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From: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]0000Authentication

To: [localplan](#)

Subject: FW: Proposed Local Development Plan, Yetholm

Sensitivity: Normal

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 11 January 2021 12:45
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Proposed Local Development Plan, Yetholm

CAUTION: External Email

[REDACTED]

By email to: [REDACTED] **Lead Officer Forward Planning, Scottish Borders Council, Newtown St Boswells, TD6 0SA**

[REDACTED]

11 January 2021

Dear [REDACTED]

Proposed Local Development Plan, Yetholm

I am writing in connection with proposals for (a) additional housing in Town Yetholm (RY1B)/(RY4B), and (b) the creation of a business/industrial site (BYETH001), adjacent to Yetholm Hall, as set out in the Local Development Plan drawn up by Scottish Borders Council (SBC).

I understand there is a brief consultation period concerning these proposals which closes on 25 January 2021. Accordingly, I should like you to take account of my observations and for this email to be **formally received by SBC as an objection**. However, as such it is an objection which constitutes a provisional position on my part pending further consideration by SBC and other authorities of the matters concerned.

In principle I do not oppose the proposals for additional housing and provision of a site which could offer employment for people in the immediate locality. However, notwithstanding the details included in the sections marked 'Site Requirements' in the Plan, I believe there need to be more detailed and firm guarantees on the part of SBC regarding the quality, appearance and safe traffic management of these proposals.

SBC will be aware that both Kirk Yetholm and Town Yetholm have developed in recent years as communities akin in some respects to the 'villages etape' which are common in France. Both villages are popular with tourists throughout the year, offer a

variety of accommodation for tourists as well as for permanent and occasional residents; there is a garage, a village shop on the point of being taken into community ownership, a butcher, a hotel and restaurant, a pub with a restaurant, and several thriving community venues - one of which shows direct live transmissions from the National Theatre, a rarity in this region. The villages are situated on the Pennine Way and St Cuthbert's Way.

In this connection I note that SBC's Development Plan, in 'Placemaking Considerations', appears to make a tacit assumption that while Kirk Yetholm has some historic features and an amenity value which need to be respected, the same factors do not seem to be applied to Town Yetholm. I would argue strongly that this assumption is mistaken and that on the contrary **the two communities should be treated as a single entity in planning and development terms, since what affects one, for good or ill, affects the other.**

Quality and Appearance

Whatever their undoubted merits in providing homes the existing housing developments at Woodbank Road and the Deanfield area in Town Yetholm are severely regimented in design, constructed along a terrace traversing a steep gradient, and offer virtually no off-road parking. Accordingly, the development does little to enhance the appearance of Yetholm as a whole or, even more importantly, for the quality of life of the people who live there. It poses severe challenges in terms of access to individual homes. Residents, some of whom are elderly and infirm, must climb up or down flights of steps to their front doors (most require handrails to do so safely), and the same issue of access affects delivery of mail, household goods, and furniture. **Any new housing development in Yetholm must avoid repeating these mistakes.**

Access and Traffic Management

The clustering of existing houses at Woodbank and Deanfield leaves no space other than for parking of residents' vehicles on both sides of the narrow roads. In this connection I question whether SBC has rehearsed access for emergency vehicles, including fire engines, when private parking is at its highest overnight.

Thus the same issues of quality, appearance, and access apply to any further housing development **and** to the proposal for a linked business/industrial unit. While Pinnacle Hill in Kelso is in many ways a model of its kind for an industrial estate, the yard tacked on to Morebattle is unsightly, and (by extending the point) how SBC can countenance the current appearance of the car breaker, 'Proctor Smiddy'(on the B6352) is beyond belief. **The authority needs to be more vigilant over the appearance of industrial units in the region** if the statement in 'Site Requirements' is to have any credibility with the community.

I have referred earlier to access and parking, and these concerns apply sharply to the impact of **increased traffic** on nearby areas of Town Yetholm by new housing and a business/industrial unit as currently proposed. Here, of course, I declare an interest, because the back of my property lies alongside the narrow road which leads to the areas under consideration. While the Development Plan makes reference to strategies for dealing with traffic flow, further attention needs to be paid to how, precisely, SBC would ensure in advance an increase in the volume of traffic would be managed both **safely and without detriment to the amenity of existing properties.**

I shall be grateful if you will formally acknowledge receipt of this email but I do not require a response to the matters raised at this stage. Instead, I would like it to be retained for further attention if and when the proposals concerning Yetholm contained in the Development Plan are taken forward.

Yours sincerely

Hywel James

