

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 January 2021 20:54
To: localplan
Subject: Comments to Proposed Local Plan

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

I would like to make the following points to entries in the Proposed Local Plan for which comments are invited during this consultation process.

1

SGALA005 and SGALA016 Hollybush and nearby woodlands.

I request that the following words be removed from the entry"-

"New road through the policies on the Balmoral Avenue side".

The reason is that this is treasured woodland, and it would simply be against any community position for the foreseeable future that any road could possibly be driven through the policies which are significant woodlands with specimen species, donated to the town of Galashiels, but managed by Scottish Border Council. If such a move were to be attempted then it would simply destroy any positive plans that could be agreed through the proposed Master plan for this area.

The fact that this is simply a reiteration of the current Masterplan is immaterial, things have changed in terms of local sentiment, and this entry is inflammatory.

2

AGALA029. Netherbarns.

Despite the council decision not to oppose this entry i would still like to object to this entry being included in the LDP as a "new entry". This is NOT a new entry. There have been various attempts to get this land into the Local Development Plan over the last 15 years or more, but three reporters have come down against this inclusion in previous plans. I simply do not understand why the council continues to force this issue despite successive reporters agreeing, in strong and unambiguous language, that this land should not be developed.

There are various reasons given, and many objections have been received, however the impact of tourism and the investments in Abbotsford House and its environs should not be jeopardised. As the tourism and leisure industry will shortly be attempting to come out of COVID, it is important that nothing should add to the fragility of this excellent business resource in the Scottish Borders. Irrespective of whether the current length of trees can screen this location, whether it can be seen from this window or not, and all the other issues, the principle issue is that when Sir Walter Scott designed this heroic project, it was designed to sit in a county landscape. This means that whether development is visible from the house is only one part of the whole. The grounds and gardens, riverside walks etc must also be considered in the visual aspect which will be at risk if any further development is permitted on this site.

During the council presentation the input from a particular landowner/developer on this site was scrutinised in some detail, seeking a council decision on the Proposed LDP In my view this is absolutely contrary to the concept of a Local Plan. When did the LDP entries be decided by a developer for his or her advantage?

The fact that the developer's proposals for this site will be concentrated at one corner parallel to the A7 road is simply a "red herring". Should this concession be permitted then since the WHOLE area is still within the Local Plan, what can possibly be done to prevent subsequent applications from the landowner/developer in future years? What Planning Committee could possibly refuse when the whole area is in the LDP? This is simply wrong and an attempt to form a "beachhead" into the area. The fact that this area is the "least visible" area of the field, according to the developer/ agents, confirms that even they acknowledge that it is wrong to include this whole site into the LDP.

I was under the impression that the input from the MIR was one thing but such a controversial issue from a developer should not, in itself, be relevant when compared with the independent decisions of various reporters when previous attempts to include this site have been made. I simply do not understand why we have this every five years when it was decided by independent planning experts many times before! This entry should be removed. There is no pressure for housing in this area. I always think it is significant that the LDP is done on Community based entries. This area, at the east end of Galashiels, should be seen in the context of its immediate encroachment on the community of Tweedbank. The council has invested many millions in the development of Lowood at Tweedbank. It would be wrong to think that there is no housing land in this vicinity, as the new Lowood development and the many houses scheduled to be built on that site, more than compensates for the loss of Netherbarns from the LDP, if it were to be removed. This would also help to preserve the council's investment in Lowood.

I am
Alexander Aitchison

[REDACTED]

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)