

# Scottish Borders Consolidated Local Plan

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Duns Primary School, Duns

Planning Brief

October 2012



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# Duns Primary School Planning Brief

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## Duns Primary School Planning Brief

### Introduction

This planning brief sets out the main objectives and issues to be addressed relating to this existing Primary School site in Duns. It provides a framework vision for the future development of the site which is allocated in the Consolidated Scottish Borders Local Plan 2011 as a redevelopment opportunity.

The brief identifies where detailed attention to specific issues is required and where developer contributions will be sought. The brief should be read alongside relevant national, strategic and local planning guidance, a selection of which is provided on page 4, and should be a material consideration for any planning application submitted for the site.

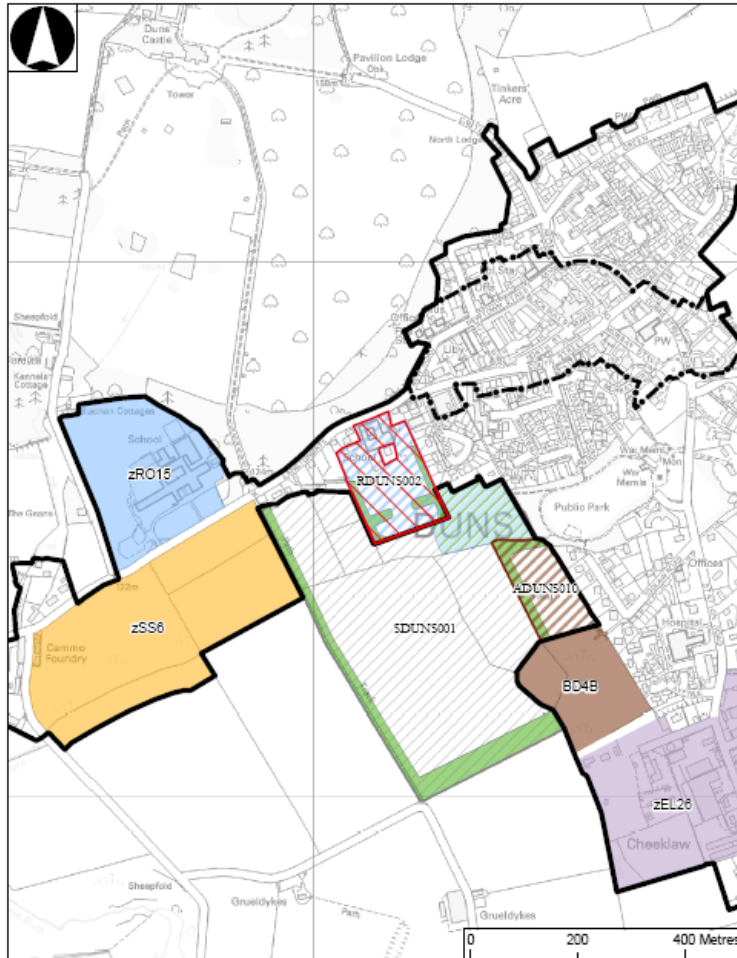
The planning brief should be read in conjunction with the developer guidance in Annex A.

Fig 1—Duns Primary School site



# Duns Primary School Planning Brief

Figure 2—Local Context



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**Key**

-  RDUNS002 Redevelopment Site  
Site Area 2.9 Hectares
-  Development (Local Plan Policy H3)
-  School (Local Plan Policy H3)
-  Employment Land Safeguarding (ED1)
-  Development Boundary (Local Plan Policy G8)
-  Housing (Local Plan Policy H3)
-  Housing (Local Plan Amendment Policy H3)
-  Long Term Mixed Use (Local Plan Amendment Policy H3)
-  Redevelopment (Local Plan Amendment Policy H3)

IST ID: 121501

## Local context

Duns is located within the eastern Borders and is identified as one of the principal towns within the Eastern Development Hub in the Consolidated Scottish Borders Structure Plan 2001—2018.

