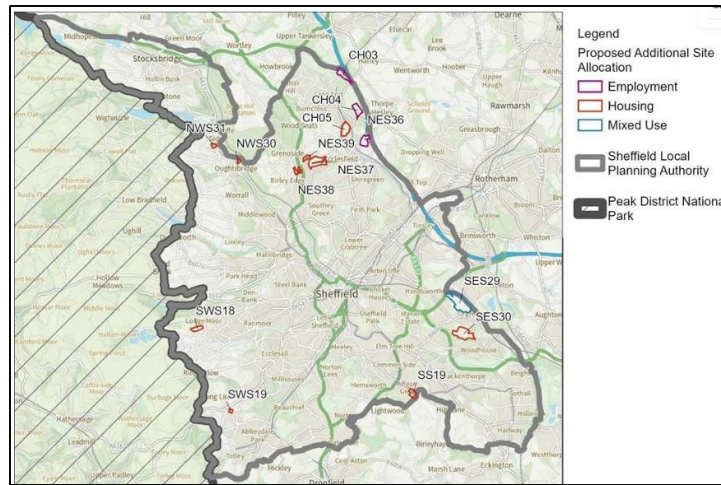


# “The Sheffield Plan”

## Review of Proposed Accesses to Site NES38 'Land to the west of Grenoside Grange, Fox Hill Road, S35 8QS (S03028) and Holme Lane Farm, Halifax Road, S35 8PB (S03100)'



Map of Sites – SCC



Proposed Site Accesses – JEH Planning

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 NES38 'Land to the west of Grenoside Grange, Fox Hill Road S35 8QS and Holme Lane Farm, Halifax Road S35 8PB', previously called sites S03028 and SO3100 respectively, and now combined by Sheffield City Council ('SCC') and hereafter referred to as 'NES38'. The sites have been identified in the proposed 'Sheffield Plan' ('the Plan') Consultation on Greenbelt land release for housing, commercial and other development.

The purpose of this report to is 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 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 NES38, two combined sites now comprising 6.72 hectare, proposed for the construction of 188 dwellings. 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 provides independent highways and transport commentary on the proposed access arrangements and highway impact implications for Sheffield Plan site NES38 'Land to the west of Grenoside Grange, Fox Hill Road, and Holme Lane Farm, Halifax Road', a combined 6.72ha allocation currently indicated for approximately 188 dwellings.

### Key Issues:

- Highway capacity risk: additional traffic would load onto an already constrained network with regular peak congestion, including the Skew Hill/Main Street bottleneck and the wider Ecclesfield/Chapelton corridors.
- Local conditions reduce resilience (narrow sections, poor sightlines, obstructive on-street parking and school run pressures), increasing the risk of delay, rat-running, and conflict with vulnerable road users.
- Car dependency risk: steep topography and constrained widths (notably Salt Box Lane and parts of the A61 corridor) may limit the delivery of high-quality, inclusive walking/wheeling/cycling measures that meet current DfT/ATE requirements.
- Public transport: bus services exist but are affected by congestion; stops/facilities are generally basic and would require upgrades (e.g., kerbs, tactile paving, clearways and, where feasible, shelters) to be attractive and inclusive.
- Evidence gap: current information is insufficient to demonstrate soundness. Trip generation, layout and assumptions are not yet transparent, and TRICS-based rates may understate private car use given limited realistic alternatives.
- Cumulative impact: the effect alongside other committed/ongoing development in north Sheffield should be tested; a site-only assessment is unlikely to capture network pinch points and real-world driver behaviour.
- Safety: recorded injury collisions in the vicinity support a precautionary approach, with mitigation designed around vulnerable road users and safe routes to key destinations (including schools and Grenoside village centre).

### Recommendations

- Detailed access designs and a robust Transport Assessment are required, including transparent trip-rate selection, sensitivity testing, and wider-area microsimulation of known pinch points (including Fox Hill Road/Salt Box Lane and Skew Hill/Main Street).
- Further assessment should include a formal active travel audit and a deliverable package of off-site walking/wheeling/cycling and crossing improvements that addresses ATE's 'last mile' connectivity, not just the site frontage.
- Should the site be progressed there would need to be a fully costed, deliverable mitigation and implementation programme (including public transport stop upgrades and service reliability measures where feasible), secured and delivered ahead of any development.
- If safe, policy-compliant access and sustainable travel measures cannot be proven deliverable (physically and financially), the allocation should be reconsidered and alternative sites sought.

### 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 NES38, 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, 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.

