



HANDS OFF



GREEN BELT!

guide to writing
objections

WHAT IS A LOCAL PLAN?

A Local Plan is the official blueprint that decides where new homes, roads, schools, and services will be built in your area over the next 15–20 years. It is created by your local council and becomes a legal document once approved. The plan includes specific site allocations, such as where new housing developments (like SES30 & SES29 in Handsworth) are proposed — and which parts of the Green Belt might be built on. Once a Local Plan is adopted, it becomes the main tool used by the council to decide whether to approve or reject future planning applications.

Imagine it is like a menu of options for the council to offer to future developers to say - *these are the spaces in Sheffield we will allow you to build new houses on.*

Without a local plan, spaces in Sheffield become a 'free for all' allowing developers to submit planning applications willy nilly. So it is important that Sheffield has a local plan so they have some level of control on these applications. But hold in mind that Sheffield's local plan hasn't been properly updated in YEARS!! (Last local plan was adopted in 1998 and updated in 2009)

WHAT IS THE NPPF?

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a document created by the UK government that sets out the rules and guidance for how local councils should plan for new homes, jobs, roads, schools, and the environment.

It provides the framework for:

- Where councils can and cannot build
- How much Green Belt should be protected
- What types of development are allowed
- What counts as a “sound” or “legal” Local Plan




All Local Plans must follow the policies and principles in the NPPF — so imagine it’s like the national recipe book that every Local Plan must follow.

WHAT VERSION OF NPPF ARE WE USING?

Sheffield is using the September 2023 version of the NPPF because:

- Sheffield's Local Plan was submitted on 6 October 2023, before Dec 2023 update.
- By policy (NPPF Annex 1), a plan is assessed against the version in force when submitted.
- Therefore, Sheffield uses the September/Dec 2023 version, not the December 2024 version

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

 That means: Even though the government has since updated the NPPF, Sheffield's plan will still be judged against the NPPF 2023, not the newer version.

THINK OF THE LOCAL PLAN LIKE A CAKE..



A Local Plan is like baking a giant cake for a party.

It needs to:

- Follow the recipe rules (**Legal compliance**)
- Use the right ingredients and actually taste good (**Soundness**)
- Be made with others who are also going to eat it (**Duty to Co-operate**)

IS THE PLAN LEGAL?

(DID THEY FOLLOW THE RECIPE?)

Think of this like following the rules in a baking recipe. If they miss a step or use the wrong method – it might still look like a cake, but it's not been made properly.

