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## Downsizing deals - Sheffield Council plans to help safeguard jobs at Corus

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It is reported that Sheffield Council plans to help safeguard jobs at the struggling Stocksbridge steelworks have been criticized as being too vague by the town's MP.

Plans drawn up by Mr John Mothersole CEO of Sheffield Council include cutting business rates to help steel giant Corus.

But Hillsborough Labour MP Ms Angela Smith, whose constituency covers Stocksbridge, said the report was strong on rhetoric but short on real practical help.

Sheffield and Rotherham Councils are investigating whether Corus could get business rate relief at Stocksbridge and Rotherham because only parts are used.

Councilors are looking at changing planning requirements so Corus can sell part of the Stocksbridge site for housing. The plan says "The council strongly believes there can be a positive future for manufacturing in Stocksbridge and that it is critical to retain the skills and plant capacity through the current recession that will allow growth again."

The council wants an employment benefits and advice centre to be set up in Stocksbridge to work alongside the Job Centre Plus service based at the Corus site.

But the main part of the plan is to lobby Government for support. Last month the council leadership and Lib Dem and Labour MPs called for the Government to increase a GBP 5 million grant to help threatened Corus workers.

Mr Smith said that "In the area where Sheffield City Council could help it is unfortunately very vague. The disposal of surplus land on the site is something the council could really help with but on this the report says very little."

(Sourced from [www.sheffieldtelegraph.co.uk](http://www.sheffieldtelegraph.co.uk))

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