

Market viability review: executive summary

SAMPLE REPORT A 169-home tower in Sheffield city centre, launching sales in 2026. For developers. The building's name is hidden; the market numbers are real.

£28.7m

Sales value on the evidence, flat by flat (listed prices: £33.5m)

£331

Price per sq ft the evidence supports, against £386 on the developer's list

£1,000

Rent a month for a one-bed. Investors would earn 7% to 8% a year at our prices

34 months

To sell all 169 flats at 5 a month, our middle case

What this report is

An independent desk review for a developer about to launch sales: what the flats are worth, who will buy and rent them, how quickly they will sell and what else is being built nearby. It uses the developer's own floor plans and price list, sold prices, rents and the city's building pipeline, all as at October 2026.

What it is not

Not a valuation. Only a RICS Registered Valuer can give one. Our figures are estimates.

Not advice. It is not legal, tax, financial or investment advice.

Not a promise. Prices, rents and sales speed can be better or worse than we show.

Our findings: the upside, the downside and what can help

	Upside	Downside	What can help
Prices	New flats are scarce: new builds were only 2.5% of Sheffield sales last year.	Listed prices average £386 per sq ft, about 14% above the £320 to £345 the evidence supports.	Price most flats at £320 to £345 per sq ft; keep higher prices for top floors and views.
Buyers	Investors look for yield; used city centre flats earn about 8% a year.	Only about half of city centre flats put up for sale in the last two years sold.	Sell mainly to investors, with a letting service; release flats in phases.
Renters	City centre rents are up 34.5% since 2021, to about £990 a month.	Flats listed to rent rose 94% in a year; rent growth is slowing to 2% to 3%.	Show investors realistic rents (£850 to £1,350 a month) rather than brochure forecasts; keep the lounge, co-working space and concierge.
Livability	A 10-minute walk to both universities, The Moor shops and Ecclesall Road.	Beside the inner ring road; Sheffield's crime rate is above the UK average.	Acoustic glazing, secure entry and a staffed reception.
New supply	Few for-sale towers nearby; most new homes are for rent or for students.	6,095 build to rent homes in the pipeline; about 2,000 homes planned next door from 2029/30.	Sell early, before the larger schemes finish.
Viability	On the evidence, sales of about £28.7m (£27.1m after the 4% agent fee and costs).	Selling all 169 flats to one investor would fetch only about £22.6m; slow sales add interest.	Aim for 5 or more sales a month; keep a bulk sale as a fall-back.

Overall: there is real demand from renters and investors, but at today's listed prices the flats look expensive against what similar flats sell for. Pricing nearer the evidence should help the tower sell steadily.

Where to find the detail	1 The scheme	2 Prices and value	3 Buyers
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Important. A sample report on an anonymised scheme. Estimates based on stated assumptions, not a formal valuation, which only a RICS Registered Valuer can provide. Not legal, tax, financial or investment advice. Prices and rents can fall as well as rise.

The scheme and the question

A 21-storey tower of 169 flats on the southern edge of Sheffield city centre. What the developer asked us to find out.

The question

A developer is about to launch sales of a refurbished 21-storey tower of 169 flats in Sheffield city centre. Most buyers are expected to be investors who will rent the flats out. The developer asked us four things: **what the flats are worth, who will buy and rent them, how quickly they will sell** and **what else is being built nearby**.

The building

Flats on floors 1 to 21, eight to a floor, with a resident lounge, co-working space, meeting room, games area and a 24-hour concierge. Most flats have a balcony. The tower sits beside the inner ring road, close to The Moor shopping street and Ecclesall Road, about a 10-minute walk from both universities.

The flats

Type	Flats	Share	Size range, sq ft	Average size
Studio	22	13%	333 to 370	364 (34 sq m)
One-bed	127	75%	388 to 735	502 (47 sq m)
Two-bed	20	12%	750	750 (70 sq m)
All flats	169	100%	333 to 750	513 (48 sq m)

Sizes are floor space inside the flat, without balconies, from the developer's floor plans. A sq ft is the space of a floor tile about 30 cm square; 10.8 sq ft make one square metre.