The town, with a population of 2,626 (2001 Census), sits with the Castle to the north whilst the southern edge of the settlement sits on the Lower Merse lowland with drumlins. A mire (bog) runs east to west across the town. Duns and its hinterland are of high amenity value and there are many attractive views of the town.

As an important administrative centre in Berwickshire, Duns plays an important complementary role to Eyemouth in helping meet housing and employment needs in the area. The 3 High Schools Project has delivered a new high school and associated playing fields to the south of the A6105 on the approach into the town from the west. Duns Primary School has severe capacity issues as a result of recent developments in the catchment area and it is expected that it will relocate to the former High School buildings.

## Duns Primary School Planning Brief

### Policy context

The brief should be read alongside relevant national and local planning guidance, the most relevant of which is presented in this section.

### National

The Scottish Government has a number of policy and guidance documents that could be useful to the consideration of this development:

- Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)
- Designing Places: A Policy Statement for Scotland
- Designing Streets: A Policy Statement for Scotland
- PAN 61: Planning & SUDS
- PAN 65: Planning & Open Space
- PAN 67: Quality Housing
- PAN 74: Affordable Housing
- PAN 77: Designing Safer Places
- PAN 78: Inclusive Design



### Structure Plan

The Consolidated Scottish Borders Structure Plan, which incorporates the original approval in 2002 and the Alteration approved by Scottish Ministers in June 2009, provides the strategic planning context. In terms of this plan, Duns lies within the eastern development hub.

### Local Plan

The Consolidated Local Plan 2011 identifies the Primary School site as a Redevelopment Opportunity (RDUNS002), with potential uses including housing, employment (classes 4, 5 and 6 of the Use Classes Order), or a mix of uses that could include community uses and open space. Redevelopment sites may be developed for a single use (Policy H3 - Land Use Allocations).

A number of policies included in the adopted Local Plan will be applicable to this site including 'Principle 1-Sustainability', 'G1-Quality Standards for New Development', 'H1-Affordable Housing', 'H3-Land Use Allocations' and 'G5-Developer Contributions'. Duns Conservation Area is located adjacent to the northern and north eastern boundaries of the site (Policy BE4). Furthermore, relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance to be considered includes 'Placemaking and Design', 'Renewable Energy', 'Landscape and Development', 'Trees and Development', 'The Use of Timber in Sustainable Construction' and 'Designing out Crime in the Scottish Borders'.

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**Key**

① Key Considerations	🏰 Duns Castle Designed Landscape
🏗️ RDUNS002 Redevelopment Site (Subject to Brief)	☀️ South Facing Aspect
🏠 Development Boundary (G8)	📍 Adjacent Listed Building
🌿 Conservation Area (BE4)	📏 5 Metre Contour
🏫 Existing Primary School Buildings	
➡️ Arrival Point	
➡️ Existing Vehicular Access	
➡️ Existing Pedestrian Access	
🌳 Existing Landscaping	
🌳 Existing Tree	
🌿 Existing Hedge	

Figure 3—Site analysis of key issues

Key Issues

- 1 Character and appearance of the Duns Conservation Area requires to be respected and taken into consideration as part of any development proposals.
- 2 Safeguard amenity of existing residential properties.
- 3 The site benefits from a southerly aspect.
- 4 Existing trees to be safeguarded unless otherwise agreed by the Council.
- 5 Arrival points along the A6105.
- 6 Existing attractive stone frontage of Primary School.
- 7 Sensitive landscape setting of Duns Castle Designed Landscape would require to be safeguarded. This is on the opposite side of the A6105 and is contained by a wall so impact may be minimal.
- 8 There are some listed buildings within the vicinity of the site which face onto the A6105. These are the category B Listed Building of 'Sunnyside' to the west and the category C(S) Listed Buildings of 11 and 13 Langtongate to the east. It is likely that any impacts from the site development will be minimal given the distance between them. However, the development of the site should ensure that it has no adverse impact on the setting of these listed properties

## Duns Primary School Planning Brief

### Background

In December 2009, the Scottish Government offered 50 per cent funding towards the relocation of Duns Primary School to the site of the former high school within the town. The Council had agreed that the replacement of Duns Primary School was a top priority in 2009. The Scottish Government agreed to fund half the cost of the project from the first phase of its primary school funding programme. The former high school is a category B listed building. SBC's half of the funding will be allocated from the School's Further New Build Block for 2012/2013. The Council will manage the appropriate structuring of the capital programme to match the provision of the Scottish Government's funding.

