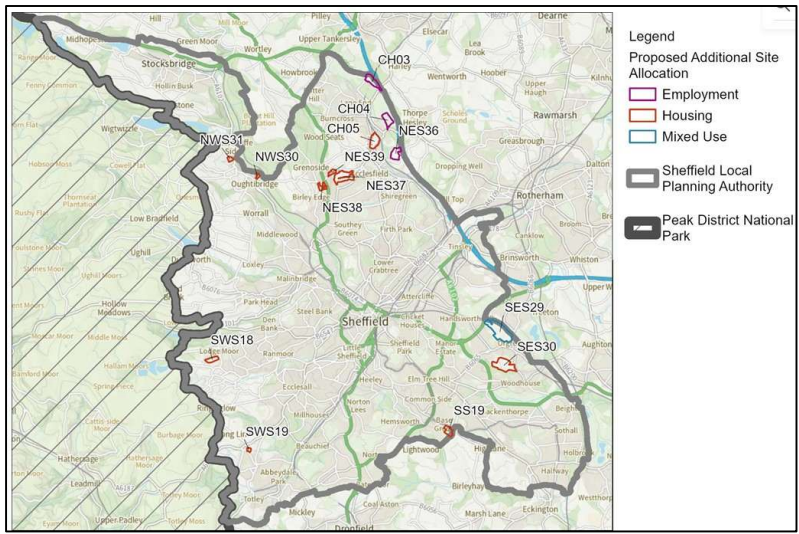


# “The Sheffield Plan”

## Review of Proposed Accesses to Site NES37 ‘Land between Creswick Avenue and Yew Lane, S35 8QN’

(also previously referred to by Sheffield City Council as Site S03038)



Map of Sites – SCC



Proposed Site Accesses – Carter Jonas/Enjoy Design Ltd

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 NES37 (also previously called sites S03051 & S03034 combined, by Sheffield City Council) 'Land between Creswick Avenue and Yew Lane, S35 8QN', hereafter referred to as 'NES37', 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 proposal. 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 NES37, a site of 17.41 hectares, proposed for the construction of around 600 dwellings, education use and a multi-faith burial ground. 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 Statement summarises the main highways, traffic, road safety and sustainable travel issues arising from the indicative proposals for Sheffield Plan site NES37 (Land between Creswick Avenue and Yew Lane, S35 8QN), identified for around 600 dwellings, education use (including SEND provision) and a multi-faith burial ground. It highlights key risks, evidence gaps and actions required before the allocation, or any later planning application, can be considered acceptable.

The surrounding network (Wheel Lane/The Wheel/Town End Road, Yew Lane, Creswick Lane, Creswick Avenue) is already constrained by narrow widths, limited visibility, on-street parking, topography and peak-time congestion (including school-run effects).

### Key findings:

- **Safety/access geometry:** The Wheel access (as drawn) is close to a sharp bend with restricted visibility, narrow carriageway/footway and pedestrian pinch points; a safe design for all users must be demonstrated.
- **Capacity/congestion:** Local links and junctions are frequently overloaded at peak times; housing, education and burial-related trips would add to delays unless substantial, deliverable mitigation is evidenced.
- **Rat-running and residential amenity:** Multiple access points could enable through-traffic and change the function/character of residential streets (including Creswick Avenue) unless physically prevented by design.
- **Sustainable travel deliverability:** Sub-standard/narrow footways, 'severance' and steep gradients constrain inclusive walking/wheeling; it is unclear how LTN 1/20 quality cycling and wider off-site links could be delivered within existing highway limits.
- **Evidence gap:** Current material is indicative and does not yet provide robust trip generation (including school "peak within a peak"), cumulative impacts, or a defined mitigation package.
- Acceptability depends on meeting the Plan's "Golden Rules" / Main Modifications and the Regulation 19 soundness tests such as safe access, mitigated traffic impact and deliverable sustainable connections consistent with national policy.

