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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 12 January 2021 10:13
To: localplan
Subject: LDP ADARN005
Attachments: Representation to SBC Forward Planning.docx

CAUTION: External Email

Good Morning

I have sent representation regarding the above by surface mail. But as mail deliveries are currently subject to some delays, have also attached my letter here for information and ensure arrival.

Thank you.

David Potts



12 January 2021

Forward Planning
Scottish Borders Council
Council Headquarters
Newtown St Boswells
Scottish Borders
TD6 0SA

Representation regarding the Local Development Plan, Appendix A, Settlement Profile, Darnick:

Proposed Development Site at Darnlee, Darnick (ADARN005)

I am writing to register my deep concern for the content within Appendix A, Settlement Profile, for the village of Darnick as defined within the Local Development Plan. This accompanies the proposals for development at land south of Darnlee with the site reference of ADARN005 and an indicative allocation of 10 dwellings.

1. Concern for ADARN005 development

- 1.1 The site identified as ADARN005 adjoins what is described in Appendix A as “There is potential in the longer term to expand the village to the west of Darnlee”. The proposed development at Darnlee will create the classic ‘infill’ scenario used by developers to secure planning consent for new building on this type of site.
- 1.2 There are at least two similar additional sites within the village where an existing dwelling has extensive grounds that could use ADARN005 as the precedent for further erosion of green space/building development within the core of the village.
- 1.3 Darnlee is an important visual gateway into the village and the grounds are currently home to many fine, mature trees. Over the last few years over 20 mature trees have been lost from the village with the small but important adverse impact on carbon dioxide take up.
- 1.4 Over a similar period 25 new homes have been built in the village, all with ‘executive style’ specifications and priced accordingly.

- 1.5 However, if the presumption is that some form of development will be permitted at the site reference ADARN005 then to preserve a balanced community within the small village of Darnick, that development should be reserved as ‘affordable homes’ to ensure that young people have local housing opportunities. An increasing number of smaller homes and subdivided residences within the village are rental properties, short term lets and holiday accommodation.
- 1.6 Within the ‘Development and Safeguarding Proposals’ section there is the statement that: “The setting of the listed building ‘Darnlee’ and the character of the Darnick Conservation Area must be safeguarded.” There is little confidence in the importance and intended enforcement of safeguarding as can be seen in the picture below of the current state of a village centre rental dwelling with half of its harling removed and stonework patched with house bricks.



2. Concern for the ‘expansion of the village to the west of Darnlee.’

- 2.1 Recent enquiries of SBC indicate that their understanding of this parcel of land is that it is ‘a field’. With the suggestion that this site may be subject to development pressure in the longer term it is imperative now to have recognition that some 20 years ago it was established as a community woodland under the auspices of The Borders Forest Trust and currently enjoyed as such by many local residents.



- 2.2 It is not known how this misunderstanding has arisen but it is important to recognise the asset and amenity value it has and continues to contribute to Darnick. This must be protected and preserved.
- 2.3 The original planting and subsequent development has been undertaken through local volunteer effort. The woodland is managed, maintained and improved through resident involvement. It is one of only a very few community assets in the village, alongside The Smith Memorial Hall and the small community garden.
- 2.3 The woodland has provided opportunities for young people from the local primary school to experience its contribution to learning as an outdoor class room. The recent improvements to accessibility and the upgrading of paths have been completed with help from groups undertaking community service. Successful grant applications have secured funding to provide an additional number of table/bench sets located throughout the woodland.
- 2.4 The small selection of photographs below indicates the current picture within the woodland.



Well used Pathways and maturing trees



A grant of £2,500 was used to provide an additional six table and bench sets in 2020.



Maturing trees and natural pathways are valuable wildlife habitats.



Important commemorative artefacts represent historic events and more recent personal contributions to the woodland.



The small woodland shelter used by community groups such as the Darnick 'Walk It' group as a social gathering point in inclement weather.

- 2.5 During the events of 2020 and into the current year, the woodland has proved to be a valuable asset for exercise and used extensively by a wide cross section of the Darnick community at a time when local movement has been restricted.

- 2.6 Over a number of years it has become increasingly important for residents of Darnick to preserve the identity of the village as a community in its own right. Therefore the anti-coalescence policy of SBC must be preserved when resisting development pressure.
- 2.7 The foregoing represents a personal view of the proposals in relation to Darnick in the current Local Development Plan and should be read alongside other local submissions. Due to current restrictions it has been difficult to meet face to face as a community and discuss these issues to achieve a local consensus view.

David Potts

