

Archived: 25 January 2021 13:27:03

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Fri, 22 Jan 2021 15:53:22

To:

Subject: SBC draft Local Development Plan. Eshiels site BESH1001 – Land at Eshiels

Sensitivity: Normal

---

CAUTION: External Email

I have been a resident of Eshiels for 26-years now. Eshiels is a rural area located a good 2-miles out from Peebles. It is well outside the envelope of the Peebles town boundary as is clearly apparent from the interactive map provided by SBC on their webpage ('Local Development Plan/2'). The proposed business park at Eshiels stands out like a sore thumb. It will ruin a rural area and make a mockery of the beautiful landscape that the designation of Tweed Valley Special Landscape area is meant to afford (see map attached).

I therefore wish to object in the strongest possible terms to the inclusion of the proposed development of a business park at Eshiels (**BESH1001**) in the Scottish Borders Council Local Development Plan (LDP). My objections are numerous and are as follows:

1. I really question if SBC has carried out due process correctly in proposing this site as a business park within the LDP. The residents of Eshiels were never consulted about this specific development. It never appeared in the Main Issues Report (MIR), and now Scottish Borders Council (SBC) tells us it will be included in the final LDP they submit to the Scottish Government despite our objections. The residents of Eshiels and Glentress never had the opportunity to comment properly on this proposal in the MIR. For this reason alone the proposal should be rejected out of hand. Due process has not been followed.
2. The site is not an 'effective' site within the definition of the Scottish Government's Scottish Planning Policy. SBC have not carried out complete and proper investigations of the site. In fact I question if a SBC planner has ever visited the site. There are many restrictions on the site which SBC's own internal people state can be mitigated against, but no detail is provided regarding the cost of such mitigation. SPP states that no development should be made 'at any cost'. This proposal should not be included in the LDP until a full costing of work required has been carried out. If the SBC argument is that economic necessity outweighs negative landscape and tourism impact, at least some attempt can be made to quantify that by investigating the cost of mitigating flooding, installation of an infrastructure, provision of low-carbon access from Peebles and survey for ancient monuments. None of this has been done and yet it should have been done by SBC according to Government Guidelines.
3. More and more people are working from home. We are all trying to do our bit to reduce carbon-heavy car journeys. There is a major climate change meeting to be held in Glasgow later this year. Surely, it must be against the SBC climate emergency agenda to promote a business park 2-miles outside of a town where walking to the site is not particularly convenient? This is not a modern way to develop business sites. Has this been thought through by SBC?
4. The Scheduled monument of a temporary Roman Camp is nearby (100 meters to the east) . The proposed development site needs to be exhaustively investigated to be sure there are no other ancient monuments within it. This has not been done yet. The site should not be included in the LDP until such survey work has been carried out.
5. A business park is not in keeping and has no right-of-place. It would be counter to the ethos of the Tweed Valley Special Landscape Plan to build a business park. The development would be in conflict

with SBC **Special Landscape Areas Policy EP 5, Protection of Greenspace EP 11, and Green Networks Policy EP12.**

6. It would be totally incongruous to build a business park two miles out from Peebles surrounded by agricultural ground on three sides and the busy A72 road on the fourth. This is counter to SBC **Quality Standards Policy PMD 2**
7. The site would be unsightly and give visitors a poor impression of the Tweed Valley. It will have a massive negative effect on tourism in the immediate area which is just the opposite of what SBC is trying to achieve in conjunction with Forestry and Land Scotland at Glentress forest. Glentress forest is hugely popular with walkers and mountain bikers. The latter come from all over the UK to bike in Glentress forest. The proposed development seriously risks damaging the tourism potential of Glentress forest and indeed the whole of the Tweed Valley.
8. Noise and light pollution will be considerable which is against **Sustainability Policy PMD 1.** Screening by planting trees will take over 20-years to have any impact;
9. The site is not good use of tax-payers money. It's only 5 hectares (12 acres) in size. Around 35% of that is unusable (too steep) in the NW corner, whilst further ground will be lost to screen planting, bus-stop pull-in area, and the requirement for widening the A72 road at the entrance, and of course roads across the site.
10. I am concerned this will contribute to ribbon development all along the Tweed Valley from Peebles to Innerleithen. The rest of the valley will be open season for developers if this business park goes ahead; contributing to killing the Golden Egg of tourism in the area.
11. Surface water run-off from the site will add to flood risk. Just the other side of the A72 is considered flood plain by SEPA. The site regularly has water sitting on it after heavy rain and the height difference ('fall') between the site and the Tweed into which it would drain is around 5 meters over approx 1 km length. Huge scope for problems over the years.
12. The development will reduce biodiversity in the area removing an important corridor by which wildlife links country to the town (Peebles). This would be bad news for the attempts being made to restore the red squirrel in the area by Scottish Wildlife Trust 'Saving Scotland's Red Squirrel'.
13. SBC are out-sourcing their perceived shortage of business parks beyond the bounds of Peebles town and ignoring their prior designation of areas within Peebles. If there is a real demand for business land then SBC should insist that land which they designate as 'Mixed Use' within the envelope of Peebles, does in reality becomes 'Mixed Use' rather than letting developers build the land with 100% houses which then puts further pressure on the infrastructure and leaves SBC without their business land.
14. The demand for new business parks has not been proven by SBC. There are other sites already within Peebles. Other sites which could have an element of business land according to SBC's own designation are available north of the river within Peebles:
  - i. **RPEEB001** (0.41 ha) at Dovecot Road
  - ii. **zEL204** (0.92 ha) South Park
  - iii. **MPEEB007** (2.25ha) at March Street
  - iv. **MPEEB006** (6.41 ha) at Rosetta Road
15. Currently the main business park in Peebles is south of the river (Calvary Park). It sits only 50% full. There is ample space for business units here for many years to come.
16. The current owner of the site proposed for BESH1001 has stated to me and SBC that he is unwilling to sell. A Compulsory Purchase Order will be required, against which the owner can appeal. Further unnecessary cost and hassle for a site that's just not worth it as a business park in the first place. It should remain as agricultural ground, protected in the Tweed Valley Special Landscape Area.

Mill in central Peebles.

This site should NOT be included in the LDP. It would make a poor business park. SBC has not proved there is a need for such a site in terms of demand; it would be bad use of tax-payers money due to the low proportion of land that could be used; it will flood; it will have a major detrimental impact on landscape, tourism and biodiversity. It would be out of place and will ruin a local landscape valued by

people far and wide.

I hope you can see reasons in removing BESH001 from the SBC Local Development Plan.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Lee