### Recommendations & Requirements:

- A single, masterplanned access and movement strategy (including rat-run prevention) before reliance can be placed on indicative sketches.
- Robust transport evidence in the form of transparent trip assumptions (including education and burial), and cumulative assessment with committed growth using micro-simulation where proportionate.
- An 'Active Travel England'-ready package showing deliverable, inclusive off-site walking & wheeling links, and LTN 1/20-quality cycling connections. If not deliverable, acknowledge the constraints.

On current information, NES37 risks car dependency and worsening congestion/safety unless major, deliverable mitigation is secured and evidenced in advance. If deliverable mitigation cannot be evidenced, reconsider the allocation. If the development is progressed, apply Grampian-style restrictions preventing commencement until all off-site works are complete.

### 3 BACKGROUND

Planning Inspectors have considered the 'Sheffield Plan' (the Plan) proposals under a number of stages of the Planning process. This stage is 'Regulation 19' of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Regulation 19 focuses on four main tests, the previous comments and objections etc already having been considered in what is effectively the Planners' agreed shortlist of sites with potential but requiring further assessment and consideration. The Inspectors are unlikely to consider previous comments, since they have already considered them in shortlisting, and will now consider the four tests, namely that the Plan must be: **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 consider the Plan to be 'sound and legally compliant subject to some modifications being agreed and made'. The modifications must undergo sustainability appraisal, habitats assessment, and public consultation. The Inspectors will essentially seek to determine whether adding sites, such as CH05, makes the plan 'more sound' (by meeting employment needs etc), or 'unsound' by creating unmitigable traffic issues.

The proposals still lack detail on, for example, precise numbers and layout of houses 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 greenfield sites to the many other committed and ongoing developments in and around Ecclesfield, Grenoside and Chapeltown, for example those in Oughtibridge, Deepcar, Thorpe Hesley, Hoyland and other nearby settlements. Several are either committed or already in construction in and around Ecclesfield, Chapeltown and Oughtibridge alone. It does not seem that the overall traffic impacts of these 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, and local employment opportunities, this should only be considered over Brownfield/urban development where it can be achieved without significant impact at the proposed site 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, these sites should be withdrawn and alternatives sought.

In the previous review of the proposed Sheffield Plan (July 2025) Aprica assessed site NES37 (known then as S03051 & SO3034 combined). 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 identified proposed site accesses.

## Green Belt site allocation appraisal (Housing)

**Site Reference:** S03051 & S03034 (combined)

**Address:** Land south of Wheel Lane between Creswick Avenue and Wheel Lane, S35

**Gross site area (Site Allocation):** 30.34 Hectares

**Net housing area:** 17.41 Hectares

**Estimated housing capacity:** 609 homes

**Net education use area:** Up to 7.00 Hectares

**Net multi-faith burial ground use area:** Up to 4.00 Hectares

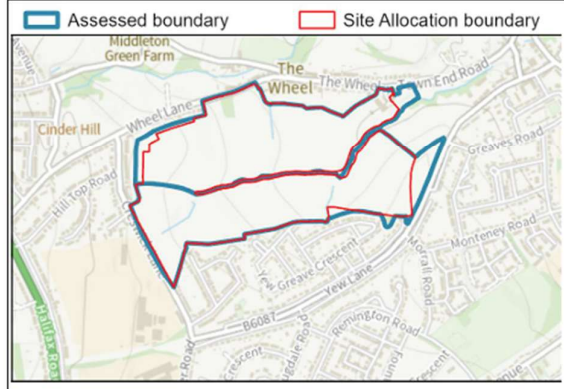
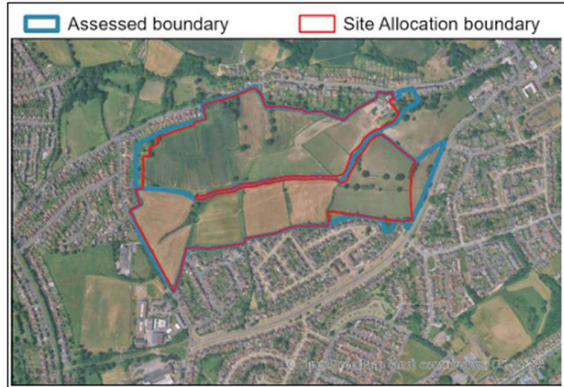
**Net employment area:** 0.00 Hectares

**Ward:** East Ecclesfield Ward

**Housing Market Area:** Chapeltown & Ecclesfield

**Ownership:** SCC

Note the capacity of these sites in combination is reduced to 609 homes to allow up to 7 hectares of land for a Secondary School (5ha) and SEND School (2ha) and 4 hectares of land for a burial ground.



