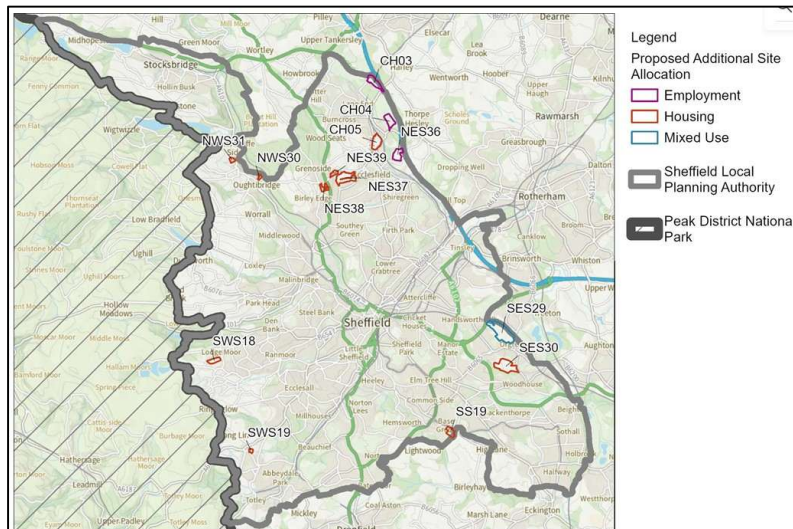


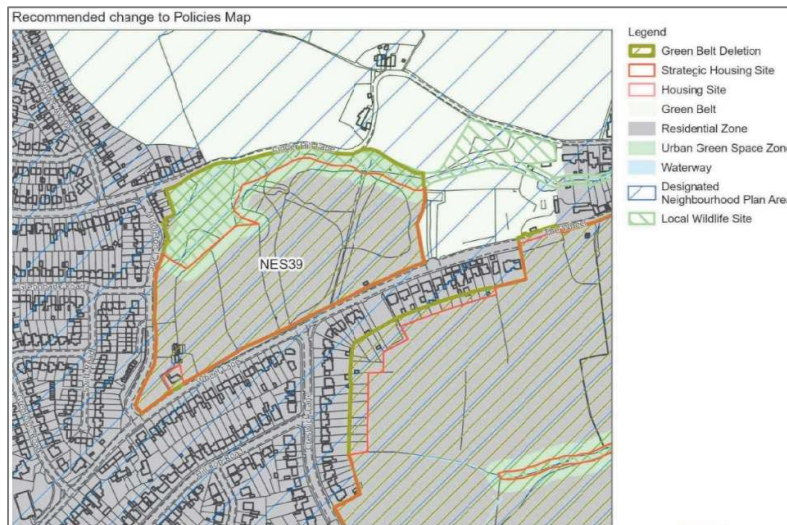
“The Sheffield Plan”

Review of Proposed Access to Site NES39 ‘Land at Wheel Lane and Middleton Lane, S35 8PU’

(also previously referred to by Sheffield City Council as Site S03035)



Map of Sites – SCC



Site Boundary - SCC

April 2026

1 TERMS OF REFERENCE

Aprica Ltd has been commissioned by a local interest group to comment on the highway implications for the proposed access arrangements for Site NES39 (also previously called sites S03035 by Sheffield City Council) 'Land at Wheel Lane and Middleton Lane, S35 8PU', hereafter referred to as 'NES39', one of the sites identified in the proposed 'Sheffield Plan' ('the Plan') Consultation Documents.

The purpose of this report is to assess the transport and traffic implications of the current proposals. It is intended that this report be considered by the interest group with a view to submitting a formal response to Sheffield City Council ('SCC'). The report is based on local knowledge, prevailing highway conditions and available documents, illustrative drawings etc.

Ian Taylor (I.Eng MICE) has produced this report. Ian is an Incorporated Engineer and a Member of the Institution of Civil Engineers, with thirty-five years' experience of public and private sector highway infrastructure disciplines including transportation planning, RoSPA accredited accident investigation & prevention, traffic management, road safety audits, traffic regulations, and highway design & construction. Ian has led on numerous major highway projects for Local Authorities and has presented at Planning Committees, Council meetings, public meetings and drop-in events, and at Public Inquiry.

2 INTRODUCTION

The scope of this report is to consider the proposed 'Main Modifications' for the Sheffield Plan (the Plan), for site NES39, a site of 5.30 hectares, proposed for the construction of 148 dwellings (subject to reduction as discussed below). The intention is to offer expert comments on the site's safe and practical useability by the travelling public, and the impact on the highway network.

