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THE CROFT

MELROSE

INTRODUCTION:

This **Brief** sets out the main opportunities and constraints relating to the allocated site, and is intended to create an outline framework for its future development within the forthcoming local plan period. The comments within the subheadings below indicate where detailed attention is required to **specific issues** and where **contributions** will be sought from the developer. The comments should be read in full consultation with relevant guidance at both Local Authority and national level. A selection of related guidance is provided at the end of the document.

SITE DESCRIPTION:

This **2.39** ha Greenfield site, currently in pastoral and education use, adjoins the lower slopes of the **Eildon Hills**. The landform is gently sloping south east- north west towards **Dingleton Road** and the **Malthouse Burn**. **The Croft**, a traditional two storey building is located within the site. The **Eildon Hills** provide backdrop above the existing tree line. Other notable features include the **Malthouse Burn** with associated **riparian vegetation**, and the **dressed sandstone wall** on the roadside boundary.

The site is proposed for Housing in the **Scottish Borders Local Plan: Finalised Plan**. The site is allocated for **50 units**. The site has a **high visual amenity value** and is located within the **Eildon and Leaderfoot National Scenic Area (NSA)**, and an **Area of Great Landscape Value (ALGV)**. The adjoining **Malthouse Burn** is a **Special Area of Conservation**. The site holds significant **archaeological interest** as the original medieval settlement of **Dingleton**.

DEVELOPMENT VISION:

A **high quality** residential environment is to be created with the **Croft** retained as a **central focus**. Priority to be given to **road improvements** on Dingleton Road and to the **edges** of the development including **replacement planting** and **landscaping** designed to enhance the **Malthouse Burn** as a landscape feature and the retention and **enhancement** of the **existing path network** and **landscape framework** surrounding the site.

1. Constraints/ opportunities:

- i. Constraints which require to be addressed through appropriate contributions (see Developer Contributions section) include existing deficiencies in terms of **vehicular access**, and deficiencies in terms of **Dingleton Road**. There is an **existing lack of capacity** in **education facilities** and within **Waste Water Treatment Works**. The site has **visual** and **environmental** sensitivities relating to the **NSA** and **AGLV**, and **existing watercourses**. The **long term management** of **new and existing planting** associated with the site is required. The site has **archaeological sensitivities** and contains **the Croft**, an **unlisted building** of character currently in **nursery use**.
- ii. The site shall also contribute towards the local and wider provision of **affordable housing**, **open space** and **railway reinstatement** (see Developer Contributions section).

2. Basic infrastructure:

- i. Appropriate **vehicular access** to be **formed** and **bridged over** the **Malthouse Burn** from **Dingleton Road**. The existing substandard access to be **blocked off** to vehicular traffic and reused as a **dedicated pedestrian linkage**. Vehicular and pedestrian access to the site to be designed to be **attractive** and **safe** and **integrated** with **natural traffic calming measures** and **clearly defined pedestrian priorities** within the site.
- ii. An appropriate **financial contribution** is required towards **road improvements** on **Dingleton Road**. The precise nature of the works to be determined by an agreed **Transport Assessment**.
- iii. **Road layout** within site to include a **main loop road** with **frontage access**, via a **T-junction** beyond the new bridge and **small cul de sacs**.
- iv. **Internal roads** to meet “**Standards for Development Roads**”. The Finalised Local Plan specifies parking to be provided at a ratio of **2** spaces per dwelling unit (**discounting garages**) for residents parking allocated to individual properties and **25%** visitor parking in addition. **Communal parking provision** to be provided at a ratio of **1.5 to 1.75** spaces per dwelling unit including visitor parking.
- v.