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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
Potential to promote family housing	-	Site more than 800m from a primary school
Availability of local facilities and education capacity	Y	Site within 800m of 4 classes of local facility
	N	No current surplus capacity for either Primary or Secondary education
	YY	No community/leisure/recreation facilities on-site

- Site is within 10-minute walk (800 metres) of a convenience shop and at least 3 other types of community facilities or important local services.
- 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.

- Site more than 1200m from the Core Public Transport Network (as of December 2023).
- Site is further than 400m from an active travel/cycle network. Footpaths on site should be retained.
- Potential capacity issues previously identified at the junctions of A6135 Ecclesfield Road / A629 Cowley Lane and Burncross Road / Lound Side in the centre of Chapeltown. Contributions may be required to local highway improvements identified through the additional transport modelling and/or Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- Site is within 5km of an M1 junction.

- Contributions are required to strategic highways improvements at junctions on the M1 and the local road network.

### Aprica comments:

- 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. The nearest cycle route is Route 67, a circular leisure loop around High Green, Wentworth, Thorpe Hesley/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 score (yellow) 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, although there is a commitment to provide sufficient land within the site for a mainstream secondary school and a Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)
- 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 on Creswick Lane (CrashMap 2019-2023)~~
- ~~Accesses onto Wheel Lane, Creswick Lane, Creswick Avenue, Yew Lane and Town End Road/The Wheel would need to be considered further should this proposed site be progressed.~~

Because of the concerns raised during the previous hearings, the Inspectors have stated that the final proposals for site NES37 must include 'Golden Rules' main modifications. (now embedded in the Sheffield Plan's own policies following the Inspectors' 2025 findings). The Golden Rules mean that the developer must prove that they can mitigate the impact on local roads. For NES37, this could mean works at the Creswick Lane/Yew Lane Junction and local road widenings. Significant active travel measures are also likely to be required.

#### **4 ASSESSMENT OF HIGHWAY PROPOSALS FOR SITE NES37**

##### 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 which clashes with commuter

flows. Adding housing, another school and a burial ground would add significantly to the known existing issues.

### Proposed Accesses

Vehicular accesses are proposed, indicatively, from The Wheel, Creswick Lane, Creswick Avenue and Yew Lane. Non-vehicular accesses are proposed at a number of other points.



*Proposed Site Accesses – – Carter Jonas/Enjoy Design Ltd*



*Vehicle Crossing White Line, At Proposed Wheel Lane Entrance, to Avoid Pedestrian On Narrow Footway – Resident Photo*

The proposed Wheel Lane site entrance is just beyond a sharp 'blind' bend where the carriageway is narrow and there is only one, very narrow footway. Residents have reported a number of vehicle to vehicle collisions and many near misses when vehicles emerging from the track (proposed to be the site entrance) have conflicted with vehicles rounding the bend and drivers unable to see each other.

Local residents have stated to the Planning Inspectors that they often face long waits just to get from their driveways onto Wheel Lane. This 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. Creswick Avenue is a residential road (terminating in a cul-de-sac head) but under the proposals would become a primary access and through-route to and from the development, changing the whole character of the road. Other residential backwaters, such as Coppin Square, would be very adversely affected.



