

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 15 September 2025

Report Title

Bassingthorpe Farm Supplementary Planning Document

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

Yes

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Andrew Bramidge, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

Rotherham West, Greasbrough and Rawmarsh West Wards

Report Summary

Bassingthorpe Farm is identified as a Strategic Allocation in the Rotherham Local Plan for around 2,400 new homes, 11 hectares of employment land, a local centre and a primary school. The Bassingthorpe Farm Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) provides more detail on existing planning policies to help bring forward the site for development. The purpose of the SPD is to:

- Guide submission of planning applications and ensure timely delivery of strategic infrastructure on and off site.
- Ensure the provision of appropriate social and community facilities.
- Support any future funding bids for national grant opportunities.

The Bassingthorpe Farm Strategic Allocation is pivotal to the delivery of Rotherham's Local Plan and Housing Strategy, particularly given the changes to the National Planning Policy Framework that seek to deliver more new homes.

Recommendations

That Cabinet approves the adoption of the Bassingthorpe Farm Supplementary Planning Document.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Bassingthorpe Farm SPD
Appendix 2 Consultation Statement part 1 Feedback Report
Appendix 3 Consultation Statement part 2 Representations Received and the Council's Response
Appendix 4 Equality Part A – Screening
Appendix 5 Carbon Impact Assessment

Background Papers

[Report to Cabinet seeking approval to consult on the draft Bassingthorpe Farm SPD \(Cabinet 20/01/2025, minute 109 refers\)](#)

[Rotherham Core Strategy \(2014\)](#)

[Rotherham Sites and Policies Document \(2018\)](#)

[Adopted Statement of Community Involvement](#)

[National Planning Policy Framework](#)

[Planning Practice Guidance](#)

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel
None

Council Approval Required
No

Exempt from the Press and Public
No

Bassingthorpe Farm Supplementary Planning Document

1. Background

- 1.1 Rotherham's Local Plan provides the policy framework for determining planning applications. Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) provide additional advice and guidance to prospective developers and infrastructure providers, to help bring forward development in a way that meets the Council's objectives. Following public consultation, and Cabinet approval, an adopted SPD is a material consideration to be taken into account when determining planning applications.
- 1.2 Bassingthorpe Farm is identified as a Strategic Allocation in the Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), to consist of around 2,400 new homes, a primary school, a local centre, employment land and commercial opportunities. This allocation has been supported by technical work since the inception of the Local Plan, such as a concept framework and a more detailed masterplan to investigate the issues relating to delivery of the site. This previous work has been reviewed and key elements incorporated in the preparation of the Bassingthorpe Farm SPD.
- 1.3 The delivery of Bassingthorpe Farm will make a significant contribution to meeting the Local Plan housing target, generating Council Tax receipts, and providing Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) income towards infrastructure provision. It will also play an important role in the growth of the wider area as the site forms one of the largest housing growth zones in the Sheffield City Region.
- 1.4 The previous report to Cabinet in January 2025 (Cabinet 20/01/2025, minute 109 refers) sought approval to undertake consultation on the draft SPD. This report seeks adoption of the Bassingthorpe Farm SPD following extensive consultation and assessment of the representations and comments received during February and March 2025. A Consultation Statement is attached at appendices 2 and 3 setting out the key issues raised, and the changes made to the draft SPD. All representations are available to view on the Council's planning consultation website. Subject to Cabinet approval, the Consultation Statement will be published alongside the adopted SPD setting out the Council's response to the comments received.
- 1.5 The January 2025 report to Cabinet set out the key vision and principles for delivery of the Bassingthorpe Farm Strategic Allocation; these have not changed substantially following public consultation but are repeated below for context. Section 2 summarises the key issues raised by stakeholders and members of the community during the consultation and the changes to the draft SPD.
- 1.6 The vision for Bassingthorpe Farm is to create:

A well-connected 21st century garden community and an integral part of Rotherham. It should offer excellent walkable neighbourhoods and convenient links with adjacent communities, a transformed town centre and

new mainline station. A quality landscape setting supports healthy active lifestyles as well as comprehensive bio-diversity gains as part of integrated green and blue infrastructure.

The heart of Bassingthorpe should include vibrant local shops and facilities with job opportunities and a neighbourhood park. New distinctive neighbourhoods will provide a mix of quality homes, including affordable housing that meets local needs, helping, transforming Rotherham's housing offer with more compact character areas in key locations and overall of a scale to sustain a critical mass of neighbourhood facilities Bassingthorpe will foster inclusive, diverse communities. Long term stewardship underpins the community's sustainability, from the management of its greenspaces to the genuine involvement of local people.

1.7 The vision is supported by five placemaking principles:

1. Connected and integrated. Ensuring Bassingthorpe is outward looking – an integral part of Rotherham – including the town centre, mainline station and adjacent neighbourhoods. Within and around the site itself promoting local living and walkable neighbourhoods with safe and attractive access – including active travel – to facilities and destinations.