Scorecard

What we checked	What we found	Rating
Listed prices against the evidence	About 14% higher than the evidence supports	High
Rents	£850 to £1,350 a month, in line with new rental blocks	Fair
Yield at listed prices	5.8% to 6.4%, against about 8% on used flats nearby	Low
Buyers for flats	About half of city centre flats offered for sale sold	Watch
Renters	Rents up 34.5% since 2021; more flats now listed	Strong
New rental homes	6,095 build to rent homes in the pipeline	Watch
Livability	Universities, shops and station within walking distance; busy road	Good
Time to sell	34 months at 5 sales a month	Watch

The bottom line

1. The tower has 169 flats: 22 studios, 127 one-beds and 20 two-beds, averaging 513 sq ft (48 sq m).
2. Renters and investors are the market. Owner-occupiers will be few, so prices have to work for an investor.
3. The listed prices are the main risk. Pages 3 and 4 set out what the evidence supports.

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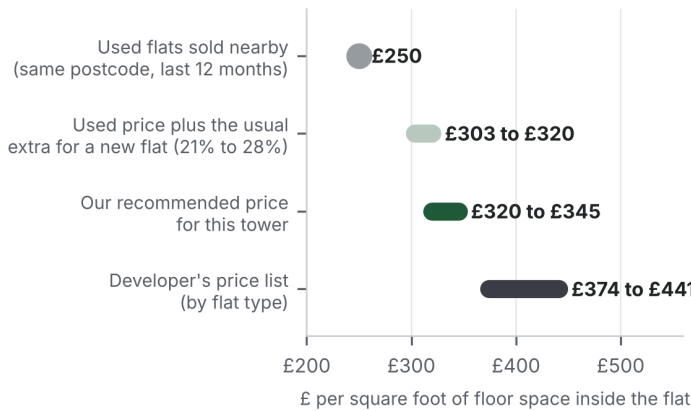
What the flats are worth

Prices compared with what similar flats sell for, measured per square foot so that flats of different sizes can be compared.

1. Price per square foot

How to read it: each line is a price, or a range of prices, per square foot of floor space. Read from the top: what used flats nearby sell for, then the usual extra for a brand-new flat, then our price for this tower and the developer's list.

Price per square foot: evidence against the list



Sources: PropertyData (Land Registry), Plumplot, Construction Capital, developer's listing, Oct 2026.

What it shows: our recommended price, **£320 to £345 per sq ft**, is built up from the evidence: used flats nearby sell for £250 and new flats usually sell for 21% to 28% more. A concierge, lounge, balconies and views justify the top of that range or a little above it. The developer's list, **£374 to £441**, is above anything the evidence supports.

2. Our recommended price for each type of flat, against the developer's list

Type	Flats	Average size	Developer's list price (average)	Our recommended price (average)	Our range	Our price compared with the list
Studio	22	364 sq ft	£160,000	£129,000	£124,000 to £135,000	£31,000 lower (20%)
One-bed	127	502 sq ft	£192,000	£167,000	£160,000 to £173,000	£25,000 lower (13%)
Two-bed	20	750 sq ft	£280,000	£234,000	£225,000 to £244,000	£46,000 lower (16%)
All flats	169	513 sq ft	£198,000	£170,000	£163,000 to £176,000	£28,000 lower (14%)

All prices are averages for that type of flat. The developer's list: studio from £159,650, one-bed from £173,040 and two-bed from £278,100, turned into a price per sq ft and applied to every flat of that type. Our price: studios £340 to £370 per sq ft, one-beds £320 to £345 and two-beds £300 to £325. Smaller flats sell for more per sq ft.