For ease of reference this report is separated into the following parts:

- 1 Terms of Reference
- 2 Introduction and Executive Summary
- 3 Background
- 4 Assessment of Highway Proposals
- 5 Sustainability
- 6 Injury Collision Record
- 7 Other Factors to Consider
- 8 Conclusions and Recommendations

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report reviews the highway and transport implications of Site NES39 'Wheel Lane/Middleton Lane' within the Sheffield Plan Main Modifications. On current evidence, there is a risk of unacceptable impact unless major, deliverable mitigation is secured up front.

Key Issues

- Access feasibility/safety: constrained highway widths, on-street parking and sub-standard footways might physically prevent compliant improvement measures, visibility and safe crossing provision.
- Network impact and cumulative effects: existing peak and school run congestion means NES39 (with NES37 and other commitments) could materially worsen delays, queuing and rat-running.
- Car dependency: limited public transport and poor walking/cycling conditions/topography make sustainable mode share targets unlikely.
- Evidence gap: access design, location, assumptions and cumulative testing are not yet sufficiently evidenced to conclude that impacts are acceptable and mitigable.
- Deliverability/phasing: scale, funding and highway constraints create a risk that mitigation is delayed or undeliverable within the plan period.

Recommendations

- A single masterplan and joint infrastructure delivery plan for NES39 and NES37 (access, internal connections, permeability/rat-running controls, phasing and funding).
- Withhold support/progression unless an adoptable, policy-compliant solution is demonstrated (visibility, junction capacity, pedestrian/cycle facilities and parking management).
- Secure "no development/occupation until delivered" conditions (Grampian-style) for critical off-site highway and active travel works.
- Require a robust cumulative transport assessment with sensitivity tests (higher car mode share and school run peaks) using appropriate modelling.
- If compliant access, mitigation and sustainable travel measures cannot be evidenced as feasible and funded, withdraw NES39 in favour of more sustainable alternatives.

3 BACKGROUND

Planning Inspectors have considered the 'Sheffield Plan' (the Plan) proposals under a number of stages of the Planning process including 'Regulation 19' of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Regulation 19 focused on four main tests of soundness, namely Positively Prepared: Based on a strategy that seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements; Justified: Based on proportionate evidence; Effective: Deliverable over the plan period; Consistent with National Policy (such as the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)). The Inspectors now consider the Plan to be 'sound and legally compliant subject to main modifications being agreed and made'. The Inspectors will essentially seek to determine whether adding a site or sites, such as NES39, makes the plan 'sound' (by meeting employment needs etc), or 'not sound' by creating unmitigable traffic issues. The modifications must still undergo detailed transport assessment, sustainability appraisal, habitats assessment, and public consultation and it can still be argued that the four main tests of soundness have not been satisfied because the proposed Main Modifications fail to resolve the infrastructure and highway safety issues identified during the examination.

The proposals still lack detail on matters such as access design, number and layout of houses, number of people employed in the case of employment space, and acceptable likely trip data (see below under TRICS), which makes it difficult for Inspectors to make a final decision, and for consultees to offer fully considered responses. Neither is there sufficient mention, or demonstrable evidence, of the possible cumulative effect of the addition of the proposed Greenbelt sites to the many other committed and ongoing developments in and around Ecclesfield, Grenoside and the wider area. It does not seem that the overall traffic impacts of these and other developments have been sufficiently considered in the individual site assessments for the Sheffield Plan, or as a whole.

Whilst it must be accepted that building on some Greenbelt land might offer more variety and choice of homes, along with local employment opportunities, this should only be considered over Brownfield/urban development where it can be achieved without significant impact at the proposed sites and in the wider area. More detail needs to be provided on, and more consideration given to, the impact on the existing local road network and how any proposals taken forward could be mitigated to eliminate or sufficiently reduce adverse effects. Should it not be possible to reduce adverse impacts to acceptable levels, sites should be withdrawn and alternatives sought.

Because the sites are greenbelt sites the Inspectors require proposals to meet the 'Golden Rules' of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The Golden Rules state that for greenbelt release, sites must deliver 50% affordable housing, the upfront provision of necessary local infrastructure and the creation of enhanced, publicly accessible green spaces. This means that the developer must prove that they can mitigate the impact on local roads and provide the required improvement measures, preferably pre-commencement rather than pre-occupation to avoid construction traffic adding to the existing traffic problems. For the area in question this is likely to mean realignment of Wheel Lane to provide adequate visibility splays, prevention of 'rat running' through Middleton Lane, and possible traffic calming. It is proposed that NES39 and NES37 have a unified road network. High quality comprehensive active sustainable travel measures will also be required, connecting new homes to the Grenoside centre etc.

