

STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND
SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL
LIMES DEVELOPMENTS LTD
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 Sheffield City Council and the land promoter in respect of proposed site allocation NES39, known as Land at Wheel Lane and Middleton Lane in the emerging Sheffield Local Plan. The SoCG is between the parties consisting of Sheffield City Council (SCC) and Limes Developments Ltd (the landowner/promoter with controlling interest of the site allocation). A site location plan is attached in Appendix 1 showing the extent of landownership within 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 site allocation NES39 and ensures any potential constraints/issues which affect its proposed allocation 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 NES39. A summary is provided in section 13 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 DLP Planning Ltd (consultant) is advising Limes Developments Ltd (landowner/promoter) regarding delivery of site NES39.
- 2.3 Site NES39 is identified as a proposed allocation within the Sheffield Plan: Proposed Additional Site Allocations (2025) for approximately 148 dwellings. These units and associated infrastructure will be delivered during the plan period between 2029/30 and 2031/32 (see paragraph 12.6 below). Site NES39 covers 5.30 ha, with a net housing area of 4.24 ha. Limes Developments Ltd consider a larger net

¹ NPPF (Sept 2023).

housing area of 4.6 ha is justified. It comprises four fields (used as paddocks and bounded by hedgerows) and is located north of The Wheel and east of Middleton Lane. The northern boundary comprises the Cinder Hill Brook Local Wildlife Site. A wider area of land, comprising the housing allocation and neighbouring Local Wildlife Site, is proposed to be released from the Green Belt which extends to 6.5ha and is within the ownership of Limes Developments Ltd.

- 2.4 Limes Developments Ltd has formally submitted representations that promote this site during the 2014 call for sites and during the two subsequent consultations on the Sheffield Local 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). Limes Development 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 Limes Developments Ltd. It will be updated as and when required.
- 2.6 SCC and Limes Developments Ltd will continue to meet to discuss the availability and deliverability of NES39 as the Sheffield Plan progresses through examination and beyond.

3 Site Ownership

- 3.1 As shown in Appendix 1, NES39 comprises land in single ownership. Limes Developments Ltd have control of the site through a promotion and options agreement that has been in place through the plan making process. These agreements have granted Limes Developments Ltd with the authority to act on their behalf in promoting the allocation of the site, entering into pre-application discussions and making planning applications for residential development. This is confirmed within the letter from Gordons LLP that accompanied Limes Developments Ltd.'s representation on the Sheffield Plan: Proposed Additional Site Allocations (2025).
- 3.2 SCC and Limes Developments Ltd agree that the whole of NES39 as shown within the Sheffield Plan: Proposed Additional Sites Allocations (2025) consultation document and Appendix 1 is available.

4 Boundaries (allocation or other)

- 4.1 SCC and Limes Developments Ltd agree with the proposed boundary for NES39, changes to the Green Belt boundary and extent of Urban Green Space Zone (which comprises a buffer for the neighbouring wildlife site) as shown within the Sheffield Plan: Proposed Additional Sites Allocations (2025) consultation document.

5 Strategic matters

- 5.1 Agreement has not yet been reached regarding the sixth condition of development which requires collaboration on a single infrastructure delivery plan with site NES39.

6 Housing matters

- 6.1 Sheffield Plan: Proposed Additional Site Allocations (2025) identifies 5.30 ha for approximately 148 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 NES39.
- 6.3 The Whole Plan Viability Assessment Further Note (2025) recommends that the site can deliver 30% affordable housing provision. It also recommends that the affordable homes can have a tenure split of 75% social rent and 25% tenures that comprise routes to home ownership.
- 6.4 As required by draft Policy NC5 within the Sheffield Plan, the allocation will deliver a mix of house types, comprising 1, 2, 3 and 4+ bedroom homes.

7 Green/blue infrastructure and environmental matters

- 7.1 The proposed allocated site is formally designated as Green Belt, so the 'Golden Rules' set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024), 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.
- 7.2 Limes Developments Ltd have proposed the deletion of the third condition on development which states:

“Planning applications must include a comprehensive assessment of the development’s impacts on the environment. Where appropriate, adverse impacts should be offset through compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining areas of Green Belt.”

- 7.3 Limes Development Ltd consider this condition unnecessary as an environmental assessment and required mitigation/compensation is required through the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations and new or improved accessible green spaces should be provided under the ‘Golden Rules’. It is also unclear what these compensatory improvements are or could be. They propose replacing this condition with the following:

“The impact of removing land from the Green Belt should be offset through the creation of on-site public open space and landscaping that enhances the setting and improves the accessibility of the remaining Green Belt land.”

- 7.4 SCC do not agree with this change. SCC consider that the draft condition complies with paragraph 142 of the NPPF (2023) which the Sheffield Plan is being examined against and which includes improvements to environmental quality alongside accessibility of the remaining Green Belt.
- 7.5 SCC will continue to work with Limes Developments Ltd in order to agree an appropriate landscape framework for the site, including the type, extent and location of accessible open space, and a long-term management strategy for these open spaces. This will be agreed through the masterplanning of the site during pre-application discussions (as required within draft policy NC1).
- 7.6 Ecological Survey Reports and Biodiversity Net Gain Baseline Assessments for this site, have previously been provided by Limes Developments Ltd.
- 7.7 Given the existing ecological evidence and the site’s use as pasture, both SCC and Limes Developments Ltd do not believe there are ecological constraints that would undermine its suitability as an allocation or jeopardise its delivery. This will be confirmed through further ecological assessments that will support pre-application discussions and forthcoming applications.