The bottom line

- 1. Our recommended prices are **lower than the developer's list for every type of flat**: about 20% lower for studios, 13% for one-beds and 16% for two-beds.
- 2. Across the tower our prices average **£170,000** a flat against £198,000 on the list, **14% lower**.
- 3. Prices nearer the evidence are more likely to sell steadily and to match the valuations banks make for buyers who borrow.

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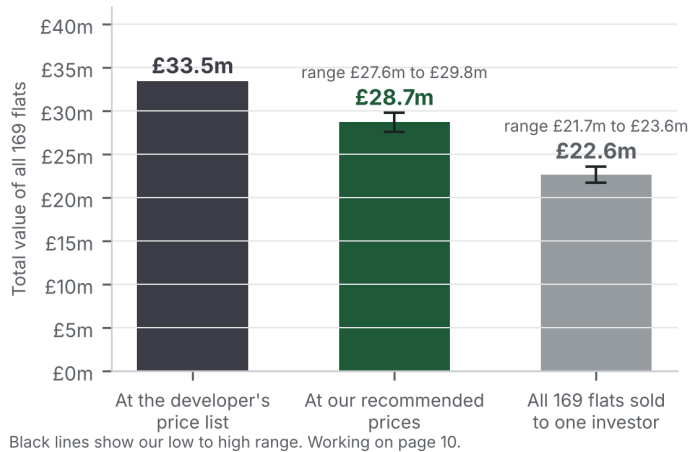
Total sales value and three ways to sell

What the whole tower could bring in: flat by flat at the developer's list, flat by flat at our prices, or all 169 flats at once to one investor.

3. Three ways to sell

How to read it: each bar is the total for all 169 flats, before selling costs. Dark grey: every flat sold one at a time at the developer's list. Green: every flat sold one at a time at our recommended prices. Light grey: the whole tower sold in one deal to one investor.

What the whole tower could sell for, before selling costs



What it shows: selling flat by flat at our prices brings in about **£28.7m**, £4.8m less than the list. Selling all 169 flats to one investor brings in less again, about **£22.6m**, but in a single deal with no wait for buyers.

How we worked out the sales value

Type	Floor space, sq ft	List £/sq ft	List total	Our £/sq ft	Our total
Studio	8,000	£441	£3.5m	£355	£2.8m
One-bed	63,692	£382	£24.3m	£332	£21.2m
Two-bed	14,990	£374	£5.6m	£312	£4.7m
All 169	86,683	£386	£33.5m	£331	£28.7m

Why is our total lower than adding up the asking prices? The £33.5m is what the developer is asking. Asking prices are not sale prices. We value each flat on what buyers have actually paid for similar flats, from Land Registry sales, plus the usual extra for a new flat. On that evidence buyers are likely to pay about 14% less than the asking prices.

The bottom line

- Flat by flat at our prices, the developer keeps about **£27.1m** after selling costs; at the list, £31.6m, but only if buyers pay those prices.
- Selling all 169 flats to one investor brings about **£22.4m**, £4.7m less than selling flat by flat at our prices, but at once and with certainty.
- Selling flat by flat is worth more only if sales are steady. Page 5 looks at how fast they can go.

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4. What the developer keeps after selling costs

Way to sell	Total sale price	Selling costs	Developer keeps
Every flat, one at a time, at the developer's list	£33.5m	5.5% (£1.8m)	£31.6m
Every flat, one at a time, at our prices	£28.7m	5.5% (£1.6m)	£27.1m
All 169 flats to one investor, in one deal	£22.6m	about 1% (£0.2m)	£22.4m

Selling flats one at a time costs about 5.5%: the 4% fee sales agents charge on this tower plus about 1.5% for marketing and legal work. A single sale to one investor needs only legal and advisers' fees, about 1%. Before tax and any interest on loans.

5. How one investor buying all 169 flats would price the tower

A company that buys whole buildings to rent out (a **build to rent** investor) does not look at flat prices. It works out the rent left after running costs and pays a price that gives it a set return.

