This statement relates specifically to Inspector’s Question 7.1 *Housing in the Countryside*

1. We set out our position on Policy 2(5) under Matter 5. In our view it is wholly wrong for the Plan to have a policy which specifically allows the future of rural sites adjacent to settlements to perpetually hang in the balance, depending on whether or not there is a 5-year housing land supply at the time.

2. We also set out in our Reg 19 representations concerning Chapter 9 of the Plan, that the draft Plan does not set out to achieve any positive outcomes for the countryside. The general thrust of the Plan’s approach to countryside can be paraphrased as follows: *The countryside is the generic space outside settlements. Development will be constrained there (Policy 26), unless there is a shortage of housing land supply, in which case development will be less constrained (Policies 2 and 3).* That is, plainly, not planning.

3. Doncaster is a geographically large Borough, with a polycentric pattern of development and an extremely diverse countryside. Despite recognising this in the contextual text, the Plan’s housing policies show no indication of being informed by these characteristics.

4. We previously recommended that the Plan should be re-structured into sub-areas, whereby settlements and their surrounding countryside could be planned together based on their characteristics and development needs. There are wide variations in housing and employment need, landscape character, flood risk, transport connectivity and ecological condition between these different sub-areas, and a Plan that is blind to those variations is simply not credible.

5. Therefore it remains our position that the approach set out in policies 2, 3 and 26 simply do not amount to a plan for housing in the countryside. In our view a sub-area approach is the only way to make a meaningful Local Plan for Doncaster, and we are deeply disappointed that our constructive efforts to advocate for this have gone unheeded.