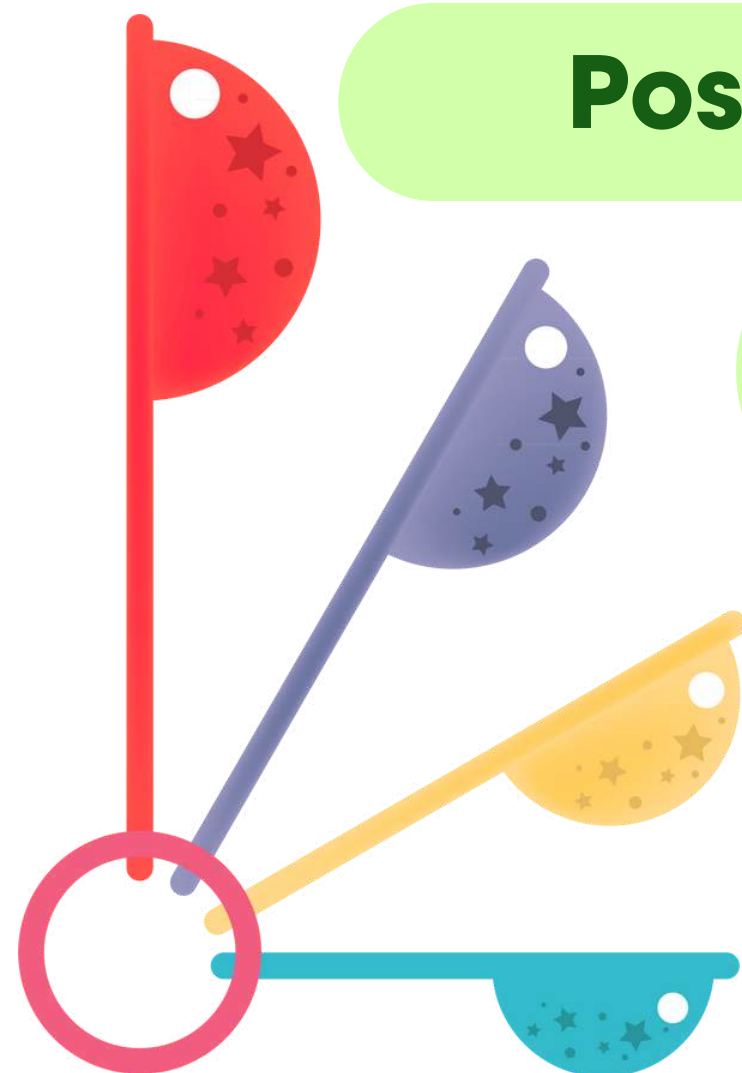


The Council must:

- ☒ Follow the Local Development Scheme (LDS) – This is the public timeline they said they'd follow. Did they change plans without updating it?
- ☒ Follow their own consultation promises – This is set out in the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). Did they write to residents? Was it accessible?
- ☒ Carry out a proper Sustainability Appraisal – This checks for harm to the environment, traffic, flood risk, community impact, etc. Did they consider this before choosing SES30?
- ☒ Consult properly at Regulation 18 stage – This is when residents should have been told early and clearly.
- ☒ Meet legal requirements in planning law – The process must follow the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

IS THE PLAN SOUND? (DOES IT ACTUALLY TASTE GOOD?)

Think of this step as ‘have they used the right ingredients and does the cake taste good?’ The Planning Inspectors will decide whether each site meets four tests of “soundness” from the NPPF (Dec 2023). Your objection should explain which one(s) you think the plan fails – and why.

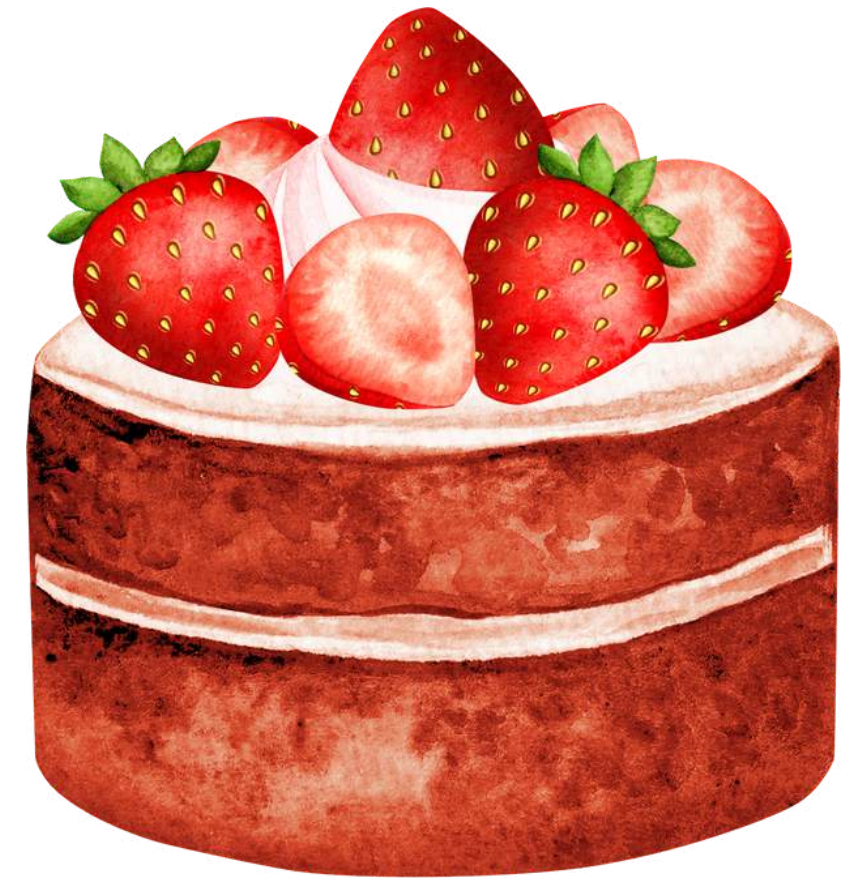


Positively prepared

Justified

Effective

Consistent with National Policy



Positively prepared

Has the plan been prepared with the right evidence to meet local needs, not just targets?

What it means:

The plan must be based on up-to-date evidence and genuinely aim to meet the needs of local people – including for housing, jobs, health, education, and infrastructure.