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 require a shift away from car dependency by prioritizing active and sustainable travel. Key infrastructure requirements include a mandatory capacity and safety assessment of the Fox Hill Road/Salt Box Lane crossroads junction, segregated walking and cycling routes to local schools and the village centre, upgraded bus stops and enhanced local bus service frequency.

In the previous review of the proposed Sheffield Plan (July 2025) Aprica assessed site NES38 (known then as S03028 and SO3100 and now 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:** S03028

**Address:** Land to the west of Grenoside Grange, Fox Hill Road, S35 8QS

**Gross site area (Site Allocation\*):** 6.72 Hectares

**Net housing area:** 5.38 Hectares

**Estimated housing capacity:** 188 homes


**Net employment area:** 0.00 Hectares

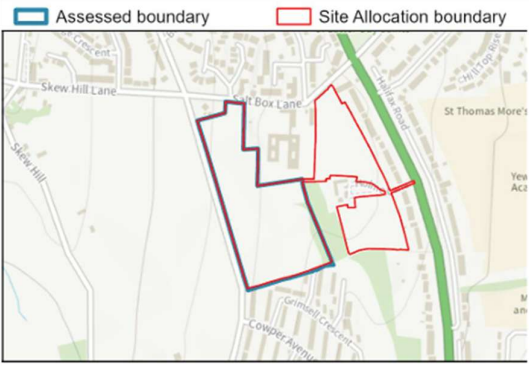
**Ward:** West Ecclesfield Ward

**Housing Market Area:** Chapelton & Ecclesfield

**Ownership:** Private

\*Note – Site combined with S03100 to form one allocation





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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	Y	Site within 400m of an existing off-carriageway cycle route
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	YY	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

- No potential highway capacity issues previously identified within 2km of the site
- Site is within 400m of a cycle route
- Footpaths on site should be retained
- 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)

**Aprica comment:**

- This site is rated double-negative (NN) for public transport, being over 1200m from the core public transport network
- The green (Y) rating for proximity to (within 400m) an active travel network is questionable, as it probably refers to the circular Route 67, more of a 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. The service in this area is quite poor, with no service on a Sunday
- The site is rated double-positive (YY) for community/leisure/recreation facilities yet it is stated that there are none. This needs clarification
- 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 access (known as Holme Lane) onto the A61 Halifax Road is entirely unsuitable as a vehicular access. It is a single width track between existing dwellings and emerges from the inside of a bend onto the A61. Safety camera warning signs are present, indicating that there might be a historical problem with vehicles exceeding the 30mph limit
- ~~Accesses onto Salt Box Lane and Fox Hill Road are not identified and would need to be considered further should this proposed site be progressed~~
- ~~There have been four serious injury collisions (seven casualties) and three slight injuries on the three roads in question (CrashMap 2019-2023)~~

#### **4 ASSESSMENT OF HIGHWAY PROPOSALS FOR SITE NES38**

##### 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).

Fox Hill Road and Salt Box Lane experience significant peak-time congestion, primarily due to the bottleneck at the Skew Hill/Main Street junction, which suffers from poor sightlines and heavy commuter flow toward the A61. The issue is made worse (a peak within the peak) by the 'school run' for Yewlands Academy, where narrow roads and parked cars often reduce traffic to a single lane. Additionally, these routes act as a frequent rat run for drivers trying to bypass main road delays. Because of this existing strain, the developers (two developers working together) will need to prove that their project won't make this congestion more severe.

Several other 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, Chapelton and beyond.

##### Proposed Accesses

Vehicular accesses are now proposed, indicatively, from Fox Hill Road. Non-vehicular accesses are proposed at a number of other points including onto the A61 Halifax Road.



*Proposed Site Accesses – JEH Planning*

Local residents have been very vocal throughout the Sheffield Plan consultations raising several specific concerns regarding the proposed access points for site NES38, including at the October 2025 Inspectors' hearing sessions. Residents and community groups argue that the proposed access points on Salt Box Lane and Fox Hill Road are fundamentally 'unsound' because they feed into an already failing junction at Skew Hill, labelled as a dangerous blackspot. The Inspectors ultimately accepted the site's inclusion but only on the condition of Main Modifications to the Plan. These modifications strictly mandate that development cannot proceed without proven junction upgrades and a robust 'active travel' strategy to mitigate the 'severe' congestion and safety risks highlighted by the community. Residents remain sceptical, due to the site's steep topography (making walking/wheeling/cycling difficult and unattractive) and the significant on-street parking, being barriers to physical mitigation measures.