In the previous review of the proposed Sheffield Plan (July 2025) Aprica assessed site NES39 (known then as S03035). At that time no access arrangements were available. The earlier assessment is shown below along with the Council's assessment of suitability. Aprica's comments follow and largely still

stand other than the collision statistics which have been updated, and the now agreed access from somewhere along Wheel Lane (to be confirmed in detailed designs).

Green Belt site allocation appraisal (Housing)

Site Reference: S03035
Address: Land at Wheel Lane and Middleton Lane, S35 8PU
Gross site area (Site Allocation): 5.30 Hectares
Net housing area: 4.24 Hectares
Estimated housing capacity: 148 homes
Net employment area: 0.00 Hectares
Ward: West Ecclesfield Ward
Housing Market Area: Chapelton & Ecclesfield
Ownership: Private

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Indicator	Indicator score	Indicator score result
Distance to core public transport network (CPTN)	NN	Site more than 1200m from the Core Public Transport Network
Access to active travel/cycle network	-	Site beyond 400m of an existing or proposed route which is at LTN1/20 standard
Potential to increase the viability of public transport or support investment in new public transport infrastructure	-	Site is beyond 400m of planned bus network improvement or 800m of planned tram/rail network improvement
Availability of local facilities and education capacity	Y	Site within 800m of 3 classes of local facility
	N	No current surplus capacity for either Primary or Secondary education
	YY	No community/leisure/recreation facilities on-site
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No potential junction capacity issues previously identified within 2km of the site. Site is more than 5km from the M1 or A616, so risk of congestion on those roads is lower. There is a primary school within 3.2km of the site (although no surplus capacity). There is a secondary school within 4.8km of the site (although no surplus capacity). There is a primary health care facility within 3.2km of the site. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site more than 1200m from the Core Public Transport Network (as of December 2023). Site is more than a 10-minute walk (800 metres) to a convenience shop and at least 3 other types of community facilities or important local services. Site is further than 400m from an active travel/cycle network. Footpaths onsite should be retained 		

Aprica comment:

- This site is rated double-negative (NN) for public transport, being over 1200m from the core public transport network
- The site is unrated (yellow) for proximity to an active travel network, being over 400m from an existing or proposed route. The nearest route would be Route 67, which is more of a circular leisure loop around High Green, Wentworth, Thorpe Hesley and Parson Cross. Commuter cyclists are unlikely to find this loop beneficial, attractive, or of use to commute
- Bus travel enhancement is unlikely to be viable, with an unrated (yellow) rating for proximity to planned improvements. In reality the nearest bus stop is the two-hourly Hillsborough to Harley service, not going to or from the city centre. There is no service on a Sunday

- School and healthcare facilities have a negative (N) rating and are too far away for sustainable travel and in any event the schools are full
- The site is rated double-positive (YY) for community/leisure/recreation facilities yet it is stated that there are none. This needs clarification
- ~~There has been one slight injury on the roads in question, specifically Wheel Lane (CrashMap 2019-2023)~~
- ~~Accesses onto Wheel Lane, Middleton Lane and Cinder Hill Lane are not identified and would need to be considered further should this proposed site be progressed~~

4 ASSESSMENT OF HIGHWAY PROPOSALS FOR SITE NES39

Surrounding Network

Over the years SCC has carried out several feasibility studies for the area and some traffic management schemes have been introduced. For example High Street/St Michael's Road/Wordsworth Avenue traffic calming and improvements for pedestrians. Other studies have not resulted in any improvement schemes being taken forward. These include the High St/Yew Lane/Stocks Hill/Town End Road/Church Street loop, and a number of studies for Church St/Town End Road/The Wheel, where narrow streets, parking, visibility, pedestrian safety and parking have long been a serious concern and remain so. This is partly due to the physical inability to introduce measures due to narrow roads, restricted visibility, tight building lines etc).

Several junctions all the way from Grenoside to the M1 regularly become congested. The Common/Chapelton Road/Ecclesfield Road suffers regular congestion and is one of the most notorious in North Sheffield. New homes, supermarkets and other new amenities have in recent years all exacerbated the long-standing traffic problems in and around Ecclesfield, Grenoside and Chapelton.