### Site analysis – context and consideration

The site is currently occupied by Duns Primary School, which is still in use. The existing Primary School site is located within close proximity to the centre of Duns and is bounded to the east by residential properties, to the south by agricultural land, the west by residential properties and to the north by the A6105.



Prominent north facing elevation of existing primary school building, fronting onto A6105

The site, extending to 2.9 hectares, has a gentle slope down to the south although the site is relatively flat for the most part. The site is therefore reasonably flat for development purposes. The site is located within a short walking distance of the High School and the site of what will be the new primary school.



## Duns Primary School Planning Brief

### Site analysis – context and consideration (cntd)

The site has a prominent frontage onto the A6105 which is currently occupied by the attractive façade of the existing traditional stone built primary school building. The development of this site affords the opportunity to develop a high quality scheme which would provide an attractive frontage onto the aforesaid A class road. Beyond the school buildings, which are more modern in appearance, to the south, the site opens up into green space which is currently utilised as school playing fields. This ground is particularly marshy in the southern extremities.

The boundaries of the site are a mixture of stone walls, fences and hedgerows. The former School House is located relatively centrally within the northern half of the site. This property, along with its garden ground, which is enclosed by an attractive stone wall, does not form part of the allocated site.

Development should take cognisance of the design, scale and massing of existing properties within the vicinity of the site and should respect and enhance the existing surroundings.

The site should comprise of a variety of housing types and uses promoting a diverse local community.

### Opportunities and constraints

To achieve a successful development the following opportunities and constraints should be considered.

#### Opportunities

The location of the site creates a wide range of opportunities for the site:

- Take advantage of the vistas to the countryside beyond the site and enhance the landscape setting of the site.
- A range of redevelopment opportunities could be incorporated within the site, such as community facilities
- The site has good access to services and facilities and employment in the settlement, these opportunities should be maximised by the creation of optimum links to the main settlement with pedestrian and cycle links.
- Design and layout should take advantage of solar gain

#### Constraints

##### Conservation Area

The site is located immediately adjacent to the Duns Conservation Area and the proposal should ensure it has no detrimental impact upon its character and setting.