Step	Working	Result
Rent from all 169 flats for a year, before costs	$22 \times £850 + 127 \times £1,000 + 20 \times £1,350, \times 12 \text{ months}$	£2,072,000
Less 30% for empty flats, management, repairs and service charges	$£2,072,000 \times 70\%$	£1,451,000
What the investor can spend in total	Net rent ÷ 6% net initial yield	£24,178,000
Less the investor's own buying costs	Stamp duty, legal and agents, about 6.8% on top of the price	£22,639,000

Which yield do we use?

Net initial yield (NIY), used on this page for the whole tower: a year's rent after running costs, divided by everything the investor pays, including stamp duty and fees. It is how investors price whole buildings; the "cap rate" is the same idea. We use 6%, within a range of 5.75% to 6.25%.

Gross yield, used on page 6 for single flats: a year's rent before any costs, divided by the price. It is the figure buyers of single flats usually quote. At £22.6m, the tower's gross yield would be 9.2%.

Who will buy and how fast

The buyers this tower will attract, how the market for flats is moving and how long it could take to sell all 169.

6. Who buys flats like these

Investors. Most buyers of small city centre flats rent them out. They compare the rent with the price: used flats in the same postcode earn about 8% a year before costs, so a new flat at a lower yield needs a clear reason to pay more.

Buyers from abroad. Sales agents for towers like this sell to investors in the Gulf and Asia. They charge about 4% and can sell several flats a month, but these buyers are sensitive to price and to the pound.

People who will live there. Some graduates and young professionals buy, but most rent. Some banks will not lend on very small flats, which narrows the market for studios.

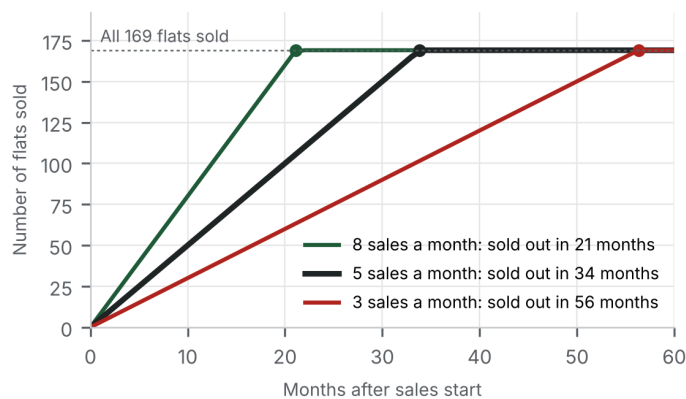
7. How the market for flats is doing

Sheffield had **7,174** home sales in the year to June 2026. New homes made up only **2.5%** of sales. In the city centre, only about **half (50.6%)** of flats offered for sale over the last two years found a buyer, against about three in four houses. Prices across the city fell slightly, by 0.4%, over the year.

8. How long it could take to sell

How to read it: each line shows flats sold month by month at a steady rate. The tower is sold out when a line reaches 169.

Flats sold over time, at three sales speeds



Middle case, in black: 5 sales a month.

What it shows: at **5 sales a month**, our middle case, the tower takes about **34 months** to sell. At 3 a month it takes over 4½ years; at 8 a month, under 2 years.

Why speed matters. While flats are unsold the developer pays interest on its loans. For every £10m still borrowed, a year of slower sales costs about **£650,000** at 6.5%, the lowest rate lenders quote for this kind of loan.

Pricing and speed go together. Prices near the evidence should support the middle case. At the listed prices, the slower line is more likely.

The bottom line

1. Investors are the main buyers, so the price has to make sense against the rent.
2. City centre flats sell more slowly than houses: about half of those offered sold.
3. At 5 sales a month the tower sells out in about 34 months. Selling some flats as a block to a rental investor would shorten this.

