Sheffield Local Plan – Main Modification consultation October 2026

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Following the Planning Inspectorate letters (dated 5th June and 27th July) I am providing a further submission concerning the matters raised in relation to Sheffield's Local Plan process following the main modifications.

In this submission I want to respond to several points raised in the Inspectorate's letter:

1. **Quaker Burial Ground on SES30** – The discovery and recognition of the Quaker Burial Ground has direct implications on the deliverability of this site. The Council's response to this in Exam 222 appears incredibly disingenuous in suggesting that the burial site is a tiny plot between residential houses.

   The suggestion that an entire burial ground is only the small plot of land outlined in Exam 222 is incredibly difficult to believe and needs further investigation. Burial grounds are far more expansive, and this one was quite famous during its time. As a result, it would be expected that this burial ground is far larger than the Council are currently stating. It is clear from the documentation on this that the true extent of the burial site is unknown, for the Council to suggest otherwise is not sustainable.

   Given this, the Planning Inspectorate should be aware that a GPR (Ground Penetrating Radar) survey has been conducted on the site to assess the full extent and historical significance of the burial ground. The final report is yet to be published but I am aware the initial indications suggest a pattern that would be indicative of burial sites due to layout and distance from the surface.

   The implications of this cannot be overlooked. The burial site will significantly impact on the access to SES30 through Beaver Avenue (although as I have said in my previous submission this access point is not fit for purpose anyway), as well as the houses that can be built in this part of the site, which therefore impacts the overall number that can be delivered.

2. **Allocation and appraisal of Infield Lane** – I recognise that this decision is primarily one for Sheffield City Council, but I do think it is important to recognise that this site could provide provision of approximately 234 homes that could immediately be taken out of the green belt allocation number.

   Given building on green belt is the least desirable option for all stakeholders in this process large sites like this that are now available should be added to the Local Plan to alleviate the demand on green belt. The Inspectorate should not accept the argument from the Council that this automatically falls into the windfall site allocation. That was clearly for smaller sites of a dozen or so houses.

   The Infield Lane site represents a strategic site that can produce a significant number of houses that would otherwise need to be placed in green belt. The Council cannot have it both ways and now claim that such a large site comes under a windfall allocation. If they were relying on such large sites to get them their windfall figure they should not have been honest with the Inspectorate about how ambitious their windfall figures were. Assuming this is not the case there should be no need to classify Infield Lane as windfall.

   The sensible approach would be to use this opportunity to use such a strategic site to reduce the burden on the green belt. I hope the Inspectorate share this view and can make the suggestion to the Council who so far have been unwilling to revisit their existing proposals.

3. **Transport infrastructure around SES29 and SES30** – In relation to Exam 221 and Exam 216 I must speak again to the complete lack of transport infrastructure and planning in these proposals.

   The Major Road Network and Large Local Majors programme was the closest proposal to a significant infrastructure project, although I accept even this is tenuous given it would not directly serve the Handsworth area. However, its cancellation does show that not only are we standing still on transport infrastructure improvement, but we are going backwards. This is a far cry from the Golden Rules set out by the Government when it comes to developing green belt.

   I also want to draw attention to my previous submissions relating to the inadequacy of a proposed station at Handsworth. Again, underlining the lack of serious transport infrastructure investment. Network Rail have since confirmed that this station (although not yet green lit) would only see a train an hour in each direction. This simply is not enough to justify this extent of green belt development in the area.

   In summary then, for nearly 2,000 houses being built in the local area there is no serious or significant infrastructure improvements tied to these developments. The only potential improvement mentioned in the documents is the possibility of a heavy rail station that offers no serious ability to deal with the influx of people and development with just one train an hour into Sheffield. I again reiterate the Barrow Hill tram train plan being worked on. This would be a far more suitable and serious proposal to support housebuilding on SES29, and one which I fundamentally believe should be a condition for developing on this site.

4. **Proposed roundabout on Orgreave Lane** – Access to SES29 is outlined is outlined in Exam 221as being via a roundabout on Orgreave Lane. Anecdotally you can speak to residents who will tell you how difficult the traffic and congestion already is.

   This proposal is made with traffic data from 2016, ten years out of date and before significant housing developments were completed on Waverley, as well as the new Lidl that has since opened on the Orgreave Road. I have not found any recent traffic data for any of the junctions on Orgreave Road that would indicate the current situation regarding traffic and congestion.

   From the outdated traffic survey data, the nearest junction to the proposed roundabout (Retford Road/ Beaver Hill Road) forecasts it operating at 95% of capacity without the Plan, and over 150% with it. The traffic light changes optimistically provide a 3% cushion once implemented. The Inspectorate cannot take these figures seriously. I know many have already offered detailed analysis as to how the survey conducted is effectively redundant in significant detail. I am personally shocked that two large developments are relying on such out-of-date traffic figures. That is not a sound basis in which to present these proposals.

   The diagram for the proposed roundabout itself is also incredibly deeply alarming It takes up a significant portion of the proposed site that will surely take out the housing numbers allocated to it. Doing so also prevents the easy expansion of Handsworth Cemetery immediately next to it. Given that the Council also needs to expand cemetery space, rather than building a wholly new site it seems far more sensible to expand this existing one, which is made harder by this proposed roundabout to access the site.

   Fundamentally the Inspectorate and councillors cannot be asked to accept a Local Plan without the relevant up to date traffic modelling. I would ask the Inspectorate now to request them to prevent a Local Plan being approved that is based in present reality when it comes to the traffic in the area.

5. **Additional document uploaded on day of consultation deadline** – On the day this consultation has closed a further document from the Council has been uploaded to the examination portal for the Local Plan titled Equalities Impact Assessment – Proposed Additional Site Allocations (Exam 238). The document itself is from 2025, so I acknowledge it is not a new document in that sense, but again it speaks to the failure by the Council to provide a timely and accurate log of the documents needed to facilitate this consultation.

   This is not the first time this problem has been encountered, but I must highlight it again here as it completely undermines the process.

   The document itself relates to the Equalities Impact Assessment following the proposal to release green belt land for development. I do not believe it accurately reflects the impact this will have on poorer communities within Sheffield given the additional development and lack of corresponding infrastructure. While I accept this is not a specific protected characteristic it is materially relevant and something I have discussed at length in previous submissions and hearings. The development burden is being placed on poorer communities with no meaningful infrastructure improvements, while the affluent West of the city is not taking its fair share.

While these are my specific concerns directly related to the latest round of main modifications from this Local Plan process, I need to reiterate again my underlying problems with this Plan and process that have not changed.

The very fact we are having yet another round of consultation following further main modifications is because of the serious questions over deliverability of these sites. This bears all the hallmarks of a rushed proposal for green belt development where a small number of large sites have been chosen to develop on, before then working backwards from these answers to justify their allocation. This is not how a Local Plan should be devised and the continuing attempt at this backwards justification is now threatening the Plan more broadly.

I maintain my previous concerns and acute frustrations with this process. The Council have taken an incredibly narrow-minded approach to this stage of the Local Plan. In doing so they have undermined the Plan as a whole and caused significant upset and opposition across the city. I hope this is recognised by the Inspectorate and elected members of Sheffield City Council. A reassessment is needed to provide a fairer spread of development in our green belt as I have said from the start.