##### Ground conditions

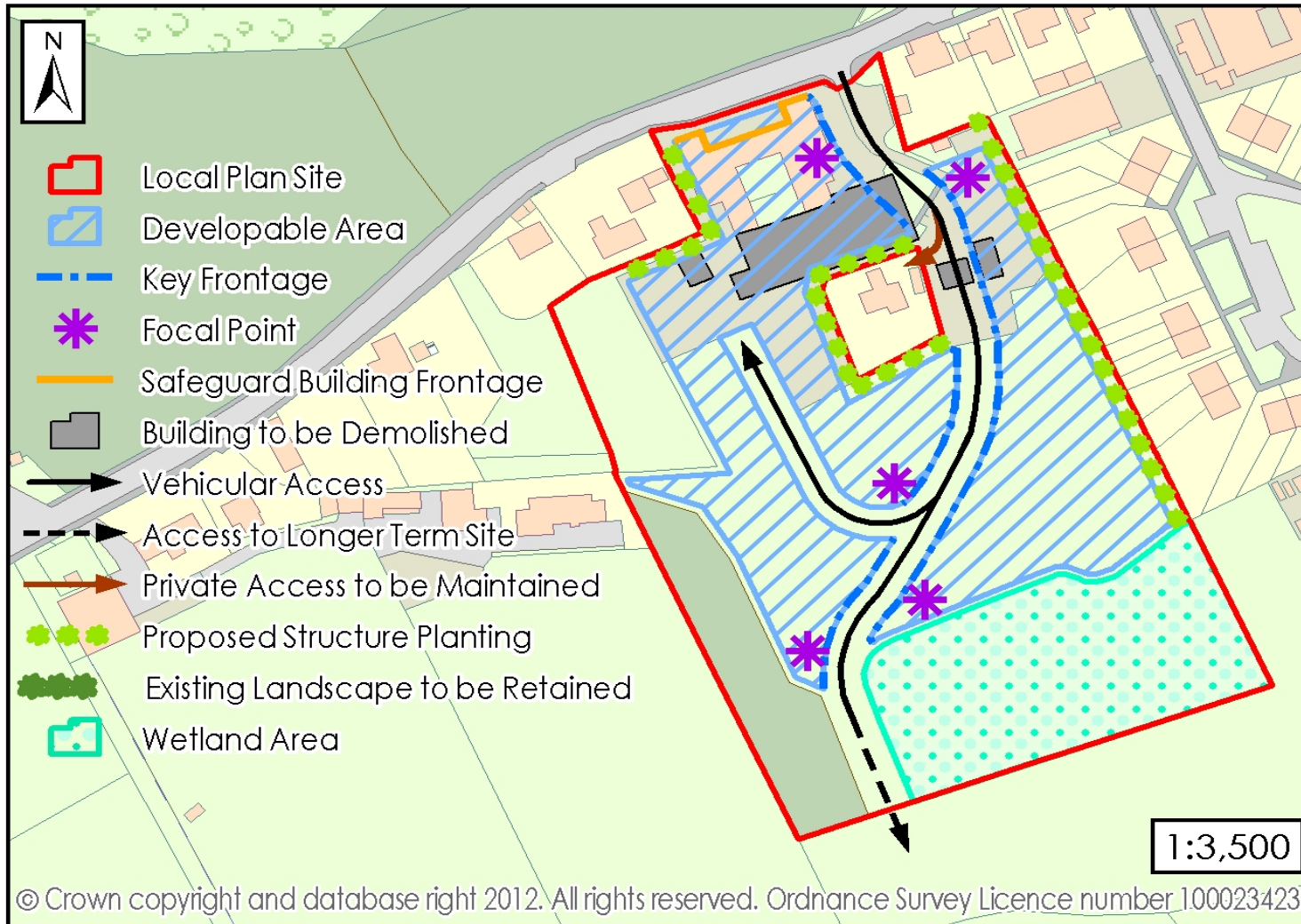
There is a wetland area within the southern part of the site which will require to be considered as part of any development.

##### Biodiversity

Potential moderate biodiversity interest as the existing buildings should be evaluated for bats.

# Duns Primary School Planning Brief

Figure 4—Development Vision—for illustrative purposes only



# Duns Primary School Planning Brief

## Development vision

### Scale and Layout

- The development needs to harmonise with the scale of the existing settlement and the landform of the site.
- The proposed buildings and proposed landscaping should consider overshadowing issues and neighbouring amenity.
- Street layout should encourage lower vehicular speeds.
- A high quality of design and materials is required, with appropriate location and orientation of buildings to ensure houses and gardens are removed from permanent shade as far as possible and by maximising passive solar gain.
- The streetscape should incorporate various edges ranging from the hard edges of buildings to soft landscape edges of trees and shrubs.
- An appropriate SUDS system will be required as part of the site development. This must be designed as part of the overall site and should be visually attractive, safe and accessible for maintenance purposes.

### Housing Density

- The site has a developable area of approximately 2.9ha and if developed solely for residential use, it has an indicative capacity of 45 houses, including affordable units.
- Scope exists to provide higher density development around any play area /open space in order to create a sense of enclosure and higher level of passive supervision.
- The definitive density would be determined during the planning application process.