7.8 Limes Developments Ltd has commissioned a full range of environmental technical assessments to inform its emerging planning application, including:

- Preliminary Flood and Drainage Appraisal.
- Phase 1 Site Investigation.
- Phase 2 site intrusive site investigation to be completed December 2025.
- Topographical Survey.
- Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment

7.9 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. The Cinder Hill Brook (ordinary watercourse) and Local Wildlife Site will remain outside the allocation and will have a 15m buffer which will ensure it will remain unobstructed and provide a blue/green corridor (as required within the Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment).

8.2 As set out within the fifth condition on development, due consideration will be given to all the 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 Limes Developments Ltd 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 (submitted as part of the planning application) would manage the surface water runoff.

9 Heritage matters

9.1 The Heritage Impact Assessment identifies Site NES39 as containing valued historic landscape characteristics and that it makes a positive contribution to the setting of nearby heritage assets, of low to moderate significance, which could be affected by development. The site also contains an area of known archaeological

interest and has potential for associated remains to survive across a wider area. These remains are considered of up to moderate significance.

9.2 Limes Developments Ltd have recognised this within their representation on the Proposed Additional Site Allocations and commissioned a Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment.

9.3 Limes Developments Ltd have not objected to the ninth condition on development which addresses this issue. There are no areas of disagreement regarding heritage matters.

10 Highways/transport matters

10.1 Limes Developments Ltd have submitted a Site Plan with their representation on the additional allocation. This identifies three potential access points off Wheel Lane. SCC is satisfied that the site can be safely accessed off Wheel Lane. This will be confirmed during further discussions at the pre-application and application stage (within a Transport Assessment).

10.2 The site is in proximity to regular bus services on Halifax/Penistone Road (A61) that connects the area with the City Centre, with less regular services using The Wheel. Forthcoming applications will be supported by a Transport Assessment. This will promote these and other sustainable and accessible travel options.

10.3 There are no areas of disagreement between SCC and Limes Developments Ltd regarding highways and transport matters.

11 Social infrastructure matters

11.1 There are no areas of disagreement between SCC and Limes Development regarding contributions to health, education or other social infrastructure (through CIL or S106 agreements). These contributions will be agreed through pre-application discussions and subsequent planning application.

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 (2022) and the most recent Proposed Additional Site Allocations (2025).

12.3 Limes Developments Ltd has commissioned a full range of environmental technical assessments to inform a future planning application, listed at paragraph 7.11 above.

12.4 The Flood and Drainage Appraisal and Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment were submitted, alongside the Vision Document, with Limes Development Ltd.'s representation on the Proposed Additional Site Allocations.

12.5 The following key milestones are:

- Submitting a request for pre-application advice – January – March 2026
- Agreeing Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) – May 2026
- Screening and scoping of an EIA – May 2026
- Submission of outline or full planning application – August – October 2026
- Approval of reserved matters – September – November 2027
- Start on site – November 2028
- Completion of first unit – April 2029
- Site completion - 2032

12.6 The following trajectory is agreed:

NES39	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
				50	50		48														

13 Areas of Agreement and Disagreement

13.1 Table 1 below sets out a summary of the areas of agreement and disagreement between Limes Developments Ltd and Sheffield City Council in relation to Site NES39 – Land at Wheel Lane and Middleton Lane.

Table 1: Areas of Agreement and Disagreement

Areas of Agreement	
Availability (ownership)	Agreement has been reached with the landowner to promote and deliver housing within this draft allocation.
Site boundary	No disagreements on the allocations boundary as identified within the Sheffield Plan: Proposed Additional Site Allocations.
Capacity	Both SCC and Limes Developments Ltd agree that the allocation will deliver approximately 148 dwellings.
Highways/transport	Both SCC and Limes Developments Ltd agree that, subject to further technical assessments and access design, the site can be safely accessed off Wheel Lane.
Environment	There are no significant ecological constraints identified by either SCC and Limes Developments Ltd that prevent the allocation of the site.
Flood and surface water	No fluvial flood risks identified. Both SCC and Limes Developments Ltd agree that risks from surface water runoff can be avoided/mitigated through a drainage strategy. This will be confirmed at the planning application stage.
Social infrastructure matters	There are no areas of disagreement between SCC and Limes Development Ltd regarding contributions to health, education or other social infrastructure. Any contribution(s) will be determined at the planning application stage.
Delivery timescales	SCC welcome and support the delivery timescales set out by Limes Developments Ltd.
Areas of Disagreement	
Net Housing Area	Limes Developments believes a larger net housing area of 4.6ha (rather than 4.24) is justified within the allocation.
Affordable housing contribution.	An affordable housing contribution of 30% is considered viable at the present time. However, Limes Developments are concerned that viability may change during the plan period.
Complementing NES37 and collaboration on a	SCC and Limes Developments have not yet reached agreement on the sixth condition on development.

single infrastructure delivery plan	
Remaining Green Belt enhancement and accessibility	SCC and Limes Developments have not yet reached agreement on the condition on development that requires complementary improvements to the remaining areas of Green Belt.

Name	Role	Organisation	Signature & Date
Mike Johnson	Head of Planning	SCC	 24/09/2025
Marcus Jolly		Limes Developments Ltd	 25/9/2025

Appendix 1: NES39 Landownership