The Wheel, Yew Lane and Creswick Lane are arterial routes between Ecclesfield, Grenoside and wider destinations via the A61 and M1. These junctions are nearly always overloaded during the morning and evening peaks.

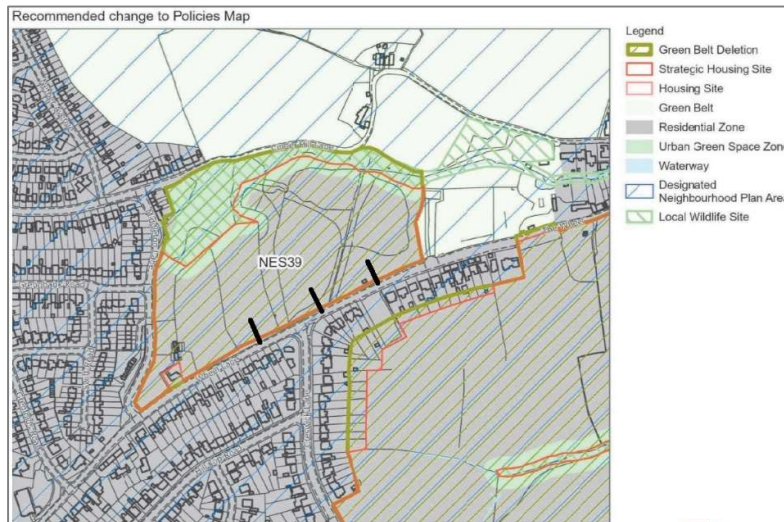
In addition to local roads being heavily congested at peak periods, the situation is greatly exacerbated by the school run, which is a variable in the localised congestion patterns in this topographically constrained area. The existing traffic associated with Yewlands Academy (around 900 students), St Thomas More Catholic School (around 200 students), Grenoside Primary School (over 300 students), and the Ecclesfield Primary and Secondary schools (for those with children at different schools), all create a concentrated volume of movement at 'school run' times, which clashes with commuter flows. Adding housing on NES39, and over 600 at NES37 along with another school and a burial ground, would add significantly to the known existing issues.

Inspectors have stated that '*Development of the site should complement and not adversely affect the delivery of the housing allocation NES37 which is located on the opposite side of The Wheel. This includes working collaboratively on the production and implementation of a single infrastructure delivery plan as required by Policy DC1*'. They have also stated that '*key considerations include retaining the public footpath, providing a 15-metre buffer to the adjacent ancient woodland, addressing flood risk, assessing and remediating potential land contamination, and implementing heritage and archaeological mitigation measures as recommended in the Heritage Impact*

Assessment. These requirements ensure sustainable, safe, and policy-compliant development of the site'.

Proposed Access

Vehicular access is proposed from Wheel Lane. The detail is to be determined through further assessment but it is understood that at the Inspectors' Hearing in October 2025 (see Section 7 below) three possible locations were discussed and agreed in principle with SCC.



Proposed Site Boundary Annotated To Show The Three Possible Locations for the Access - SCC

Local residents have stated to the Planning Inspectors that they often face long waits just to get from their driveways onto Wheel Lane. Another access on this already difficult section of highway would make matters far worse. Congestion can occur at any time of day but at 'school run' times the local roads can become a no-go zone. Roads are very narrow in places and arguably, as former local rural lanes now carrying thousands of vehicles, unsuitable for even more traffic. Parking on-street is commonplace and drivers often obstruct footways by parking partially on them.

Middleton Lane and Cinder Hill Lane are both narrow. On-street parking takes place on both roads, Cinder Hill Lane becoming too narrow to park on.



Parking on Middleton Lane – Google

The existing footpath, through the site to Cinder Hill Lane, is proposed to be retained and enhanced. A new footpath is proposed from the site to Middleton Lane. Local residents are concerned that this would mean the significant loss of trees, hedges, watercourse vegetation and historic stone walls.



Cinder Hill Lane Footpath Across Site - Google

Without careful internal planning and physical measures, internal roads at the development could create a rat-run to Middleton Lane, something that the Inspectors have raised. If the site is progressed, further assessment of the indicative access and internal layout needs to be made, with detailed designs being drawn up and assessed.

5 SUSTAINABILITY

In the UK, standards for sustainable travel and the hierarchy of travel modes are set by the Department for Transport's (DfT's) Manual for Streets (MfS) and Local Transport Note 1/20 (LTN 1/20). The DfT publishes the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Paragraph 114 explicitly states that applications should "give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements." The MfS is the go-to guide for urban design. It established the hierarchy that places pedestrians at the top and private cars at the bottom.