### House type

- Create a development with a mix of house types and tenure within the site.

### Affordable Housing

- The requirement for affordable housing should be met in line with Local Plan Policy H1 and Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG10) on Affordable Housing. The proportion of affordable housing to be provided, in accordance with the present policy, is currently 25% of the developable area.
- On-site affordable housing units should be developed and integrated in the same style and quality as main stream housing in order that it should not be possible to distinguish which properties are affordable housing from their external appearance.

### Buildings

#### Materials

- Materials used should harmonise with materials used in the existing town such as slate, pantile, stone, render and timber.
- Road/pavement surfaces should be made of a permeable material to aid water run-off where considered appropriate.

### Demolition of existing on-site buildings

School buildings are not listed but it would be desirable to retain attractive stone frontage fronting Langtongate if possible. Other school buildings identified in figure 3 are of less architectural merit and offer limited conversion opportunities and could be demolished.

## Duns Primary School Planning Brief

### Roads

Road construction should not be conceived in isolation, but as an element in the overall design of the development. The Council's standards for development should serve as a guide but should be flexible enough to avoid inhibiting the design of an innovative less car dominant layout. The Council promotes an informal system of well connected streets with natural traffic calming built in (building lines, squares, shared surfaces, etc). Figure 4 is indicative only, and the road layout should allow streets with different characters (curved, straight, splaying, lanes and tree lined footpaths and verges) and a range of house types which creates an interesting façade. Figure 5 on page 11 shows how the site relates to surrounding land earmarked for development and footpaths in terms of connectivity. This would be investigated further via an overall masterplan.

### Streets and spaces

#### Access and links

Vehicular connections into the site should be provided at the following locations:

- The existing vehicular access to the school should be upgraded to an adoptable standard to serve the sites.
- A link should be formed into the longer term mixed use site (ref SDUNS001) to the south. This link should include cycle and pedestrian provision and vehicular links of a minor nature.
- Good pedestrian and cycle linkage with the rest of the town is also important in terms of sustainable transport and a developer contribution is likely to be sought for improved pedestrian linkage to the new high school.
- Parking located to the rear of properties or within overseen courtyards to avoid streets being dominated by cars.
- Street furniture could be used to create high quality spaces without conflicting with street cleansing

