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From: [REDACTED]

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To:

Subject: Comments on proposed LDP2

Sensitivity: Normal

CAUTION: External Email

u-257 ?u-257 ?Sir, Madam, in u-257 ?LDP Vol 1 Planning for Housing 6.6, the Council's Local Housing Strategy 2020-2025 identifies a number of issues to be addressed, including availability of further affordable housing, provision of housing for the elderly (the 65-75 age group is projected to rise faster than any other between now and 2026), the poor accessibility of housing to allow younger people to remain in the Borders, and the need for the supply of housing to reflect demand (i.e. the right housing in the right place).

As such, I should like to make the following comments:

Housing in the Countryside

While I am supportive of SBC's policy on this, I believe that housing density and the need for specific types of housing in different rural areas (maybe starter homes in some, or sheltered housing in others) needs to be more clearly defined. As well as ensuring that the right kind of housing is built in the right place, this would avoid wasting commercial developers (and the Planning Department's) time.

Abbotsford House and Netherbarns, Galashiels

Abbotsford House and its gardens are one of the Scottish Borders' top visitor attractions, and as they are historic environment assets should be given strong protection from inappropriate development (SBC policy EP8). Furthermore, policy EP8 states that 'setting is considered to be important to the way in which historic assets are understood, appreciated and experienced both inwards and outwards'.

So, in my view, it follows that designation of any part of the Netherbarns site for housing must take account of the visual and auditory impact of any proposal on Abbotsford House and gardens. This should immediately rule out any proposal that includes two-storey buildings on such a sensitive site, especially as year-round mitigation - screening off the development from the Abbotsford estate - from existing and new planting will be inadequate for years; there will inevitably be a greater degree of light pollution; and larger houses located some distance from public transport will almost inevitably mean more traffic noise.

Rather than covering more green space, particularly such a sensitive site, with a type of new housing for which there is not an urgent need, Scottish Borders Council should be identifying and encouraging/incentivising the development of the many brownfield sites close to public transport and amenities within Galashiels to meet the area's real housing needs as identified above.

Regards

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Sent from my iPad