Active Travel England (ATE) is the government's Sustainable Travel Inspectorate. It reviews large planning applications (such as NES39) to ensure that they meet these standards. They mandate that active travel infrastructure must go beyond the immediate vicinity of the site, and they look at the 'last mile' (i.e. journeys of a mile to and from the site), expecting high quality, inclusive corridors that utilise segregated paths to ensure that walking and cycling will be a mode of choice for accessing local services. If a site is likely to be too 'car-dependent' ATE can formally object.

ATE state that for site NES39: *'The rural character of Grenoside should be protected; A unified infrastructure plan is required with the adjacent site NES37, with an integrated internal road and path network to prevent fragmented traffic impacts and reduce car dependency'*. To mitigate the loss of Greenbelt land, the Planning Inspectors ordered a significant reduction in housing capacity (from 148 to around 70 units) to allow for a 2.1 hectare strategic green buffer along the northern and eastern boundaries. ATE has said that *'the site must deliver high-permeability pedestrian and cycle links, specifically a new soft gateway to Middleton Lane and the enhancement of the existing public right of way toward Cinder Hill Lane'*.

The South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) has been mandated by the DfT that all local transport authorities are required to review and update their statutory Local Transport Plans (LTP's) to align with current national and local priorities, and to provide a more consistent basis for determining future investment priorities. 'Connecting Sheffield' is part of the long-term vision for the future of travel in the city of Sheffield, creating high-quality, convenient and safer routes into and around the city for cycling, walking and public transport. Funding has been made available, from central Government and other sources, to deliver work that aims to transform the city and enable people to make better travel choices. The website <https://haveyoursay.sheffield.gov.uk/connecting-sheffield> gives updates on projects. At present there are none in the vicinity of site NEES37 or north Sheffield in general, but hopefully a case will be made for at least some studies in the area.

For site NES39 the hierarchy of travel modes – 1. Walking, 2. Cycling & wheeling, 3. Public transport, 4. Private car – needs more consideration and more detail provided on how active and sustainable travel can genuinely be achieved, before the site progresses. This is explored in more detail below.

Sustainable Travel Modes

1. Walking: Around site NES39, pedestrian facilities are severely restricted. Wheel Lane and The Wheel have sub-standard footway widths (less than 1 metre wide in places) and obstructions such as house and garden walls which prevent adherence to LTN 1/20 accessibility standards. The area also has a challenging topography, with gradients often exceeding the 1 in 20 threshold for inclusive mobility. ATE has classified NES39 as a topographically sensitive site. Whilst acknowledging the natural 8 to 12% slopes, ATE has called for a design-led mitigation strategy. This requires the developer to bypass existing steep highway gradients by creating a contour-following internal

network. All primary pedestrian links must adhere to LTN 1/20 standards, ensuring a maximum 5% gradient by the use of switchbacks and mandatory 2 metre level 'landings' for every 500mm of vertical rise. This is essential to ensure that the development meets national 'Inclusive Mobility' standards and the legal requirements of the Equality Act 2010. The current severance caused by the A61 creates a high-risk environment for vulnerable road users. Without a comprehensive program of off-site 'walking and wheeling' infrastructure, the site, along with NES37, remains isolated from community core areas. It seems unlikely, due to the constricted highway boundaries and the gradients, that ATE's requirements for pedestrians can be met.



Wheel Lane Footways Narrow and Obstructed - Google



Middleton Lane Footway Narrow and Obstructed - Google

2. Cycling: Much as for walking, the roads are steep in places and there are no cycle measures whatsoever. Only the most serious cyclists would be likely to cycle to site NES39 and back. It seems a physical impossibility to meet ATE's requirements for fully segregated cycle infrastructure, especially with the steep topography in the area.

3. Public Transport: Bus services are infrequent (the M92 being two-hourly and the 765 being a school bus). There are no stops on Cinder Hill Lane and no services on Middleton Lane. Most bus

stops are simple bus stop 'flags'. Current requirements are for raised bus boarder kerbs, tactile paving for partially sighted users, bus stop clearway markings, and preferably shelters. It is difficult to imagine how all this could be accommodated, along with ATE's requirement for at least 2 metres of clear footway, bearing in mind the constricted highway widths in the area.