### Landscape

#### Existing and improved landscaping

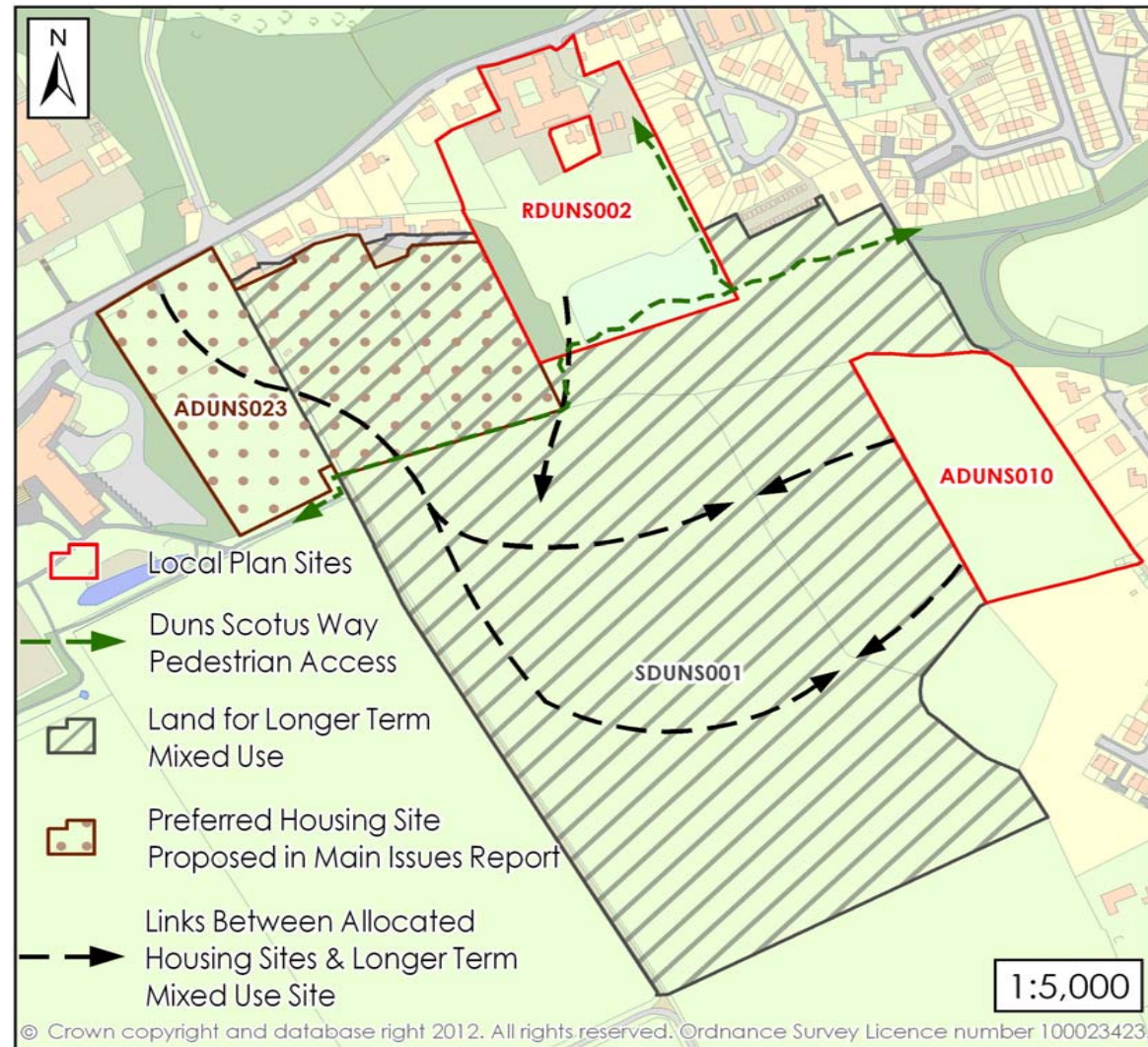
- The existing well established landscape buffer along the south western boundary of the site must be retained and safeguarded as it provides a mature landscape framework for the development.
- Structural planting / landscaping should be provided to the east of the site to separate it from the existing residential area at Earlsmeadow.
- Landscaping should be used to frame development and define the boundaries of the site.
- Planting schemes should recognise the indigenous species types.
- Proposed open areas should be designed to be useful amenity areas rather than dispersed fragments of ground.
- Planting/lighting/ retention of existing vegetation/ services/detail of levels etc must be considered in an integrative manner within submitted plans for the site.
- Careful attention must be given to the edge treatment of the site including appropriate planting, hedging, fencing and pedestrian access points.

### Waste

Waste and recycling facilities and collections needs to be considered in the layout and design and should be discussed with the Council's Waste Strategy Manager (see Contacts) prior to the submission of a formal planning application.

## Duns Primary School Planning Brief

Figure 5—Linkage of site to adjoining land (for illustrative purposes only)



## Duns Primary School Planning Brief

### **Development contributions**

Development contributions are sought where provision, improvement and maintenance of infrastructure, services and facilities are required to facilitate the new development.

### **Affordable housing**

The requirement for affordable housing should be met in line with Local Plan Policy H1 and Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG10) on Affordable Housing. The proportion of affordable housing to be provided, in accordance with the present policy, is currently 25% of the number of houses proposed. In terms of location, there should be no assumption that the affordable housing element should be located in the less desirable parts of the site. Affordable housing should be well integrated and designed into the scheme.

