element of flexibility to allow some selective removal to enable delivery of the development. SCC proposes adding the phrase '*Where possible*' to the start of this condition.

- 7.11 SCC will continue to work with the Norfolk Estate to agree an appropriate mix of open space uses on site (pre-app and masterplanning for sites of 200+ new homes or over 4 hectares (as required by Policy NC1)).
- 7.12 SCC will continue to work with Norfolk Estate to agree an appropriate landscape framework for the site and a long-term management strategy for the open space assets. However, SCC advise that there is no intention that this will involve the Council taking management responsibility for the open space.
- 7.13 Norfolk Estate has commissioned a range of environmental technical assessments to inform its emerging planning application, including:
- Topographical Survey
 - A Phase 1 and Phase 2 Ground Investigation
 - Ecological and BNG Calculation
- 7.14 If required by the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 an Environmental Impact Assessment will also be prepared. This will be confirmed following the submission of EIA Screening and Scoping Request.

8 Flood risk matters

- 8.1 The draft allocation is within Flood Zone 1 and there is a low risk of flooding from surface water.
- 8.2 Due consideration will be given to any impacts of flood risk identified in the Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. All mitigation matters identified in the 'Recommendations, FRA requirements, and further work' section of the Level 2 SFRA site assessment will be addressed at or before planning application stage.
- 8.3 Both SCC and the Norfolk Estate agree that the draft allocation is not constrained by fluvial flood risk issues and a surface water drainage strategy incorporated within the masterplan and layout would manage the surface water runoff. This will be confirmed at the planning application stage.
- 8.4 Norfolk Estate has commissioned a Flood Risk Assessment Drainage Strategy (Surface/Foul).

9 Heritage matters

- 9.1 No constraints have been identified and both SCC and Norfolk Estate agree that heritage issues should not prevent the allocation of this site for housing development and its delivery. This will be confirmed at the planning application stage.

10 Highways/transport matters

- 10.1 Norfolk Estate have resubmitted a Development Framework Report with their representation on the Proposed Additional Site Allocations. This includes an indicative masterplan of the site. This identifies two highway access points off Fox Hill Road, with opportunities for a pedestrian/cycle access point onto Salt Box Lane. SCC is satisfied that the site can be safely accessed off the Fox Hill Road, with an access point also feasible of Salt Box Lane (adjacent to the Scout Hut). Access points will be confirmed during further discussions at the pre-application and application stage.
- 10.2 The site is in close proximity to bus stops on Fox Hill Road, Salt Box Lane and Halifax Road, these provide regular bus services to the City Centre, Hillsborough, and Parson Cross.
- 10.3 Forthcoming applications will be supported by a Transport Assessment. This will promote these and other sustainable and accessible travel options. Norfolk Estate have commissioned a Transport Statement.
- 10.4 There are no areas of disagreement between Sheffield CC and Norfolk Estate regarding highways and transport matters, which prevent the allocation of the site.

11 Social infrastructure matters

- 11.1 There are no areas of disagreement between Sheffield CC and Norfolk Estate regarding contributions to health, education or other social infrastructure (through CIL or S106 agreements). These contributions will be confirmed through pre-application discussions and subsequent planning application.
- 11.2 Norfolk Estate has commissioned a Utilities Capacity Study.

12 Delivery timescales(s)

- 12.1 At the time of writing the site currently does not have planning consent for the proposed uses identified within the Sheffield Plan: Proposed Additional Site Allocations (2025).
- 12.2 The land has been promoted through the plan making process; it was submitted during the call for sites in 2014 and consultation on the Issues and Options (2020), Publication Draft Sheffield Plan (2023) and the most recent Proposed Additional Site Allocations (2025).
- 12.3 Norfolk Estate has commissioned a range of technical assessments as part of due diligence and support the marketing of the site, including:
- Topographical Survey
 - A Phase 1 and Phase 2 Ground Investigation
 - Ecological and BNG Calculation
 - Transport Statement
 - Flood Risk Assessment Drainage Strategy (Surface/Foul)
 - Utilities Capacity Study
- 12.4 There are no critical delivery issues which will require resolving and agreed actions.
- 12.5 Norfolk Estate, whilst actively promoting the site through the Sheffield Plan, do not intend to develop it themselves. Instead, their objective is to dispose of the site, and this will entail actively marketing the site in the short term. They have jointly instructed local agents Fowler Sandford as well as national agents Savills to undertake this work.
- 12.6 It is anticipated that the disposal of the site and pre-application discussions will run concurrently with the final stage of the Sheffield Plan examination process so that a planning application could be submitted by the housebuilder when the Plan is adopted in the middle of 2026.
- 12.7 The following milestones and trajectory are agreed:
- Submitting a request for pre-application advice – (2025/26) (Early 2026)
 - Submission of full or outline planning application – 2026/27 (Middle 2026)
 - Start on site – 2027/28
 - Completion of first unit – 2029/30

- Site completion – 2031/32

NES38	2026/27 (1)	2027/28 (2)	2028/29 (3)	2029/30 (4)	2030/31 (5)	5 Year	2031/32 (6)	2032/33 (7)	2033/34 (8)	2034/35 (9)	2035/36 (10)	6 to 10 Year	2036/37 (11)	2027/38 (12)	2038/39 (13)	11 to 13 Year	Total during Plan Period	2039/40 (14)	2040/41 (15)	2041/42 (16)	Total After Plan
				38	50		50	50													

13 Areas of Agreement and Disagreement

13.1 Table 1 below sets out a summary of the areas of agreement and disagreement between Norfolk Estate and Sheffield City Council.

Table 1: Areas of Agreement and Disagreement

Areas of Agreement	
Availability (ownership)	Agreement has been reached with both landowners to promote and deliver housing within this draft allocation.
Allocation boundary	No disagreements on the allocations boundary as identified within the Sheffield Plan: Additional Site Allocations.
Capacity	Norfolk Estate believe the allocation could deliver slightly more units (around 200 rather than 188)
Highways/transport	Both SCC and Norfolk Estate agree that the site can be accessed off Fox Hill Road and Salt Box Lane.
Flooding and surface water	No flood risks identified. Both SCC and Norfolk Estate agree that risks from surface water runoff can be avoided/mitigated through a drainage strategy.
Social infrastructure matters	There are no areas of disagreement between SCC and Norfolk Estate regarding contributions to health, education or other social infrastructure.
Environmental Matters	The development would provide accessible and high-quality open space provision, and opportunities for improved footpath access and permeability to the retained Green Belt areas to the west for occupants of the new development and Grenoside in general.

Delivery timescales	Start on site 2027/28 with estimated completion by 2032/33
Areas of Disagreement	
Ecology/biodiversity	Norfolk Estate believe a condition on development should allow highways, pedestrian/cycle and other essential infrastructure provision within the LWS in order to access the eastern area of the allocation. Both SCC and the Norfolk Estate have proposed alternative conditions addressing this issue.
Ecology/biodiversity	Norfolk Estate believes the condition on development which protects existing hedgerows should be more flexible and allow selective removal where this is required to deliver development.
Ecology/ Biodiversity	Norfolk Estate consider the proposed 15m buffer stand off distance with the LWS is too prescriptive and this matter should be considered at the planning application stage.

Signatories to the Statement of Common Ground

Name	Role	Organisation	Signature & Date
Mike Johnson	Head of Planning	Sheffield City Council	23/09/2025 
James Hobson	Managing Director	JEH Planning Ltd	25/09/2025 

Appendix 1: Proposed Allocation NES38

Recommended change to Policies Map