Outdated Overgrown and Obstructed Bus Stops on Wheel Lane – Google

At almost 5km away (at least an hour's walk including steep gradients), Chapeltown Railway Station is beyond viable pedestrian reach and unlikely to appeal to all but the most committed cyclists. This leaves just bus travel on the sustainable motorised travel list. In order for rail travel to be viable, a feeder bus service would be required, with reliable and consistent (15 minutes or less) timetabling. This is unlikely to happen, other than under short-term Travel Plan incentives, leaving just the car for travel to and from a railway station.

4. Private Car: Since sustainable travel modes are currently poor and unlikely to be made sufficiently attractive, the car is highly likely to be the main mode of transport for people living in or visiting the houses, school or burial ground on the proposed site.

Trip Generation and TRICS

TRICS is 'Trip Rate Information Computer System'. It is effectively an industry-standard historical library of traffic figures. When developers want to build something new – such as housing or commercial space – they must demonstrate how much extra traffic the development will put on the highway network. Because the development doesn't yet exist the developer uses TRICS and its database to assess and demonstrate what has happened at similar sites in the past. Developers naturally want to demonstrate the minimum impact on the highway network and might naturally cherry pick test sites.

Whilst TRICS contains thousands of real-world traffic counts from across the UK and Ireland, its outputs are often controversial and site NES39 is no exception. The traffic impact assessments TIA's) for sites NES39 and NES37 have been challenged on the grounds of TRICS data suitability, specifically regarding the selection of locational proxies. Critics allege that the standard trip rates applied do not account for Grenoside's severe topographical gradients and that the TRICS methodology fails to identify the 'peak within a peak' demand generated by the co-location of housing

and education facilities. In addition it has been suggested, in regard to the adjacent NES37 site, that there are no combined housing/burial ground sites in the TRICS 'library'. All of this leads to the potential underestimation of traffic figures and over-estimation of sustainable travel take up. Critics also argue that Planners should design for a typical busy day (called the 85th percentile), whilst Developers prefer to use the average day (the mean) which makes the adverse impact look smaller. Thus, in real-world terms, actual traffic volumes and impacts are very often significantly worse than those predicted by TRICS. Driver and other road user behaviour in 'the real world' is not like a computer model in any case. A common example would be where drivers stop in long lines of slow-moving main road traffic to let single vehicles in or out of minor junctions or driveways, thereby impacting on dozens of following main road vehicles.

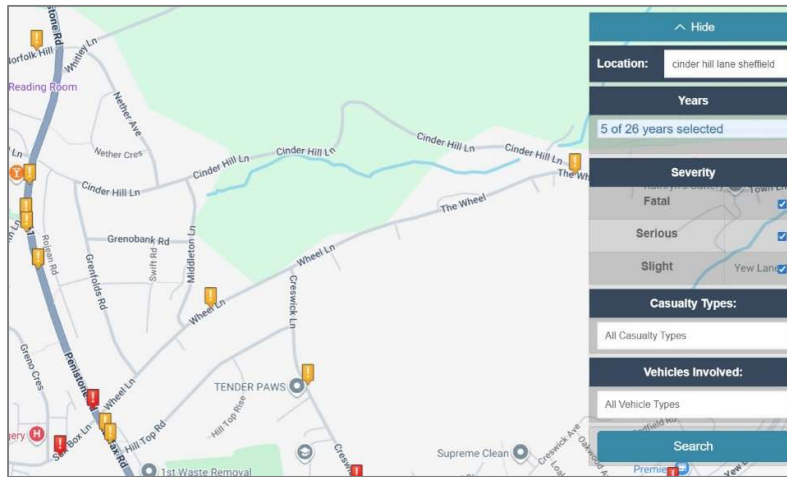
Aprica does not have the software or expertise to challenge TRICS (Trip Rate Information Computer System) and to do so would take many hours. It is therefore beyond the remit of this report but the core issue for Site NES39 seems to be the discrepancy between the theoretical models used by SCC and the likely reality of trip generation and modal transport choice.

The data should be closely checked to ensure its soundness and, if necessary, re-run using data appropriate for busy congested roads with nearby schools and a possible burial ground, such as those around site NES39. As mentioned above, experience has shown that in practice actual trip numbers (especially for private vehicles) are very often higher than those suggested in Transport Assessments (TA's). Software can easily be used to manipulate and 'adjust' modelled outcomes, whereas in real-world circumstances, people's behaviour and choices dictate what actually happens.

TRICS is, in any case, just a library of numbers and predicts trip numbers based on existing, similar, sample sites. It cannot model the cumulative impact of development on, say, nearby major junctions. A full micro-simulation model should be built, using software such as VISSIM ("Verkehr In Städten SIMulationsmodell" - which translates to "Traffic in Cities - Simulation Model") to show actual traffic modelling for the wider area rather than just numbers for the one site. This is particularly important for NES39 as it is very close, and connected by the Inspectors' requirements, to the larger NES37.