*Obstructive Parking on The Narrow Footways, Salt Box Lane - Google*

## 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 NES38) 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 NES38 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 categorised site NES38 as a high-risk location for 'car-dependency' due to its steep topography and the existing hostile road environment of Salt Box Lane. During the October 2025 hearings, ATE challenged the Council's focus on motor vehicle capacity, insisting that any mitigation at the Skew Hill/Main Street junction must instead prioritise LTN 1/20 compliant pedestrian and cycle infrastructure. ATE's intervention led to the January 2026 Main Modifications, which now mandate a formal "active travel audit" and the delivery of segregated, safe routes to Yewlands Academy and Grenoside village centre. ATE's stance is clear: *'development must not proceed unless it can be proven that walking, wheeling, and cycling are the most convenient and safest modes of transport for new residents from the outset'*.

Grenoside presents a particular challenge with over 30% of residents being aged 65 or more. This higher demographic skew, combined with the village's challenging topography, suggests that standard active travel mitigations such as cycle lanes may be less effective than improvements to public transport and mobility-scooter-friendly infrastructure. As the Census data is from 2021/2022 and the National trend is towards a population of ageing people, it is likely that the non-walking/cycling community has increased.

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 NES38 or north Sheffield in general, but hopefully a case will be made for at least some studies in the area.

For site NES38 the hierarchy of travel modes – 1. Walking, 2. Cycling & wheeling, 3. Public transport, 4. Private car – needs more consideration and more detail provided on what active and sustainable travel measures can and will be provided where. Whilst some sections of the existing highway lend themselves to such measures some, such as Salt Box Lane, do not.

## Sustainable Travel Modes

**1. Walking:** Around site NES38, pedestrian facilities are severely restricted in places. Fox Hill Road has the width to introduce LTN 1/20 compliant infrastructure, but Salt Box Lane does not and it would be difficult to introduce on the A61 Halifax Road. As mentioned above, the area has a challenging topography, with most gradients being 1 in 10 to 1 in 15, far exceeding the 1 in 20 threshold for inclusive mobility. The current lack of controlled crossing points, for example at Fox Hill Road/Salt Box Lane, in Grenoside itself and at the Salt Box Lane/A61 junction, create severance and pose a high risk to vulnerable road users. Without a comprehensive programme of off-site 'walking and wheeling' infrastructure, the site would remain isolated from core community areas. It seems unlikely, due to the constricted highway boundaries and the gradients, that ATE's requirements for pedestrians can be met.

**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 NES38 and back. In places 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 adversely affected by congestion and bottlenecks. Buses on services such as the 86 can often become full, even with the 20 minute frequency. Even more regular services would be required in order to make bus travel a mode of choice.

There are no bus stops on the site frontage on Fox Hill Road, the nearest stops being some 150 and 350 metres from the proposed accesses. Adding the internal site distance could put the stops further away than ATE's recommended 400 metre maximum. The northbound stop on Salt Boxx Lane would be a steep 120 metre walk to the pedestrian site entrance. 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 Bus Stops on Salt Box Lane - Google*

At almost 5km away (from the site centre), 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'. Site NES38 is linked to the railway station by the 86 bus service, which stops around 200 metres from the station. The service's infrequency during evenings and weekends, and its susceptibility to peak-hour congestion, mean that it does not function as a 'bus-to-rail link'. To mitigate car dependency, the Sheffield Plan highlights the need for enhanced synchronisation between the 86 bus and train departure times at Chapeltown.

**4. Private Car:** Since sustainable travel modes are unlikely to be made sufficiently attractive, bearing in mind the topography, constricted road widths and the age demographic, the car is highly likely to be the main mode of transport for people living in or visiting the houses 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 NES38 is no exception. Site NES38 faced specific TRICS-related challenges during the 2025 hearings. Critics argue that the Council's reliance on standard 'suburban' trip rates was flawed because it failed to account for Grenoside's steep topography and the resulting 'mobility barrier' for its elderly population. This led to a formal challenge of the transport modelling, with the Planning Inspectors consequently mandating a more robust, site-specific assessment that accounts for the 'hill factor' and current bus reliability. Developers naturally want to demonstrate the minimum impact on the highway network and might therefore 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.