For SES30 and/or SES29, consider:

- Is there solid evidence showing we need this development in S13?
- Have they shown that services like GPs, schools, roads and buses can cope?
- Does the plan respond to the real needs of this community, not just targets?
- Have they shown there's capacity at local GP surgeries and health services?
- Is there a confirmed new health centre, or just vague promises?
- Are you currently struggling to get a GP or dentist appointment?
- Do schools in S13 have space, or are they already full?
- Is there evidence of where children in 1700+ new homes would go?
- Has the Council checked whether local roads and buses can cope with extra cars and passengers?
- Will traffic increase make journeys more dangerous or slow?
- Did they talk to the community about what this area actually needs?
- Does this site solve a real problem – or just meet housing numbers?
- Is the evidence based on real, recent data from S13 – or generic citywide / nationwide figures?
- Did they assess what impact the Waverley estate (Rotherham side) already has on our services?
- Did they assess where recreational / green space would be offered - take away our accessible green space and replace it with what?



Justified

Is this the right site, or just the easiest one to choose?

A Justified Local Plan means the council must:

- ✓ Base their decisions on real evidence – not guesses or what's convenient
- ✓ Compare all reasonable site options, not just one
- ✓ Involve local people early so their views help shape the decisions
- ✓ Choose the best strategy, based on facts, fairness, and sustainability (e.g. traffic, wildlife, air quality, community impact)

In short:

“Justified” means the plan must show its working out – like a maths exam. It’s not just what decision they made, but how and why they got there.

For SES30 and/or SES29 ask:

- Why did they pick this specific Green Belt site – and not others?
- Did they compare it to brownfield sites or underused land in other parts of Sheffield?
- Was the community ever asked for their views before the decision?
- Does this site actually make sense based on local facts, not citywide or nationwide averages?

Effective

Does the Plan follow national planning rules and support sustainable development?

A plan is Effective when it's not just a good idea on paper — but actually doable, with a clear plan for who will deliver it, how it will be funded, and when it will happen.

The Council needs to show:

- ✓ The right infrastructure will be delivered — roads, schools, GPs, drainage, etc.
- ✓ There are no major barriers (like flood risk, protected wildlife, lack of access)
- ✓ Developers and partners have signed up to help deliver it
- ✓ The plan can adapt if something changes — like funding falling through or services not being ready
- ✓ Progress can be tracked and reviewed so that promises are kept

In short:

“Effective” means don't just promise things — show how, when, and who will make them happen.

For SES30 and/or SES29 consider:

- Is there a funded plan to deliver new GPs, roads, schools, flood defences, etc.?
- Are housing developers or NHS providers committed to supporting this site?
- Can this site be delivered without major problems (like surface water flooding)?
- Who will monitor whether services are keeping up with housing growth — and what happens if they don't?

Consistent with National Policy

Does the Plan follow national planning rules and support sustainable development?

The Local Plan must follow the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) — which sets the rules all councils in England must follow.

That includes protecting:

- ✓ The Green Belt (only to be released in exceptional circumstances)
- ✓ The natural environment and biodiversity (wildlife, trees, open spaces)
- ✓ People's health and well-being (including access to green space and clean air)
- ✓ The need to fight climate change and reduce air pollution
- ✓ The importance of brownfield first (building on used land before countryside)

It also means the plan must:

- Enable sustainable development (development that balances housing, environment, jobs, and health)
- Reflect the latest national rules, such as the 2023 NPPF (used for Sheffield's Plan)

In short:

“Consistent” means: Does this plan follow national rules about what good development should look like — and avoid causing harm to people or the environment?

For SES30 and/or SES29 consider:

- Has the Council clearly shown “exceptional circumstances” to justify releasing this Green Belt land?
- Does the plan protect important green space used for health, recreation, and wildlife?
- Does it align with national rules to reduce pollution, flooding, and car dependency?
- Has the Council made a proper attempt to use brownfield land first?
- Are they considering cumulative impacts — like the nearby Waverley estate just over the Rotherham border?

DUTY TO CO-OPERATE

(DID THEY WORK WITH OTHERS?)