6 INJURY COLLISION RECORD

'CrashMap' is a website that uses official government data (the STATS19 database) collected by police forces across the country, to allow users to see where, when, and (for a fee) how road traffic collisions (RTC's) are occurring in their local area. The CrashMap data for the latest verified five-year period (2020 to 2024 inclusive) is shown below. There have been several slight (shown amber) and serious (shown red) injuries in the area of the site and on surrounding roads. In terms of the number of injury collisions, it should be noted that although there is little published data on unreported collisions, the Department for Transport (DfT) suggests that *'for every reported and recorded injury collision there could be as many as 5 unreported injury collisions and 20 damage-only collisions'*. Near misses could be as many as 300 per recorded injury collision.



Injury Collisions - CrashMap

7 OTHER FACTORS TO CONSIDER

The Statement of Common Ground (SOCG) between SCC and Limes Developments agrees that access to NES39 would be provided from Wheel Lane, subject to further technical assessments at the planning stage. Road safety will be addressed through a detailed Transport Assessment, ensuring that access points are designed to protect all users, including pedestrians and cyclists. Future planning applications will promote walking, cycling, and public transport use, in line with local and national policy, to encourage sustainable and accessible travel for new residents.

Residents argue that the development would lead to higher traffic volumes on local roads, raising concerns about congestion and road safety, especially given the area's topography and current rural use, there are reduced opportunities for sustainable travel. They feel that SCC has not fully assessed the impact on openness and permanence, which includes considering the effects of increased traffic and changes to travel patterns.

At a Sheffield Plan Examination Hearing in October 2025 the Inspectors discussed the site area, access and highway issues, the site's role in separating Grenoside from Chapeltown (coalescence – see below), and its impact on local character and landscape value. The hearing also addresses open space provision, biodiversity (including effects on the Cinder Hill Brook Local Wildlife Site and the Local Nature Recovery Network), archaeological considerations, infrastructure planning (especially collaboration with NES37), land contamination risks, delivery timescales, and the justification for removing adjoining land from the Green Belt. The outcome of the hearing for site NES39 was that the Inspectors deemed the site to be 'sound' for development, provided that specific 'Main Modifications' are implemented. The Inspectors mandated a reduction in housing capacity and the inclusion of significant landscape buffers to protect the rural character of Grenoside. As mentioned above, they ruled that NES39 must be developed through a unified masterplan with the adjacent site NES37, ensuring that vehicular access and infrastructure are coordinated as a single network rather than fragmented junctions. Whilst the principle of access from Wheel Lane was accepted, the final design must prove it can accommodate necessary visibility splays and provide dedicated pedestrian and cycle permeability into the existing village.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and SCC's own Policies resist the coalescence of settlements and Greenbelt land is scored in terms of importance against such sprawl. Residents

argue that developing site NES39, particularly with NES37, would cause coalescence, merging Grenoside into Ecclesfield and Parson Cross.

The Draft Sheffield Plan Green Belt Review – Appraisal of Proposed Additional Site Allocations and Consequential Deletions mentions that the proposed allocation for site NES39 has been reduced in size during the examination process if the site is removed from the Green Belt, the new boundary would be weaker, relying on the woodland edge and a hedgerow. Whilst SCC's own assessment showed that NES39 performs moderately well against the Green Belt purposes, it plays a relatively weak role in preventing the merging of settlements and offers limited opportunities to 'round off' the existing urban edge. Overall, the evidence suggests that NES39 continues to make a valuable contribution to the Green Belt, particularly in protecting the countryside, and its removal would weaken the boundary and reduce this protection.

The Sheffield Plan Proposed Additional Site Allocations document for NES37, the neighbouring site, confirms that development must comply with the above-mentioned 'Golden Rules' of the National Planning Policy Framework; A masterplan is required for NES39 and NES37 together, and must be submitted with any planning application; The site must address flood risk through mitigation measures identified in the Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment; Development should be coordinated with NES37 (on the opposite side of The Wheel), including a joint infrastructure delivery plan; Additional requirements include a 15 metre buffer to the adjacent ancient woodland, retention of public footpaths, and thorough assessments and mitigation for heritage, archaeology, and potential land contamination.