3. Urban Design/ Conservation/ Cultural Heritage:

- i. Issues such as **planting/ lighting/ retention of existing vegetation/ services/ detail of levels etc** must be considered in an **integrative manner** within submitted plans for the site. A **Design Statement** is required, containing an assessment of the main issues associated with **integrating** the site and including envisaged **mitigation** measures. The statement in **written form** with **supporting illustrative material** should be submitted with the planning application. This co-joined approach should be carried forward into **detailed plans** which clearly exhibit the following design components:
- ii. 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**.
- iii. Careful attention to be given to the **edge treatment** of the site including **appropriate planting, hedging, fencing** and **pedestrian access points**, particularly adjoining the **Malthouse Burn**, and existing pedestrian routes.
- iv. The **Malthouse Burn** is seen to be an **underutilised asset** and works in the vicinity of the burn must seek to **enhance** its **visual quality** whilst achieving best practice in terms of **ecology, flood prevention** and **environmental quality**. The burn should not be culverted.
- v. **Road realignment- Visual impact** of necessary infrastructure and retaining walls to be mitigated through careful **design**, appropriate **replacement planting** and **reinstatement** of the **existing stone boundary wall** along the length of the Dingleton Road frontage (approximate height 1 metre).
- vi. **Lighting-** Light intrusion to be minimised as far as possible from the **NSA** and from **Dingleton Road** in accordance with best practice.
- vii. **The Croft** may be suitable for a **variety of uses** and the original part of the building is to be retained. This may include the retention of the existing **nursery** and or provision of the **affordable housing component** with associated **communal parking** to the **rear** and **shared greenspace**. The Croft should continue to form a **central focus point** within the development.
- viii. **Open space-** A ‘total open space per household’ of a minimum of **60m²** per household

is required, as per current national research recommendations (please refer to Minimum Standards for Open Space, SEDD 2005, p100). The site has access to adjoining open space. Suitable **play facilities/ open space** are required in a **central location** associated with the Croft to **complement** surrounding provisions (see Developer Contributions section).

- ix. The site has **archaeological** significance associated with its former uses. The **Lockit Well** beyond the tree line on the south eastern boundary of the site is to be respected by the development via an appropriate buffer (see Landscape section). An **Archaeological Evaluation** is required for the whole site.
- x. Existing **footpath links** surrounding the site to be retained. A **footpath network** to be provided within the site and integrated with play facilities and to connect with the wider footpath network beyond the site boundaries. Footpaths to be provided with landscaped edges, where appropriate.

4. Landscape/ Ecology:

- i. **Protection of Landscape Setting:** There is an established framework of mature trees and woodland within the site and around its perimeter. This woodland cover is an important landscape resource to be conserved and positively managed.
- ii. Based on an initial visual appraisal indicative **Buffer zones** with no ground disturbance are shown (**10m South, 10m East, 20m West**). **Buffer zones** are based on **BS Standard 5837: 2005, 'Trees in Relation to Construction' and other relevant criteria**, as defined by SBC and have been designed to protect **existing trees** and **woodland** within and beyond the site boundaries. Modifications to the identified exclusion areas may be agreed through further discussion between the developer and SBC subject to further information relating to the **surveyed location** and **sizes of existing trees**.
- iii. Appropriate **hedging** to be provided surrounding the eastern, northern and western edges of the site in accordance with **Landscape Guidance Note 3**. **Hedging** to ensure suitable **setting** and a **green edge** for the site. **Planted buffers** are also required to **protect** and **enhance** the **riparian environments** associated with the **Malthouse Burn** and to ensure satisfactory setting for the site. Please refer to **SBC Landscape Guidance Notes** for suitable planting methods and species.
- iv. Subject to obtaining appropriate consent from landowners, a **Tree Survey** to be carried out with the extent of planned **road improvements** along the northern boundary of the site to assess the retention of trees associated with the **Malthouse Burn (subject to obtaining consent from landowners)**.
- v. The scale of the proposals, are seen as a **Major** development in ecological terms as defined by the Scottish Executive. An **Ecological Impact Assessment** is required.

5. Water Resource Management:

- i. The site adjoins the **Malthouse Burn** and contains two further minor streams which enter the site from the Eildon Hills to the south. A **Flood Risk Assessment** and a **Drainage Impact Assessment** may be required.
- ii. An appropriate **SUDS** system is required to the agreement of **SEPA, Scottish Water** and **SBC**. SUDS must be designed to be **visually attractive, accessible** and **safe** and with suitable provisions for **long term maintenance**. A single purpose engineered solution should be avoided.
- iii.

6. Developer Contributions required (as per Draft Developer Contributions SPG):

- i. **Water and drainage:** Melrose catchment area (possible, dependant on the Scottish Water programme for investment).
- ii. **Railway:** Waverley Railway Line Reinstatement.
- iii. **Roads:** Road improvements along **Dingleton Road** to the satisfaction of the Director of Technical Services (Roads)
- iv. **Education:** Melrose Primary School and Earlston High School catchment.
- v. **Open space/ play facilities:** Centrally sited play facility to be provided. Facility to be fully funded with an appropriate **long-term maintenance** regime agreed.
- vi. **Woodland:** An appropriate management scheme to be agreed between SBC and developer.