2. Landscape focussed. Making the most of a distinctive landscape setting and topography. Establishing comprehensive green / blue infrastructure including multi-functional elements and a new neighbourhood park and sports facilities at the heart of Bassingthorpe.

3. Heart of the community. Establishing a neighbourhood scale commercial and community 'heart' for Bassingthorpe including shops, facilities (including a co-located primary school), job opportunities and public realm. Located to serve new and nearby existing communities with safe and convenient access including cycle and pedestrian options.

4. Varied and distinctive. Planning for a critical mass of homes and residents to support a new local centre and designing for a range of distinctive character areas with a mix of house type, tenure and density – some more compact communities will be appropriate in key locations such as around the centre and near to transport hubs.

5. Sustainable stewardship. Underpinning green and blue infrastructure and the communities that use them with a comprehensive approach to maintenance, management and stewardship, bringing together the public, private and community sectors. Incorporating opportunities for training and skills development, social enterprise and community involvement.

2. Key Issues

2.1 The Bassingthorpe Farm SPD contains a spatial framework consisting of a series of coordinated and complementary plan layers that will guide the form and arrangement of future development parcels and green spaces, such as placemaking principles, green infrastructure, urban design, movement

hierarchy, residential character areas and densities. The plan layers are informed by consideration of the constraints and opportunities that exist on site and respond to existing policy requirements. Several technical studies and baseline information reports have informed this framework. After publication of the draft SPD for consultation, further technical work has been undertaken to consider the ground conditions and the constraints impacting on site following previous mining activity. This latest technical work suggests up to approximately 2,000 homes can be achieved which is lower than the anticipated number of homes stated in the draft SPD but it is important to note that this remains a working range, and the final housing numbers will be refined further as more technical work is carried out and detailed masterplanning progresses.

- 2.2 Consultation on the draft SPD was undertaken in line with The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement. In response to the consultation the Council received 59 representations. All representations received have been considered and the Consultation Statement at Appendices 2 and 3 provides details of the issues raised, the Council's response and how the SPD has been amended as a result. The main issues raised are summarised in the following paragraphs.

2.3 **Fear of losing green spaces, views, and informal walking routes**

The green infrastructure framework section has been updated with further tools and guidance prepared by Natural England. The aim of integrating accessible greenspace, biodiversity corridors, sustainable drainage systems, and urban greening has been reinforced to add confidence.

2.4 **Scepticism around infrastructure being delivered before or alongside homes and belief that the developers won't deliver their share of infrastructure**

To increase confidence, the SPD has been amended to provide clearer explanation of the mechanisms available to the Council when dealing with submitted planning applications, through which infrastructure contributions will be required. It highlights planning obligations such as Section 106, and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) requirements in plain English; and includes further detail on the Council's role in using the SPD in decision-making.

2.5 **Lack of understanding about who owns the land, and lack of confidence in delivery partners**

While land ownership is not directly within the SPD's remit, explanatory content has been added to provide greater clarity on the role of landowners, reinforcing the Council's leadership role and acknowledging the collaborative nature of delivery.

2.6 Local concern around Greasbrough traffic, and junction pressure at Carr Hill, Scrooby Lane, Potter Hill etc. Frustration with current congestion that feels likely to worsen

In response to specific concerns, the SPD's wording has been strengthened to recognise the local concerns around traffic. It also provides a clearer explanation of the requirement for a comprehensive Transport Assessment in later planning stages. The Connected and Integrated Placemaking principles have been strengthened by providing clearer commitments around prioritising active travel, improving public transport, and avoiding over reliance on cars. The SPD also further reinforces the aim to calm and reduce through traffic and the commitment to improvements of existing highways.

2.7 Confusion expressed by members of the community as to the details specific to the different densities/characters

Example images have been added to each character area section to make the requirements set out in the spatial framework and the character areas, easier to understand.

2.8 Concerns that heritage is being overlooked and lack of detail on the Bassingthorpe Farm buildings (some of which are listed buildings)

The SPD has been updated to more fully recognise heritage assets and their role in shaping character. The document now anticipates the use of historic references and locally significant names when considering place names across the development. The intention to retain and reuse the Bassingthorpe Farm buildings, and how they could be used for community uses, such as part of a local centre, heritage asset or cultural space, has been added and clarified.

2.9 Concerns about climate change, biodiversity, and protected species

The SPD now better reflects up-to-date expectations on climate resilience, net zero development, and biodiversity net gain. It references national standards (eg Future Homes and Future Buildings standards) and how the development will contribute to Council's Borough-wide ambitions. The SPD also provides greater clarity around protection of protected species, including a reference to environmental impact assessment and other measures to add confidence.