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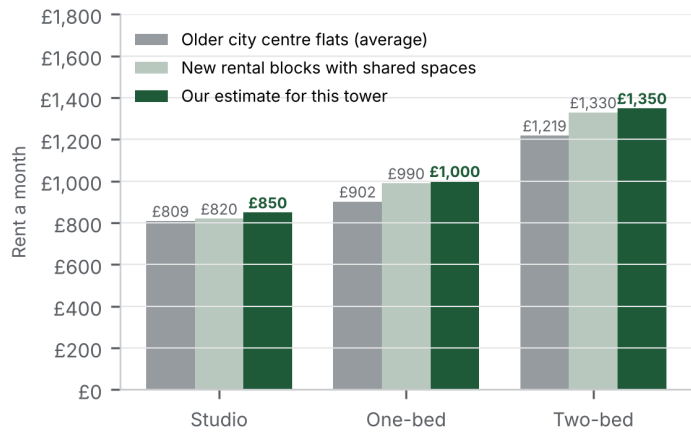
Rental demand: who will rent and for how much

The rents these flats can earn, the people who rent in Sheffield city centre and the yield an investor buyer would get.

9. Rents a month

How to read it: grey is the average for older city centre flats; pale green is new rental blocks with shared spaces; dark green is our estimate for this tower.

Rent a month by type of flat



Sources: ARL build to rent snapshot, June 2025; our estimate for 2026.

What it shows: new rental blocks with a lounge, gym or concierge let for **7% more** on average than older flats and 10% more for one-beds. This tower has similar shared spaces, so we put its rents close to theirs, about **£850, £1,000 and £1,350** a month.

10. The yield an investor would get

For single flats, buyers quote the **gross yield**: a year's rent before any costs, divided by the price.

Type	Rent a month	Listed price	Gross yield	Our recommended price	Gross yield
Studio	£850	£160,000	6.4%	£129,000	7.9%
One-bed	£1,000	£192,000	6.3%	£167,000	7.2%
Two-bed	£1,350	£280,000	5.8%	£234,000	6.9%

Used flats in the same postcode earn about **8%**. At our prices the new flats earn about 7% to 8%, close enough for many investors to pay for a new flat with shared spaces. At the listed prices, 5.8% to 6.4% is a harder sell.

11. Who rents here and why demand is strong

- Sheffield has about **54,000** university students; many graduates stay to work.
- The city's population reached **573,252** in 2023, up 3% in ten years.
- City centre rents rose **34.5%** from 2021 to 2026, to about £990 a month.
- About **19%** of Sheffield homes are rented from private landlords.

Watch: rental listings rose **94%** in a year to mid-2025 while rents across Sheffield rose 4.3% in the year to April 2026, slower than before. Agents expect 2% to 3% in the city centre in 2026.

The bottom line

1. Rents of about £850 for a studio, £1,000 for a one-bed and £1,350 for a two-bed are in line with new rental blocks nearby.
2. At our prices investors would earn about 7% to 8% a year before costs; at the listed prices, 5.8% to 6.4%.
3. Demand is strong, but more flats are coming up for rent, so rent growth is likely to slow.

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Livability: what it is like to live here

The things renters and buyers weigh up: getting about, work, study, shops, green space, safety, noise and the building itself.

12. Livability scorecard

What we checked	What we found	Rating
Universities	About a 10-minute walk to the University of Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam University	Very good
Getting about	About 15 minutes' walk to Sheffield station; fastest train to London about 2 hours, around 38 trains a day	Good
Shops, food and nightlife	Next to The Moor shopping street and market; Ecclesall Road's bars and restaurants close by	Very good
Jobs	City centre offices within walking distance; the Heart of the City scheme aims for 7,000 new jobs by 2030	Good
Green space	Small city centre parks and gardens within walking distance; larger parks a short bus ride away	Fair
Safety	Sheffield recorded 8.6 crimes per 1,000 residents in January 2026, against 6.8 for the UK; city centres are usually higher	Watch
Noise and air	Beside the inner ring road, a busy dual carriageway	Watch
The building	Resident lounge, co-working space, meeting room, games area and 24-hour concierge; most flats have balconies; views from upper floors	Good
Building safety	A tower over 18 metres: buyers' lenders will ask for fire safety paperwork	Check

What it shows: the tower scores well on the things city centre renters care about most: being close to the universities, shops, nightlife and the station. The weak points are road noise and safety on the streets around a city centre. Both can be eased: acoustic glazing, controlled entry and a staffed reception matter to renters and to their parents.