Air Quality

Site NES39 is situated within the city-wide Sheffield Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), necessitating a comprehensive Air Quality Assessment to address the impact of the estimated 2,000 additional daily vehicle movements. Under current planning policy, the introduction of sensitive receptors, such as the nearby proposed Secondary and SEND educational facilities, within an AQMA requires robust mitigation to ensure compliance with national nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulate matter (PM₁₀) limits. Proposed interventions could include EV charging and 'green' buffer zones. The cumulative impact, however, of this development and NES37 along with other proposed site allocations remains a point of contention. The area's topography could also exacerbate local concentrations of pollutants during peak 'school run' periods. If suitable measures cannot be guaranteed to work, the site should be withdrawn.

8 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

More evidence needs to be provided, bearing in mind the known issues around site NES39, that the proposed access would be safe, connective without leading to rat running, and conducive to sustainable travel. Further development at this location would currently seem inappropriate, based on the known congestion problems. Proposals would need to be compliant with National Planning Policy and are probably not physically deliverable given the available highway widths etc.

Of the 'Four Points' mentioned in Section 3 above, the Inspectors should note the following:

Positively Prepared: The proposals do not currently meet 'objectively assessed development' or 'infrastructure requirements':

- The assessments to date appear to have been rushed in effort to meet SCC's time constraints and seem optimistically in favour of the proposed development, giving little thought to wider and cumulative impact.
- The consultation documents provide no confidence in the TRICS modelling, the impact assessments overall, or that the local highway network would be able to cope with the increase in traffic demand. Neither is there anything to suggest that that local and national policy and objectives, such as active and sustainable travel, could be genuinely achieved.

Justified: The proposals are not based on proportionate evidence:

- The allocation of site NES39 is not currently supported by proportionate or complete transport evidence. The cumulative impact of this and major neighbouring developments such as NES37 and others in an already badly congested area, is concerning.
- TRICS data is questionable and it is possible that the site could generate significantly higher traffic movements, particularly by private car. If TRICS outputs are not based on like-for-like sites the projected sustainable travel figures are likely to be far too optimistic.

Effective: Deliverable over the plan period:

- The site cannot be made safe and sound without major external highway works and even then would be likely to still present additional hazards for vulnerable road users (i.e. those walking, wheeling and cycling), and are unlikely to sufficiently address congestion. It is therefore unlikely that acceptable proposals, in terms of Policy etc, could be delivered within an agreed period, if at all.

Consistent with National Policy: The proposals are not consistent with Policy such as the NPPF.

- The proposals do not offer enough sustainable transport improvements in an area where they are inadequate at present. The topography and constrained widths do not lend themselves to introducing such measures.
- The proposals would have an unacceptable impact on traffic and road safety for the local highway network and its residents.
- In terms of sustainability, walking to and from the site is unlikely due to the unattractive footways, the topography and the significant traffic volumes passing close to those walking. Footways are narrow or non-existent in places. There is no cycle infrastructure at all and no evidence is provided to demonstrate how LTN 1/20-compliant cycle infrastructure could be delivered within the highway limits. Bus services are infrequent and bus stops are not to an acceptable standard. Rail access is impractical.

- Active Travel England (ATE) requires developments to enable at least 50% of short trips by sustainable modes by 2030. There is no likelihood of achieving this.
- The site would, for the above reasons, probably be overwhelmingly car-dependent.

Recommendations

The allocation of Site NES39 should be very carefully assessed to ensure that safe and sustainable travel is a realistic proposition. If no such guarantee can be provided, the site should be removed from the Sheffield Plan due to continuing road safety hazards, unmitigable impact on the highway network, and failure to be able to meet sustainability requirements.

Should any development go ahead, Grampian-style conditions need to be imposed such that no development can commence until the issues of safety, traffic impact, sustainability and other concerns have been fully addressed and the associated works completed. If this is not possible then again the site should not proceed.

If sustainability aims are to be anywhere near successful, a robust Sustainability Strategy must be prepared in order to provide direct, safe walking and cycling links to Grenoside, Ecclesfield and other local facilities via new and improved footways and paths, segregated LTN 1/20-compliant cycle infrastructure, and improved bus frequency with fully compliant bus stops and shelters (raised bus boarder kerbs, tactile paving, bus stop clearways). These measures should also be enshrined in Grampian-style planning conditions.

More robust and accurate assessment needs to be made of the likely cumulative impact on the wider highway network, capturing realistic site SE39 and NES37 traffic, known existing traffic problems and known committed residential and commercial developments in Grenoside, Ecclesfield, Chapeltown, Thorpe Hesley etc.