

Archived: 22 January 2021 11:07:22

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Thu, 21 Jan 2021 10:22:10

To:

Subject: Re: PROPOSED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2020 - Comments

Sensitivity: Normal

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CAUTION: External Email

Please find addendum re Hawick

Regards

Ian

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Wednesday, January 20, 2021 6:02 PM

To: localplan@scotborders.gov.uk

Subject: PROPOSED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2020 - Comments

## **PROPOSED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2020**

I have comments on the following proposals:

### **Cardrona - Objection**

You identify a substantial 'preferred area for future expansion beyond the 2020 LDP plan period' at Nether Horsburgh (SCARD002). Whilst Cardrona enjoys some level of containment, the above expansion area when approached from Peebles / the west clearly intrudes into open countryside at a key and extensive focal point of the valley, and has no natural containment. Any future intended edge screen planting associated with this proposal (though not indicated on your settlement map) would also be alien to the open nature of the scene which is part of the key attraction for visitors to the Tweed Valley and Glentress. It will stick out like a sore thumb for all time.

If it is still considered acceptable to expand a road dependent free-standing development in this era, then limited land take along the western and southern edge of the B7062 would be accessible from the existing western village road which itself runs south from the roundabout with Cardrona Way. If contained by the 'diamond shaped' copse to its east, it would create significantly less intrusion in this sensitive high quality landscape

### **Eshiels - Objection**

You propose a mixed business and industrial use site at BESH1001 north of the A72 is currently bounded by a thin and ageing line of mature trees to the west, but remains very visually exposed on gently rising land which clearly reads as part of the foothills to the north. Even with any boundary planting, this site will remain unrelated to any development and is better allocated south of the A72, such as between Mill Lane and the limits of the Roman camp where a combination of future building height limits, landscape reinforcement of its northern boundary / or a strong boundary wall would permit its visual containment. This development will stick out like a sore thumb for all time.

### **Gattonside**

AGATT007 refers to trees to be retained 'wherever possible' which is weak. Given the history of tree thinning and removal permitted along the boundaries of this site to date, the Plan should be emphasising how to ensure the future continuity and reinforcement of those boundaries as no new planting has ever been undertaken since the felling. Reference to open space within

the site should consider that the current site ownership extends to include the meadow south of St Aidan's, some of which was formerly sports land. The meadow would benefit from its allocation for informal recreation enabling the non-flooding land around St Aidan's to be better used for development. As much of the meadow site lies within flood land, formal recreational structures would not be appropriate.

### **Hawick**

BHAW1001 requires a firm landscape screen along the entire western boundary which could be accommodated within the current Highway embankment to screen views of the yards, storage, roofscape etc of any new business uses from the A7. Views from the A7 tourist trail are currently only contained by a weak hedge – itself entirely missing in the vicinity of the bus stop. Given the fall in land from the A7 such planting will not obscure longer views towards Rubers Law. This screen planting should continue across the entire northern boundaries of this allocation and of the adjoining BHAW1004. Existing Burnfoot estate housing to the east should be afforded additional softening of views into the new business sites by a more formal tree planting along the eastern boundary of BHAW1004. Provision for the effective long term management of these landscape areas is required. Direct road connection between the B6359 and Burnhead Rd is assumed within this diagrammatic allocation. It would assist interpretation and implementation of these intentions if they were shown on the proposals maps.

### **Melrose**

AMELR013 is unclear. The safeguarding proposals refer both to 'retain and protect boundary features where possible' which is weak and vague and more clearly to 'existing trees/hedging within and on the boundaries of the site must be retained and protected'. This is an important edge to Melrose in the vicinity of the Abbey – one of the Border's key tourist attractions. As such the importance of the southern boundary wall, the northern mature tree line and the relationship with the existing stone carriage house to the east of this site need to be clearly established as firm principles for retention. The Plan should emphasise that before the site is released, a site development brief will be prepared to clearly set out development limits and constraints so that any potential purchaser is forewarned.

((A site Brief should clearly define how to achieve acceptable sight lines from the site, (whilst retaining the wall) and the extent of developable land once the rooting area of the northern tree line is excluded. Clear control is required to prevent future breaches and appropriate maintenance of the boundary wall which might otherwise be subject to gradual replacement with ad hoc fencing etc. Retained trees need to be protected from the vagaries of individual plot ownership which suggests that single-aspect access is routed towards the north of the site to create non-private land below the trees, with an associated management / maintenance regime, and to provide access to houses south of the access road. Private house gardens can then enjoy enclosure by the southern boundary wall)).

### **Newtown St Boswells**

There is no clear reference in this part of the plan to the safeguarding of the Waverley rail route, or of how to relate developments successfully to that route in the event of either it remaining unused, or of its future re-use.

### **St Boswells**

ZEL19 ought to take the opportunity to clearly allocate land for screen planting at its eastern extremity adjacent to the A68 which is partly occupied by a former railway track bed. This is important to the setting and approach to St Boswells along the A68.

### **Tweedbank / Lowood - Objection**

Re MTWEE002, the proposed northern boundary planting is on lower levels, whilst the Galashiels-Lowood Road looks down on this land. Effective screening of buildings, (permanent or otherwise), open storage areas, parking, loading, fences, roof tops with extractor / air con etc paraphernalia will not be possible or effective even in the long-term.

The north eastern extent of the proposed mixed use area breaches existing and even the limited proposed tree screening and extends to the very edge of the Tweed. Why bring mixed use to such a public focus on the edge of land designated of special landscape value and in sight of the iconic Listed Lowood Bridge in such a sensitive valley setting, immediately alongside the protected River Tweed and encroach upon an area subject to flooding? Where also is the contingency planning for Climate Change?

This site is visible from the Eildon NSA. Its appearance from above is thus of equal sensitivity and would need very careful control throughout the life of any development. The area set aside for 'High Amenity Business Land' similarly requires effective controls and management regimes to achieve this. Land-owner controls would enable building-to-contract, (avoiding design etc substitutes that erode initial Planning intentions) and enable the levy of service fees for landscape management and maintenance whilst affording effective controls over otherwise permitted developments etc in such a sensitive location. However, given the

Council's current use of Simplified Planning Zones, it is very questionable whether this level of on-going engagement for quality will be used. Certainly, reliance upon Planning controls will not achieve any required level of sensitivity and, as such, the 'High Amenity Business' uses are likely to remain aspirational.

Reference is made to a possible replacement for Lowood Bridge and to the alignment of any Waverley route extension, but no clear indication of either is shown. How and where will existing roads link to any new bridge alignment? What are the impacts on the proposed site plot layout, screen planting and future responsibilities? How will buildings be arranged to address the edge of any new road or railway? How will railway land-take affect the above, (including creation of wider embankments to achieve rail headroom clearance over main roads)? How will the impact, on existing or proposed planting, of associated tree-free zones (as required by rail operators to ensure clearance between trees and overhead electric catenary supplies) be assessed / planned and implemented? Without clarity on such issues, a series of uncoordinated 'discoveries' around these related issues is likely which would lead to the development of another low quality / anywhere town industrial site, but in the middle of the Borders scenic gem and tourist hot spots.

### Policy Map

This is of poor quality, with faint background detail which is difficult to decipher in many detailed areas (such as along the edges of Tweedbank) and apparently without zoom facility.

### Settlement Maps

It would greatly help if these were electronically aligned to the horizontal for ease of assessment, if customers are now expected to rely on screen viewing.

### Landscape Proposals

Appear to rely on indicative block screen planting zones around any new development.

Ian Lindley