

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2021 11:17
To: localplan
Cc: kruthven@scotborders.co.uk
Subject: GSGALA 010 - Development Comments

CAUTION: External Email

I submit this as a local resident and - as the owner of [REDACTED] also as a contiguous neighbour of the proposed development known as GSGALA010

The first point I would like to make is that I am extremely surprised to find out about this only by virtue of having discovered various notices pinned to some of my fences and gates. It might have been helpful had someone taken the trouble to contact me direct and even perhaps to send me a letter. Be that as it may, I have now had a look at at some of what is being proposed.

Scott Park

By way of background, this is an area which was gifted in the late 1930s by my great uncle Henry Scott, shortly before he was killed in action in WW2. The intention was to provide the people of Galashiels with an open space, of which at the time there were very few in the town. Unlike the Public Park, it was an outright gift and it is distressing to observe that, over the years, there have been successive encroachments upon this public space, initially to build care homes and now a proposal to relocate Galashiels Academy there and further shrink the Park by several acres; frankly, what will remain of the original gift should Option 3 be progressed is a travesty. I recognise that I have no more say over this than the next man, but I must say that it runs completely contrary to the spirit of the gift and to the intention of what was intended. It is an irreversible change from which the Scott Park will never recover and another public area will be lost.

There is always pressure on space in the face of a need to find sites for public buildings, but in many cases the easy short term decision contributes to a disaster in the long term; permitting a series of marginal encroachments is a classic example of the road to hell being paved with good intentions. Some of the great public spaces - for example The Meadows in Edinburgh - are there today simply because successive councils over the years had the courage, imagination and foresight to resist the type of salami slicing that seems to underly the current plan to rip the heart out of the Scott Park.

A better solution

I submit that there is a very much better solution which has not seem to have been considered. I own an area of woodland which lies to the south east of the Academy playing fields, that which is at the foot of Gala Hill and below the Hollybush Road, lying just the other side of the Academy fence. Much of this is on the flat and is not in any way productive woodland. Part of it could be turned into playing fields (perhaps with space for 2 pitches) which could release some land currently supporting pitches. This would allow the new school building to be constructed on the released space, which would be to the south of the current school complex and with no need to encroach on the Park or reduce the number of pitches available. Perhaps someone might like to come and discuss this with me?

New Road/ Gala Policies

I have read that there is consideration being given to a new road through the Policies, perhaps connecting the Hollybush Road with Balmoral. I am entirely unclear as to where this might run, but I imagine that this

must involve some of my land. Again, it would be helpful to discuss this with the planning authorities rather than hearing about things second hand. Over the next 10 years, I have some major forestry works planned for Gala Hill, where there are large stands of mature timber which must be felled if they are to avoid windblow and this has considerable implications for any roadworks which may be contemplated for that part of the Hollybush Road.

Please feel free to contact me should you wish to discuss any of the above.

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John Scott

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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