

Archived: 25 January 2021 08:18:00

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Fri, 22 Jan 2021 08:53:19

To:
Subject: Galashiels Community Council Proposed Local Development Plan

Sensitivity: Normal

Attachments:

[REDACTED]

CAUTION: External Email

Dear Sir/Madam,

Please find attached to this email, the response to the consultation on the Council's new Local Development Plan from Galashiels Community Council.

Regards,

Rick Kenney

[REDACTED]



RESPONSE TO THE CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSED SBC LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN FROM GALASHIELS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Background

There was a meeting of Galashiels Community council held on 13th January 2021 via Zoom to discuss the proposed Local Development Plan (LDP). Two ward councillors were in attendance and representation from the Gala Policies Group along with various members of the public.

The following areas of the LDP were specifically discussed and a summary of the comments are shown in the following paragraphs.

Site Reference AGALA 029 – Netherbarns

There were mixed views on this location. The most up to date indicative plan for the area had been distributed to the Community Council members prior to the meeting and others present confirmed that they had viewed this on the SBC website. It was mentioned that a masterplan should be developed for the site, and that an ecological impact assessment and transport assessment are essential before any future decisions be taken.

Some felt that the houses would not really be visible for the largest part of the year (and when Abbotsford House would be open to the public) and noted that increased planting would improve any negative impact of the development over the years as this grew in stature. It was stressed that the design, colour scheme of houses and their roofs, all of a design sympathetic to the site shown would also mitigate on any visual concerns relating to visitors to Abbotsford House. The replacement of any trees subsequently felled should be replaced without delay to protect the view from Abbotsford.

Others, however, felt that as this site has been rejected in the past by the Scottish Government reporter, this affirmed their view that the site should be removed as a housing location in the new LDP. The importance of tourism to the area, especially resulting from the railway, should not be affected in any way by the use of this site for housing.

Site Reference EGL 178 Buckholm Corner

The meeting noted the ongoing site development at Buckholm Corner and had made comment at the virtual presentation to members of the Community Council last year. No additional comments were raised at the meeting on 13th January, however previous comment has been made as to what improvements are going to be made to the junction from these developments onto the A7 road. As you come south into the 40mph limit you have a private house accessing directly onto the A7, then

the current housing followed by the new development all within 50-100yards and all on the left. As there will be three points of access onto the A7, we trust that plans will take cognisance of this.

Site Reference EGL 41 Buckholm North

Discussion briefly took place in relation to this site, but no adverse comments were made. The Community Council will respond to consultation on future planning applications.

Site Reference SGALA 005 and SGALA 016 Hollybush Valley

It should be mentioned that some time ago, when the 2016 LDP was being developed, there was concern mentioned by the Community Council about the potential impact on the Gala Policies and the effect upon the environment from the roads access mentioned, although no specific detailed routes were shown on maps. At the recent Community Council meeting held on 13th January 2021, there was representation from the now established Gala Policies Group and who expressed their ongoing concerns and objections to the LDP to the Community Council to these proposed sites for housing and mixed development.

The use of the Scott Park (especially the preferred option 3) was brought up by members of the Community Council, especially the proposed demolition of the Gala Swimming Pool site and its subsequent use for car parking for the new school campus. The Community Council awaits the opportunity to take part in the formal consultation process regarding the new school but has concerns about the efficacy of this, given that it is proposed as a 'virtual' consultation.

Despite the current lock down requirements of the Scottish Government, the Community Council feels that plans should be displayed in a public outdoor area, such as the empty shop windows on the Douglas Bridge area. Current displays on some windows show that this area is regularly seen by passers-by and therefore this would be a positive way to improve consultation for those who do not have access to on line consultation.

Whilst the Community Council are aware that the new school campus will have a specific consultation process developed and notes that the school is not a specific part of the LDP consultation, we hope that these comments will be taken cognisance of by the Council, particularly those with a potential effect upon the Hollybush Valley site/s.

Site Reference GSGALA 009 Gala Policies and GSGALA 010 Scott Park

The Community Council has concerns that despite these two locations being allocated as key green spaces along with the protection that such sites warrant, proposals for the new Galashiels Campus and for Mixed Use Development at Hollybush Valley present a threat to these two locations. There are only 10 key green spaces listed in the LDP for Galashiels measuring some 36.5HA in total. It was noted that the above two sites (**GSGALA 009 and GSGALA 0100**) comprise just slightly less than 50% of total key green space and alludes to concerns shown about the use of these areas for building and mixed use

General Comment

There was comment that should all the potential housing sites go ahead over the next ten years, the Council needs to carry out a (ongoing) review of the schools provision in Galashiels, due to the increasing number of families and children commensurate with this development of the town.