The bottom line

1. Location is the tower's strongest point for renters: universities, shops and the station are all walkable.
2. Road noise and city centre safety are the main drawbacks; the concierge and secure entry help.
3. Have the fire safety paperwork ready before launch, as buyers' banks will ask for it.

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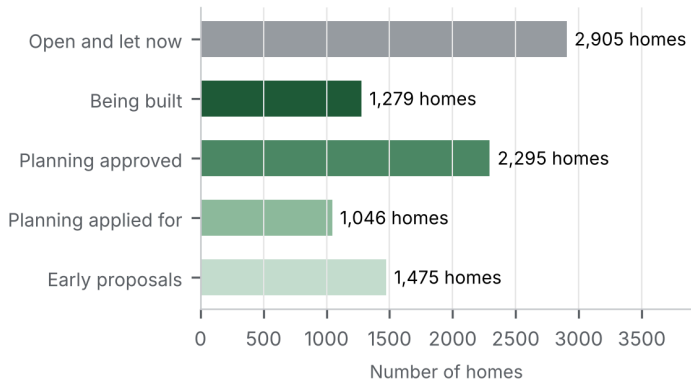
Competing supply: what else is being built

New homes for rent, for sale and for students that will compete with this tower for tenants and buyers.

13. Build to rent homes in Sheffield

How to read it: homes in blocks built to rent out, by stage. Dark green is being built now and will compete soonest.

Build to rent homes in Sheffield, by stage



What it shows: Sheffield has **2,905** build to rent homes open and **6,095** in the pipeline, more than twice as many again. Not all will be built, but **1,279** were already under construction in mid-2025. Each one competes for the same young renters.

14. Schemes near this tower

Scheme	Homes	Type	Stage
Large student and co-living block, Wellington Street	960	Student / co-living	Being built
Rental block, Nursery Street	101	Build to rent	Being built
Two rental blocks due 2026	n/a	Build to rent	Due mid-2026
40-storey tower, High Street	206	Not stated	Approved 2020, not started
23-storey rental tower, city centre edge	336	Build to rent	Approved 2021
Moorfoot, beside The Moor	c.2,000	Mixed	Planned 2029/30 to 2039/40
Student tower, St Mary's Gate	286 beds	Students	Plans submitted 2020

Names of other schemes are given by street only. Sources: Sheffield City Council, ARL build to rent snapshot (June 2025), developers and press.

What it means: few new towers nearby are selling flats one by one, which helps sales. But much more rental and student housing is coming and the council plans about **2,000 homes at Moorfoot**, next to The Moor, from 2029/30. That will compete for renters later in the decade.

The bottom line

- 1. Little direct competition for buyers: few nearby towers are selling flats one at a time.
- 2. Strong competition for renters is building: 6,095 rental homes in the pipeline and about 2,000 homes planned next door.
- 3. Selling and letting early, before these schemes finish, lowers the risk.

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Viability, risks and next steps

Whether the scheme works at today's market prices, what could change the result and what to do before launch.

15. What the tower could raise

Case	Sales value	After selling costs	What it assumes
Prices 10% below our middle	£25.8m	£24.4m	Weaker market or bank valuations
Our middle prices	£28.7m	£27.1m	£331 per sq ft on average
Our high prices	£29.8m	£28.2m	Top of the evidence range
Listed prices	£33.5m	£31.6m	Only if buyers pay above the evidence
All 169 flats to one investor	£22.6m	£22.4m	One deal: quick, certain, lower value

What it shows: the tower's value on the evidence sits between a quick sale to a rental investor and the listed prices. Whether the scheme makes money depends on what it cost to buy and refurbish, which this sample does not cover. A full review compares these figures with the developer's costs.