2.10 Jargon used, not getting clear answers at consultation events, and cynicism that engagement is just a "tick box" exercise

The language used throughout the SPD has been reviewed and simplified to improve clarity where possible. A new glossary of terms has been included to explain technical terms, and officers have reflected on the consultation feedback to inform how future engagement can be more open, transparent, and inclusive. The SPD also includes a clearer explanation on how the community can get involved in future stages, what they are, and what level of

detail they can expect to see. The SPD now includes a diagram of future stages for improved understanding.

2.11 Comments around the principle of development, loss of rural and agricultural land, and confusion about the purpose and level of detail in the SPD

The SPD now clearly reinforces that its purpose is to provide a framework for guiding future planning applications and that many detailed matters, such as design, layout, materials, drainage, the density of development, and the size of units will be addressed at later stages through Design Codes and individual planning applications.

- 2.12 The principle of development has already been established through the adopted Local Plan, which identified the site as a Strategic Allocation and removed the land from the Green Belt in 2014. The development of Bassingthorpe Farm is essential for delivering much-needed new homes to meet the Borough's housing needs. The refinements to the SPD following consultation will help to deliver a new development that takes account of public feedback. There will be more opportunity for public involvement when individual planning applications come forward.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 Option 1: Adopt the Bassingthorpe Farm SPD with the amendments

- 3.2 Adopting the document as a Supplementary Planning Document will provide clear guidance to applicants, helping speed up the planning process by minimising time-consuming amendments or negotiations often necessary following submission of planning applications. Adoption of the SPD will ensure that future planning applications for the site can demonstrate compliance with Policy CS1 of the Local Plan and provide support for the Council to refuse non-compliant planning applications. This will give greater certainty to the community and prospective developers on the Council's preferred approach to the future development of Bassingthorpe Farm.

- 3.3 Policy CS1 states that a comprehensive Masterplan must be approved by the Council prior to consideration of any planning applications on land forming the Strategic Allocation. Any planning applications, if for less than the whole development, must not prejudice the implementation of the whole Bassingthorpe Farm development and must include a phasing strategy to ensure the strategic social and physical infrastructure can be secured.

- 3.4 There may be higher risk of legal challenge to planning decision-making if the Council cannot demonstrate it has comprehensively considered the delivery of the Strategic Allocation in accordance with the requirements of Policy CS1. The adoption of the SPD to guide future development of the Bassingthorpe Farm Strategic Allocation will enable it to be a material consideration when making decisions on planning applications. It will ensure that all future planning applications are compliant with Policy CS1 and also appropriately reflect the detailed site development guidelines in the Local Plan.