When a council writes a Local Plan, it can't plan in isolation — it has a legal duty to work with neighbouring councils and key services on big, cross-boundary issues. That includes things like:

- 🏥 Health services (e.g. NHS or local ICBs)
- 🚗 Transport and infrastructure
- 🏠 Housing needs across borders (e.g. Rotherham and Sheffield)
- 💧 Flood risk, environment, and utilities
- 📖 Education and public services

Think of it like this: *If you're baking a cake and planning to borrow your neighbour's oven, you need to ask them first!*

For SES30 and/or SES29 consider:



- Did Sheffield Council speak to Rotherham Council about the Waverley estate (just across the border)?
- Did they work with the NHS or ICB to confirm whether local GPs and health services can cope?
- Did they look at the combined impact of both Sheffield and Rotherham building thousands of homes next to each other?
- Did they document and publish these discussions so the public could see them?



WHAT SHOULD YOU INCLUDE IN AN OBJECTION?

Top Tips for Writing a Good Objection:

- Use your own words – This shows it's personal and genuine. Don't copy and paste from others. If you copy and paste (as we all have similar arguments, then try to re-word)
- Be specific – Talk about how it affects you, your street, your family, or your daily life.
- Be clear and polite – Avoid angry or emotional language. Stick to facts.
- Focus on real-life problems – Traffic, flooding, lack of GPs, wildlife loss. These matter more than “I just don't like it.”
- Back it with evidence - using your own evidence or from the S13 Key facts sheet
- The inspectors don't expect you to be a planning professional, you're not writing a dissertation! Just write to the point, with evidence and try not to waffle on (keep to 1 or 2 pages of A4)

 Don't Say This	 Say This Instead
"I just don't want houses near me."	"The area lacks the GP capacity, school places, and transport links to support new homes."
"It's not fair on us."	"44% of all Green Belt loss in Sheffield is happening in our part of the city – that's disproportionate and not justified."
"This will ruin the area."	"This Green Belt land provides daily access to green space and supports wildlife such as bats and foxes – these are benefits protected under national planning rules."
"They're only doing this for the money."	"There's no evidence the decision was based on local needs. No alternative sites were properly consulted on with this community."
"The council never tells us anything."	"I didn't receive any direct letter or communication about SES30/ SES29, even though Regulation 18 guidance suggests local residents should be involved earlier."
"We're sick of Sheffield Council!"	"This plan is not legally compliant with the Council's own Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), which promises early and accessible consultation."
"I hate this idea."	"The plan is unsound because xyz..."
"This will make things worse."	"Current air pollution levels in Handsworth are already above healthy limits. Adding hundreds more vehicles will worsen this and affect community health."
"We weren't given a chance to have our say."	"SES30/ SES29 was added in April 2025, after Regulation 18 ended. This meant we had no early opportunity to share our concerns, which goes against planning best practice."

WHAT EVIDENCE SHOULD I INCLUDE?

Photos

- Traffic congestion near schools or junctions (e.g. Beaver Hill Road at 8:30am)
- Flooding or standing water during or after rain
- Wildlife on the SES30 site (foxes, bats, birds of prey)
- Crowded GP waiting rooms or notices showing appointment delays
- Queues at local schools or lack of safe pedestrian access



Real-life Experience / Local Knowledge

- How long it takes you to get a GP appointment (date you tried, how long the wait was)
- School admissions issues (being refused a place, long commutes for children)
- How the area is already struggling (e.g. “We already have to wait two weeks for an NHS dental appointment”)
- Weather-related issues (e.g. “The field next to my house floods after heavy rain – building here would make it worse.”)



Official Documents or Reports

- Quotes from the Council’s own reports that show:
- Flood risk on SES30 (e.g. Level 2 SFRA)
- Need for water storage
- Lack of confirmed GP provision
- Transport impact summaries showing local strain

WHAT EVIDENCE SHOULD I INCLUDE?

Digital Barriers

- Notes about how hard it was to find information online
- Photos of printed notices (or lack of them) near SES30 or SES29. Or a photo of the poster you saw (which this group provided, that informed you)
- Screenshots showing how many steps it took to find SES30 or SES29 documents

Maps

- Screenshots of Google Maps traffic data at peak times
- Annotated maps showing:
 - Where you live relative to SES30 or SES29
 - Where local green space or walking routes will be lost
 - How far the nearest GP/school is from the site

Keep your evidence...

- Dated (especially photos and screenshots)
- Localised (name the street or park if it's relevant)
- Short but clear ("This is a photo of traffic on Beaver Hill Road every school morning at 8:15am")

Screenshots or Emails

- A message from a GP surgery showing long wait times
- A response (or lack of) from the Council when you raised concerns
- Screenshots of confusing or inaccessible planning website pages
- Conflicting statements from different council sources

WRITING YOUR OBJECTION

1.To which part of the Sheffield Plan: Proposed Additional Site Allocations document does your representation relate?