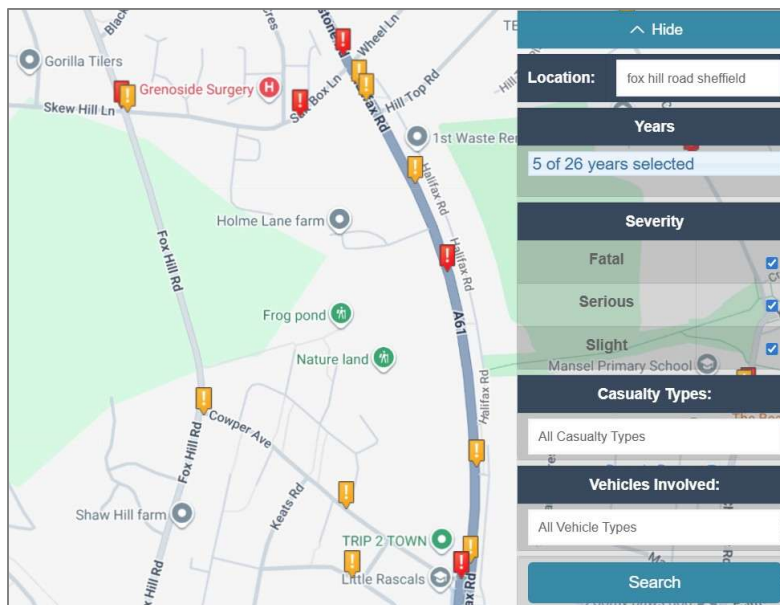
Aprica does not have the software or expertise to challenge TRICS (Trip Rate Information Computer System) and to do so would take many hours. It is therefore beyond the remit of this report but the core issue for Site NES38 seems to be the discrepancy between the theoretical models used by SCC and the 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 other developments, such as is the case at site NES38. 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 and Norfolk Estates agrees that: ‘The site can be safely accessed via two points on Fox Hill Road, with additional pedestrian and cycle access proposed onto Salt Box Lane; The site benefits from proximity to regular bus services on Fox Hill Road, Salt Box Lane, and Halifax Road, supporting sustainable travel for future residents; Highways, transport, and road safety matters do not present barriers to the site’s allocation or delivery; The development will enhance sustainable and active travel by improving the public footpath network across the site, increasing accessibility to the wider Green Belt.’ It is agreed that a Transport Assessment will accompany future planning applications to promote sustainable travel

options. Discussions continue regarding the extent of ecological buffers and the flexibility to provide infrastructure within the Local Wildlife Site, ensuring a balance between connectivity and environmental protection. Should the site progress, these further investigations and surveys will not just be needed, they will need to prove that the measures can be successfully introduced. They will need to include 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.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and SCC' 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 by significantly narrowing the green buffer between Grenoside and Ecclesfield. Critics, supported by the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE), argue that *'the development violates a core purpose of the Green Belt by eroding the distinct 'valley gap' that separates these communities'*. To address this, the 2026 Main Modifications mandate *'substantial landscape buffering'* on the site's eastern boundary to prevent a perceived merge and to protect the visual integrity of the Robin Brook corridor. This remains a major bone of contention with residents and the CPRE, who maintain that, especially when viewed alongside site NES39, there would be a failure to protect the Green Belt's role in preventing settlement merger.

#### Air Quality

Whilst site NES38 lies just outside the city-wide Sheffield Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), air quality is a material concern due to the site's proximity to the A61 corridor and the vulnerability of Grenoside's aging demographic. Evidence submitted in 2025 (REF1.0251) suggests that whilst national NO2 limits may be met, current levels already exceed World Health Organisation (WHO) guidelines. The Main Modifications require the developer to provide an Air Quality Assessment that accounts for the cumulative impact of construction dust and increased traffic at the Skew Hill bottleneck.

## 8 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusions

More evidence needs to be provided, bearing in mind the known issues around site NES38, to show that the proposed accesses would be safe and conducive to sustainable travel. Further development at this location could be inappropriate based on the known congestion problems and the challenges to creating safe, sustainable connections to the wider area. Proposals would need to be compliant with National Planning Policy and are probably not physically deliverable given the available highway widths and steep topography.

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 or 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 NES38 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. If its outputs are not based on like-for-like samples it is possible that the site could generate significantly higher private car movements, compounded by lower than projected sustainable travel figures.

**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 present additional hazards for vulnerable road users (i.e. those walking, wheeling and cycling). 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 currently 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.
- In terms of sustainability, walking to and from the site is unlikely due to the unattractive footways and significant gradients. Footways are narrow or non-existent in places. There is no cycle infrastructure at all and no evidence is yet provided to demonstrate how LTN 1/20-compliant (segregated) cycle infrastructure could be delivered within the highway limits. Bus services are not infrequent but are not frequent or reliable enough. 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 NES38 should be 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 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 and beyond, 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 SE38 traffic figures, known existing traffic problems, and known committed residential and commercial developments in Grenoside, Ecclesfield, Chapeltown and Thorpe Hesley.