### **Education and Lifelong Learning**

There is currently a requirement for a developer contribution for the new Berwickshire High School. Currently these are sought at £3,870 per house and £581 per flat for the High School and contributions towards the relocated Primary School will be at the enhanced rate of £4,521 per house. One bedroom residential units and those satisfying SBC Affordable Housing policy definitions are currently exempt from E & LL contribution liability. These figures are valid until April 2012 when they are updated via the Building Cost Information Service (BCIS) indices. A contribution will also be sought towards the relocation of Duns Primary School to the former High School buildings. Details of the amount can be obtained from the Development Negotiator.

### **Play areas and open space**

Contributions towards play areas and green space should be in line with the Green Space Strategy SPG. It is expected that there will be the requirement for on-site provision for a play area for small children, and an off site provision/ contribution may be required within the public park to the east of the site for other required provision. The Parks Manager (see contact list) should be contacted by any developer prior to any application submission to discuss this further.

### **Access**

The developer will be expected to meet the cost of, or contribute towards the cost of, identified off-site transport work required as a result of the development and/or the cumulative effect of development on a wider scale. Development contributions will be required for upgrading of pedestrian and cycle links to/from the site. This would include a contribution towards an upgraded pedestrian link to the new High School.

## Duns Primary School Planning Brief

### **Submission requirements**

This section sets out the requirement for development proposals. Any proposals should reflect this planning brief and also the developer guidance in Annex A. The following assessment should be submitted to the Council at an early stage to achieve an effective development management process.

**Design statement**—Developers must illustrate the development vision principles in their design statement and demonstrate that due consideration has been given of the following issues for the local area:

- Spaces between buildings
- Density and use
- Localised topography
- Views
- Vegetation pattern
- Boundary treatment
- Streets

and the following key issues for proposed buildings:

- Scale/proportion/materials/colour/articulation
- Relationship to site plot
- Relationship to adjacent buildings/structures
- Contribution to wider townscape
- Distinctiveness

**Traffic assessment (TA)**—Developers must through a traffic assessment demonstrate how the development will function in transport terms with emphasis on sustainable travel patterns.

**Ecological Impact Assessment**—This would be required including an extended Phase 1 habitat survey and survey for bats and breeding birds of any buildings to be demolished or restored.

**Drainage impact assessment**—A drainage impact assessment needs to be included in any submission and address issues such as the development's impact on the catchment area and waste and surface water drainage solutions.

**Energy efficiency**—Developers must submit a statement for the Council's approval detailing how energy efficiency measures and low and zero carbon technologies will be incorporated into the development proposals, and the level of CO<sub>2</sub> reduction that will be achieved. Account must be taken of the Climate Change Act 2008.

**Eco-homes**— A Eco-home statement should demonstrate how advice has been sought from a licensed assessor at an early stage in the project to ensure that the estimated rating will be obtained. A full list of licensed assessors can be found at the EcoHomes website ([www.ecohomes.org](http://www.ecohomes.org)).

**Landscaping statement**—The statement should include a statement on maintenance of the proposed and existing planting in the future.

**Refuse vehicle access strategy**— The strategy should include details of suitable turning areas for refuse vehicles, swept path analysis and details of bin locations.

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**SUDS** For residential developments of 50 houses or less one level of SUDS treatment would be required for all hardstanding areas (including roads). As best practice this level of treatment should be source control such as porous paving for the driveways and filter trenches for the roads.

**School Travel Plan**-An existing School Travel Plan for the site will require to be updated in liaison with the Technical Services Department of SBC.

### Checklist for key submission requirements

Key parts of submission	Included in submission?
Design statement	
Transport Assessment	
Safer Routes to School	
Ecological Impact Assessment	
Drainage impact assessment	
Energy efficiency statement	
Eco-home statement	
Landscaping statement	
Refuse vehicle access strategy	



## Duns Primary School Planning Brief

### Contacts

#### Planning & Regulatory Services

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#### SBC Education & Lifelong Learning

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#### Neighbourhood Services

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