A specific proposed Site Allocation - reference:

The Proposed Additional Site Allocations Document – section:

Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) - section:.....

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) – section:.....

You will need to include the site reference under which proposal
you are objecting on. You can include both:

SES30 (BRAMLEY LANE/ BEAVERHILL)

SES29 (FINCHWELL/ HANDSWORTH HALL
FARM)

WRITING YOUR OBJECTION: HEARINGS

7. If your representation is seeking a modification to the plan, do you consider it necessary to participate in examination hearing session(s)?

Yes, I wish to participate in hearing session(s)

Yes ☐

No, I do not wish to participate in hearing session(s)

No ☐

8. If you wish to participate in the hearing session(s), please outline why you consider this to be necessary. Please avoid sharing personal information.

Please note that the inspector will make the final decision as to who is necessary to participate in hearing sessions, and to which hearing session(s) they should attend, and they will determine the most appropriate procedure to adopt to hear those who wish to participate at the examination hearings.

The Inspector only invites people to hearings if they believe the person has something unique or ‘extra’ to contribute to the specific matters being examined.

This means Residents who repeat similar concerns may not be invited to speak individually.

The Inspector may group participants or select representatives to speak on behalf of wider views.

Highlight your detailed knowledge, role in community organisation, and/or expertise in the evidence.

OR “I would like to attend the hearing, but I also support XXX speaking on behalf of my objection”

- Nominate a person you know is also making an objection
- Nominate a representative from “Hands Off S13 Working Group”
- Clive Betts or a representative of.

YOUR VOICE MATTERS

REMEMBER....

You don't need to be an expert

Your lived experience is powerful

Let's protect what makes our area special — together 

Don't stress with all the details and evidence, it might feel overwhelming but just tell your honest experience...

YOUR VOICE MATTERS

 Even Without Formal Evidence:

You can still give weighty testimony by simply stating:

- “I had no idea SES30/SES29 was proposed until May 2025.”
- “I’m not confident using the internet and couldn’t find the documents.”
- “I was never asked about this site in previous consultations.”
- “I couldn’t make sense of all the thousands of pages, there was nothing specifically available to find the information I needed”
- “I tried to attend a public drop in event but it was chaotic and I didn’t get answers to my questions”
- “The information available is not specific to my community or what impacts me”
- “Materials provided were not accessible or inclusive because of my needs..”

The Planning Inspector values real-world evidence of exclusion or unfairness, especially when it’s echoed by multiple residents.

SUBMITTING YOUR OBJECTION

- You can find a template here: <https://saves13greenbelt.org.uk/templates>

Responses can be submitted from Thursday 29th of May until **Friday 11th of July** via the following methods will be sent to the Inspectors for consideration:

- Online through sheffield city council consultation hub webpage:
<https://haveyoursay.sheffield.gov.uk/sheffield-plan-proposed-additional-site-allocations> (*website is a bit crap*)
 - By Email at sheffieldplan@sheffield.gov.uk (**attach your word template**)
 - By post at: Strategic Planning Team Planning Service 5th Floor, Howden House Sheffield S1 2SH
(print and post your template or letter)
-
- Ask someone to help if you don't use the internet
 - *Don't give up – every objection matters, your voice counts!*

LINKS TO KEY DOCUMENTS

Because of the NUMBER of documents, and how much information there actually is - it's an impossible task to succinctly co-ordinate it all within this guide. But here are some key documents you may wish to look at.
It is recommended to use a search function and search "handsworth" / "SES30" or "SES29"

[Proposed Additional Site Allocations May 2025](#) **Page 40-44**

[Integrated Impact Assessment Report](#) **Page 235 - 241 (search handsworth)**

[Sheffield Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Update Site S02502 \(beaverhill\)](#)

[Sheffield Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Update Site SES30 \(Bramley\)](#)

[Sheffield Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Update Site SES29 \(Finchwell\)](#)

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Infrastructure Delivery Plan **Search SES30 / SES29 or Handsworth**

Integrated Impact Assessment Report **Page 235 - 241 (search handsworth)**

Selection of Sites for Green Belt Release **These are the sites rejected & reasons why**

TRANSPORT ASSESSMENT: REPORT ON LOCAL ROAD NETWORK
IMPACTS AND POTENTIAL MITIGATION

Search handsworth