7. Affordable Housing needs as per Draft Affordable Housing SPG:

- i. A minimum of **15%** Affordable Housing is required. **On site provision** is recommended setting a requirement for a minimum of **5** affordable units within the site (see Urban Design and Density section and Calculation). The numbers of affordable units are based on assumptions regarding density made in this brief and would vary according to final units agreed and the **results of the forthcoming Housing Needs Assessment**. SBC may also consider offsite provision or a commuted payment as appropriate

8. Density:

- i. Surrounding development achieves densities of between **16** and **27** units/ hectare. Based on an assessment carried out for the allocated site **45** units at **21** units/ ha is suggested as having potential within the **Net Developable Area** (please refer to Density Calculation below). This total is an indicative figure based on **20 units/ hectare** within the **Net Developable Area** with a **higher density of 30** units/ ha recommended for the Affordable Provision. Final numbers of units will be determined at the detailed design stage and will be dependant on the mix and size of proposed houses.

9. Density Calculation

The Croft, Melrose		Number of units for average density	Indicative affordable units	Land take affordable units (ha)	Units at average density	Recalculated number of units
		44	7	0.22	40	45
Density for Calculations purposes	No of units/	45				
Medium density		21	0.05			
High Density	30		0.033			

Note: Calculations for density within the site are approximate and are based on the **Net Developable Area (NDA)** (i.e. the areas not excluded by constraint features for example planting associated with the Malthouse Burn and existing trees). This figure includes **Buffered Areas** which may be utilised as garden grounds within the development site.

The figures assume a density of **20/ ha** within the site, with a higher density of **30/ha** for the provision of Affordable Housing. Please note numbers of indicative units have been **rounded to**

the nearest 5 units for clarity.

HMA for Affordable Housing purposes	% Aff. Hou. for HMA (1= 100% of developable area of site)
Central Borders	0.15

Related material:

SBC:

Development Plan: Scottish Borders Local Plan (Finalised) (SBC 2005), Scottish Borders Structure Plan 2001-2011 'The Scottish Borders– The New Way Forward' (SBC 2002), **Supplementary Planning Guidance:** Affordable Housing, Developer Contributions (draft), Biodiversity (draft), **Guidance Notes:** Landscape Guidance Notes, Standards for Development Roads, Minimum Distances: A Good Practice Guide (draft).

Scottish Executive/ Other relevant national level policy/ guidance:

Current and forthcoming **Planning Advice Notes** and **Scottish Planning Policy** (particularly in relation to design, transport, housing, flooding), **Circulars, Scottish Executive Research** particularly: **Minimum Standards for Open Space**, (SEDD 2005) **BS Standard 5837: 2005**, 'Trees in Relation to Construction' (Arboricultural Association 2005), Other as appropriate.

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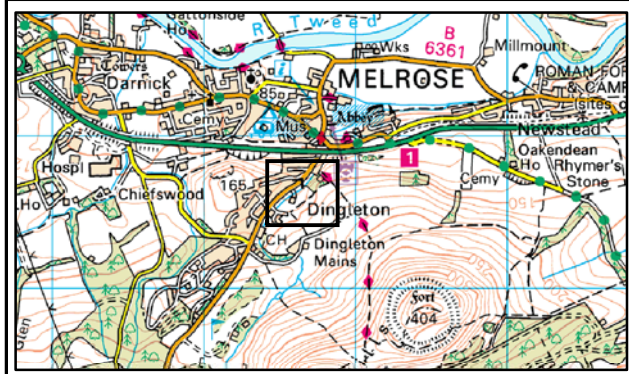
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Key

-  Site Boundary
-  Existing building and garden to be retained
-  Buffer Protection Zone (planted)
-  Buffer Protection Zone (no ground disturbance)
-  Road Improvement Area
-  Woodland to be retained
-  Higher Density Area
-  Archeological Site
-  Open Space
-  Pedestrian/Cycle link
-  Hedge
-  Road Direction
-  Vehicular Access Point



This map has been produced using colours and hatchings to illustrate key components of the brief. Whilst every attempt has been made to make the maps legible in black and white, viewing and printing in colour is recommended.

Disclaimer: Scottish Borders Council uses the most up to date spatial information from a range of sources in order to produce the mapping held within this document.

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