16. Risks and what can reduce them

Risk	What we found	Rating	What can help
Price	Listed prices are about 14% above the evidence	High	Reprice to £320 to £345 per sq ft; keep premiums for upper floors
Speed of sales	Half of city centre flats offered for sale sold in two years	Watch	Phase releases; sell a block to a rental investor
Rents	More flats coming up for rent; growth slowing	Watch	Market the flats on realistic rents; furnish and include broadband
New supply	6,095 rental homes in the pipeline; Moorfoot from 2029/30	Watch	Launch and let early
Buyers' loans	Small flats and tall buildings: some banks are cautious	Check	Fire safety paperwork ready; line up lenders
Overseas buyers	Sensitive to the pound and to price	Watch	Clear rent figures; price in pounds

17. Next steps before launch

1. Set a price list from the evidence, for each floor and view, then test it with two or three agents.
2. Ask a rental investor for a price on a block of 30 to 50 flats as a fall-back.
3. Have fire safety paperwork and service charge figures ready for buyers' banks and lawyers.
4. Agree a letting service so investors can see the rent before they buy.

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Appendix: where the numbers come from

The sources behind each figure and the sums, so that every number can be checked.

A1. Sources

Number	Source	Date	Used for
Unit mix, sizes, shared spaces	Developer's floor plans and brochure	2024	Pages 2 to 4
Listed prices	Developer's current listing on Zoopla	Oct 2026	Prices
Sales agent fee, 4%	Developer's sales terms for this tower	2024	Selling costs
Used flat price, £250 per sq ft; yield about 8% (S1)	PropertyData, from Land Registry sales	Aug 2026	Prices, yields
Average flat sale, about £120,000 (S1); recent sales	Rightmove sold prices	Jul 2026	Prices
Flats sold for £140,000 in Sheffield; 7,174 sales; new-build premium 27.7%; senior debt from 6.5%	Construction Capital, from Land Registry	Oct 2026	Prices, speed
New-build premium about 21%; new builds 2.5% of sales	Plumplot, from Land Registry	Aug 2026	Prices, buyers
Half of city centre flats offered sold	Reeds Rains	Mar 2026	Buyers
City centre rents up 34.5% since 2021, £990	Reeds Rains	Jun 2026	Renters
Rents by flat type; build to rent pipeline; population; listings up 94%	ARL build to rent snapshot	Jun 2025	Renters, supply
Sheffield rents up 4.3%	ONS Price Index of Private Rents	Apr 2026	Renters
Students, about 54,000	PropertyData	2026	Renters
Housing need, Moorfoot c.2,000 homes, private renting 19%	Sheffield City Council, Housing Growth Delivery Plan	2025	Supply
Crime rate	SCOS from police data	Jan 2026	Livability
Train times to London	Traintickets.com timetable	2026	Livability

A2. The sums

Figure	Working	Result
Floor space	Internal areas from the floor plans, all 169 flats	86,683 sq ft (8,053 sq m)
Listed value	Each type's listed £ per sq ft × its floor space	£33,461,000
Our value	Studios £340 to £370, one-beds £320 to £345, two-beds £300 to £325 per sq ft × floor space	£27,599,000 to £29,806,000
Rent roll	$(22 \times £850 + 127 \times £1,000 + 20 \times £1,350) \times 12$	£2,072,000
Bulk sale	$\text{Rent roll} \times 70\% \div 6\% \div 1.068$	£22,639,000
Selling costs	4% agent fee + 1.5% marketing and legal	5.5%
Time to sell	$169 \div \text{sales a month (3, 5 or 8)}$	56, 34 or 21 months
Interest cost	$£10\text{m} \times 6.5\% \text{ for a year}$	£650,000

Assumptions that are ours: the price ranges by flat type, the rents for this tower, 30% running costs for a rental investor, a 5.75% to 6.25% investor yield and the sales rates. All figures are rounded and before tax.

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