*Parking on The Wheel – Google*



*Parking on Yew Lane - Google*

Without careful internal planning and physical measures, internal roads at the development could become rat-runs for drivers wishing to avoid the frequent queues on surrounding roads. Under the current proposals drivers could easily avoid the heavily congested Wheel Lane/A61 Penistone Road

traffic signals. Further assessment of the indicative accesses should be made to see if there are more suitable accesses in terms of safety, avoidance of rat runs, reduction or removal of impact on residents, rights of way and the environment. Detailed designs will need to be 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 NES37) to ensure that they meet these standards. If a site is likely to be too 'car-dependent' ATE can formally object. ATE state that for sites such as NES37 active travel infrastructure must go beyond the immediate vicinity of the site. They look at the 'last mile' (i.e. journeys of a mile to and from the site) and expect high quality, inclusive corridors that utilise segregated paths to ensure that walking and cycling will be a mode of choice for accessing local services. ATE has emphasised that site NES37 must overcome its topographical challenges in order to avoid car dependency. ATE's recommendations will be for LTN 1/20-compliant infrastructure serving the wider walking and cycling area. ATE has highlighted that current pedestrian provision on Wheel Lane is insufficient for the projected increase in footfall. ATE mandates segregated active travel links and not simple carriageway/footway widening. In order for active and sustainable travel to be attractive it must be considered, by users, to be safe and of sufficient quality.

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 NES37 or north Sheffield in general, but hopefully a case will be made for at least some studies in the area.

It is well worth noting that, according to the 2022 Census, 25% of the population of Chapeltown and Ecclesfield (East Ecclesfield Ward) are over 65 so unlikely to cycle or walk significant distances, and unlikely to use the bus services which are poor. 20% are under the age of 19 and so the majority are of 'working age' and, with the area having one of the highest unemployment rates in Sheffield, will be travelling to work by car. As the Census data is from 2022 and the National trend is towards a population of ageing people, it is likely that the non-walking/cycling community has increased.

For site NES37 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 NES37, 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. Residents report that drivers in cars and vans travelling at inappropriate speeds down Wheel Lane where it becomes The Wheel, and where The Wheel becomes Townend, have caused minor (unrecorded) injuries where pedestrians, including children, have been 'clipped' by wing mirrors hitting their heads, arms and hands. Similar issues have been witnessed on Creswick Avenue, where vehicle/child pedestrian collisions have occurred at school opening and closing times. The area also has a challenging topography, with gradients often exceeding the 1 in 20 threshold for inclusive mobility. The current lack of controlled crossing points, for example at the Yew Lane/Creswick Lane junction and the severance caused by the A61, create a high-risk environment for vulnerable road users. Without a comprehensive program of off-site 'walking and wheeling' infrastructure, the site 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.



*Town End Road Footways 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 NES37 and back. It seems a physical impossibility to meet ATE's requirements for fully segregated cycle infrastructure.

**3. Public Transport:** Bus services are not infrequent but reliability is frequently adversely affected by congestion and bottlenecks. Most bus stops are simple bus stop 'flags'. Current requirements are 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 Bus Stops on The Wheel - Google*

At over 4km away, 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 travel 'list'. In order to be viable a 'feeder' bus service would be needed, 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.

Whilst TRICS contains thousands of real-world traffic counts from across the UK and Ireland, its outputs are often controversial and site NES37 is no exception. The traffic impact assessments TIA's) for site 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 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 potential over-estimation of sustainable travel take up. Developers naturally want to demonstrate the minimum impact on the highway network and might naturally cherry pick test sites. Critics 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 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.

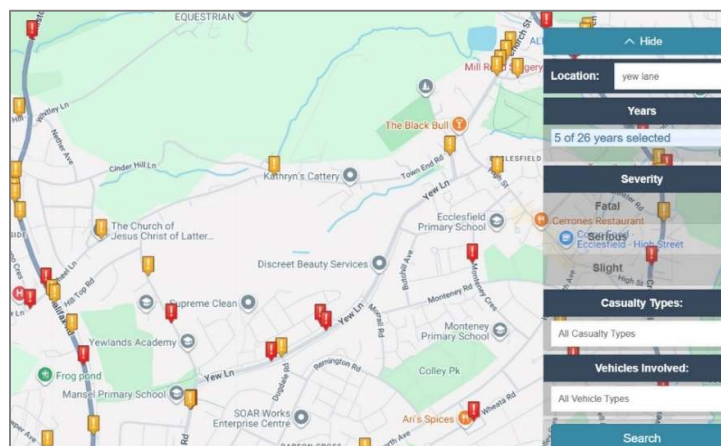
Aprica does not have the software or expertise to challenge TRICS (Trip Rate Information Computer System) and to do so would take many hours. It is therefore beyond the remit of this report but the core issue for Site NES37 seems to be the discrepancy between the theoretical models used by SCC and the 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 NES37. 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 a 'site'.