- 3.5 The amendments detailed in the Consultation Statement are considered necessary to ensure the guidance contained in the SPD is robust, clear, relevant, and appropriate.
- 3.6 **Option 2: Decline to take forward the adoption of the Bassingthorpe Farm SPD**
- 3.7 Whilst there is no legal requirement that the Council prepares adoptable Supplementary Planning Documents, in this instance Policy CS1 of the Local Plan requires that: any application for development is preceded by, and is consistent with, a comprehensive masterplan, prepared collaboratively with and approved by the Council. Should the Council decide not to adopt the Bassingthorpe Farm SPD following this extensive programme of work and consultation on a draft SPD, then this will further delay the delivery of new homes at Bassingthorpe Farm. A comprehensive masterplan for the Strategic Allocation will be required at some future point to ensure delivery can occur on site.
- 3.8 It is imperative that sites already allocated in the adopted Local Plan (such as Bassingthorpe Farm) are brought forward for development as swiftly as possible to enable a supply of deliverable sites coming forward for development. Without a robust supply of deliverable housing sites, the Council will face continuing challenges to release other land, including Safeguarded Land or land in the Green Belt.
- 3.9 **Option 1 is the recommended option**, to ensure that Local Plan Policy CS1 and Site Development Guidelines are satisfied, and that development of Bassingthorpe Farm contributes to the overall housing supply in the Borough.
- 4. Consultation on proposal**
- 4.1 Table 1 in Paragraph 11 of the Consultation Statement provides details of all consultation activities undertaken, including in-person drop-in sessions. The SPD documentation was also made available in local libraries at Greasbrough, Rawmarsh and Riverside House. Details of all press notices, adverts and social media activity is included in the Consultation Statement. In addition, several thousand flyers and posters advertising the event and how to get involved were made available through community representatives, and in local community venues and shops advertising the events. Following a briefing from officers, Ward Members were directly involved in providing information locally to their communities and in attending the drop-in sessions.
- 4.2 There were 59 responses in total. The comments and representations received have all been reviewed and a response provided by the Council to each representation. Where appropriate, changes have been made to the draft SPD, these changes are clearly identified in the Consultation Statement. A copy of the amended version of the SPD is attached at Appendix 1.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 Subject to Cabinet approval, the Bassingthorpe Farm SPD along with the Consultation Statement and a Statement of Adoption will be published on the Council's website and will be used as a material consideration in all planning decision-making. All those who provided comments on the draft SPD will be notified.
- 5.2 Given the comprehensive nature of the SPD, this document will also be shared with potential developers to set out the requirements for delivery of around 2,000 homes and supporting community services and facilities including a new school, green infrastructure and all appropriate transport improvements.
- 5.3 To achieve consistency with the Council's document style, and correct any typographical errors, minor changes to numbering, formatting, text and images may be made prior to publication of the adopted SPD and supporting documents.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 The costs associated with the creation and consultation of the SPD have been funded through approved revenue budgets and grants.
- 6.2 There are no direct procurement implications arising from the recommendations detailed in this report.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 The recommendations and options set out in this report are in compliance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) regulations 2012 (the Regulations) as amended. The Report specifically seeks adoption of this Supplementary Planning Document from Cabinet following extensive public consultation. Formal Adoption is in accordance with the requirements of the Regulations which set out that consultation is a specific requirement to allow for the validation of an SPD.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 There are no direct Human Resources implications arising from the recommendations contained in this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 The SPD is intended to assist in delivering the Council's strategy and policies set out in the Local Plan. These include promoting and delivering sustainable patterns of development and sustainable communities, reducing pollution, and conserving and enhancing the quality of the built and natural environment.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 The SPD is intended to assist in delivering the Council's strategy and policies set out in the Local Plan. SPDs provide guidance on the strategic policies of the Local Plan.
- 10.2 The published Integrated Impact Assessments (IIA) that supported the preparation, examination and adoption of the Rotherham Local Plan provide a comprehensive Equalities Assessment of all the strategic policies of the Local Plan.
- 10.3 Community and stakeholder consultations were undertaken at various stages of Local Plan preparation, and this resulted in further refinements to policy wording. At each stage of Local Plan preparation an IIA, including an Equalities Assessment, was prepared and refined to reflect the most up to date policies that emerged following consultation.
- 10.4 Supplementary Planning Documents promote the delivery of sustainable patterns of development and the creation of sustainable communities for all residents, businesses and visitors, and conserve and enhance the quality of the built and natural environment for the benefit of everyone. The Equality Screening Assessment is attached as an appendix.
- 10.5 SPDs aid understanding of Local Plan policies and provide additional guidance to aid their implementation, but they do not create new planning policy.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 Climate change poses a significant threat to environments, individuals, communities, and economies on local, national, and international scales. In recognition of this the Council has aimed to be net carbon neutral as an organisation by 2030, and for Rotherham as a whole to achieve the same position by 2040.
- 11.2 The SPD provides further guidance and clarity to developers in bringing forward planning applications for development of Bassingthorpe Farm; reducing the carbon footprint of development; promoting higher sustainable construction standards; building climate resilient dwellings; and minimising impacts of carbon emissions harmful to local air quality, the natural environment and health.
- 11.3 The willingness of developers to work towards zero carbon developments is a key driver to change. Future government legislation will effectively regulate development on site to be zero carbon. Without legislation, the Council can promote best practice through its Development Plan Documents and guidance but cannot insist on carbon-neutral development.
- 11.4 There is a significant demand for new homes and amenities in the Borough. The Council is committed to determining planning applications in accordance

with Local Plan policy and SPDs, and in doing so is seeking to reduce, mitigate and adapt to climate change.

11.5 The Carbon Impact Assessment is attached as an appendix.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1 The implications for partners or other directorates are mainly associated with awareness of the content of the SPD in providing a robust framework for advice from stakeholders when commenting on future planning applications.

12.2 There are implications arising from the content of the SPD for the other major landowner Fitzwilliam Wentworth Estates; it will provide a framework for future discussions on collaboration in bringing the Strategic Allocation forward for development.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 The Council may be open to legal challenge should SPDs not be prepared and adopted in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Reporting back on the consultation process and clearly identifying where changes have been made to the earlier draft SPD published for consultation, is an essential requirement of the preparation of a robust SPD and Spatial Masterplan Framework required by Local Plan Policy CS1 and Site Development Guidelines.

13.2 If the Council does not adopt the SPD, there will be further delays in bringing forward the Bassingthorpe Farm Strategic Allocation for development.

14. Accountable Officers

Simon Moss, Assistant Director of Planning, Regeneration & Transport

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

| | Named Officer | Date |
|--|----------------------|-------------|
| Chief Executive | John Edwards | 26/08/25 |
| Assistant Director, Financial Services (Deputy S.151 Officer) | Rob Mahon | 20/08/25 |
| Assistant Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer) | Phil Horsfield | 18/08/25 |

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