## 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 as Landowner and SCC as Planning (prepared by Carter Jonas) confirms that the site is considered suitable and deliverable for the proposed uses. Should the site progress, however, further investigations and surveys will be needed, encompassing detailed access designs, more detailed trip generation data and mitigation of traffic and road safety issues. The planning process will require compliance with national and local policies on highways, traffic, and road safety for pedestrians, cyclists and other users, and in terms of connected sustainable travel.

At a Sheffield Plan Examination Hearing in October 2025 the Inspector discussed how the site would be accessed and connected, considering the presence of an internal watercourse and a Local Wildlife Site. There was also consideration of the scheme's impact on both the strategic and local road network and whether the site would lead to coalescence of communities.

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 the site would cause coalescence, merging Grenoside into Ecclesfield and Parson Cross.

The Sheffield Plan Proposed Additional Site Allocations document for NES37 states that *'the allocation requires that highways, traffic, and safety are carefully addressed through a comprehensive masterplan. Development must ensure integration with surrounding areas, retain existing public and permissive footpaths for pedestrian safety, and collaborate with adjacent sites (such as NES39) on a unified infrastructure delivery plan. Access routes should be planned to avoid congestion and maintain safe movement for all users, while a 10-metre buffer is required alongside the adjacent Local Wildlife Site to protect environmental and pedestrian safety. Flood risk mitigation, visual impact, and landscape integration must also be considered to support safe and efficient site access'*. This is likely to mean further, more detailed analysis of the highway infrastructure, and agreed designs to mitigate traffic and road safety issues, should the site be progressed.

The site is currently accessed via a network of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) connecting the surrounding suburbs, with additional access tracks used for agricultural and equestrian purposes. The 'Preliminary Ecological Appraisal' (PEA) notes that *'any future residential development would potentially increase local traffic resulting in the loss and fragmentation of habitats'*. Overall, whilst detailed traffic and highways assessments are not included in the PEA, it does emphasise the need for careful planning and mitigation to address road safety, access, and ecological connectivity in any future development proposals.

### Air Quality

Site NES37 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 Secondary and SEND educational facilities, within an AQMA requires robust mitigation to ensure compliance with national nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>) limits. Proposed interventions could include EV charging and 'green' buffer zones. The cumulative impact, however, of this development and 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 NES37, that the proposed accesses 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 that the local highway network would be able to cope with the increase in traffic demand. Neither is there anything to offer confidence that that local and national policy and objectives, such as active and sustainable travel, could be achieved.

**Justified:** The proposals are not based on proportionate evidence:

- The allocation of site NES37 is not currently supported by proportionate or complete transport evidence. The cumulative impact of this and major neighbouring developments, 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 and 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 not infrequent but 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 NES37 should be very carefully assessed for safe and sustainable travel to be a realistic proposition. If no such proof 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 Ecclesfield, Grenoside and Chapeltown, via new and improved footways and paths, segregated LTN 1/20-compliant cycle infrastructure, and improved bus infrastructure with fully compliant bus stops and shelters (raised bus boarder kerbs, tactile paving, bus stop clearways). These measures should also be enshrined in Grampian Planning Conditions.

More robust and accurate assessment needs to be made of the likely cumulative impact on the wider highway network, capturing realistic site SE37 traffic, known existing traffic problems, and known committed residential and commercial developments in Ecclesfield, Chapeltown, Grenoside, Thorpe Hesley etc.